

Psychological Defense Mechanisms in Hemingway's Men Without Women

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ABSTRACT

Applying certain psychological designations to six short stories selected from Hemingway's *Men Without Women*, the present paper investigates the variable defense mechanisms that occur in the behavioral manifestations of the fictional characters. The characters' stressed reactions are examined in accordance with given patterns of defense mechanisms before placing them within the broader framework of autobiographical repressed anxieties. The study concludes that the represented characters project Hemingway's unconscious defenses against three major sources of anxiety: the feminized dominance over his world which leads to the fear of emasculation, the sense of nostalgia for a lost male company, and the post-traumatic stress disorders caused by his terrible war experience.

1. INTRODUCTION

The period during which Hemingway's fourth collection of short stories has been published, October 14, 1927, is crucial in the author's life as it marks an interval between two marital phases. While writing the stories of this collection, Hemingway was undergoing an emotional instability due to the divorce with Hadley and marriage to Pauline. Such a change could never pass by without leaving a psychological turmoil that can be traced in the backdrop of the stories included in the collection which from early on was titled *Men Without Women*. In her book *Ernest Hemingway: A Literary Life*, Wagner-Martin (2007) confirmed that "[Hemingway's] focus on male friendships and male allegiances, to the exclusion of women's involvement, the book may have conveyed more than Hemingway intended about his state of mind during those eight or nine months" (67-9). Given the circumstances of writing the book, does the emotional void Hemingway was undergoing touch afresh some inner wounds and thus cause an unconscious outlet for his anxieties?

The answer might embark initially on the principle of 'iceberg' with which Hemingway wanted his stories to be read. It necessitates applying approaches that take into consideration the author's biographical as well as psychological background. Endorsing the application of psychoanalytic approach to reading Hemingway's works in the light of the iceberg principle, Brown (2019) observes:

Thus, Hemingway's "iceberg" mode of signification speaks to the traumatic origins of his narrative art: a deeply paradoxical mode of revelation and repression, governed by the contradictory, post-traumatic imperatives of disclosure and survival, meaning-making and mystification. (8)

Harping upon the same impression, Baker (2010) has quoted Hemingway's view of the iceberg principle to elucidate that his short stories are similarly ambiguous, "The supporting structure, submerged and mostly invisible except to the patient explorer, is built with a different kind of precision—that of the poet-symbolist"(71). Baker (2010) believes that the real meaning of the stories is perceptible to the reader once he/she has become aware of such deep structures. Accordingly, the psychological climate within which Hemingway's characters grow and with which they are sketched is the key to fathom the nature of his fictional elements and modes of relationships.

The present inquiry is guided by the hypothesis that the characters in the select short stories in *Men without Women* are engaged in various types of defense mechanisms in response to an internal anxiety and external stressors. The ego, in their case, is torn between the contradictory impulses of: uttering out a haunting anxiety or keeping up the serene silence; facing up to a traumatic experience or succumbing to oblivion; and the deep wound lurking persistently in memory or the appealing engagement in escapism. The characters unconsciously apply variable strategies of defense mechanisms to evade different psychological byproducts of anxiety neurosis. As a result, the characters' psychological struggle provides a clue as to the writer's history of anxiety disorders that

Young (1996) detects, "Hemingway's style [was] a direct response to trauma" (210) in which the "callous" Hemingway hero was painfully drawn over a deep wound as a defense against reopening it" (202). Most likely, the represented characters and incidents either give a conscious outlet for Hemingway's repressed anxieties or else the repressed thoughts of his unconscious are leaking out.

Out of the huge body of criticism conducted on Hemingway, one would find a considerable number of studies that either wholly apply the psychoanalytical approach or try to read his work from certain psychological perspectives. The most recent study conducted by Brown (2019) in *Hemingway, Trauma and Masculinity: In the Garden of the Uncanny* develops his argument on the assumption that Hemingway was undergoing post-traumatic stress disorders. The two wounds he has afflicted with (war and androgyny) are deep-rooted in a wound of emasculation that Hemingway has encountered in childhood, war, and love. Based on the trauma theory and narrative, the book investigates the traumatic origins of Hemingway's narrative art.

