

## Code Hero in Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sun Also Rises*



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### Abstract

This research looks at Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sun Also Rises* in order to explore the specific characteristics found in Hemingway's code hero as these heroes share certain attitudes and characteristics found in all Hemingway's novels. This project wants to illustrate the Phillip Young's concept of code hero in Hemingway's selected novels as he is the first scholar who has created characteristics Hemingway's code hero for the first time. He has named these heroes "code hero" due to certain characteristics such as sense of nothingness, grace under pressure, courage and dignity that recur through all these code heroes. By introducing this type of hero, Hemingway has added a new branch to the theory of heroism. By using heroism theory this project wants to illustrate the fundamental similarities and differences of this new type of hero with other definitions in heroism theory. This research will next examine the complexities and integrities found in Hemingway's code hero. Due to direct relationship between Hemingway's background and his code heroes, this thesis also discusses how Hemingway tries to foreshadow his own life and moralities in his code heroes and will relate the creation of this certain hero to the characteristics of Hemingway's spiritual life. This research also examines how Hemingway throughout depiction of his code hero and especially with the description of nada conception highlights the pessimistic view of the code hero and shows the position of early modern man in civilized society.

### مقدمه قهرمان رمزی در رمان‌های «وداع با اسلحه» و «خورشید نیز طلوع می‌کند» اثر ارنست همینگوی

این تحقیق به بررسی رمان‌های «وداع با اسلحه» و «خورشید نیز طلوع می‌کند» اثر ارنست همینگوی می‌پردازد تا ویژگی‌های خاص موجود در قهرمان رمزی همینگوی را بررسی کند، زیرا این قهرمانان نگرش‌ها و ویژگی‌های خاصی را که در تمام رمان‌های همینگوی یافت می‌شود، به اشتراک می‌گذارند. این پروژه می‌خواهد مفهوم فیلیپ یانگ از قهرمان رمزی را در رمان‌های منتخب همینگوی به تصویر بکشد، زیرا او اولین محقق است که برای اولین بار ویژگی‌های قهرمان رمزی همینگوی را خلق کرده است. او این قهرمانان را به دلیل ویژگی‌های خاصی مانند حس نیستی، وقار تحت فشار، شجاعت و وقار که در تمام این قهرمانان رمزی تکرار می‌شوند، «قهرمان رمزی» نامیده است. همینگوی با معرفی این نوع قهرمان، شاخه جدیدی به نظریه قهرمانی اضافه کرده است. این پروژه با استفاده از نظریه قهرمانی می‌خواهد شباهت‌ها و تفاوت‌های اساسی این نوع جدید قهرمان را با سایر تعاریف در نظریه قهرمانی نشان دهد. در ادامه، این تحقیق پیچیدگی‌ها و یکپارچگی‌های موجود در قهرمان رمزی همینگوی را بررسی خواهد کرد. با توجه به ارتباط مستقیم پیشینه همینگوی و قهرمانان رمزی او، این پایان‌نامه همچنین به این موضوع می‌پردازد که چگونه همینگوی تلاش می‌کند زندگی و اخلاقیات خود را در قهرمانان رمزی خود پیش‌بینی کند و خلق این قهرمان خاص را به ویژگی‌های زندگی معنوی همینگوی مرتبط خواهد کرد. این تحقیق همچنین بررسی می‌کند که چگونه همینگوی در طول تصویرسازی از قهرمان رمزی خود و به ویژه با توصیف مفهوم نداد، دیدگاه بدبینانه قهرمان رمزی را برجسته می‌کند و جایگاه انسان مدرن اولیه را در جامعه متمدن نشان می‌دهد. کلمات کلیدی: قهرمانی، قهرمان، قهرمان رمزی

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### Introduction

Ernest Miller Hemingway is distinguished for the specific type of heroes he has produced in his novels and short stories. In exhibiting his heroes, he does not follow other post-war American novelists and depicts heroes with special characteristics. It means that all his heroes share a group of similarities. He also foreshadows his personality and morals in his characters, which follow the beliefs known to be the Hemingway's code hero. All these heroes follow some fixed attitudes. In other words, reader can see basic and same characteristics, for instance the kind of characters and their outlook towards life, images, setting, and symbols that are reiterated throughout Hemingway's code heroes. Namely from his earliest published novels until the end, the similar chief elements and themes dominate.

