

Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*: An Exploration of American Exceptionalism

Hossein Zamani Alavijeh

Faculty of Literature and Humanities, English department, Kharazmi University, Iran

Email: hzamani_alavijeh@yahoo.com

Received: 16/12/2023

Accepted: 24/02/2024

Published: 01/03/2024

Volume: 5 Issue: 2

How to cite this paper: Zamani Alavijeh, H. (2024). Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*: An Exploration of American Exceptionalism. *Journal of Critical Studies in Language and Literature*, 5(2), 43-48

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46809/jcsll.v5i2.258>

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Abstract

The present paper aims to posit that in his acclaimed novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, Ernst Hemingway employs an anti-war framework strategically to weave a deeper narrative that underscores an underlying reverence for America and dissects key passages, character interactions, and thematic elements to unveil the subtle patriotic undertones embedded within the narrative. By scrutinizing the protagonist's interactions, motivations, and evolving perspectives, the article unravels the intricate relationship between character's experiences and the novel's latent celebration of American exceptionalism. While the novel is often regarded as a poignant portrayal of the disillusionment arising from the First World War, the analysis contends that beneath its anti-war veneer lies a subtler narrative thread which aims to subtly idolize America and construct a complex commentary on American identity. By challenging conventional readings of *A Farewell to Arms*, this article seeks to prompt a reconsideration of the novel's thematic complexities and invites scholars to explore the interplay between war narratives and nationalistic undercurrents within the context of American literature.

Keywords: American Exceptionalism, Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, American Identity, War

1. Introduction

The seeds of American exceptionalism could be traced back to the early colonial period, where Puritan settlers saw their journey to the New World as a divine mission and viewed their journey to their budding communities as a "City upon a Hill" or a beacon of moral and religious virtue. No doubt, Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, published in 1830s, stands as a seminal work that significantly contributes to the discourse of American exceptionalism. He recognizes the pervasive equality in American society, describing it as a fundamental and enduring force shaping the nation's institutions and culture. According to him, the absence of an entrenched aristocracy gives rise to a sense of egalitarianism that permeates various aspects of American life. Besides, he observes a unique form of individualism in the United States and, emphasizing the pursuit of self-interest within the context of a strong communal ethos, he notes the prevalence of voluntary associations and civic engagement as essential mechanisms for mitigating the potential drawbacks of excessive individualism and fostering a sense of shared responsibility in that country. He also accentuates the profound influence of Christianity on American mores and asserts that religious beliefs contribute to the moral foundation of democratic institutions and serve as a cohesive force within that society:

So the situation of the Americans is entirely exceptional, and it may be believed that no democratic people will ever be put in the same situation... So let us stop seeing all democratic nations with the face of the American people, and let us try finally to consider them with their own features. (Tocqueville, 2012, pp. 768-9)

This notion of a chosen people kept resonating through the American Revolution, with the belief that the new republic was a unique experiment in self-governance. The revolutionary generation, inspired by Enlightenment ideals and a fervent commitment to principles of liberty, individual rights, and representative government, forged a revolutionary consciousness that set the stage for the exceptionalist discourse and the Declaration of Independence, crafted by Thomas Jefferson, became a seminal document encapsulating that exceptionalist spirit. The existing fervour sparked a sense of mission - a belief that the American experiment had global significance- and the Constitution of 1787, which represented an innovative blend of federalism, checks and balances, and a Bill of Rights, contributed to the exceptionalist narrative by showcasing a strong adherence to democratic governance and protection of individual liberties. It should be noted, however, that while the revolutionary era embodied a spirit of egalitarianism and democratic aspirations, it also grappled with contradictions such as slavery and the treatment of indigenous peoples which prompted ongoing debates about the true nature and scope of American exceptionalism.

During the 19th century, the notion found expression in the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, which asserted that the expansion of the United States across the continent was not only inevitable but divinely ordained and framed territorial acquisitions and westward expansion as a fulfilment of the nation's destiny. Moreover, as the United States transformed into an industrial and economic powerhouse, the nation's emergence on the global stage led to a sense of moral responsibility and a belief in spreading American ideals abroad. In the same vein, the World wars positioned America as a defender of freedom and democracy and the later ideological struggle with communism portrayed the country as a bastion of liberty against totalitarian threats.