Mark Spilka's essay "A Retrospective Epilogue: On the Importance of Being Androgynous" examines the extent to which Hemingway's life and art were influenced by the violence of an androgynous wound in childhood. To support his main argument, Spilka (2005) concisely pays heed to an overlooked aspect in Hemingway criticism that critics have often read "with one eye closed for years," since "his peculiar world of *men without women* was in fact founded on relations with women. . . or on a sense of himself in relation to women," (144, my emphasis).

Rovit (2005) devoted his inquiry "On Psychic Retrenchment in Hemingway" to talking about the obsessive policy of exclusion and a sense of shame as shaping forces in Hemingway's work and life as well. Presuming that Hemingway is imbued with an ideology that pushes away "everything that can be considered extraneous", Rovit (2005) attempts to delve into "the secret of Hemingway's psychic structure and the secret of audience response." (171-4).

Quite relevant in its broad theoretical framework to the present study is Christopher D. Martin's investigation entitled "Ernest Hemingway: A Psychological Autopsy of a Suicide." Martin (2006) has applied a biopsychosocial approach to integrate the various threads of the author's multifaceted psychiatric portrayal. Examining Hemingway's life through many biographical, social and psychological records, the study comes up with evidences that support "the diagnoses of bipolar disorder, alcohol dependence, traumatic brain injury, and probable borderline and narcissistic personality traits," (351) which has developed later into psychosis. Martin (2006) has listed a variety of defense mechanisms utilized by Hemingway to cope with the psychiatric disorders, "including self-medication with alcohol, a lifestyle of aggressive, risk-taking sportsmanship, and writing," (351) which are all ultimately defeated by suicide.

Almost every one of the above, in addition to many other, studies agree that the psychological struggle enacted in Hemingway's fiction is the outcome of various post-traumatic stress disorders, anxiety, and anxiety neurosis to which the author himself has been prone. Nevertheless, a rare attention has been paid to the unconscious strategies of defense mechanisms employed in fiction to cope with such psychological disturbances. In this light, the present study makes use of the psychoanalysis approach to investigate defense mechanisms in six short stories of Hemingway's *Men Without Women*. It is Bowins' standpoints over the concept that have been mainly adopted throughout the following analysis. Prior to delving into such an analysis, it would be imperative to illuminate the concept of defense mechanisms and its psychological categories and tropes.

In psychoanalysis, defense mechanisms refer to a number of unconscious processes that protect the individual against anxiety and help him/her cope with the awareness of internal or external disturbances or stressors. According to Schmid-Kitsikis (2005), the term was first used by Freud to refer to "the ego's attempts at psychic transformation in response to representations and affects that are painful, intolerable, or unacceptable." (376). Giving a further elaboration on the subject, Freud (1946) in "The ego and the mechanisms of defense" identified nine defense mechanisms: "regression, repression, reaction-formation, isolation, undoing, projection, introjection, turning against the self and reversal," she suggested that, "we must add a tenth, which pertains rather to the study of the normal than to that of neurosis: sublimation, or displacement of instinctual aims" (47).

In "Psychological Defense Mechanisms: A New Perspective," Bowins (2004) traces the process to intelligence which amplifies emotions "intensified fear/anxiety and sadness/depression," leading to the rise of psychological defense mechanisms which are designed to cope with "the intensity, frequency, and duration of these adverse feelings states." Bowins (2004) cited Vaillant's insightful analogy that, "the psychological defense system is expressed often unknowingly in each and every person much like the immune system operates without our conscious awareness" (2). He, moreover, differentiates between two overlapping spectrums of defense mechanisms: dissociation and cognitive distortions. Dissociation enables the ego to adjust the internal state to the pain of conflict, "Dissociation essentially provides the ability to detach from adverse emotional states." The Dissociative experiences assume different forms including: "emotional numbing, absorption and imaginative involvement, depersonalization and derealization, amnesia, and identity fragmentation" (Bowins, 2004).

