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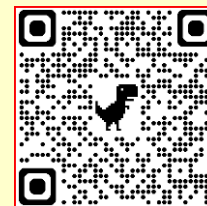
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### The Will to Meaning: A Logotherapeutic Study of Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*

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#### ABSTRACT

Logotherapy manifests itself as a major contrasting theory in case of man's inclination towards the search for life's meaning. This theory has turned the world upside down as it proposes that point of view which has not been proposed before. This study delves deeply into the gripping world of Viktor E. Frankl's logotherapy, a concept that has revolutionized our understanding of the existential crisis of the man. The study explores how the quest for meaning is the primary motivational force in man and how man searches for the meaning of his life by considering himself responsible for the effort. The researcher has brought out an all inclusive anatomization of Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* strictly bearing in mind Dr. Frankl's theoretical notions. Hemingway's characters are often war wounded and are hedonists. They spare no effort in making sure their survival in the world which is sometimes chaotic, often stressful and always painful. Following the pursuit of fulfilling the void within themselves, Hemingway's characters suffer from a terrible sense of existential frustration. The researcher brings forth an all-inclusive analysis of *A Farewell to Arms* with the application of Frankl's logotherapeutic intellection. The findings of the thesis reveal that the major characters in Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* actually leave no stone unturned in finding a meaning in their lives with the fear of death at their heels.

**KEY WORDS:** logotherapy, existential vacuum, self-transcendence, existential frustration

#### Introduction

Ernest Hemingway, an American novelist and short story writer, is Nobel Laureate who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954. Hemingway's brain children are marked with autobiographical realism. His own life was the raw material for his works. He wrote about everything he experienced himself. His works are the screams of his life. Hemingway's wartime experiences provided the foundations for his novels.

*A Farewell to Arms* is an accomplished piece of art by Ernest Hemingway which hit the stalls in 1929. The novel presents a winsome blend of love and war and these two notions rise as the major themes in the novel. The novel presents a first-person account of Henry serving as a lieutenant in the Italian army and an ambulance driver. Henry falls in love with Catherine, a beautiful young lady serving as a nurse in a hospital in Milan. A major portion of the novel hovers over Catherine and Henry's loved knot world. It explores the themes of love and war in their richest sense.

Henry disillusioned with the disgusting impacts of war, searches for a world of peace and serenity; a world where "love conquers all". Catherine, on the other hand, is driven into the ghettos of melancholy and departure because of the death of her lover, whom she has been betrothed. Life for the characters has been meaningless until the two fall in love with each other. Numerous academics have employed logotherapy in their study of various texts. Still, very few have examined Hemingway's writings through the lens of logotherapy. The application of logotherapy to Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms* is the major concern of this research project.

#### Literature Review

Since its publication, *A Farewell to Arms* has been anatomized and interpreted by many scholars. It has invited diverse attention from researchers at home and abroad and received public admiration at a larger scale. While the research circles are bound within the themes, character analysis, and symbols, some scholars have tried to delve deeply into the novel.

Rashid (2016) brings out an in-depth analysis of Henry's manhood in *A Farewell to Arms*. He puts a critical lens on the masculine identity of Friedrich Henry. His study actually focuses on the social construction of masculine identity. Henry is actually caught in between two; either to flee from the Italian army or to save his love of Catherine. He first goes with his notion of army and can't detest but later on he leaves it as he is driven by the disillusionment of war and its horrible impacts. The researcher reaches the conclusion that Henry's aim to build his manhood is gone in the dust. He terribly fails in rebuilding his manhood.

Al-Fahdawi (2017) has sought out *A Farewell to Arms* by putting an ironical lens. He claims that Hemingway has used irony in order to foreground the grotesqueness of war in contrast with the beauty that coexists with love. He asserts that the title of the novel is in itself an irony. The title of the novel puts the reader in ambiguity as on the one hand, it stands for Henry's farewell to the army and ammunition and on the other hand, it describes Henry's saying goodbye to his beloved's arms, Catherine Barkley. The researcher concludes that Hemingway has adopted a behavior marked with ironical intentions to show the fear, agony and chaos of the war. To bring out a cutting-edge difference between illusion and reality, Hemingway's expertise in the use of irony in his main-stream narrative is applaudable.

Ismail (2018) has investigated components of modernism in *A Farewell to Arms*. The way Hemingway has delineated Italy as crushed and broken is so exact. At that time, Italy was seeing the appalling impacts of World War 1 which is the one of the foremost conspicuous topics within the novel. Another important attribute of modernist literature is the discovery of one's inner self. Modernist literature focuses on character's self-transcendence and the self-recognition. The post-world war generation suffered through identity crisis. The values were shattered and the people strived for the discovery of their selves.

In *A Farewell to Arms*, Henry is an American, serving in the Italian army which vividly indicates his divided self. Notwithstanding speaking Italian, he has a good American accent. And the justification of this intermingling is given by him in the dialogues when he is asked for the reason of his joining Italian army: "Tell me. Why did you join up with the Italians?" "I was in Italy and I spoke Italian" (p. 19). He starts believing in the voice within himself. He realizes that all the authorities lie within him. At the end, he achieves over-soul and becomes an out-and-out transcendentalist. Conclusively, the researcher has regarded *A Farewell to Arms* a pure modernist piece of art.

