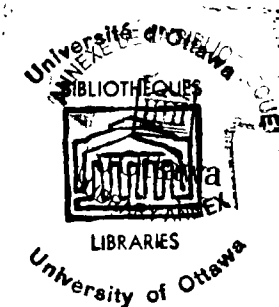


THE QUESTION OF RELIGION
IN THE LIFE AND WORKS OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

by Edward Carben



Thesis presented to the Faculty of
Arts of the University of Ottawa as
partial fulfillment of the require-
ments for the degree of Doctor of
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PREFACE

The writer of this thesis wishes to express his gratitude to the staff of the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C., for making their many facilities available to him, especially their microfilms and a number of manuscripts in the Rare Book Division which would have been otherwise unobtainable. Mrs. Margaret Duncan, librarian of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington, D. C., deserves a note of appreciation for providing telegrams, news releases, and other material in reference to Ernest Hemingway and Catholicism. The writer also wishes to thank Father Robert J. Waldmann, the priest who officiated at Ernest Hemingway's funeral, for his correspondence. In addition, the writer wishes to thank Dr. Dalton McGuinty of the University of Ottawa for being kind enough to read the thesis while it was in the process of preparation and to make a number of extremely useful observations. The writer is especially indebted and grateful to Dr. Emmett O'Grady of the University of Ottawa, the director of this thesis, for his continued and indefatigable interest and numerous valuable suggestions.

A note on the format of the thesis, in general,

is in order, and particularly on the use of quotations, footnote references, and the form of the bibliography. The writer has followed the suggestions laid down by Kate L. Turabian in her A Manual for Writers of Dissertations (The University of Chicago Press). The writer used this particular manual because he was familiar with it, having used it at Saint Vincent College in preparing his Bachelor's thesis, THE PHILOSOPHY OF T. S. ELIOT, under the direction of Reverend Quentin Schaut, O. S. B., currently president of Saint Vincent Archabbey and College; and also at the University of Iowa in preparing his Master's thesis, a continuation of the same project, under the direction of Robert Lowell, the poet. Additional reasons for using this manual are that it is a standard manual, used extensively in colleges and universities throughout the United States, and except for extremely minor variations, it meets the requirements of most other such manuals presently in use. The one matter in which this manual is not followed is that of the annotated bibliography. Since no annotated bibliography is indicated by Turabian's manual, Shevenell's Research and Theses (The University of Ottawa Press) is followed in this regard. It is to be noted, however, that only those works which are connected directly with the topic of the thesis are annotated. Other works,

which are helpful in a more general understanding of Hemingway and his writing, are not annotated.

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INTRODUCTION

Following Ernest Hemingway's suicide¹ at his home in Ketchum, Idaho, on July 3, 1961, there occurred the inevitable revived interest in an author who had lived during a time of mass communication and who was already world-renowned not only for his writing but for his picturesque personality as well. New editions of his works were quickly printed and in many places book dealers were unable to keep pace with the demand, and in bookstores which specialized in the selling of used books, all first editions of Hemingway's works disappeared from the shelves within hours after his death was announced. Not only did Hemingway's violent death result in a renewed interest in his works but it also resulted in a revitalized curiosity in regard to his already much publicized life itself.

One rather ambiguous aspect of Hemingway's life was the question of his religion, and the fact

¹ To verify that Hemingway's death was a suicide rather than an accident see the New York Times, July 3 and 4, 1961.

that a Catholic priest officiated at the grave of this thrice-divorced,¹ supposedly Roman Catholic created new speculation in this particular sphere. A great many people took it for granted that Hemingway was simply a Catholic in good standing or a Catholic who found himself outside the Church because of divorce. But the question of Hemingway's attitude towards Catholicism specifically and religion in general is not so simply solved and dismissed.

In October of 1956, Leo J. Hertzell, writing in The Catholic World, said:

During the past twenty-five years a vast amount of criticism has been written about the novels and short stories of Ernest Hemingway. Indeed, so much has been written on the subject that critics are beginning to stumble over each other in repeating this year that which was settled once and for all last year.

