The Hidden Role of the Heroine
in
A Farewell to Arms

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Introduction

This is a thesis on A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway. The novel has been widely discussed and the point of numerous arguments has been particularly centered on the assessment of the heroine because the novel ends up with the tragic fate imposed on her. Therefore, the necessity for an unbiased reading has been required, which would account for the imbalance based on the question of gender. My following argument thus principally deals with the gender disparity between the male character and the female character: it is the disparity recognized in their gender roles.

In the first chapter I will focus on the occupations in which the hero and the heroine are respectively engaged, and further, I will confirm that the characters do not equally earn the reward for their roles. At first, it seems that the disparity constitutes a mere reflection of the difference in their fields for the activities: the male character does military activities and the female one does nursing. It might be taken not as the disparity but as the difference. However, the disparity becomes more visible when we think of their occupations along with their gendered direc-
tions: the male character is given the outward field for battling and the female character is assigned the inward area for curing. Thus we may confirm that the disparity in their gender roles is understood together with the spatial directions, either to the outside or to the inside. Moreover, in developing the question of gender, my thesis adopts the idea of the wound as a gender mark. In other words, I regard the experience of being wounded as a crucial factor for the fulfillment of the characters' gender identifications. This examination into the foundation of gender identities will provide a useful viewpoint for a closer analysis of the disparity.

In the next chapter, I will consider the ways in which the characters' gender identities are differently arranged. This argument begins by the observation that, though they are once wounded, both the hero and the heroine get wounded all over again at the end of the novel. Taking into consideration my argument's premise that their gender is marked by the wound, their second injuries would likely subvert their gender identities which are previously determined by the former ones. Therefore, my approach in the second chapter is to see how the thesis's perspective would be widened by the concept of the wound.

Finally, the third chapter considers whether or not the gender disparity is resolved now that the wounds mark them reversely. In this chapter, I will look into the transfigurations of the characters' identities caused by their second injuries at the novel's ending. Further, we will see if the concept of the wound will retain its power of marking their gender because, if the wound does not always construct the steady identity but proves to reverse its earlier gender arrangements, its role as a gender marker will be rendered invalid. Accordingly, the third chapter will look into some illustrative cases of the wounded characters to inspect the wound's workings thoroughly. And, ultimately, the closest attention will be paid to the heroine's second injury to find out how she is marked by that.

In this way, my thesis analyzes the novel on the basis of the wound. This is a practice to better understand the representation of the gender problems in the novel. Yet I do not mean to adopt the idea of the wound only to confirm the way they are gendered but also to suggest that it happens to reveal the vulnerability of the gender structure. That will be the point on which my argument will be most eagerly concentrated.
Chapter I. The Foundation of Gender

In this thesis, my argument will be developed in terms of gender. The validity of this approach would be understood considering the situation of the foregoing arguments about the novel. Mainly, these discussions have been concerned with the heroine.

In most of the criticisms of *A Farewell to Arms*, Catherine Barkley, the heroine, has been the center of the arguments: the novel has been harshly criticized because she is totally devoted to the hero only to die. Concretely, she wishes to do whatever the male character wants her to do, and moreover, she denies herself: “I want what you want. There isn’t any me any more. Just what you want” (Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* 96). Consequently, some critics denounce the author for making up such an indecisive woman. Judith Fetterley, among them, says “Catherine dies and dies because she is a woman” (Fetterley 117). Whereas such critics as Fetterley reject the description of the excessive selflessness of the heroine, others take a favorable stance, regarding Catherine as self-disciplined. Although the latter think much of her, they do not problematize her death but accept it, saying that it is “an artistic necessity” of the author (Spanier 142). Thus the assessments of Catherine are sharply divided. So the purpose of this chapter is to lay the groundwork for the coherent evaluation of the heroine.

First of all, I have to recognize the disparity between the hero and the heroine in light of their gender roles. Although it seems that they do their jobs of their own will, when it is closely studied, it would be known that the characters do just follow the dominant gender model. In other words, their roles are already gendered. As a consequence, the characters come to accept the gender disparity without knowing. In exploring the idea of the gender disparity, I particularly look into the difference in the characters’ fields for their occupations.

Their roles are given the opposite directions: men to the outward area and women to the inward one. To be specific, Frederic, the hero, goes to participate in the war activities while Catherine goes into nursing at the hospital. And I will take these two spheres as the gendered area, in which the gender activities are supposed to be done. As a result, the gender disparity is roughly recognized along with the concept of the directions. And, importantly, the inward area works as fetters
for Catherine because it means that she voluntarily undertakes the role of being servitude to the wounded, all of whom are men injured at the battlefront, to send them back to the outward field again. In this way, their gender roles are constructed with the disparity included in them.