From *In Our Times* (1925) until *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) the protagonists in Hemingway's novels share common attitude towards the world. Philip Young in his book *Hemingway: A Reconsideration* (1966) introduced the "concept code" hero to Hemingway's heroes and, until now, many critics such as McGrath in 2007, Calhoun in 2005, and Austad in 2008 support this label bestowed upon Hemingway's heroes. Young mentions that these code heroes follow heroism and have new special characteristics, as he believes Hemingway through these attitudes introduced a specific kind of hero. Young argues that they are heroes who highlighted specific doctrines of dignity, prowess, and endurance: "This is the Hemingway code-a grace under pressure, it is made of the controls of honor and courage which in a life of tension and pain make a man and distinguish him from the people who follow random impulses" (*Hemingway: A Reconsideration*, 63). According to Young, Hemingway's hero with certain codes evaluates himself by how he deals with the predicament situation that life has bestowed upon him (65) hence his works strike a very sensitive chord in modern man's consciousness. Young, who for the first time originated this term called code hero, entitled these certain codes just to the male protagonist of Hemingway's novels. These code heroes, according to Young's concept, must have two main characteristics: first they must be a male hero, and second, they must be the protagonist of the Hemingway's novels. This research wants to elaborate on Young's concept and to add two more points to this concept: first, that the female hero of Hemingway's novels also can play the role of being a female code hero, and second, these certain codes are not specific to the protagonists of the Hemingway's novels, the minor character also can be a code hero.

Hemingway's code heroes have a basically consistent perspective towards the world and the position of human life in this universe, so these themes are the core to special characteristic for Hemingway's code heroes. The chief characteristic is the opinion of death (nada conception) that penetrates into all of the character's action in Hemingway's novels. For Hemingway's code heroes, human being is surrounded with a purposeless and indifferent world which predestinates to impose them its destructive rules. Therefore, these are Godless code heroes and for them the world is lack of aim and value. All these code heroes portray the basic fragmentation and disillusionment which is caused by the First World War and then in the post-war society pushes them towards the belief on nada. It means in most of Hemingway's novels the code heroes are always associated in the war

or sometimes in bloody sports such as bullfighting which is a substitute for the violence of war. Thus, throughout the war code hero sees brutal thing and comes to this reality that old standards and concepts cannot save humankind from the disaster of the world war. As a result of such opinion, they lost their previous belief and faith, lead toward aimlessness of universe.

Hemingway's code heroes outlook towards life was interesting to the people of the 1920, due to the setting and atmosphere of war in his novels. In 1920, artists from all over the world found refuge among thousands of drifters who had survived the First World War. All these derelicts and drifters tried to become artists. They established a way of life which became the distinctive feature of a whole generation. Those who succeeded in creating something worth mentioning had one common theme: World War I and the effects it had left on a generation.

Among these story tellers who were occupied with the theme of war was Ernest Hemingway who was known as an author of war protestation: "He was spoken particularly for those whose lives had been deprived of meaning by the war' (Hatcher 228). Hemingway's code heroes are post-war generation who are disillusioned with the senseless violence of war. A whole generation of Europe and also many Americans had joined the war to save the traditional values, but the war disillusioned and shocked them and shattered their beliefs in the old values that they fought for.

From the present researcher's point of view, Ernest Hemingway best exemplifies his code hero in his novels *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* through his characters: Jake Barnes, Frederick Henry, Pedro Romero as well as his female code heroes, Catherine Barkley and Lady Brett Ashley. Although critics label the Hemingway's protagonists as a code hero, in *The Sun Also Rises* except the protagonist Jake, another character of the novel, Pedro Romero, points out some basic characteristics of Hemingway's code hero such as dignity, courage, grace under pressure and self-control. These code heroes signify fundamental traits such as *nada* conception, stoicism and courage that manage the actions and ethics of Hemingway's protagonist or maybe another character in his novels. The codes grant these heroes some characteristics such as bravery, toughness, pleasure seeking man, emotionless, alcoholism and insomnia in the darkness of night. But among these characteristics the *nada* conception has a prominent role. It means challenging and striving against the purposelessness of life, rather than indicating desire for this life and its pleasures, which they demonstrate through their actions and behaviors.

Ernest Hemingway illustrates in his novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, the character of Frederick Henry as a code hero, who must point out his principles of being code hero in the brutality and hardships of First World War. In this novel war and its violence cause a challenge that merely Hemingway's hero with certain codes can endure courageously. Frederick Henry is a self-restrain character who is a man of action, and sustains grace under pressure. Throughout the story Frederick Henry portrays the fundamental characteristics of a code hero and finally with the death of his beloved, Catherine, he bears grace under pressure. Such as the other Hemingway's code hero, Frederick Henry also has insomnia problem. He drinks alcohol a lot but obviously, stays rational in his drunkenness. He also does not believe God and does not have any religious beliefs. Catherine Barkley, who crosses over the male role as a code hero, indicates some basic characteristics of

Hemingway's female code hero such as Lady Brett Ashley, insomnia, dignity, and shows her grace under pressure. She already recognized the reality of life to kill all human being and comprehends philosophy of life, so she contributes to the development of Frederick Henry to shift and develop towards being a complete code hero.