Kaifu (2019) has worked on the narrative strategies in the novel. His critique investigates the narrative strategies in *A Farewell to Arms*, which includes the analysis of narrative order, narrative voice and narrative situation. The researcher has found that in *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway takes analepsis now and then. By analepsis, the researcher means that sometimes the protagonist travels back in time from the current point in the story. Analepsis can also be referred as a flashback or retrospection. The researcher has also found that Hemingway takes prolepsis often times which refers to prefiguring of an event in a story. The researcher has concluded that the compactness and the coherence in the plot of the novel is because of the chronological order of the events. The events are arranged in such a manner that with the omission of any one of them, the novel falls apart.

Ahamad (2019) has brought out a structural analysis of *A Farewell to Arms*. He has taken into account the narrative as the object of observation. The researcher has analyzed some attributes obvious in Hemingway's style of writing and come to the conclusion that

Hemingway has skillfully employed some techniques particularly the narrative transformations in *A Farewell to Arms*. The researcher has of the view that in such a narrative technique, the narrator often associates himself to one of the characters. Here in *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway has fused himself to the protagonist of the novel, Friedrich Henry. In such a fusion, the narrator sees everything through the eyes of his character. The character's vision becomes the author's vision. The researcher has admired Hemingway's expertise in writing skills and concluded that Hemingway is at home in employing narrative skills.

Chohan, Aamir and Deen (2021) have scrutinized *A Farewell to Arms* from the post-colonial perspective, strictly keeping in view the ideological and repressive state apparatuses. The article claims that Henry joins Italian army not because of any notions about war but because of his nature which romanticizes war every time. Moreover, the ambulance drivers in the war are just spectators and they do not participate in the war. They are just watchers. Henry's idealistic notions about war shatter into pieces when he sees the sufferings of men. The findings of this research article reveal that Hemingway exposes the destruction that is brought by the upper class people by using ISAs and RSAs upon the people who belong to lower class while these people happily work under them not knowing that they have been exploited both physically and mentally by the state.

The focus of this study is to view *A Farewell to Arms* through the eyes of logotherapy which has not been done before. The present study investigates how Catherine and Henry struggle to find meaning in their lives through love, self-transcendence and by finding meaning in their sufferings. The researcher is going to look out how Henry's self-transcendence takes place under the veil of Catherine's love. The study helps the readers to know the difference between the Henry before falling in love with Catherine and the Henry after his love for her.

## Discussion

### Noo-Dynamics

Dr. Frankl does not believe in the mental equilibrium in which the person's mental state is in rest; he has no aspirations for the future; a tension-less state. He regards that very situation detrimental for one's health and favors constant struggle and effort. He contends, "What man actually needs is not a tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for a worthwhile goal, a freely chosen task" (p. 81). In this state, there's a tension, within a person's mind, that who he is and who he ought to be. This leads to the creation of two extremes. One stands for the meaning that is going to be accomplished and the other stands for the individual, who is responsible for fulfilling this void. Turning to *A Farewell to Arms*, the readers observe that the moment when Henry's mental tension is at equilibrium, he fails terribly to recognize the goals he must achieve. The moment, when he falls in love with Catherine, he realizes what he is and what he ought to be.

Catherine's mental tension is quite obvious for she clearly sees who she is, what she has achieved and who she ought to be or what she has to achieve in the future. She is happy with Henry, that's what she has achieved. Now she has to become a successful mother of her child and to get through the war.

### Existential Vacuum

Existential Vacuum basically stands for the gap or the void that arises out of existential frustration. What is related with existential vacuum is existential frustration, understanding which is as necessary as logotherapy itself. Existential frustration simply means existential anxiety; the frustration of existence. This anxiety may be related to: 1) man's existence; the human mode of being; 2) the meaning of existence itself; 3) the struggle to find the meaning in existence.

There are semblances under which existential vacuum appears. According to Dr. Frankl, existential vacuum mainly substantiates itself in the form of sexual intercourse. In that case, the will to meaning, marked with frustration, is replaced by will to pleasure. Apart from that, existential vacuum may be compensated through will to power; more particularly will to money. This means that some people get their meaning of existence and are able to abolish the sense of existential anxiety by doing sex. While, there are some people who get out of the clutches of that anxiety by accumulating money and dominating others.

In *A Farewell to Arms*, Henry seeks sensual pleasures throughout the play. He is an out and out hedonist who satisfies his id in the novel's course. Whenever he is unable to cope with the war brutalities, he asks Catherine to come to bed. He always feels finer in the bed: "I feel fine in the bed" (p. 212). Nights are grand for him for he is with Catherine. Henry's existential vacuum is quite obvious when he feels an intense sense of loneliness and emptiness when he is not with Catherine. And when he is with Catherine, he feels wonderful and splendid.