Now that the basic form of the inequality is indicated, my argument is concerned with its details. In this analysis, paradoxically, I will review an argument which does not object to Catherine's circumstances. Indeed, some critics claim that the reality of Catherine's inward area does not mean the gender disparity, and further, they reevaluate Catherine's role. Yet their revaluation would provide a useful viewpoint in explicating the gender disparity. It is because, though their assessment of Catherine is intended to prove her positive role, it comes to reveal more clearly Catherine's difficult circumstances.

Their process of re-reading Catherine begins with the intention of appreciating Catherine's gender role. Among those who see Catherine as self-determined, I refer to Sandra Whipple Spanier. Although we have confirmed that Catherine is put in the internal area, Spanier's interpretation regards her condition as autonomic. Her main principle is to take the weakness of Catherine for the strength. Specifically, Spanier emphasizes the fundamental difference between men and women, and importantly, suggests that Frederic and Catherine differ in what they are acquainted with: "if Frederic knows the physical landscape . . . Catherine knows the emotional territory" (139). In her argument, Spanier draws attention to the psychological aspect of Catherine because women would be underestimated at the time of war, when the physical ability matters. At first glance, this principle seems to solve the problem. Catherine is not a spineless woman any more because her devotion is not necessarily taken as the weakness but as the strength: it is regarded as a form of love.

This reading, however, presents another problem because the assessment is done only within the gendered area which has been prescribed for Catherine. To put it another way, the practice of the re-estimation only reinforces the gender structure because it essentializes Catherine's gender role and excludes other possibilities. Actually, Spanier points out the inevitability of Catherine's role in the nursing and the following loving relationship with Frederic. At one point, she maintains that Catherine should excel in a certain game, as some of Hemingway's characters
do, such as the bullfight or the boxing match. Catherine's game, according to Spanier, is "love," which the critic defines as "the only one a woman could play." As a matter of fact, in this statement Spanier underlies the basic connection between Catherine and her role, referring to her as "Nurse Barkley" (140).

This argument of Spanier definitely reveals Catherine's difficult circumstances. We have observed that she focuses on Catherine's psyche. It is actually a paradoxical word: on the one hand, it is meant to build an equal relationship with the male, Frederic, who represents the physicality, but on the other hand, it reveals the essential failure to exclude the image of the inwardness. This confirmation, in consequence, starts my argument.

In bringing forward the question of gender, I adopt an idea of the wound. I consider it plays an important role in the construction of the gender identity. More specifically, the gender identification is ultimately achieved through the experience of being wounded. As a result, the idea of the wound will recognize more plainly the way the gender disparity is made. And, ultimately, I expect that a clear knowledge on the process of being gendered will let us be aware of the scene where the arrangement of the characters' gender is displaced. Yet, presently, I only intend to monitor the gender mechanism through the effects of the wound.

Firstly, we look over Frederic's wound. He gets it during the course of his military activities. Its reward is, apart from a decoration for his bravery, the awakening feeling that he is somewhat initiated by the wound. Concerning the correlation between the wound and its effects, I refer to the definition established by Debra Moddelmog: "In Hemingway's fiction, then, the wound marks a body as white, male, masculine, and heterosexual" (Moddelmog 129). Actually, the fact that Frederic gets wounded during the execution of his role proves his observance of the role, and consequently, he would be back to the duty with his thought more deeply involved in his gender role. This is the way his identity is established by the wound. Subsequently, we will look into the case of Catherine.

As noted earlier, the full establishment of the gender identity is achieved through the event of getting wounded. Yet it cannot be applied to Catherine because the gender role in which Catherine is engaged would not let her tread men's outer field, and therefore, there is little possibility that she is gendered by the bodily mark. So we have to examine the way Catherine is governed by the gender mechanism.
As to the formation of Catherine's identity, however, I also expect the responsibility of the wound as is the case of Frederic, yet this time, I recognize that it is done in another way. In exploring the way Catherine's identity is formed, I take advantage of Spanier's model which observes Frederic's physicality and Catherine's psyche. Now that we have seen how Frederic becomes physically oriented by the bodily wound, the way she is gendered would be comprehensible. I draw attention to her sentiment, which consequently makes Catherine's wound tangible: the one imprinted on the mind.