In *The Sun Also Rises*, Brett Ashley is a beloved of Jake Barnes who does not have any limitation for her sexual relationship and exceeding the normal bounds in her desire for sex. She has relationship with four different men. So in this novel through Brett Ashley and her different love, Hemingway indicates his protagonist, Jake Barnes, as his code hero and Brett Ashley as a code heroine. Here Jake Barnes, the protagonist of novel, has been exhibited as Hemingway code hero with the characteristics of self-preservation, dignity, and prowess who tolerates all life's failures courageously. He is a castrated veteran of First World War, who until the end of novel points out his faithfulness to Brett. Lady Brett Ashley also points out the main characteristic of female code hero through her traits of nada conception and paganism, indifference sense towards world and social norm, and being an anti-war code heroine. Jake Barnes is the main code hero of the novel, while Pedro Romero, the minor character, exhibits some characteristics of being Hemingway's code hero such as grace under pressure, courage, dignity, self-reliance and more significantly demonstrates that the code hero is not just the protagonist of the novel.

The present study is going to concentrate more on attitudes and complexities of Hemingway's code heroes in order to elaborate Young's concept in the selected novels, and highlights why Frederick Henry, and Jake Barnes are labeled as Hemingway's code heroes (according to the concept of Young) and also develops this concept to the female heroes and minor characters. So, this research will discuss why the female heroes, Catherine Barkley and Lady Brett Ashley are Hemingway's female code heroes, and Pedro Romero, as a minor character, is also a code hero. Therefore, the first step of the thesis writing will be to highlight the special characteristic of what shall be called code hero, and then this study tries to expand this concept of code hero to female hero and minor character as code hero in two of Hemingway's major novels: *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sun Also Rises*.

### The Problem

Due to the First World War and its brutality Ernest Hemingway formulates heroes with certain characteristics. Therefore, his special characters in novels and short stories brought a controversial tract regarding to heroism theory. Although his heroes are concerned with the heroism concept, he instilled a certain sort of hero with specific characteristic that has many differences with other aspects of heroism. According to Edmund Wilson, in his book *The Wound and The Bow*, moving throughout Hemingway's four major novels in chronological order, we find that a broad progression occurs in his heroes that dissociate them from other usual hero (74). Leo Gurko also has quoted from George Snell that: "All the principal Hemingway heroes...are one and the same person and they are largely molded upon Hemingway himself" (*Ernest Hemingway and The Pursuit of Heroism*, 5). Therefore, this Hemingway's specific hero known as code hero still could

be a specific and unique type of hero. These code heroes with common opinions consist of similar elements, motifs, conflicts and characteristic repeat from his first published novel until the end, thus the code hero is still a very influential and special definition of hero used in Hemingway's style.

Code hero is something distinguished and denoted to Hemingway, therefore code hero and the analysis of this character is the most important feature in reading and analyzing Hemingway's selected works. Therefore, the central character's complexities, attitudes and his roles to create code hero will be the significant points to be examined. As I mentioned earlier this study also wants to elaborate on Young's concept of Hemingway's code hero and adds two aspects to this concept: first the female hero also can be the code hero and the codes are not specific to the male hero, second the minor character also could be a code hero, not just the protagonist. Therefore, this research will apply Young's concept of code hero in the selected novels of Hemingway and will explore why Frederick Henry, Jake Barnes, Catherine Barkley, Brett Ashley and Pedro Romero are entitled as Hemingway's code hero. In order to reveal the complexities of Hemingway's code heroes, selected works need to be analyzed especially on how each hero is interpreted in selected novels. The main premise of this project will be about the depiction of heroism and reveal the certain codes of characters especially main character or protagonist, and also in female hero and minor characters, according to Young's concept of code hero, by scrutinizing selected novels. This project focuses more on heroic deed and strict moral values of the characters that changed them towards become a Hemingway's code hero in selected novels. It is notable that although many critics who support the idea of Young in relation to Hemingway's code hero, but there are not complete and detailed thesis or study about code hero in Hemingway's novels except in *The Old Man and The Sea* (1953). So, the chosen novels for this research are *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sun Also Rises*. Furthermore, this research will discuss the concept of female code hero and minor characters as code heroes as a new aspect of Young's conception, since no critics label these certain characteristics and codes to female hero and minor characters of Hemingway's novels.