With so much critical attention, it is surprising to note that Hemingway's treatment of religion in general and Catholicism in particular has been generally ignored.²

Philip Young, one of the foremost authorities on Hemingway, mentioned in a book published in 1959 that "It is perhaps also relevant to note that he [Hemingway] is in some private, unorthodox way a convert to Roman

¹ Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1959), p. 23.

² Leo J. Hertzell, "Hemingway and the Problem of Belief," The Catholic World, 184 (October, 1956), 29-33.

Catholicism."¹ This almost complete silence regarding Hemingway's attitude towards religion continued right up to the time of his death, following which many conflicting stories began to appear in newspapers and magazines, chiefly as the result of a Catholic priest officiating at his funeral.

The purpose of this thesis is to clarify Hemingway's confusing, ambiguous, and misunderstood relationship to religion. This is accomplished in three ways: (1) personal pronouncements by Hemingway which are in any way connected with religion are carefully weighed; (2) what is known historically of the function of religion in the life of Hemingway is examined; (3) Hemingway's attitude towards religion as expressed by his works is considered.

In so far as the first point is concerned, since Hemingway carefully avoided direct statements on the matter of religion, naturally no direct statements in this regard are to be found in the thesis. Hemingway did, however, refer indirectly to religion by making statements which have special relevance to religious beliefs and practices---in such matters, for example, as death and morality. Such statements, whenever they are to be found, are used to the greatest

¹ Young, *op. cit.*, p. 25. Italics added.

possible advantage in the thesis.

As for the second point, while there is some historical evidence which relates to the function of religion in the life of Hemingway, it is not of such nature that it can be accepted as conclusive in itself. This, once again, is due to the fact that Hemingway himself apparently made no direct comments in relation to religion, and if he ever did practice religion formally after the years of his boyhood he preferred to keep such matters private and secretive. It is possible, however, from the historical evidence which is available, to make a number of important conjectures relative to the part religion played in Ernest Hemingway's life.

It is to the third point, Hemingway's attitude towards religion as expressed by his works, that most attention is devoted in the thesis. This is so for three reasons: (1) Hemingway's works offer the greatest amount of material related to the topic of the thesis. Hemingway made no direct personal statements in regard to religion, and even his indirect personal statements in this regard are few. The historical evidence which is available, on the other hand, is not, in itself, conclusive. Consequently, the greatest amount of information is to be found through a perusal of the works themselves, and of necessity, then,

most attention is given to these works. (2) While it is sometimes hazardous to attempt to interpret an author's personal philosophy in terms of his works, especially if that author has portrayed a large number of completely variegated characters in different settings, such difficulty is at its barest minimum in the case of Hemingway, so much so that one can safely say, in this particular instance, that such a method is perfectly valid. This is true because Hemingway is one author who has written consistently within almost exactly the same frame of reference. While Hemingway's characters may bear different names, they are type-characters who react in the same way and say the same things in work after work. This will become evident from the characters and works appearing in this thesis itself. Philip Young says:

Of course Hemingway has left out a lot, but a good many of the main outlines and really significant events of his life have been recorded in the guise of fiction. It is always risky to take any kind of fiction as a presentation of fact, but it is less of a risk here than it would be in most places.¹

Young then goes on to point out that Hemingway's Green Hills of Africa, which Hemingway admitted was an autobiographical book, "seems no more factual and a lot less revealing than Across the River and Into

¹ Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway (New York: Rinehart, 1952), pp. 117-118.

the Trees, for instance."¹ (3) Conclusions which are drawn from Hemingway's works in this thesis are substantiated by Hemingway's personal statements and the historical evidence available.