The implication of Catherine's wound could be seen at the earlier stage of the novel. It might strike the reader that some similarity is observable between the scene and the later one, in which Frederic is being recuperated from the injury in his leg: both of them hold a stick. Whereas it is quite understandable that Frederic uses it, taking into consideration the hardship of the wound, it is suggestive that Catherine has the one. It allows a further reading because she does not have any physical disability.

Catherine carries "a thin rattan stick" (18). She tells Frederic that it originally belongs to her fiancé and the owner was killed in the war. Considering the elemental role of a stick, it seems that Catherine needs it, but not in the way Frederic does: she is recovering from the loss of her fiancé. To put it another way, while Frederic suffers from a physical bruise, she has a psychological one.

Thus the psychological wound is presented as a possible factor for the foundation of Catherine's gender. And since the argument has reviewed the relation between the wound and its effects on the gender consciousness, my immediate concern is concentrated on the consequences of her wound to her gender consciousness. As has been shown, her emotional hurt derives from the lover's death, for whom she might have waited at a hospital, thinking that he would come with "a saber cut." However, he was not injured in that way but blown "to bits" (19). Accordingly, she is left with the psychological bruise and it makes her fancy that the lover would be back some time. Indeed, at first, she takes Frederic for the dead lover, which is why she lets Frederic do whatever he wants.

Therefore, it is plain that the psychological injury makes Catherine stay in a daydream and keeps her locked up at the hospital, waiting in vain. It is observable that Catherine's gender role is intensified by the wound on the mind: she is entirely
bounded by the gender system and confined in the prescribed area. And thus far we have confirmed the process in which Frederic and Catherine are marked respectively by two kinds of the wound, which defines their gender. The physical/outer wound lets Frederic out to the outer field and the psychological/inner one leaves Catherine in the inner area. It is the way those wounds function as the gender marks. Then the next question arises whether or not there could be seen any possibility which suggests the gender disruption. This is the case we will explore in the next chapter.

Chapter II. Aspects of Gender Crossings

In the previous chapter, we have observed the workings of the wound in the formation of the characters' gender identities. Although their gender consciousness is enforced by the wound because it engages more powerfully them in the roles, in this chapter, my argument begins by calling into question the consistency of their gender identities. In other words, I suggest that their gender undergoes the transformation. In spite of the fact that the inner/outer wound functions to let Frederic go to the outward field and Catherine into the inward one, this chapter will recognize that the arrangement of their fields is changed. As a starting point of this argument, I will skip to the last chapter of the novel because the ending provides a foundation of this discussion. And then returning to the earlier chapters, I will re-read the novel which is now placed under the possibility of another reading and examine in detail what those descriptions could speak of about the matter.

In the famous and troublesome ending, Catherine, after being operated on for the childbirth, dies and leaves Frederic, who vacantly gazes upon her. This ending, seen from the standpoint of the wound, prepares the opposite seats for both Catherine and Frederic, that is to say, Catherine gets the outer injury and Frederic is left with the inner one. Let us look into the case.

When the reader sees that Frederic is left alone, standing and looking at Catherine at the end of the novel, one would be reminded that the situation is where Catherine has once been: she has faced with the death of her fiancé. Considering the fact that her inner wound was caused by her fiancé's death, the reader does not fail to grasp the consequences of Frederic's present circumstances.
On the contrary, when the reader studies the scene in which Catherine is dying, no one would miss the mark on her: a Caesarean delivery leaves an unmistakable scar on her belly.

This reading of the ending on the basis of the wound reveals that both characters get the other wound respectively: Catherine’s physical injury and Frederic’s psychological bruise. Nevertheless, I would not claim that the gender disparity is resolved now, saying that their gender is switched. It is a mere foothold to develop my following argument. Superficially, it is indeed taken as an exchange of their wounds. So what I have to do is to see if the novel supports this reading. Consequently, the first step to take is to get to the point where the structure of their gender identities begins to be destabilized.

In observing the way their wounds are exchanged, I place the pregnancy of Catherine at the heart of my argument because her pregnancy marks a turning point in the plot of the novel. It is announced about in the half point of the novel and subsequently both Frederic and Catherine appear different from what they have been. And I look over the latter part of the novel taking into consideration the approaching exchange. Since the novel has some ambiguities in its detail points, a close interpretation of them will reconstruct the novel in the context of my argument. First of all, I consider a sequence of events which occurs when Frederic returns to the front from the hospital.

