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The Grim Reality of War and Love in Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms and Antoon's The Corpse washer

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Abstract

The theme of love is woven with the theme of War. This study stands on the similarities of themes of War and love in Hemingway's A farewell to Arms and Sinan Antoon's The Corpse washer, where War darkened the vision of people. This study gives a short biography of both writers and a summary of both works. Then it discusses the elements and aspects of the two novels to explore the similarities between them by asserting War's role in restraining the sensitiveness and psychology of the characters who suffer from war in keeping on their love and living. It shows the link between wars despite times and places, the rage that anyone cannot escape physically, psychologically or both. It follows the formalistic as well as the comparative approach in analyzing the selected text. It starts with an introduction, then the discussion occurs, and it ends with a conclusion to show the findings.

Key Words: Hemingway, Sinan Antoon, War, Love, Anti-war writings

Introduction

The outcomes of war are likely to produce atrocities depending on the brutal forces applied by the warring parties. (Almaarof & Mohammad, 2022, 92-102) .To refuse to look at it, is the core of all the writings about war. Almost all anti-war authors have a similar worldview on the

horrors of war, and this is particularly true when the focus is on World War II. (Almaarroof & Hussein, 2022, 557-562)

E M Hemingway is one of the greatest writers of the 20th century; an American novelist born in 1898. His way of choosing images is deeply recognized. Hemingway tries to make the reader witness and live the incidents in his writings as accurate. His academic career was impressive. He graduated from Oak Park High school. According to his work as a journalist, he worked in the American Red Cross Ambulance service. Hemingway witnessed the horror of War in 1915 and was severely injured. He died in 1961. "A Farewell to Arms" is considered one of his finest war novels, published in 1921 (Pajazitaj, 2018 4-6). Ernest Hemingway was aware of man's mortality, which is why all his novels were tragedies. Even his heroes were tragic ones. (Emmanuel Lanior, 2014 166)

A Farewell to Arms is straightforward. It prescribes Hemingway's experience during World War I on the Italian front. The abrupt change reflected on the human civilization, which was not fair. The two main central characters- Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley- struggling life and death and the painful experience of War as they were victims of it (Debnath, 2017, 715).

On the other hand, Sinan Antoon (Baghdad, 1967) is an Iraqi novelist, poet, scholar, and literary translator. He is "one of the most acclaimed authors of the Arab World".

Sinan got Bachelor's Degree in English literature from Baghdad University. He immigrated to the USA after the Gulf war in 1991. He completed his study there and obtained a master's degree from Georgetown University and Doctoral Degree from Harvard University in Arabic Literature (Antoon, 2013 4). Currently, he is an associate professor of Arabic literature at NYU, New York, where he lives. (www.rayaagency.org. p.3)

The Corpse washer is one of Antoon's elevated work. Published in Arabic in 2010 and then in English after three years in 2013, it shows the public view of the War's trauma and terror in Iraq. The novel submits the problematic perspective of War, its trauma and its impact on people. (Mankhia, 2020 88)

Jawad Salim is the younger son of a Shi'i family. The novel's hero inherited the Corpse washing profession from his household in Baghdad. His dreams were shattered by the troubled condition of wars, the Iran-Iraq war, and the American invasion; maintaining his family work, losing his beloved Reem and his dreams. (www.rayaagency.org. p.5) (Tikrit U University Platform, " Literature, Ideology, and Translation: Cultural and Linguistic Perspectives", Virtual Seminar)

Methodology

This paper follows the comparative approach concerning the themes of War and love in Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and Sinan Antoon's *The Corpse washer*. The comparative method to processing the chosen texts is the most acceptable strategy as it concentrates upon describing the qualities of these passages accordingly. It aims throughout the debate to address two problems; the first is whether USA is barbarous in its fight against people and affect their private life or otherwise. The second issue of whether the chosen texts are effective in signaling the brutality of war and destroying love and the human life or not.

Discussion

Both novels have similarities in themes (War and love). Hemingway and Antoon developed themes of War and love by depicting reality and speaking of people's collective consciousness. They verbalized the wounds and the suffering of people in words. They showed the confrontation between life and death. (Tikrit University Platform, "Literature, Ideology, and Translation: Cultural and Linguistic Perspectives", Virtual Seminar)

The human heart and mind's state agree on two inextricable stances, Love and War, formulating the novel structure as in Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (Kumar, 2013 131). War is unnecessary and awful, but with love, it can be possible. Hemingway's novel love starts in wartime; Lieutenant Henry is a young American ambulance driver in Italy serving in World War I, and Catherine Barkley is an English self-assured, kind nurse. They meet and fall in love, though Fredric falls in love with her when he is wounded and transferred to the hospital in Milan (Assadnassab, 2005 9).