The other category, cognitive distortions, is figured from a positive perspective as a psychological attempt to sugar-coat events so as to make the individual's experience of the world more acceptable, "It refers to the tendency of people to place a self-enhancing spin on experience and alter the perception of unfavorable events in a positive

way to lessen the impact." This category is further subdivided into three types: mature defenses, intermediate/neurotic defenses, and immature defenses. Mature defenses include "humor, sublimation, anticipation, altruism, and suppression," which "involve relatively minor cognitive distortions, largely consisting of an attenuation of unwelcome experience." Intermediate/neurotic defenses, such as "intellectualization, rationalization, repression, isolation, reaction formation, and displacement are expressed by everyone, particularly during difficult periods of life." Immature defenses comprise the most extreme cognitive distortions which might impair reality testing at times. They are often associated with "severe stress and in personality disorders, such as projection with Paranoid Personality Disorder." They include: "splitting, idealization and devaluation, projection, hypochondriasis and somatization, undoing, acting-out, schizoid fantasy, and denial" (Bowins 2004)

2. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

2.1. Analysis of Psychological Defense Mechanisms in Select Short Stories

Applying Bowins' above designations, the psychological defense mechanisms have been explored in the characters of six short stories selected from *Men Without Women*. Chosen according to their appropriateness for investigation, the analyzed short stories are: "A Canary for One", "Hills Like White Elephants", "A Pursuit Race", "Now I Lay Me", "A Simple Enquiry", "In Another Country." The traceable defense mechanisms have been highlighted within the analyzed text so that the reader can grasp them very easily. In the conclusion, the fictional characters' defense mechanisms are given an autobiographical dimension through linking them up to Hemingway's repressed anxieties.

2.1.1. "Hills Like White Elephants"

This short story involves an American man and a girl in a dialogue as they are on their way to have an abortion operation for the girl whose reactions throughout the story note to a severe manic depression. It can be detected from the way she indulges in alcoholism as well as being prone to borderline personality disorders. She feels betrayed and unloved by her partner whose only present interest is to talk her into having the operation. Nevertheless, she neither resists the man's attempts or questions his fidelity nor shows any concerns about her health in what looks like a state of **emotional numbing**.

The girl's consumption of many glasses of various drinks signifies a severe dissociative defense, the **schizoid fantasy** of substance abuse, provided that she resorts to alcohol to escape a reality that she cannot endure. She asks the man to order two big glasses of beer and wants to try the "Anis del Toro" (35) drink. Life goals seem to shrink in her estranged mind into trying a new drink so as to faintly add a sense to a pointless life, "I wanted to try this new drink. That's all we do, isn't it—look at things and try new drinks?" (36). And when her argument with the demanding partner becomes unbearably annoying, she escapes over and over again to alcohol. Her absorption mechanism turns out clearly when liquor is so dominating over her feelings, "Everything tastes of liquorice. Especially all the things you've waited so long for, like absinthe" (36). It becomes the touchstone against which every detail in her life is benchmarked.

The image of the hills looking like white elephants, from which the story derives its title, dominates the girl's thinking and overshadows the couple's conversation throughout the story as well. The girl is obsessed with the image to a point that she is ready to quarrel with her man if he disagrees. Her case is a vivid example of **absorption and imaginative involvement** bordering on the mental disorder referred to as 'manic episode' which is defined as, "distractibility (attention too easily drawn to unimportant or irrelevant external stimuli)" (Noll, 2007). Her absorption becomes a manic conceit of finding an arbitrary similarity between two dissimilar things and urging the man to agree with her, "I said the mountains looked like white elephants" (36). The man, who does not want his focus on the abortion to be distracted, repeatedly highlights the operation to assure her. Disturbed by the 'white elephants' interruption, he is keen to talk about what he sees as important and prior. Ironically, the girl shifts priority of the topics to discuss and goals to achieve according to her melancholic spirit, "I know. But if I do it, then it will be nice again if I say things are like white elephants, and you'll like it?" (37). For her, the operation is a means that should lead to having his consent to her manic conceit as an end.

Elephant in some eastern philosophies is a symbol of maternal nature of which the girl in the story is deprived; namely in India where a rite is carried out every year "in which an elephant is escorted in procession by men dressed as women, who in this way pay homage to maternal nature" (Cirlot, 2001). Cirlot (2001) defines the symbolic significance of elephant as follows, "In the broadest and universal sense, it is a symbol of strength and of the power of the libido" (96). Ironically speaking, the maternal nature is neither respected in this context nor even given a chance to survive; the intent abortion thwarts the very idea of motherhood. No wonder then if the girl is wholly preoccupied with the notion of the elephants, meanwhile the man shuns the topic which, to him, is reminiscent of the libido apart from any real love.