Frederic is given a new order, the retreat. The retreat is a full-scale military operation which Frederic has never experienced. In the retreat, the main road is jammed and stalled with other cars and the mules, and his group of drivers decides to take side-roads, most of which go blind. And finally they have to abandon the cars because they get stuck in a muddy road. The series of these incidents, when translated in terms of gender, figure largely.

In this reading, I look on the car as the representation of the maleness because it is the practical device used in the outward field. In consequence, I expect that the argument about gender unfolds with the concept of mobility. In verifying this idea as to the correlation between the mobility and the question of gender, I reckon that Moddelmog provides a useful perspective: “Mobility, one of the distinguishing components of critical and popular constructions of Hemingway . . . this mobility is also a constituent element of maleness, heterosexuality, and the ‘able’
body" (100). Though she uses the term in broader sense like traveling abroad, here I restrict its use to a more fundamental level. Accordingly, the maleness of Frederic is maintained by steering cars. Then it has to be considered what the significance of the successive absurdities is, which ends up in the complete abandonment of his car.

First of all, the word retreat suggests the grave change regarding Frederic's direction. Literally, it is the withdrawal from the front to the backward. As a matter of fact, the main road no longer carries him, and therefore, he relies on the "secondary roads" (181). The association showed here between the regression and the secondary roads denotes the gender disparity in light of the spatial images: if the chief road leads to the outer field, the minor ones to the inner area. Significantly, in consequence, his mobility is not admitted into the inside. The muddy road catches the car and sinks it up to the differential gear, which eventually disables it. Thus all the incidents, with the change of the direction, the suggestion of the inner realm and the desertion of mobility, can be taken as the disintegration of the gender identity of Frederic.

Yet the dominant gender norm still keeps its hand on his gender consciousness because the gender mark is still engraved on his body and gives him the outward direction. As has been seen in the preceding chapter, it is the crucial factor for deciding his gender awareness. Nevertheless, along with the incidents which melt some of his maleness away, his wound is also called into question. The indication is shown in the early stage of the novel.

At one scene, Frederic is brought to a dressing station because of his wound, yet suddenly he is dropped on the ground. It is because a shell fell close and the bearers are frightened. Frederic gets angry and one of the bearers replies: "It was because we were scared" (53). It testifies that the victim of the attack could be left not only with the visible wound but also with the terror, that is, one is not only scarred but also scared. Relatedly, just before the retreat is announced, a comrade of Frederic tells him that "I don't suppose they are so effective," speaking of the attack, and he asserts: "But they scare me... What's the use of not being wounded if they scare you to death?" (163). Thus the meaning of the outer wound wobbles. And, bearing in mind the fact that the scare differs with the scar in the realm on which the effects of the attack fall, the increasing importance of the former
denotes his inclination to the invisible, that is, inner wound. In consequence, the transformation of his gender identity eventually results in Frederic's symbolic death. Indeed, he is dead, at least on paper.

Crossing across a bridge on foot, Frederic is suddenly grabbed around the neck and taken to a field by a river. They are the battle police. He finds other people who are also taken there like him and sees one of them brought to the river and shot. And soon after that, another is done in the same way. Before his turn comes around, he takes a chance, runs and plunges into the river. After he gets on the ground, he sneaks into a gondola to get to Catherine. Though he thinks of the war, it is no more his business: “it was not my show any more” (206). This is indeed the end of his role in the war activities and he thinks he would be reported to be dead: “Piani [his comrade] would tell them they shot me” and thinks that his family or acquaintances would also hear that Frederic is “[d]ead from wounds and other causes” (206). Thus the latter part of the novel, which starts with the announcement of the pregnancy of Catherine, sees the symbolic death of Frederic. It could be regarded as the breakdown of his maleness, yet the argument is still half-way. Successively, we will find that Catherine experiences the change in the recognition of her gender.

Whereas the path of Frederic tends to go inward, we will recognize that Catherine undertakes his masculine role: Frederic leaves the army and tries to escape arrest but Catherine faces the battlefront, instead. It is an implied front, though. And, of the two, only Catherine notices it. That is when she and Frederic are finally going to a hotel to rest after the exhausting escape: she smells out the resemblance between their present situation and the previous one they have experienced. She remembers that at the time they took a hotel near the station of Milan to enjoy their time together before Frederic is to set out for the front again. Catherine sends him off there. The similarity of the scenes makes her say: “I'm not just driving down to the stazione in Milan to see you off?” (253).

This is certainly an implicit introduction to the sense of the war, but this time, it is the beginning of Catherine's war. In this light, the fact of her pregnancy well accounts for the cause of this war. Indeed, the author correlates the pregnancy with the war. It is in the first chapter of the novel where the protagonist narrates. Frederic thinks that the rifles under the cape make the soldiers look “as though
they were six months gone with child” (4).