Interestingly, in April 2009, when questioned by a journalist in Strasbourg, U.S. President Barack Obama framed his belief in American exceptionalism by acknowledging that other nations, such as the British and the Greeks, similarly hold convictions in their own exceptionalism and emphasized that, despite America's unique role in global leadership, effective problem-solving necessitates collaborative partnerships due to the interconnected nature of contemporary challenges (Sharma & Gielen, 2013, pp.34-5). Mitt Romney (2010) accused Obama of a lack of genuine belief in American exceptionalism and Former Arkansas Governor, Mike Huckabee, asserted that his worldview significantly deviated from his predecessors and characterized him as more of a globalist than an advocate for American interests. Huckabee argued that denying American Exceptionalism equates to rejecting the essence of the nation (Stone & Kuznick, 2013). On September 10, 2013, however, Obama, addressing the Syria crisis, rectified or clarified his perspective on American Exceptionalism. He said that

[...] however, when, with modest effort and risk, we can stop children from being gassed to death, and thereby make our kids safer over the long run, I believe we should act.... That is what makes America different. That is what makes us exceptional. (Tumulty, 2013)

It should not be forgotten that the idea that the United States possesses unique qualities, a distinct destiny, or a moral mission does serve as a thematic undercurrent which has reverberated in various forms within American literature thus far. Works of early American literature, shaped by Puritan beliefs, such as John Winthrop's *A Model of Christian Charity*, reflect a sense of divine mission and convey a covenantal vision of America as a "City upon a Hill" and transcendentalist writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau all emphasized a national individualism, self-reliance, and a spiritual connection to nature which shaped a distinctly American philosophy. As the nation expanded westward, literature reflected the ideology of Manifest Destiny and writers such as James Fenimore Cooper and Walt Whitman celebrated the American spirit in the face of territorial expansion. On the other side of the coin, there were also many writers who vehemently questioned the American claim of exceptionality and critiqued societal norms and erosion of American ideals. They challenged the notion of inherent virtuosity, addressed racial discrimination and blamed the consumer culture in their societies. Realist and naturalist writers such as Mark Twain and Stephen Crane, writers of the Harlem Renaissance such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neal Hurston, The Beat Generation writers such as Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg and postmodern writers such as Don DeLillo and Thomas Pynchon serve only as few examples.

Amid great American writers who have set pen to paper so far, Ernst Hemingway is undoubtedly a towering figure whose sparse and direct prose style, characterized by short sentences, vivid imagery, and understated emotion, has had a lasting influence on generations of writers who have sought to emulate his clarity and precision. Beyond his stylistic innovations, Hemingway's characters and themes of war, love, loss, masculinity, and the struggle for meaning in a chaotic world speaks to universal truths that transcend time and place. In my perspective, as a writer who captured the essence of American experience in the 20th century, his themes resonate deeply with the ideals of American exceptionalism and his works have left a lasting legacy that continue to shape our understanding of America's status in the world. His *A Farewell to Arms*, as I have noticed, could be exemplified as a case in point and a compelling evidence to demonstrate his key role in shaping the exceptionalist discourse within American literature.

Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, beneath the veneer of its anti-war gesture which, in my opinion, serves only as a peripheral backdrop reveals a deeper message which takes centre stage all through the novel. That is America and American identity. However, what he does is not merely a descriptive or analytical presentation of America and American identity. He does transcend this to bestow upon these themes a resounding eminence even by disregarding and sometimes unabashedly evoking an air of disdain for all that is non-American. In my assessment, the permeation of this underlying thematic element, far from being an unconscious occurrence, is a completely intentional act on the part of Hemingway which clearly testifies his

adherence to a minimalistic style to writing. In his early career as a journalist, he was compelled to concentrate his reports mainly on immediate incidents without ever providing an extensive context or an interpretive analysis and he, in his transition into the realm of writing, maintained the same minimalistic style. He, emphasizing superficial elements and refraining from overtly addressing underlying themes, contended that the major elements within a text should not lie readily apparent on its surface, but should rather emanate implicitly. As Carlos Baker (1972), his biographer, pointed out Hemingway learned "how to get the most from the least, how to prune language and avoid waste motion, how to multiply intensities, and how to tell nothing but the truth in a way that allowed for telling more than the truth" (p. 117). This writing technique coined by Hemingway known as "iceberg theory" is well explained by Jenna Blum (2013):

Hemingway said that only the tip of the iceberg showed in fiction—your reader will see only what is above the water—but the knowledge that you have about your character that never makes it into the story acts as the bulk of the iceberg. And that is what gives your story weight and gravitas. (11:25)