He exposed his love for Catherine, saying, "God Knows I had not wanted to fall in love with her. But God Knows I had ... I felt wonderful" (Al-Fahdawi, 2017 113). Both suffered from warfare. Catherine expressed her sadness and frustration after the death of her fiance on the waterfront "he is dead" (Debnath, 2017 716). She tried to escape the pain of her fiance's death when she told Henry about it. Besides, he intended to be far from this topic (Abdeen, 2020 47). Henry started to get attached to Catherine, but the latter was fond of him. She frequently said she loved him. "Oh, darling, I do love you". Henry is tied to her, and he visits her before going to the front. Besides, she gave him a picture of Saint Anthony or his sound. "you be careful, will not you" (*A Farewell To Arms* 1932- Full movie). Henry's leg was hardly wounded. He was shifted to Milan for a Better cure. Henry could not sleep at night because of his restless mind due to injuries from War (Debnath, 2017, 717). The lovers have reunited again, "Are you badly hurt" (Ibid 718). They started their love affair then Catherine discovered her pregnancy (Assadnassab, 2005 9). "The baby cannot be born alive because their love is beautiful yet doomed" (Ibid 8). Hemingway shows War's world with its hideousness, vehemence, madness, and irrationality. The soldiers, even Henry, were tired of War. They longed for peace (Al-Fahdawi, 2017, 111).

In War, insignificance and hiding are the last things soldiers must think in, even during their rest time for dinner. War and its images can reach their trenches. "That was a big mortar" " There was a great splashing, and I saw the star-shells go up and burst and float whitely and rockets going up and heard the bombs all this in a moment..." (Woameno, 2015 20). The writer manifests War as the most devastating of all human actions, as it is only death brings. Hemingway's title selection mirrors the public and personal hatred toward War. In *A Farewell to Arms*, the word "Arms" mean "weapons", which demonstrates the conspicuous resentment of War (Abdeen, 2020 42). Henry observed the disillusionment of War and tried to escape from its absurdity, searching for peace with Catherin. He runs away from the soldiers who opened fire on him. He throws himself in a river and then hides in a train to reach the love he chose away from the war world. Henry barely made his way out, as the officers were looking for runaway soldiers to send them back to the battlefield or shoot them if they escaped "send them back to fight invaders. Every foot of Italian soil must be retained. The inception of Henry came gradually comprehended war, love and lastly, death (Pajazitaj, 2018 25) death of Catherin in her childbirth, leaving him alone, was the worst strike (Al-Fahdawi, 2017 112). Henry could not achieve peace. War barged into their love until it separated them (Al-Fahdawi, 2017 113). Their love schemed "with the atmosphere and setting of war in the background", facing the brutality and cruel realities of War (Pajazitaj, 2018 23). Hemingway condemns War as the latter "seen to be nothing more than dark itself". It is the process of murdering the extension of humankind's innate need for love and safety (Abdeen, 2020, 46-47). Such depiction of War created a virtual experiment to include the reader (Ibid 40).

The *Corpse Washer* is one of the works that account for the wars in the Middle East, including the Iran-Iraq War following the economic sanctions of the 1990s (Truslow, 2019 46). However, many works are semi-autobiographic or autobiographic stories of journalists, western soldiers or photographers (Yebra, 2018 1). Sinan is a dramatized writer. He is a witness to the bloody history of Iraq. He translates his suffering as well as others' into a language. "He raises the history of Iraq with an ink of blood, with an ink of suffering". (Tikrit University Platform, " Literature, Ideology, and Translation: Cultural and Linguistic Perspectives", Virtual Seminar)

Jawad Salim, the novel's hero, is a young man of a Shi'i family in Baghdad of *Corpse Washer* (Yebra, 2018 1), in which the family profession is prepared and cleanses dead bodies for burial (Truslow, 2019 46). He inherited War's trauma. Jawad desires to become an artist; thus, he attends the academy of the faculty of Art at Baghdad University regardless of his family's refusal to this field and there he meets Reem. Jawad wants to create life instead of death. Jawad struggled and followed the progress of Mr Ismael, his first teacher of art. His professor demands that art is the alternative to War and preconception. "war intimately linked with immortality" (Yebra, 2018 4). Jawad seeks hope and pursues knowledge in a country born to be ripped by wars (www.rayaagency.org. p.5). Jawad

witnessed the American invasion and the conflict between Shi'i and Sunnis (Yebara, 2018 1-3). On the contrary to his father, who lived during the Iran-Iraq war and washed the corpses of Martyrs. Jawad was washing parts of the corpse as it was exposed to an absolute explosion. The influence of War was immense. Its impact on people and civilization resulted beyond the mind's border (Tikrit University Platform, " Literature, Ideology, and Translation: Cultural and Linguistic Perspectives", Virtual Seminar).