In addition to the indication that Catherine faces the masculine role, I suggest that her ability to the outer field is shown: the mobility. When Frederic finally abandons the army and goes back to Catherine, he finds that she is not there: he is told that “[s]he is away” (213). This fact is profitable in the sense that it contrasts with the incident in which Frederic loses the means of his mobility. She begins to own some mobile ability, and moreover, the awareness of Catherine that she is in charge of the mobility would be intensified at the scene of their escape.

Catherine and Frederic are on a boat. Although she asks Frederic to let her hold the oars, for a while Frederic rows the boat by himself to Switzerland because the sea is quite rough. Yet, being exhausted, he lets Catherine steer the boat. Meanwhile, he holds an umbrella. In this escape, the fact that Catherine pulls the oars instead of Frederic proves her acquisition of the mobility. Yet, it carries a deeper significance. It is the reason why Fredric is not willing to pass the oars to Catherine and why she so earnestly wants to grab them. It is because the rowing might get her wounded. Indeed, Frederic has his hand “blistered raw” (253). Though Catherine does not actually get injured or wounded here, her thought of approaching to it is considered as her challenge to the gender norm.

Her desire to perform the masculine role might reach its height when she lies on the bed for the delivery. She has her face covered with the mask which supplies her with the gas for mitigating the pain. Reading the mask according to the context of the male gender, since the novel describes a gas mask in the scenes of the war, it is as though she imagines herself as a soldier at the front.

The labor pains repeatedly come and go and Catherine feels some excitement over them: “The pains came quite regularly, then slackened off. Catherine was very excited” (278). It gives the reader the impression that the inevitable point of the novel is approaching. Eventually a doctor advises a Caesarean delivery, which consequently leaves a “very long” incision (287). As a result, she gives birth to a boy who is already dead and she, with the body injured, passes away.

Thus we have seen the track of the exchange of the wounds. And Frederic’s abandonment of his role and Catherine’s undertaking of the male role actually exhibit gender-crossings. Subsequently, to examine this matter further, the next chapter inspects her outer wound.
Chapter III. The Destination of Gender

This chapter investigates what is proposed in the previous chapter: the examination of the physical injury on Catherine. The argument will be centered on the assessment of its effects on Frederic's or Catherine's gender.

As has been shown, Catherine's outer wound results in the exchange of the wound, whose consequences are expected to be the transformation of the two characters' gender identities. Frederic faces the disintegration of his identity while Catherine witnesses the formation of the alternative one. And if this is the case, it can be said that the gender subversion has been fulfilled. As to this observation, Frederic's remark about the childbirth is beneficial.

At one scene of the novel he quarrels with a head nurse over the hardship of his suffering and he claims that it is a peculiarity of men, saying that its sensation is what "few women have ever experienced." His gender consciousness is maintained by the physical torment, rejecting the possibility that the female could go through it. However, he compares his circumstances to women's certain condition: the delivery. He tries to make the nurse understand what he is going through but asserts that she would not grasp that because "she had never experienced childbirth" (130).

His theory reversely proves that a woman could get access to the equivalent of his pain through the childbirth, and as a consequence, supports the idea that Catherine's experience of the delivery and the following wound on the belly are certainly taken as the dawn of her another identity: she is marked as a male.

Nevertheless, it is not the final conclusion this thesis supports. Taking into consideration the fact that my argument considers that the physical wound organizes the male gender identity and forms the gender consciousness, Catherine's access to it seems to disrupt its consistency: she invalidates the wound as a gender mark and deconstructs the male identity, rather to construct her new identity on the scar. Actually, the novel does not always depict the consistent effects of the wound but sometimes reveals its incoherent quality. What Catherine has done is to increase its incoherency. In the following argument, I observe two contradictory workings of the wound. First, I find out that the effects of the wound shape the irregular forms of consciousness among the wounded.
At one scene, Frederic goes to the horse racing with some friends. Among them are a boy named Crowell and an old man, Mr. Meyers. The latter wins most of the games; however, he dislikes to share the information, though he “hated less to tell Crowell” a tip of races because “the Crowell’s eyes had been hurt.” And the details are explained more clearly in light of the wound: “Meyers had trouble with his eyes and so he liked Crowell” (115). It is obvious that their association is based on the fact that they are both wounded. And importantly, the consciousness is maintained by excluding a woman: the old man tells the boy not to leak anything to Mrs. Meyers, his wife. This is our brief review, and so far, our observation on this case shows nothing new about the wound’s effects: the tie between the males based on the wound and its accompanying elimination of the female.