From a relevant perspective, the girl's melancholy leads to a self-flagellating apathy. She makes up her mind to do the abortion regardless of whether it is good or bad for her, "Then I'll do it. Because I don't care about me" (37). Apparently, the girl's reactions to the man's self-interested demands are marked with a posttraumatic indifference. Having being vulnerable to her partner's treachery, she feels she does not have anything to lose. Her **emotional numbing** reached a climatic point when she uncaringly exposes herself to harms with a masochist mood, "I don't feel any way," the girl said. "I just know things" (38).

Feeling that her body is not her own, Jig experiences a sort of **depersonalization**. Her melancholic symptoms are the natural outcome of a relationship in which the woman sacrifices her most precious possessions only to find out that the man is driving the relationship to his selfish ends. Quite conscious of the man's actual intentions, Jig adopts the **denial** defense by negating awareness of the disturbing part of her experience and even **internalizing** the oppressor's attitude. She, therefore, prefers a passive submission to an active resistance which marks a serious psychological deterioration ending up with lack of a desire to talk, "Would you please . . . stop talking?" (38). Silence could be read in this context as a conscious tool of an unconscious subversion.

2.1.2. "A Canary for One"

The title of this short story is very significant as it suggests how an anxiety-ridden deaf lady has bought her embittered girl a canary thinking that would satisfy the latter's need for a husband. The American Lady, put under focus, suffers from complicated stress disorders. Her anxiety neurosis turns out at the outset of the story when she speaks in a self-revealing manner about why she has a bird, "I bought him in Palermo. . . . The man wanted to be paid in dollars and I gave him a dollar and a half. He really sings very beautifully." (83). It is **rationalization** that turns out clearly as a defense mechanism that she applies to sugar-coat her silly conduct. As if to be fending off accusations, the lady gives unnecessary and irrelevant details to a stranger couple about the way she has got the bird. She justifies the action she feels uncertain about.

The lady's xenophobia assumes the form of fear from marrying her daughter off to a non-American man. Upon knowing that the couple travelling with her on the same compartment are Americans, she feels free to express her paranoid concerns, "I'm so glad you're Americans. American men make the best husband" (84). she goes on letting out her xenophobic fears, "That was why we left the Continent, you know. My daughter fell in love with a man in Vevey." She stopped. "They were simply madly in love." She stopped again. "I took her away, of course" (84). She is quite aware of the bad psychological turmoil her daughter is undergoing, yet she never hesitates to carry out her paranoiac principles regardless of what might become of her child. She stresses, "I couldn't have her marrying a foreigner" (84) as a good friend once told her, "No foreigner can make an American girl a good husband" (85). The Swiss man is from a good family in Vevey, he is to be engineer, and he and her daughter are in love, but he is not a good match since he lacks the only condition the lady stipulates – being an American.

Another defense mechanism that the lady shows is **Fixation** which is emphasized by buying "her own clothes for twenty years now from the same *maison de couture* in the Rue Saint Honore" (85). Her daughter is also forced to follow her perverse habit and taste, "they had her daughter's measurements now, too" (85). The miserable girl does not have to shop for herself. She has also to receive the parceled clothes which are "simple-looking and with no gold lace now ornaments" (85).

By idealizing the American husband and devaluating others, the lady's position amounts to a defense mechanism known as **splitting**. Recurrently, she repeats her obsessed convictions about American husbands that sometimes take the form of irrational overgeneralizations, "American men are the only men in the world to marry" (85). Ironically, the American Lady's outstated belief is set against the American couple's intended separation that is anti-climatically revealed at the very end of the story.

The lady's neurotic delusions are obviously outspoken toward the end. Upon passing three car wreck, she comments, "I was afraid of that all night. . . . I have terrific presentiments about things sometimes" (86). Unconsciously, she beats at the root of all her convictions which appear now to be motivated by presentiments rather than logical reasoning. The reader can understand her queer conduct including suppressing her daughter's love, buying clothes from the same shop for twenty years, and so on. Actually, the oppressive treatment with which the poor girl is afflicted might be a **displacement** of the mother's embittered experience. From a relevant perspective, the lady is unconsciously involved in a **reaction formation** as, in her case, the oedipal complex works out reversely with the mother practicing hatred against the daughter in the name of care and love.