Jawad went to see the academy he studied in after the American occupation because he heard it was attacked "The Americans bombed it" (Antoon, 2013, 70 e-books). It was true, and the damage occurred. It is where he first saw her. "She was all in black. I was late for my art history class". Jawad used to meet Reem, his beloved, there, even after her graduation. "The American hit it with a missile" (Antoon, 2013, 71 e-books). It provides the consequence of minds injury, the psychological one (Mankhia, 2020 89), and what he will face with post-traumatic; nightmares, rage and suicide (Tikrit University Platform, " Literature, Ideology, and Translation: Cultural and Linguistic Perspectives", Virtual Seminar). Sinan illustrates the awareness of the Iraqi people. Jawad and Reem were in love "I kissed her neck and inhaled that jasmine perfume which had so dizzied me for months" (Ibid 52). Even during his military service, he longed for her "I missed Reem" (Ibid 56).

The corpse washer is displayed to the very end. The loss of opportunities; Jawad loses his brother in Iran-Iraq, his girlfriend Reem and his father (Yebara, 2018 1-2). "Reem and her breast which was amputated, just as our love was. My father, Armoury" (Antoon, 2013 158 e-books). No other choices were left for him, especially after being the responsible one for helping his family, so he returned to the profession of his family corpse washing. "Ultimately, the death of his father, lack of work opportunities as a painter, and a large number of daily killings" forced Jawad to precede his desire and dreams and go along with family business consummating his religious duty (Truslow, 2019 46). As he gets used to the aftermath scenes, he describes his work (Mohammed, 2015 146) :

If death is a postman, then I receive his letters every day. I am the one who carefully opens the bloodied and torn envelopes. I am the one who washes them, who removes the stamps of death, dries and perfumes them, mumbling what I do not entirely believe in. Then, wrap them carefully in white so they may reach the final reader of the grave. (Antoon, 2013 3)

Jawad and the pomegranate tree are where Muslims wash dead bodies (Mghaysil) (Mankhia, 2020 90). Both were eyewitnesses to the bloody history of Iraq, the long years of War. The tree is watered with blood ", But no one knows. No one. The pomegranate alone knows" (Antoon, 2013 170 e-books). Now Jawad is a prisoner to the hideous truth of War, which generated the daily death bodies. Prisoner in the infinite wide cage of life that he describes his melancholy:

I felt for the hundredth time what a stranger I would become In my hometown and how my alienation had intensified in these last years...but the stranger today was whoever lived in Rusafa and Karkh, Baghdad's two halves. Everyone in Baghdad felt like a stranger in his own country. (Antoon, 2013 174-175)

Sinan criticizes the policies of the United States government in each of his novels by elaborating on how these decisions affect the citizens of Iraq (Truslow, 2019, 45). Throughout both novels, the reader can find a continuous and open bitterness because both novels depict the War and love buried during the time of War. War is an endless matter that can only cause destruction, suffering, and frustration.

Conclusion

Love is all people and the world need, but War has nothing to do with it. War is just like death, the only fate from which humans cannot get away. As the two novels develop, War ruins characters physically or psychologically; Henry in Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms is devastated over the loss of Catherine and his peace. He lost his real motive and guidance in life and has no desire to seek another route. Jawad, on the other hand, in Sinan Antoon's The Corpse washer, destroyed upon the losses that cannot be counted, extends to not only his beloved Reem but his brother, his father, and his dreams. War ends in both novels, yet the real War within its characters lasts endlessly.

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الحقيقة القاتمة للحرب والحب

في رواية إيرنست همنغواي "وداعاً للأسلحة" و"مغسلة الجثث" لسنان أنطون

المستخلص

موضوع الحب منسوج مع موضوع الحرب. تستند هذه الدراسة إلى أوجه التشابه بين موضوعات الحرب والحب في كتاب همنغواي "وداعاً للأسلحة" و "غسالة الجثة" لسنان أنطون ، حيث أدت الحرب إلى تعقيم رؤية الناس.

تقدم هذه الدراسة سيرة ذاتية قصيرة لكلا المؤلفين وملخصاً لكلا العملين. ثم تناقش عناصر وجوانب الروايتين لاستكشاف أوجه الشبه بينهما من خلال التأكيد على دور الحرب في كبح حساسية ونفسية الشخصيات التي تعاني من الحرب في

الحفاظ على حبهم وعيشتهم. ويظهر الارتباط بين الحروب رغم الزمان والأماكن ، والغضب الذي لا يستطيع أحد الهروب منه جسدياً أو نفسياً أو كليهما

تتبع الدراسة النهج الشكلي وكذلك المقارن في تحليل النص المختار. وتبدأ بمقدمة ، ثم تبدأ المناقشة ، وتنتهي بخاتمة لإظهار النتائج.

الكلمات المفتاحية: همنغواي ، سنان أنطون ، حرب ، حب ، كتابات مناهضة للحرب