The wound, however, reveals the multiplicity in its effects at the same time, that is, Frederic does not belong to the community of the wounded: “I [Frederic] hated to ask him [Mr. Meyers] because sometimes he didn’t answer” (115). It is strange considering the fact that Frederic is also wounded. Yet when we remember that Frederic’s eyes are undamaged, it strikes us that the wound does not always establish the organized relation among its victims. The wound not only differentiates males from females but also makes differences among the males. In other words, whereas the outer wound builds the foundation for Frederic’s gender, it also causes the disassociation of his gender identity, demonstrating that the male gender is not steady or stable but contains miscellaneous dimensions.

This first contradiction threatens the idea that the outer wound produces the consistent gender identity for Frederic. Moreover, the second contradiction comes to be exposed. In addition to the inconsistency in its effects, I will observe the basic trouble of the idea of the wound. Though this thesis has been grounded on the reciprocal interaction between the wound and the gender identity, the novel also suggests their degenerative interrelation. In other words, the wound plays an ambivalent role: the wound not only reinforces Frederic’s gender consciousness but also demoralizes him. His identity is endangered by the anxiety aroused by the wound that he is robbed of the flawless body. Although the experience of being wounded is a qualified condition for the male gender, it reversely becomes a threat to him. This ambivalence of Frederic’s wound can be seen more specifically in terms of mobility.
Although he undergoes the operation on his knee and it works, it would not appease his anxiety. Rather, it increases his apprehension. He thinks that it is no longer his leg and says that it is the doctor's: "It was his knee all right. The other knee was mine. Doctors did things to you and then it was not your body any more." Actually, his knee is still "stiff," which indicates that, though he once lost his mobility earlier which is represented by the abandonment of the vehicle, his last mobility is now fading away: an ability to walk on his own legs (205). And what is important here is that the loss of his mobility happened as the direct result of his wound. Considering the fact that possession of mobility testifies Frederic's maleness, it seems paradoxical that he is deprived of his mobility by the wound which must have marked him as a male.

Thus the contradictory functions of the wound are presented: the multiple and the ambivalent effects. Then we go back to the examination of Catherine's physical wound. Certainly, her injury firmly confronts Frederic with the bitter reality that the scar ceases to be the reliable source for the male identity because women's wound is not prescribed by the gender norm. Thus, bearing in mind that Catherine's injury serves to disorganize the gender structure imprinted in the bodily wound, we have to consider whether or not it eventually settles the gender disparity.

We have seen the exceptional performances of Catherine; however, there remains the likelihood that her attempt at the realization of the fleshly wound might be wasted in vain. It is sure that her wound has a great impact on Frederic's gender because she is not supposed to get injured, yet if her scar possibly turns out to be biased by the gender norm, its significance would be nullified. Therefore, its validity has to be reviewed. In this exploration, I am concerned with the way she gets scarred.

When we survey Catherine's scar from a comprehensive viewpoint, we come to know that her wound has problems: her injury as a result of the delivery tends to justify the pregnancy as women's inherent potentiality for the fulfillment of the gender subversion. Indeed, it presupposes that a woman has to be impregnable and inevitably there should be a man to impregnate her: it is implicitly based on the idea that a woman is insufficient herself but would be completed with the probability for the subversion when she has an intercourse with a man. Therefore, at
least in its beginning, her attempt to disrupt the gender norm is not free of the gender disparity. Then, we have to observe what the case of its final outcome is.

Catherine is caught between the risks and rewards of being pregnant: the acceptance of the disparity and the expectation for the scar. And we can see her dreadful dilemma in her delivery which is followed by the death of both Catherine and the baby. Therefore, as to the question of the gender disparity, the consequences of her troublemaking scar are restricted by the controversial birthing. In this examination, I suggest that Catherine’s dilemma is embodied in the death of the child. In fact, rather than the tragic death of Catherine which tends to lead to emotional quarrels among the readers, the detailed description of the stillbirth speaks silently but more eloquently of Catherine’s plight.

First of all, I regard the baby as the other self of Catherine. The significant name “young Catherine” that is given to the baby denotes Catherine’s expectation: if the Caesarean scar subverts both Catherine’s and Frederic’s gender, the new-born baby who is taken out from there will cease to produce the old gender model (260). Further, when we consider this observation in light of the gender areas, it reveals another expectation of Catherine: the process in which the child is brought out to the outer world is directly connected with her desire to get out of her gendered area.