2.1.3. "A Pursuit Race"

This is another story in the collection in which the central character succumbs to alcohol and drugs just to evade a reality that he fails to cope with. William Campbell is an advance man for a burlesque show, and he has managed to stay ahead of the show from Pittsburgh to Kansas City. Failing his duties, he gets caught in a drunk state in a Kansas City hotel room by Mr. Turner, one of the show's managers. The "pursuit race" of the story's title is a metaphor, which makes it clear that Campbell has been put out of the more important race, life itself. The

major defense mechanism in Campbell's case is **schizoid fantasy** provided that Campbell uses psychoactive substances to achieve altered states of consciousness, "Alcohol plays the role of a unique substitute object and a trap, creating a pseudo-reality" (Descombey, 2005).

Depersonalization and derealization, which entails "hearing voices inside one's head" and "looking at the world through a fog" (Bowins, 2004) is evident in Campbell's case. His conversation with Mr. Turner is suffused with delirium tremens (D.T.'s) due to the excessive use of drugs and alcohol. Like a madman, he talks to his manager through the bedsheet, lets out rambling thoughts, and even declines the manager's proposal to help him, "I don't want to take a cure at all. I am perfectly happy. All my life I have been perfectly happy" (93). His delirious state gave way to schizophrenic thoughts that a wolf is haunting his habitation and interacting with him.

"I don't know. But I've got my wolf back." He touched the sheet with his tongue.

"I've had him for a week."

"The hell you have."

"Oh, yes. My dear wolf. Every time I take a drink he goes outside the room. He can't stand alcohol. The poor little fellow." He moved his tongue round and round on the sheet. "He's a lovely wolf. He's just like he always was." William Campbell shut his eyes and took a deep breath. (93)

Taking into account that a person's most reserved fears and concerns could be disclosed when his/her unconscious, rather than conscious, is in charge, Campbell's delirium gave clues about two hangovers of **repression** as an unconscious defense by which some affect has been separated from ideation though still are preserved in consciousness. The first is related to job as he compares himself to his manager – Mr. Turner. Most likely, Campbell refers certain professional failures to his inability to deal with matters as flexibly as the manager who can "slide" through life without an awareness of its possible meanings.

"Listen, Billy," William Campbell said, "I want to tell you something. You're called

'Sliding Billy'. That's because you can slide. I'm called just Billy. That's because I never could slide at all. I can't slide, Billy. I can't slide. It just catches. Every time I try it, it catches." He shut his eyes. "I can't slide, Billy. It's awful when you can't slide." (94)

The second hint has something to do with the relationships with women. He warned the manager against the love of horses, eagles, and, more emphatically, women, "If you love women you'll get a dose," (95). An impossible failed love might have left an emotional void in Campbell's emotional life which, alongside with the unsatisfying job, leads him to alcohol and drug addiction as an **absorption** into a substitute reality.

2.1.4. "Now I Lay Me"

In "Now I Lay Me" the central character, Nick, is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of his participation in World War I. Obviously, Nick's **schizoid fantasy** as well as **absorption** make him retreat into a world of imaginative involvements.

This short story highlights the narrator's fear of darkness as well as sleep, so he tries to busy himself with various details and memories in order to get through the night without sleep. The protagonist's insomnia is shared by many characters of Hemingway's war stories whose physical wounds cause a lot of a psychological unrest. As a result, their keen interest in the details of their surrounding and stream of thoughts give clues about the intense internal turmoil they struggle to avoid.

Nick's insomnia, however, is not because he cannot sleep but because he is afraid to sleep,

I myself did not want to sleep because I had been living for a long time with the knowledge that if I ever shut my eyes in the dark and let myself go, my soul would go out of my body. (101)

To avoid the phobia of sleep-death, Nick has different ways of occupying himself. He indulges in a make-believe world of fishing in the trout streams he had fished long ago as a boy. He lives the minutest details of the imaginary experience including having a lunch break, catching and losing fish, trying various baits, and so on. When he runs out of the real trout streams to fish in his mind, he makes up new ones to have more fun. "Some nights too I made up streams, and some of them were very exciting, and it was like being awake and dreaming." (102). Such a world of fantasy is supposed to provide escapism from embittered, real thoughts of war that Nick tries to evade.