### Significance of the Study

Ernest Hemingway through his works introduced a certain kind of hero with special codes that leads the critics to formulate these heroes as code hero. Some special basic themes and chief motif tends to happen in Hemingway's heroes, female hero, and some times in minor character that give particular codes to these characters, allow them to go beyond the traditional heroes and separate them from other definition of heroism theory. In other words, Hemingway introduced a certain kind of hero that through this research this code hero will add to the massive field of heroism. Hemingway's code heroes are charactering whose concept is shaped by his outlook towards death and this world. For these code heroes in the face of inevitable death a man must perform certain acts and deeds and, these actions often consist of enjoying and using the most benefits from this life. Behind the formulation of this code lies the basic disillusionment brought about by the First World War. This fragmentation guides code hero towards nada conception, therefore they reject the meaning of this world. Hemingway depicted this disillusionment and alienation of war in his



first novels: *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sun Also Rises*. Another point that is significant to this study is a new perspective to the Young's concept of code hero: that the female hero and minor character of Hemingway's novels can also play the role of code hero and this concept is not only specific to the male protagonist of novel.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This project aims to examine the fact that how selected novels, *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sun Also Rises*, revealed the special codes of Hemingway's heroes. This study aims to illustrate the specific characteristics and attitudes of these code heroes under the heroism viewpoint to indicate the special codes of the heroes. This image deals with First World War, nada conception and the disillusionment and fragmentation of the war, and some certain codes of behaviors such as loyalty, courage, dignity and grace under pressure. So, these characteristics are examined in order to determine their significance to formulate the code hero in the selected novels and in relation to the themes of these novels. Nada conception is distinguishing quality in code hero/heroine, as this attitude devises other characteristics such as indifference sense towards world, hedonistic life and fragmentation. Therefore, as I mentioned before, the intention of this research is not to look out nada conception on its own, but this is part of process to identify the code hero. In addition, the study serves to elaborate and enlarge the fundamental definition of code hero to the female hero and minor characters, characteristic such as ethical behaviors, certain moral values and heroic actions that govern them towards Hemingway's female code hero. Lastly this study intends to relate the aforementioned points of code hero to the background of Hemingway and explores that how the creation of this specific kind of hero, known as code hero, has roots in Hemingway's personal experience and life, and indicates how Hemingway through depiction of this code hero displays the position of early modern man in violent and civilized society.

### **Methodology**

The selected texts of this thesis are analyzed in order to point out the assumptions and objectives of the study mentioned earlier. Therefore, in relation to the study, this process entails a close reading of the selected novels, and detailed analysis that refers to depiction of code hero. Thus, an awareness of the multiple symbols of selected novels that reflect an image of code hero provides significant insight into the image specifically, and the selected works as a whole. The selected novels are analyzed by using the theory of heroism as the main idea in general. Concepts such as nada conception and code hero are used to analyze and interpret character's action and their situations in two selected texts.

Relevant lines from the selected novels are closely examined to discuss and highlight the depiction of the code hero and the thematic effect of this image on the selected novels as a whole. Therefore, in relation to the study, this process entails a profound analysis and deep reading of all elements of heroism to understand the complicated heroes in Hemingway's selected works. Once paragraphs or phrases that indicate code of heroes identified and examined, pattern and inter-

relationship between these images are analyzed within the context of the selected novels. The materials for this research were gathered by means of library researches on different literary journals written on the Young's concept of Hemingway's code hero, nada conception and the definition of heroism terms in the literature. Since this study is mostly based on textual analysis in concepts related to heroism and code hero, further explanations of the methodology is prepared in chapter two.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Connection between Hemingway's Life and His Code Heroes**

By looking in depth of the code hero we found that the creation of such specific hero with certain qualities has direct connection with Hemingway's personality. Hemingway came from strict Victorian setting, from Oak Park, Illinois, and also grew up in strict Victorian values that formed his childhood. Anthony Burgess describes the most quintessential Victorian town of Oak Park, a village west of Chicago, and the strict moral tone of Hemingway's childhood as "The place where bars ended and churches began. There were no loose ladies around and the high school girls were respectable... it was a good whole some life...but the time inevitably came when the young Hemingway wanted more than the constraints of happy but stuffy Oak Park" (17).