If we keep in mind this premise that the child is a represented image of Catherine, the way the baby passes away shows us the failure of her attempt: it turns out that the baby dies because “[t]he cord was caught around his neck” and it “was choked all that time.” Consequently, it becomes known that the baby never starts breathing in the outside sphere: “He [the child] had never been alive. Except in Catherine” (289). At the end of the novel, in this way, Catherine is bitterly inflicted with the impossibility of living outside of the prescribed area, which is represented by the reality that the baby can only exist in the inward area. Accordingly, it attests the fact that the gender disparity remains.

So far I have carried out the assessment of Catherine’s wound and we are reaching the conclusion that the gender subversion has not been fulfilled. At the end of my analysis, however, I close my argument by recognizing the productive dimension of the scar running on the belly of Catherine: I observe its restricted influence on Frederic’s consciousness. Firstly, I confirm the way Frederic sees his physical
injury.

At one point, his hands are found to be “both blistered raw” from rowing a boat and Catherine compassionately tries to get hold of them, yet he rejects the attendance: “Don’t touch them” (253-54). It is clear that his gender consciousness follows the old gender model: the recognition of the maleness in the wound and the elimination of females. On the contrary, when Catherine undergoes the operation, Frederic’s anxiety lingers around her wound. He feels glad to see the wound sewed up by the doctor and is obsessed with the thought of making it less noticeable. He says to the doctor “[t]he incision looked very long” a little worriedly and asks if it would be indiscernible: “Will that scar flatten out?” (287-78). He may think that when the scar is closed, the disruption caused by it would be settled. Nevertheless, at the deathbed, when Frederic takes her hand Catherine lets him know that the disorder of the gender marking does not subside, telling him to let go of her hand: “Don’t touch me” (292). Catherine obviously imitates what Frederic has told her earlier, though she subsequently lets him touch her. As to its effects on Frederic, we have to observe the ending of the novel, in which Frederic leaves Catherine.

The novel comes to an end in a restrained way. It does not step in Frederic’s sentiment but objectively informs us that he stays with Catherine’s body in a closed room for a while and then leaves for the hotel in the rain. Actually, the novel does not mention the condition of his gender: he might get back to the war, get wounded and show his maleness, or he comes to accept another form of gender.

In studying his eventual gender consciousness, I compare Frederic with a man who appears in another work by the same author. It is a short story named “Indian Camp.” I choose it because it has much in common with A Farewell to Arms, and moreover, because I think it would give us a further clue to understanding the novel. The story depicts a pregnant woman and her husband in a shanty. Significantly, the husband is wounded in the foot. The woman subsequently undergoes a Caesarean operation and, after she is operated on, her husband is found to be dead. He kills himself by cutting his own throat.

The story is useful in the sense that it minutely describes the effects of the Caesarean operation on males. Indeed, the operation accounts for the cause of the husband's suicide: he is mentioned as one of those who are “the worst sufferers” of the childbirth, and afterwards, a doctor says that the man commits suicide
because “he couldn’t stand things” (*In Our Time* 18-19).

So far, the story shows a common feature or two with the novel: a man’s wound in his leg and the practice of a Caesarean operation. Accordingly, if we read the story in the context of the novel, the husband’s suffering becomes understandable: the gender mark represented by the physical injury would be analogously accessible to women through the labor pains and threatens male identities. Moreover, if the husband’s suffering takes place on the gender level and if it endangers his identity, we can comparably speculate Frederic’s fate, in turn, from the story. Therefore, first of all, I examine if the story correlates the childbirth with the question of gender. In exploring this issue, I focus on the role of the woman’s scream because it has an influential effect on men in the story.

The scream of the agonizing woman works on men: they are “out of range of the noise she made” (16). Thus the shanty is full of old women and holds no men but the husband, who is doomed to die. The protagonist, a young boy, of the story is worried about the scream and asks his father, who is the doctor, to stop it. The doctor says he cannot do it because it requires the anesthetic, which he does not have. Although the reader cannot know the way the husband suffers from her scream, its subversive role would be visible when we see that the husband conversely loses his voice: “His throat had been cut from ear to ear” (18).