Catherine, on the other hand, is also indulged equally in sensuous pleasures along with Henry. She finds solace and consolation in Henry's arms. She does feel lonely and empty when Henry is not with her. Her existential vacuum is filled when Henry steps into her life whom she welcomes in an unpleasant manner. Several incidents in the play describe that sense of Catherine's belongingness with Henry. And whenever Henry is with Catherine, it stops raining. This describes how Catherine finds herself safe from the destruction and the cruelties of life when she is with Henry. She associates her existence with Henry: "I don't live at all when I am not with you" (p. 254).

### The Meaning of Love

The meaning of life can also be found by loving someone. Dr. Frankl (1992:33) calls love as "the highest goal to which man can aspire". For Dr. Frankl what was most important and preliminary thing was that ultimate feeling which was devoid of the physical person of his wife: "nothing could touch the strength of my love, my thoughts, and the image of my beloved" (Frankl, 1992, p. 34). Even if one may come to know that his beloved is no more in the world, he would still stick himself to that self made images which he had created to live for them and he would still live, for, life still has meaning for him.

Friedrich Henry initially goes for the physical person of Catherine. Yet as time goes by, he feels as if he is going far from that physical person. Though he is crazy about her yet he suffers a lot when he can't think of Catherine. His early love is described by priest as only passion and lust and nothing more than that: "What you tell me about in the nights. That is not love. That is only passion and lust. When you love you wish to do things for, You wish to sacrifice for, You wish to serve" (p. 63). When Henry leaves for Gorizia so as to participate in the war, he can't help but thinking of Catherine. His wife's image becomes the sole source of connection and solace amidst war and chaos. He would think of her time and again that how she could manage for their young Catherine. He says exhaustively: "I was going to try not to think about Catherine except at night before I went to sleep. But now I was tired, so I lay and thought about her" (p. 141).

### Journey towards Self-transcendent: from the Least to the Most

Dr. Frankl narrates the tale of his self-transcendence in his prosaic *Man's Search for Meaning*. He writes that the more intense the camp environment was the more inclination was there towards the natural landscapes. Other prisoners with Dr. Frankl during the harsh camp circumstances experienced nature and its beauty in such a way that they had not done before. With nature, Dr. Frankl's imagination was also surrounded by her wife's image which was a source of solace and

consolation for him. He achieved self-transcendence by listening to the screams within him and when it came the liberation day, he rose as a transcendentalist.

Henry is the least self-transcendent character in the beginning. He does love God but not that much:

I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious and sacrifice and the expression in vain. We has heard them, sometimes standing in the rain almost out of earshot, and had read them or proclamations that were slapped up by billposters- **I had seen nothing sacred.** (p. 157)

He does not respond to Catherine's love. He sees nothing sacred around him. He is an out and out hedonist who seeks for bodily pleasures every time whenever he gets chance. He considers love a game. Gradually, Catherine becomes the reason for his existence. And this feeling grows stronger when Henry gets wounded and is admitted to the hospital in Milan. There the two pass grand nights and the immortal bond of love is signed by both of them in heaven. Henry, at that point, is even ready to spread dreams under Catherine's feet as W.B Yeats (1889:67) in his poem *He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven* writes in a winsome manner:

*I would spread the cloths under your feet:*

*But I, being poor, have only my dreams;*

*I have spread my dreams under your feet;*

If we talk about Catherine, she is also least self-transcendent in the beginning as she does not take Henry's love seriously. She says to Henry that he must not pretend of loving her. But Catherine is more mature than Henry as she realizes her feelings earlier though Henry takes time in this case. Catherine, whose fiancée with whom she was betrothed, tries to get out of the trauma by engaging herself in different circumstances. She even regards Henry her religion: "You're my religion. You're all I have got" (p. 98).

### Conclusion

To sum up all the points that have been discussed, it is concluded that in logotherapy, one can find a concrete meaning in his life through three ways: by creating a work or doing a deed, by loving someone or encountering something or by finding a meaning in one's sufferings. Sufferings, for Dr. Frankl, must be made by man as a source of personal triumph. Sufferings are no longer sufferings the moment the sufferer finds a meaning to it. It will then become a journey towards the achievement, towards success. The moment when a person knows his *why* of life, he is ready to bear any *how* that would come in his way. So man is always ready to suffer provided that his sufferings have found some meaning.

In Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, the researcher has discussed two characters: Friedrich Henry and Catherine Barkley. They both struggle to abolish the existential vacuum in them and make sure their survival in the world which is chaotic, stressful and painful. Just like Raskolnikov in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* who, after committing the double murder, finds his life meaningless, Henry and Catherine's life is also the same until the two fall in love with each other and tie an immortal bond in heaven. Henry succeeds in recognizing his existential vacuum and leaves no stone unturned in fulfilling it by keeping in view his beloved and her love. Catherine on the other hand also spares no effort in making herself an ideal beloved for Henry. She is with Henry in storms and tides. Be it the case of rowing a boat or flying from one country to the other, making an ideal self of her or accepting death, Catherine proves that she is a stout lady for whom everything is in the dust except her love for her husband. The main objective of this research is that to assist people in their re-

orientation towards the meaning of their life. The post-modern generation suffers from extreme existential crisis and existential frustration. Logotherapy helps one to deal with existential anxieties and problems as it provides a conceptual framework to cope with the existential complexities.

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