Hemingway grew up under the influence of his father who encouraged him to develop outdoor interests such as swimming, fishing and hunting. His early boyhood was spent in the northern woods of Michigan among the native Indians, where he learned the primitive aspects of life such as fear, pain, danger and death, the aspects which he later tries to show in his writing. So, his early experiences in Michigan colored his code heroes to some extent. His father, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, implemented traditional values and firmly reproached any deviation from them. Samuel Shaw states: "Ed Hemingway was a harsh disciplinarian in the puritan mold. His lectures to the boy extolled purity of body and mind" (15). His father-imposed rules of behavior with governance over thoughts and action, compelling Hemingway to restrict evil forces internally and externally. Bernice Kert adds, "Rules of behavior and motivation to write novels with specific heroes were established by Ed Hemingway. He forced the Sabbath strictly. No play or game, no visiting with friends, and prayers and church attendance were mandatory." (35) So, Ed Hemingway embeds moral earnestness within Hemingway's upbringing, established an innate set of values that shapes some characteristics of his code hero. Although he grew up in Victorian home, his experience during World War I caused him to find ideas cultivated in his childhood inadequate. As Rao Rama in his book: Ernest Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms mentions his idea that: "For a long time he could not sleep in the nights and had to keep a light in his room. He tried hard to overcome his fear of death by seeking it again and again. He dared danger and death all his life. This accounts for the presence of war, violence, death, darkness and nada in his fictions" (100).

Hemingway in *The Sun Also Rises* depicted the essence of the Lost Generation, because Hemingway himself belongs to this generation. In fact, he writes about his own feeling when he tries to describe Jake for us. In fact, Jake is a substitute for serious thoughts of Hemingway himself. It refers to solution to the dilemma of the Lost Generation that Hemingway himself was entangled with. Another best example is his participation in the First World War as an ambulance driver and

later in *A Farewell to Arms* substitutes his feeling in his code hero Henry. His experience as a young man in the Italian front during First World War had brought him face to face with death, which is the same as Henry's experience. He exhibited in his own life as well as his works and code heroes an incarnation of the myth of masculinity, to the point of self-parody.

### **Depiction of Early Modern Man**

With the affirmative conclusion of the two novels, Hemingway offers a response to the prospect of finding heal in the modern world. This healing is shown through both the powers of negation and affirmation. Hemingway in his novels through the code hero depicted the violence and chaotic of this modern world. The violence of after war influences the psychological and emotional state of the code hero, leading them towards dehumanization. The influence of violence stems from Hemingway's experience in both World Wars. This violence inflicted by his code heroes is not random; it is structured and comes from a sense of dignity and duty. Violence also is reinforced when the code hero feels a sense of responsibility to himself and those in his care, when duty calls for it. Participation in these activities requires strict adherence to the unspoken rules because the code hero is a man of action rather than theory.

Jose'oretega y Gasset argues in *The Dehumanization of Art* (1998) that one of the main characteristics of modernity is dehumanization, distortion or destruction of man (42), which happens to all Hemingway's code hero at last. So, Hemingway claims new insights into human condition with his code hero which is man plagued by conflict and strife. Deep psychological conflicts plague man, often causing violence. Man engaged in a constant struggle for existence, striving to acquire and maintain resources, which is the case with Hemingway. By introducing his code hero, Hemingway tries to indicate the new hero who separates himself from traditional boundaries. For instance, Henry and Catherine's relationship promotes more traditional view of love. This love also deviated from traditional Victorian's view as it exists out of wedlock. Within Victorian mind, physical love was private and appropriate only within the bound of marriage. Hemingway removes these restrains and with his characterization of code hero Hemingway tries to destruct the Victorian view. The modern world has wounded code heroes in some way, each exhibiting physical and psychological injuries. Henry leaves the United States for Europe to study architecture. He then joins the Italian army, but fails to uncover meaning with these acts. He only finds emptiness and begins to feel estrangement. Feeling hollow and alienated, he begins to distance himself from the modern world. The code heroes portray the complexities and of modern life due to the fact they encounter unexplainable violence and pain.

To sum up, Young's and other critics opinion on code hero, one can find that Hemingway's code heroes have resemblance with our new civilized and sophisticated generation. A generation which in any circumstances of luxury life should tolerate suffering, as Nietzsche writes in *Basic Writing of Nietzsche* explains: "In new generation that, as it were, has inherited in its blood diverse standards and values, every thing is unrest, disturbance and doubtful" (320). The main result of this study is that Hemingway's code hero represents an aspect of our society;



the existence of inevitable defeat and suffering which is true for everybody and any time. According to Young Hemingway uses his code hero in modern world to teach his readers a creative and disciplined way of life (63).

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