In addition to the daydreams, past memories represent the protagonist's alternative, conscious method of defense against neurotic anxiety. The memories of his father, mother, and the attic in his grandfather's house rush into his mind but always the stream of memories stops some point before the war,

On those nights I tried to remember everything that had ever happened to me, starting with just before I went to the war and remembering back from one thing to another. . .until I reached the war. (102).

He also tries to remember the names of all animals and then the girls he has ever known. Nevertheless, he gives up thinking of the girls because "finally they all blurred and all became rather the same" (107) and resumes his favorite make-believe fishing.

The story is set against the backdrop of his orderly sleeping and snoring as well as the silk-worms chewing unceasingly. Remarkably, the two images stand in contrast to Nick's case. The orderly sleeps deeply because he

has nothing to worry about, whereas the silk-worms are absorbed in their daily factory-like business uninterruptedly. On the contrary, Nick stays up through the night with eyes observing the dark and waiting eagerly for the daylight to break so that he can sleep. Ironically, Nick does not want to sleep because he wants to select the dreams he likes no matter if they keep him detached from a traumatic experience. Like many of Hemingway's characters, Nick has difficulty sleeping for psychological reasons. This anxiety of death, originating in **hypochondriacal** concerns which haunted the writer, is suggested by the title of the story which, according to Oliver (2007), comes from a 12th century prayer: "Now I lay me down to sleep,/ I pray the Lord my soul to keep;/ If I should die before I wake,/ I pray the Lord my soul to take." (294).

2.1.5. "A Simple Enquiry"

At its superficial level, the story tells about the enquiry of a homosexual military major about his orderly's, Pinin's, sexual preferences. However, the self-revealing major becomes the object of the enquiry, and so be the nature of soldiering in war. The pervert major wants to exploit the poor orderly by offering homosexual seduction as the best choice since the other would be getting killed in the war.

In "Some Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia, and Homosexuality", Freud (2014) finds a relationship between paranoia, homosexuality, and jealousy as the homosexual man, guided by the "thought of losing the loved object," feels "grief about the man, whom he loves unconsciously, and hatred of the woman as his rival; and this latter set of feelings will add to the intensity of his jealousy." (3900). According to Freud (2014), such feelings originate in "delusional jealousy" (3902) arising from the **projection** of a delusional character. The above projection is detectable in the character of the major who is keen to know if Pinin, his loved object, has an actual love affair with a girl. Beside reading the orderly's personal letters, he asked with an unreserved curiosity, "And you are quite sure that you love a girl?" (76).

Moreover, the major, doubtful that the boy is outwitting him, is prone to paranoid suspicion. Citing Freud's above essay again would be accountable of the major's case. "Delusional jealousy," emphasized Freud (2014), "is what is left of a homosexuality that has run its course, and it rightly takes its position among the classical forms of paranoia." (3902). The narcissist impulse of his paranoid jealousy turns out when he asks the orderly to stay close from him just to avoid the risks of war.

Apart from homosexuality, the major's sexual abuse can be read as **acting-out** to release the inhibited sexual desire resulting from staying in a military camp for a long period on the one hand and entertaining the self to forget about the troubles of war on the other. Hence, both the seducer and the seduced are victims of the 'corrupt' military environment.

Ironically, the title is "A Simple Enquiry" though the enquiry is complex and multi-layered. First, what seems to be an enquiry directed from the Major to his orderly turns out to be an enquiry about the Major's real inclinations. He appears hesitant and anxiety-ridden with incomplete statements and asking Tonani, "can you hear me talking?" (76). Second, the real enquiry is implied by the major's question to Pinin, "that you are not corrupt?" (76) which entails the defense of **projection** as the major believes that the unacceptable impulses arise not from the self but from an outside object. According to the speech act theory, the question implies a request as well as an invitation for Pinin to join the Major's 'corrupt' world. Third, like the Duke of Ferrara in Browning's "My Last Duchess", the Major self-reveals his own queerness and expects the subaltern to agree with. Last, the question posed as to the author's sexual orientation brought forth by the story is tackled further in the conclusion.