I strongly believe the themes of war and love, extensively deliberated upon as the main themes of this novel, reside on the tip of the iceberg and merely scratch the surface of a much larger underlying concept. In fact, the crux of the narrative and what lies in the bulk of the iceberg in this novel is the superiority of America and American identity. According to Mark Morrison (2006),

As America increasingly asserted itself on the world stage – becoming an imperial power at the turn of the century, reluctantly but successfully entering World War I, and grappling with its relationship to the League of Nations after the war – nationalism and understandings of the arts' relationship to national identity metamorphosed a number of times...The nationalistic sense that America was a special country, a new country on the verge of a major cultural renaissance, was widespread in the pre-First World War period. (pp. 12-15)

In fact, Morrison's,

[...] brief examination into the role of nationalism in the American modernist canon should suggest that as much as modernism is an international phenomenon, we do cultural history a disservice by ignoring the nationalism often at play at different moments and in different ways in the history of the modernist movement. Indeed, much of the richness of American modernism emerges from its frequent efforts to imagine the nature of an American identity. (p. 33)

As "the literary prize could be a fast track to canonization" (p. 26), one might venture to say that the bestowal of Pulitzer Prize as well as Nobel Prize upon Hemingway and inclusion of many of his works within the literary cannon are not inconsequential to his fervent devotion to the theme of America. As Terry Eagleton (1996) states,

[...] the chancy nature of literary canons, their dependence on a culturally specific frame of value, is nowadays quite widely recognized, along with the truth that certain social groups have been unjustly excluded from them. (p. 208)

The present study sheds light on the intersection of American exceptionalism with broader themes of war literature and by analysing how Hemingway's characters grapple with the harsh realities of conflict, it aims to highlight the ways in which jingoistic notions may be tested and reinforced in the crucible of war. Situating the study within the context of Hemingway's broad body of work and the historical period in which he wrote enhances our understanding of how American exceptionalism evolved and was expressed during the early 20th century.

2. Discussion

To begin with, Hemingway's utilization of the first-person narrative point of view serves as a strategic device to allow Frederic to deftly detach himself from the clutches of a European war. In my opinion, this is a novel written mainly for an American audience and this narrative choice enables Hemingway to paint a subjectively defamiliarized and mysterious portrait of the war-torn setting and Italy's natural and rural landscapes through the eyes of an American outsider. The protagonist, through the prism of his own American criteria, is able to pass positive and negative judgements upon people of various nationalities and convinces the readers to take his side. In adopting an alternative omniscient point of view, the author would be compelled to assume a detached and objective position throughout the novel which would undoubtedly jeopardize his major project.

With regard to narrative perspective, the first-person point of view is often claimed to carry with it a sense of unreliability which casts a shadow of doubt upon the veracity of the narrator's account. However, Hemingway's portrayal of Frederic as a radiant beacon of truth and strength amidst the chaos of war completely defies the so-called unreliability associated with first-person narration. Although serving as an ambulance driver in Italian Army, he does establish his military merit at the same level as an officer of high rank in the mind of the reader. He is ideally characterized as a courageous and resolute warrior with an exceptional mental acuity on the battlefield whose wisdom shines through in moments of crisis.

Frederic is characterized as a masterful war strategist who despite being a foreigner, surpasses his local Italian counterparts in understanding the geopolitical features of the region, in planning for warfare and in anticipating enemy's next moves. Beside his strategic brilliance, his emotional stability is also pictured as heroically outstanding. When wounded, he exhibits an extraordinary level of self-control and displays no signs of panic or pain at all but rather selflessly directs his concern towards the well-being of other wounded soldiers. After his failed attempt to save Passini's life, our "bloody hero" (Hemingway, 1929, p. 62) asks Gordini to take care of those much worse wounded than him. While the reader is aware of the severity of his injury, he describes his wound to the British man as "not serious" (p. 61). Also, while being sent back, he keeps asking about Gordini