It is to be emphasized that this thesis is to be considered as an organic unity. Just as Hemingway's personal pronouncements, the historical evidence, and Hemingway's works are to be considered as parts of an over-all view in so far as the total thesis is concerned, so also are the individual chapters of the thesis to be considered as parts of a structural whole. To facilitate the reading of the thesis in this spirit each chapter will be introduced by a statement of purpose and will conclude with a summary. But even so, it is important to bear in mind that while Chapter I stresses the historical evidence relative to Hemingway's religious position it cannot be divorced from subsequent chapters which deal with the works themselves, with Hemingway's own statements, and which correlate all of these factors into their logical conclusions. Likewise, Chapter II, which deals with the direct allusions to religion found in Hemingway's work, should not be detached from following chapters

¹
Ibid., p. 118.

which deal with indirect allusions to religion and which attempt to utilize and further evaluate the conclusions of Chapter II. In similar fashion, Chapter III, which treats of Hemingway's distrust of the intellect, not only lays the foundation for Chapter IV which deals with the life of unfulfillment, but bears an importance throughout the thesis. Chapter V, on the other hand, which deals with Hemingway's philosophy of despair, flows from Chapter III and Chapter IV. It, in turn, is important in understanding Hemingway's attitude towards war (Chapter VI), his attitude towards death (Chapter VII), his concept of manhood (Chapter VIII), his attitude towards women (Chapter IX), and his code (Chapter X). While Chapter X emphasizes Hemingway's code it is important to note that the chief components which result in that code are examined in Chapters III, V, VI, VII, VIII, and IX. Chapter XI, which deals with Hemingway as artist, basis its conclusions upon all of the preceding chapters.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

In this chapter the question of Ernest Hemingway's attitude towards religion will be investigated from the standpoint of historical facts relevant to that particular aspect of his life. The religious practices of his boyhood will be examined as well as what is known concerning his relationship to religion in adulthood. Because it has been alleged at various times that Hemingway was a Catholic, significant comments on this matter by his son, John, as well as by a number of Catholic writers, and especially the comments of Father Robert J. Waldmann who officiated at Hemingway's funeral, will be considered.

* * *

Ernest Hemingway was born on July 21, 1899, in Oak Park, a Chicago suburb which is sometimes described as the middle-class capital of the world. He was the second child and first son in a family of two boys and four girls. His father, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, was a physician whose two chief passions in life were hunting and fishing. His mother, whose maiden name was Grace Hall, was a soloist at the First

Congregational Church, the Church which Hemingway attended as a boy. She was devoted to music and there was a large stage in the Hemingway home where Mrs. Hemingway sang for guests. Both parents attempted to model Ernest Hemingway after themselves. The father gave him his first fishing rod when Ernest was not yet three years old and his first shotgun when he was only ten. His mother, on the other hand, presented him with a cello. From the very beginning Ernest was more interested in hunting and fishing than in music.¹ In Oak Park Hemingway was reared in a Protestant Christian atmosphere. Because of this background his early teachers and acquaintances were shocked and bewildered at what he eventually wrote. They could not understand "how a boy brought up in Christian and Puritan nurture should know and write so well of the devil and the underworld."²

Other than the fact that Hemingway was brought up in a Protestant middle-class family, nothing else is mentioned about religion in his life until the nineteen-thirties when contradictory reports began to

¹ See Malcolm Cowley, "A Portrait of Mister Papa," Life, 25 (January 10, 1949), 94.

² See Charles A. Fenton, The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway: The Early Years (New York: Farrar, Straus & Young, 1954), p. 2.

be circulated to the effect that Hemingway was a Catholic. It is noteworthy that such reports never came directly from Hemingway himself but were always passed along by individuals who had gotten their information from someone who was supposed to have known Hemingway. The superficial, and at times rather supercilious, nature of such reports is evidenced by an article written by Father Daniel A. Lord which appeared in The Sign of March 1934. Father Lord wrote:

I had lunch recently with the pastor of Ernest Hemingway. Surprised to find that Hemingway is a Catholic? So am I, though you sometimes find flashes of Catholicity even in his weirdest books.

Father F. X. Dougherty is pastor of the Jesuit parish in Key West, the farthest point south in the United States. He talked of Hemingway.