2.1.6. "In Another Country"

According to Oliver (2007), the title of this short story is taken from Marlowe's "The Jew of Malta," quoted by T. S. ELIOT as an epigraph to "Portrait of a Lady": "Thou hast committed—/ Fornication: but that was in another country, / And besides, the wench is dead" (211). The significance of the title arises from the deep melancholic sense of guilt with which the major is afflicted. While it is certain that the dead 'wench' stands for the major's dead wife, a question might arise as to the act of fornication committed in another country. Does the Major feel that the death of his young wife is a punishment for his illegal war involvements of which his crippled hand is also a consequence? if so, his entire emotional reaction will be motivated by the defense of **suppression**.

Both the narrator, an American officer fighting with the Italian army and identified as 'I', and an Italian major are having a medical treatment for war injuries. They receive machine treatment though they both feel skeptical of its effectiveness, "There was a time when none of us believed in the machines, and one day the major said it was all nonsense" (32). Unlike the doctor whose job is to raise hope, the patients seem overwhelmed with the desperate disillusionment of war. When the doctor asked the major, "You have confidence?" his reply was "No," (31). The major had the most bitter sense of despair as the very idea of machine treatment makes no difference to him, "It was an idiotic idea, he said, 'a theory, like another'" (32).

Experiencing war, death, and physical mutation, the officers are overwhelmed by the sense of alienation and homelessness. The narrator described one of the other three officers receiving the same treatment: "He had lived

a very long time with death and was a little detached. We were all a little detached, and there was nothing that held us together except that we met every afternoon at the hospital" (31). Outside, they are always bound together not so much because they are friends as because they experience the people's xenophobia, "The people hated us because we were officers," (31).

The major's wound, however, seems much deeper than a crippled hand. Apparently, he is suffering from a post-traumatic stress due to the death of his young wife out of pneumonia. In addition to physical loss, the major is afflicted with the anxiety neurosis that caused his hysterical reaction to the narrator's expressed intention to get married. To him marriage is a big loss that a man should never take risk in,

"He cannot marry. He cannot marry," he said angrily. "If he is to lose everything, he should not place himself in a position to lose that. He should not place himself in a position to lose. He should find things he cannot lose."

He spoke very angrily and bitterly, and looked straight ahead while he talked (33). The major's disturbing experience of losing a wife leads him to the defense of **reaction formation** which transforms the deprived impulse into its opposite. The great love of the wife develops into a fear of loss which returns with an eruptive violence enervated by **repression**.

Upon recovering from the nervous state, the major has to apologize. He referred his emotional burst to the death of his wife that he could not resign himself to,

He looked straight past me and out through the window. Then he began to cry. "I am utterly unable to resign myself," he said and choked. And then crying, his head up, looking at nothing, carrying himself straight and soldierly, with tears on both his cheeks and biting his lips, he walked past the machines and out of the door. (33)

The major's condition is desperate and suggests a posttraumatic detachment that turns out in the sense of indifference to the outcome of the machine treatment, "The photographs did not make much difference to the major because he only looked out of the window" (34). Again, it is **absorption and imaginative involvements** as a defense mechanism that is present in the major's case.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It would be appropriate to conclude this investigation by questioning the presence of the author's psychological defense mechanisms in the above characters. Remarkably, the represented characters project Hemingway's unconscious defenses against three major sources of anxiety: the feminized dominance over his world along with the resultant fear of emasculation, the sense of nostalgia for a lost male company, and the post-traumatic stress disorders caused by the writer's terrible war experience.

Apparently, displacing the women from the men's world is an experience that can be neither relieving nor disturbing for Hemingway. True, the stories comprise male characters who either live without women or are at a separation crossroads. But, the represented men are not satisfied with their present conditions provided that they cannot evade the women figuring in their thinking and dreams positively or negatively. The narrator in "A Canary for One" is taking a train to Paris where he and his wife are planning separation. The deaf woman's talk about her daughter's suppressed love affair and the inappropriateness of non-American husbands seems to be an ironic rehearsal for that separation. In "Hills Like White Elephants", the abortion badly wanted by the man suggests the nature of the love relationship from his own perspective. Though he shows affection towards the girl, it can be judged that his foremost concern is to get rid of any commitment to this relationship. In both above stories one can conclude that Hemingway depicts the man-woman relationship as a burden that leads to many unbearable complications regardless of which party is responsible for pushing the relationship into an impasse.