Thus the story tells us the subversive effect of the Caesarean birthing and the consequent fate of the husband. The following question is what the case of Frederic is. In arguing this point, we have to be aware of the difference between the story and the novel: it is remarkable that Catherine is given the anesthetic. Although it is used for lessening her pains, it secretly smothers her and suppresses her declaration by putting the gas mask on her face. Hence, compared with the husband in “Indian Camp,” Frederic suffers less. The latter says: “Thanks God for gas, anyway. What must it have been like before there were anaesthetics?” (383). In addition, Frederic consequently abandons the idea which he once entertains that he wishes to have been choked, unlike the husband in the short story.

My thesis comes to recognize the eventual influence exerted on him. Even though Frederic manages the disturbing noise of Catherine, he does not evade the troubling mark on her. When he is alone with Catherine after she passes away, he “turn[s] off the light.” The darkness of the room makes her figure indiscernible.
His thought is clear: he intends to veil Catherine's injury, making her look like "a statue." Though, in the end he does not see any sense in the cover-up and admits that "it wasn't any good" (293). The novel's ending certainly leaves the ambiguity as to Frederic's destination. Yet when we read it in light of the question of gender, the novel's title might convince us. Since Frederic's gender has been established by his outer wound, his farewell to arms signifies the eventual transfiguration of his gender identity: it is the valediction to the bleeding wound.

Conclusion

Thus my thesis, which has begun by the premise that the characters' gender is founded by the wound, arrives at the conclusion that it is eventually destabilized by the wound itself. Importantly, Catherine's role is indispensable for this destabilizing process: her bleeding wound decisively testifies the wreckage of the wound's significance, showing that the wound will never produce the exclusive, steady identity for the male now that a woman gets it. It is an imperfect declaration of Catherine, though, because her attitudes for deconstructing their gender contradictorily essentialize the childbirth as women's role: only impregnable women can cause the gender subversion. However, our confirmation of its constructive aspect was a beginning of a more developed consciousness of women's performances. Accordingly, the task of my forthcoming research will be concentrated on the verification of women's troubling roles against the gender norm, covering the author's other works. And, in that research, I will be concerned with the way the female characters make themselves heard, known and understood.

Especially, a further study will begin with our recognition of women's disturbing role in their verbal expressions. Its significance would be proved if we remember the women I reviewed in my argument: Catherine and the pregnant woman in "Indian Camp." Indeed, they only have an unexpressed form of articulation. Considering my premise that the baby is Catherine's alternative self, the fact that it is strangled to death signifies that she is denied a word, though she troubles Frederic's gender by displaying her subversive wound. Meanwhile, the pregnant woman, though her shrieking noise troubles the men to a great degree and keeps them away, has no specific words: she just shouts. And, significantly, we would not
hear her because her words are not written down but we are told by the mouth of the male characters that the woman is shouting. In either case, the reader is well kept away from the women’s utterance; however, at least their situations testify the fact that the women are firmly suppressed.

When we consider these circumstances of the women, we inevitably confront the presence of the male author. Consequently, the reading of the characters’ gender roles lead to Hemingway’s own gender: he may be inclined to smother female characters if covertly or not; nevertheless, they narrowly escape and catch the author off his guard. Thus the behaviors of his female characters are the representations of his own fear, anxiety and, though it seems contradictory, expectations toward his own gender.

Therefore, my following work will be devoted to recognize those representations, however faint they are. Accordingly, when Hemingway really allows a woman to voice what breaks down the old gender model, I expect that we shall hear her own articulation together with the collapsing sound of his gender identity.

Works Cited


The Hidden Role of the Heroine

in

A Farewell to Arms

Akira Yokoyama

Abstract

A novel would be called a tragedy when it ends up with a character's death. It is because of the suffering the bereaved would undergo. The loss of the beloved casts a long shadow over the future of a main character, with whom the readers would identify themselves.

The term tragedy, however, tends to camouflage the trouble which the novel contains. More specifically, the deceased is made use of completing the novel and for intensifying its effects. And particularly, in developing my argument, I am mainly concerned with the gender disparity. It is seen in such works as a result in a woman's death. Indeed, even when the woman dies in a cruel situation, her passing is understood as a required condition for the novel's achievement: the woman's dignity as a person is overshadowed by the novel's importance as a literary work.

In Ernest Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms, the heroine ultimately meets her death. The quarrel over the novel is that she seems quite submissive to the hero and dies in vain. Nevertheless, my thesis focuses on the multiple aspects of the heroine's death. In exploring this angle, it is necessary to see the way a character's
gender is constructed, and subsequently, see whether or not his or her gender is possibly transformed by some events. In these ways, I demonstrate that, though the male character maintains his masculine gender by keeping the female character away, he eventually faces trouble by her departure.