"Oh, yes, he never misses Sunday Mass. He arrives and stands in the back of the church during Mass. I've never known him to take a pew. Easter duty? Most assuredly. Lovely wife and children, all of them Catholics, and good Catholics, too.

"Hemingway is a great fisherman. Spends weeks on end fishing. And when visitors come to visit me, he takes them out if I suggest it. But he dodges writers of all sorts, even if they happen to be priest writers. He won't be interviewed if he can help it.

"I've talked a lot to him about his books. He claims he writes just as he sees life. When I told him I thought his books did a lot of harm, his answer was: 'The people who like my books are beyond the possibility of my harming them.' 'What of young people?' I demanded. 'The type of young people who read me know already more than I can tell them.'

"He writes whenever the impulse is on him. Frequently he jumps up in the middle of the night because an idea has hit him and he wants to get it on paper. But no dog about him or his family, and he lives quietly and unostentatiously here in my little parish."

So that is that. Hemingway is a Catholic. Let's

pray that some day he may see what a treasure of literary material he has in the Catholic Faith, and he may turn his undoubted powers toward the Catholic Literary renaissance.

Harry Sylvester, writing in The Commonweal of October 30, 1936, said:

One hears by word of mouth that Hemingway has become a Catholic. This is inaccurate: Hemingway has returned to the Roman Catholic Church, in which he was baptized some years ago. His reasons for leaving the Church are his own and may come out if he ever chooses to do an autobiography. I feel free only to speak of one of them and to make a surmise regarding another.

When, after being on the bum as a hobo since he was fifteen, after working in factories and fighting at smokers for a meal, Hemingway found his way to Italy at the start of the World War, the Italians welcomed this American still in his teens and made him an officer. Some time later they also took 251 pieces of trench mortar out of one of his knees, but that is another story. While waiting for zero hour to attack the Austrians, the men under Hemingway, like the rest of the Italian army under similar circumstances, drank a mixture of whisky and ether to key them up. Zero hour came and the attack was called off. Hemingway's men, on edge and half-savage from the strain and the drink, broke discipline and went to a village behind the lines and proceeded to attack all the women in it. Hemingway, although his own life until then had shown him many unpleasant things, was sickened; and when he was commended the next day instead of reprimanded by his superiors for allowing the men to find an outlet for their savagery, it is not unreasonable to believe that the boy thought there might be no God. And when the exact same experience in every major detail was repeated the following night and morning, he possibly felt quite sure there was no God.

He was away from America for eleven years. After the war he spent many years in Spain, which

1

Daniel A. Lord, "Ernest Hemingway As a Catholic," The Sign, March, 1934.

was not always a country for a Catholic with a weak faith to look deeply into. And now that although Hemingway has come---by whatever weary way he himself only knows---to accept again the spiritual body of the Church, he is still distrustful of at least part of the corporal body of the Church.

Hemingway goes to Mass every Sunday. When he does not like a sermon, he goes out of the church or chapel until the sermon is over. (No, not to smoke a cigarette. He doesn't smoke. He is very proud of his sense of smell, which enables him to scent game in the woods at a distance, and that is one reason he does not smoke.) He is of the Church, but not dedicated to it. He is dedicated to nothing but his family and his art. He will never be dedicated to the Church in the same puerile sense that Communist writers are dedicated to Communism. But some day he may write the first great Catholic novel in the English language.¹

Like the account by Father Lord, this version of Hemingway's Catholicism is highly sentimental and romantic. Not only that, a number of statements in the article, such as the one that Hemingway was "on the bum as a hobo since he was fifteen," are clearly false. This lack of accuracy and the general tone cast a very dubious light on Harry Sylvester's statements relative to the question of Hemingway's Catholicism.