and Gavuzz to make sure they are alright and repeatedly reminds them of other wounded soldiers. More interestingly, the readers promptly find the protagonist's admirable composure in stark contrast with the timidity exhibited by the two clumsy Italian carriers who drop his wounded body several times out of fear and we all unconsciously sympathize with him when he curses at them. Even when hospitalized and during his knee surgery, his severe pains rarely find an outward expression. It should be noted that Hemingway, in my opinion, purposefully amplifies the significance of his protagonist's American identity in the context of his injury scene to imbue it with a distinct sense of exceptionalism. To me, the captain doctors seem to be more impressed by the American nationality of the leading character than the gravity of his wound. Miss Van Campen aptly marks him down as a "domineering" (p. 93) character and a "privileged patient" (p. 117). However, it is essential to bear in mind that her aversion to him stems primarily from the fact that she thought "it was somewhat disgraceful that [he] was with the Italians" (p. 93). Anyway, he is the apple of Italian's eyes and it should not come as a surprise to see the insistence of George, the headwaiter of Gran Italia, on not serving strawberry wine only to his VIP guest not to leave a bad taste in his mouth. Likewise, always a spirited debate ensues as everybody vies with others to offer the superlative holiday destination to their beloved treasure. They want their esteemed guest to revel in his sojourns whether in Italy or Switzerland.

The motif of drinking weaves its way into most of Hemingway's illustrious works including this one. While the characters of this novel easily succumb to intoxication and become idiotic individuals and objects of ridicule in their drunken states, our main character, in his inebriated state, remains steadfast in his sobriety and never relinquishes his rationality. Conversely, he sometimes also astounds those around him with his sharp wit and clever retorts. He is a gentleman who unfailingly preserves the decorum. Although he is an unbeliever, he never engages in the nonsensical mockery of the priest by his friends and always treats him politely. The author seems to be quite concerned lest he might stain Frederic's reputation in the eyes of the reader and make him an object of mockery or disgrace. Even in the presence of his intimate friend Rinaldi who frequently engages in crude language, displays a lack of respect to women and exhibits a brash and impulsive demeanour, he never debases himself and acts as a wise controlling teacher who knows well how to discipline a mischievous boy. Despite Rinaldi's insistence on the affinity between Frederic's American personality and his own Italian roots, our protagonist adamantly refuses to acknowledge any sort of similarity between the two. It is natural because whenever angered by Rinaldi, he targets his friend's Italian nationality as a means of expressing his contempt.

Following the defeat of Italian Army and when faced with the imminent threat of being killed by Austrian soldiers, many soldiers succumb to fear and lose their composure. This is evident in the case of Italian soldiers who anxiously open fire on their own comrades mistaking them for the enemy and also in the case of those who choose to embrace captivity to save themselves from the prospect of certain death. In sharp contrast, Frederic emerges as a Moses and is able to remain clearly composed and displays great wisdom and courage in leading the exodus of hapless Italian soldiers to safety during their retreat. Meanwhile, he plays the role of the good Samaritan who gives the stranded ones a ride and gives alms to the poor and also the role of Joseph as the patron saint of virgins. The soldiers' trust in Frederic's American prowess has solidified his position as a saviour, cherished and unconditionally obeyed by his comrades.

Here, Hemingway recounts an epic-like tale of valour and betrayal to arouse our deepest sympathy with the American protagonist. After successfully rescuing his comrades from the front lines, he is met, upon his return, with a repulsively ungrateful reception by the silly battle police who intend to execute him for no excuse. It is abhorrent since even his grandfather would not consent to "jail a patriotic grandson who is dying that Italy may live" (p. 81). We all wonder like Frederic "how their minds worked; if they had minds and if they worked" (p. 240).

While other officers readily resign themselves to their tragic fate, our hero, defies all odds and confronts those who dare to arrest him and finally, in a twist reminiscent of Hollywood action movies, manages to save his own life and embarks on an adventurous journey towards his beloved. Hemingway's masterful storytelling evokes within readers an intense loathing for unappreciative Italians causing them to wholeheartedly align themselves with Frederic's decision to abandon a war that does not really belong to him. His escape from the Italian war is thus not seen as an act of cowardice but rather as a completely wise and rational choice.

All Italians hold a deep-rooted admiration for the patriotic spirit exhibited by Americans and envy it. They take pride in Fredric and this justifies their fervent desire to have more American soldiers join their ranks to assist their frustrating troops. Notwithstanding Frederic's status as a foreigner, he appears more concerned about the war in Italy than the disheartened Italian folk and alerts them to the dire consequences that shall befall them in the aftermath of defeat. It is noteworthy that moments before his severe injury, he valiantly ventures forth amid a relentless barrage of enemy fire to procure food for some craven drivers who refuse to lift a finger, leaving him alone to shoulder the burden alone. Upon his return although the major warns him to "wait until the shelling is over" (p. 56), he declines to heed his warning just because "they want to eat" (p. 56). After safely delivering the food, tinged with irony, he addresses them as "patriots" (p. 56). Moreover, although to his own admission, Frederic had not engaged in any acts of heroism at the scene of his injury, the fact is difficult for others to fathom and it comes as a surprise to them. It is because, for them, American identity is intertwined with honour and this even prompts his friends to try to weave a narrative of bravery for him in order to secure him a well-deserved medal. Except for Fredric, Ettore Moretti is the sole seemingly qualified and heroic warrior in the novel, of course not in action but in words. However, unlike Fredric, he is characterized as an obnoxious braggart who strongly evokes our antipathy. It is because Hemingway exercises great caution to distinguish between Fredric's genuine American identity and the Italian American identity of characters like Moretti. As the priest says he is different. He is not an Italian. He is a foreigner and a patriot. Even Moretti with that inflated opinion of himself aspires to get the opportunity to serve in the American army someday and humbly asks Fredric if there might be a favour he