In the other stories, the women are absented but their presence can be felt looming large at every juncture of the plot. "A Simple Enquiry" has been read as a homoerotic alternative for the man-woman relationship. According to Strong (2008), "A Simple Enquiry" gives clue about a repressed homoerotic inclination in Hemingway as it reveals "the tension behind repression or revelation of homosexuality" (xii). Figured from a homoerotic dimension, a world where men can dispense with women suggests an application of **acting-out** defense against a suppressed homosexual relationship. The above reading, however, disagrees with many biographical facts talking about a new marital life Hemingway was leading with lesbian wife and sister-in-law,

Pauline's sister, Jinny, was a lesbian and according to biographers, Pauline herself had 'lesbian tendencies,' which she acted upon after her marriage with Hemingway was over." (Fantina, 2005).

Besides, Hemingway grew up with a sense of hatred against his mother who was also lesbian, "It didn't help that Ernest may have heard neighborhood gossip about his Mom's covert lesbian relationship with a young music student whom she brought into the house as a 'companion.'" (Sigal, 2013). He also had an early emasculating experience with his mother Grace who used to call him Ernestine and to dress him and his elder sister, Marcelline, in girls' clothes. She was a commanding wife causing his passive and self-embittered father to escape the house and commit suicide. He once stated, "I hate her guts and she hates mine. She forced my father to suicide." (Sigal, 2013).

Hence, it is not homosexuality that Hemingway endorses in the collection. Rather, it is a **reaction formation** cultivated as a result of **suppressing** his protest against the sense of banishment from home intimacy. His futile relationship with lesbian women exposes him to a new understanding of life which makes him think of emotional alternatives. Besides, it stirs a sort of nostalgia for the past life spent with male friends practicing together their favorite, exciting games. Based on this estranged history, Hemingway's collection of short stories *Men Without Women* represents the culmination of his self-affirming rebellion against the feminist dominance and a traumatic anxiety as well. His attraction to men and self-indulgence in risky sports can be read, in this light, as psychological defenses against the prevalence of the superego that the feminized families he lives within represent rather than any misunderstood homoerotic tendencies.

In addition, the fear of emasculation gets symbolically reinforced in "In Another Country" where the narrator, the major, and three other soldiers undergo a futile machine therapy for war injuries. The characters' crippled limbs stand for the anxiety of androgynous impotence deep-rooted in Hemingway's trauma narrative. The 'other country' suggests homelessness, dissociation of the self, and the unfamiliar realms of the subconscious where the hidden drives for each story dwell. The homeless protagonist is similarly encountered in "A Pursuit Race", but homelessness in this context is both physical and mental. Campbell's maladaptive **schizoid fantasy** of substance consumption depicts a major trope in Hemingway's avoidance of unwanted thoughts and feelings.

"Now I Lay Me" can be obviously figured within the post-traumatic stress disorders such as nightmares, insomnia, repression of thought, and so on, to which Hemingway was prone as a result of the war experience. The trout-fishing streams are symbolic of exploring one's deep nature to reach those dark realms of the unconscious, "Fishing amounts to extracting the unconscious elements from deep-lying sources" (Cirlot, 2001). Women that the hero has known are among the things he fished in memory. They are, however, reduced to mere digits enshrined in the brain's dark cells to be retrieved not so much for their own sake as for activating memory and fending off the anxiety of the subconscious world of sleep. In this story, the entire process of memory exercises and daydreams stands for a conscious enactment of the presumably unconscious defense mechanisms.

Obviously, each of Hemingway's above characters represents a probe to establish an effective contact with a specific realm of the author's subconscious. Hemingway, almost crossing the borderline to the subconscious, was able to isolate certain dark images from their chaotic mental entanglement and reenact them in fictional forms. Regardless of the extent to which the writer's intention is involved, Hemingway's *Men Without Women* stories record the emotional signs and signature psyche of the author who could successfully overcome neurotic challenges by virtue of art that stands for **sublimation** as an overall defense mechanism.

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