could do him in this regard. In fact, he is no position to find fault with Fredric's ability in Italian language. This is he who should learn English in the hope of securing a better job for himself.

There, "everybody hates war" (p. 54) and is forced to fight. However, in this prevailing reign of terror in Italy, Italian soldiers could confide in Fredric and dare to rebuke the stupidity of their country's ruling class in front of him because they know "he likes it" (p. 54). As "the legitimate son of President Wilson" (p. 62) or "the only son of the American Ambassador" (p. 63) he comes from a glorious land and could safely sympathize with them. They are clearly characterized by Hemingway in a way to regard themselves as inferior to Americans and to yearn for America's intervention in the war to rescue them. Hemingway wants not only Italians but also the readers to hold an American's selfless presence in another country in high regard and this way he could fulfil his objective to highlight the pivotal role played by holy America in The World War and in liberating nations. Hence, Frederic's presence in an irrelevant war, in a foreign country, elicits a spectrum of reactions in the novel ranging from astonishment and reverence to a deep sense of compassion for his plight. In my perspective, the emotional response evoked by the depiction of war brutalities in Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* is less intense for a contemporary Italian reader than the resentment caused by the unflattering portrayal of his country and nation and it is the small price that Hemingway does not hesitate to pay in order to praise America and American identity.

As seen in the novel, despite Frederic's proficiency in the Italian language, there is an intangible quality in his American identity which is easily discernible by those who encounter him. A distinctive aura of American-ness which could be recognized in him by strangers in nearly all his first greetings and even when he has not uttered a word yet. This is what sets him apart from others and affords him a certain level of respect and an air of superiority among his peers. Having to wear a "bloody theatrical" (p. 29) steel helmet and a useless Astra 7.65 calibre pistol as items of the ridiculous Italian military dress code is an embarrassment that our handsome American guy has finally come to put up with. Now, he has no "feeling at all except a vague sort of shame when [he] met English-speaking people" (p. 30). For him, "it was impossible to salute foreigners as an Italian, without embarrassment" (p. 22). It would be an apparent fallacy, in my opinion, to regard Frederic as an unpatriotic man. He detests patriotism only when it comes to Italy and this is what separates him from Gino. But with respect to his own country, America, he is a diehard patriot. In fact, he is so irrevocably committed to his nationality that he instantly corrects his friend Count Greffi when the latter casually refers to his language as English, asserting that American is the accurate word for his language.

It could be argued that the supremacy of our American character acquires the greatest significance in his relationship with her fiancée, Catherine. Rinaldi who finds himself captivated by the enchanting Catherine requests Frederic to keep his company on his visit to her as though he perceives the presence of an American companion by his side as a source of confidence. However, their encounter takes an unexpected turn, for in their very first meeting, Catherine becomes infatuated with the American gentleman, leading to a passionate liaison between them and poor Rinaldi does not dare to voice any objection to the man who has already possessed his lady. Interestingly, Catherine's attention is immediately drawn to Frederic's American nationality. His involvement in the Italian army elicits no response from her but surprise. While Frederic's actions merely hint at a sexual attraction towards her, she responds with an overwhelming display of sentimentality. We see a wretched girl who beseeches our protagonist for kindness. She embodies the archetype of a damsel in distress, persistently questioning Frederic regarding the authenticity of his love for her. Although she appears well aware of the absurdity surrounding their love affair, throughout the course of the novel, she remains steadfast in her attachment to him and implores him not to abandon her. She desperately clings to him and even after a brief period of acquaintance, his only three-day absence leaves her longing for him intensely. Not only his wife but also all his friends miss him in his absence as if his departure always leaves a void for others that no one could ever fill. Like the readers, Frederic openly acknowledges her erratic behaviour too and thinks of her as a crazy girl. Until the midpoint of the story at least, I could only see a woman suffering from an unrequited love and a man with the noble guise of a lord bestowing his kindness upon a woman in accepting her love. It becomes increasingly evident that Frederic's approach towards Catherine within and without the war setting is driven solely by his desire for physical intimacy as he incessantly insists on sleeping with her and having flirtation, leaving little room for doubt regarding his intentions. Also, his admiration for her fails to extend beyond the realm of physicality and falls short of embracing her soul. In the beginning of their relationship, he explicitly confesses to feigning love for her and draws parallels between their lovemaking and a game of bridge "in which you said things instead of playing cards" (p. 32). To him, "this was better than going every evening to the house for officers where the girls climbed all over you and put your cap on backward as a sign of affection between their trips upstairs with brother officers" (pp. 31-32). She serves as a plaything merely to satiate his lord's carnal desires and knowing that, she feels quite contented. Although he should bear full responsibility for impregnating her, it is Catherine who assumes fault for her own negligence and hesitates about disclosing her pregnancy to him just in case he gets concerned. When her belly gradually grows, she loses her rock-bottom level of confidence as she worries about not appealing to her husband and tries to assure him that she will regain her beauty. Even while in an excruciating labour, she is still worried about letting her husband down. Of course, we would be unjust to deny the fact that following Frederic's escape from the war, we begin to see a more balanced relationship between the two couples but, having said that, we are not supposed to see a Romeo drinking the vial of poison in the face of his Juliet's lifeless body at the final curtain but rather a detached character unruffled by the sight before him who lingers for seconds behind her corpse and then reticently leaves the room. After all, he is an American. She would "be very glad to be an American" (p. 315) but it was a dream she could not realize.

3. Conclusion

Based on the arguments outlined above, I am of the opinion that Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* aims to capture the essence of the American spirit by depicting the protagonist, Frederic Henry, as a symbol of stoicism, commitment, strength and determination in the face of adversity and as a heroic character, who through his experiences in war-torn Europe, is embodied with the American values of freedom, independence and self-reliance. In sharp contrast, his partner, Catherine Barkley, is depicted as emotionally vulnerable and dependent on Frederic for support and stability and often relies on him for comfort and reassurance, especially in times of distress or uncertainty. She is a sympathetic character who tends to defer to his American husband's decisions and opinions constantly, allowing him to take the lead and struggles to assert her own desires and aspirations, often subsuming them to accommodate Frederic's needs and wishes. We could also see how her physical fragility is highlighted in the novel, particularly during her pregnancy and childbirth. Hemingway also captures the zeitgeist of an era when America, despite its initial reluctance to enter the war, eventually played a pivotal role in reshaping the course of history and, in doing so, the novel subtly idolizes a nation stepping onto the world stage to safeguard democratic principles and promote peace and freedom worldwide. Hemingway's vivid descriptions of the landscapes and culture of Italy serve as a backdrop to highlight the contrast between the American ideals of progress with the traditional and ridiculous values of Europe and, through this juxtaposition, he sets America apart from other nations. Overall, *A Farewell to Arms*, in my perspective, is a poignant reminder of the enduring legacy of American exceptionalism and the belief in the inherent greatness of the American people.

References

- Baker, C. (1972). *Hemingway: The Writer as Artist*. Princeton University Press.
- Blum, J. (2013). *The Author at Work: The Art of Writing Fiction* [Audiobook]. Recorded Books.
- Eagleton, T. (1996). *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Hemingway, E. (1929). *A Farewell to Arms*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.
- Mitt Romney (2010). *No Apology: The Case for American Greatness*. Macmillan.
- Morrison, M. (2006). "Nationalism and the modern American canon." In W. Kalaidjian (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to American Modernism* (pp. 12-35). Cambridge University Press.
- Sharma, D., & Gielen, U. P. (Eds.). (2013). *The Global Obama: Crossroads of Leadership in the 21st Century*. Routledge.
- Stone, O., & Kuznick, P. (2013). *The Untold History of the United States*. Simon and Schuster.
- Tocqueville, A. D. (2012). *Democracy in America* (J. T. Schleifer, Trans.). In E. Nolla (Ed.), Liberty Fund. (Original work published 1945)
- Tumulty, K. (2013, September 12). "American exceptionalism, explained". The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2013/09/12/american-exceptionalism-explained/>