In 1941 the typical, sentimental, highly questionable report of Hemingway's Catholicism, found in American Catholic newspapers and periodicals of the time, once again appeared. An article in the Michigan Catholic, in which Hemingway is depicted as

¹

Harry Sylvester, "Ernest Hemingway: A Note," *The Commonweal*, XXV (October 30, 1936), 11.

all apologies for not living up to the Catholic faith, stated that Hemingway was baptized a Catholic because, during the First World War, he thought he was dying of his injuries. That account read as follows:

Ernest Hemingway, star propagandist for the former Loyalist regime in Spain, has at various times been reported as being a Catholic. Catholics could not reconcile the overworked and unnecessary sex episodes in his novels with the standards of Catholic morality; nor could they reconcile Catholicism with the Communism he espoused.

Some light is thrown on this situation by a Redemptorist priest who met the author of "For Whom the Bell Tolls." The priest, as quoted by the Denver Register, points out that Hemingway should be a Catholic. He asked the author pointblank about his faith.

Hemingway is reported to have given a frank answer, "Father, I'm a disgrace to the Church. I'm not a good Catholic. Besides, I don't like such books as tell about conversions. You see, Father, in the last war I thought I was dying and those around me did too; and so I was baptized."

This frank statement clears up a lot of conjecture. Certainly the Faith in this case is in eclipse. But the grace of the sacrament of Baptism has operated successfully in far more complex and difficult cases than this. Perhaps a prayer by devout Catholics will do much to rescue a soul that in time of sore distress found refuge in the consolations of religion.¹

Of all the statements issued in regard to Hemingway's Catholicism, probably the one issued by his eldest son, John, following his father's death, carries the most weight. John says that his father became a Catholic at the time he married his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, who was a Catholic. This would

1

Michigan Catholic, April 17, 1941.

seem to contradict the reports that Hemingway became a Catholic during the First World War. The New York Times made the following statements on July 5, 1961:

His son John said today that Mr. Hemingway was "at one time" a Catholic but that "he actually was not" at the time of his death. He said Mr. Hemingway had been converted to Catholicism at the time of his marriage to his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer.¹

At the time of Hemingway's death newspaper correspondents, probably quite erroneously, gave the impression that Hemingway was outside the Church merely because he had been divorced. The New York Times of July 4, 1961 stated:

Although he was once a practicing Roman Catholic, Mr. Hemingway was divorced three times.

The Rev. Robert J. Waldmann, pastor of Our Lady of the Snows Roman Catholic Church in Ketchum, said that there would be no formal Catholic services but that there might be a graveside service. He said he had passed no judgment on whether Mr. Hemingway's death had been an accident or suicide. The funeral, he said, will be private.²

The New York Times of July 5, 1961 said:

...the fact that Mr. Hemingway had been divorced would bar him from a Catholic Church funeral. Catholic sources said there was nothing improper in a Catholic priest's saying graveside prayers. Mr. Hemingway was divorced three times.³

¹
New York Times, July 5, 1961.

²
New York Times, July 4, 1961.

³
New York Times, July 5, 1961.

Father Robert J. Waldmann, the priest who officiated at Hemingway's funeral, makes clear in a letter that even he was uncertain as to the facts of Hemingway's relationship to Catholicism. He also points out that Hemingway did not receive Catholic burial. Father Waldmann's letter reads in part:

...I cannot speak of any information I might have obtained from him [Hemingway] personally. I have learned from his sister that he grew up in the Congregational church which he attended as a boy. All I know about his Catholicism is what I read in various papers after his death...I must admit that I was not too interested in Hemingway until I took care of the graveside rites for him. I trust you understand too that he only received graveside rites and not a truly Catholic burial.

His two sons Patrick and Gregory born of his second marriage were brought up as Catholics. It was apparently during this second marriage that he was baptized a Catholic.

...The things mentioned above are about all that I know concerning the matter.¹

One of the interesting aspects of Hemingway's supposed Catholicism is the fact that Hemingway seemed determined to keep this one particular aspect of his life vague and confusing. Newspapers and periodicals record three of Hemingway's marriages, but they do not record his marriage to Pauline Pfeiffer, the Catholic, and one cannot help but wonder if that is because this particular marriage may have been performed by

1

Letter from Father Robert J. Waldmann to Edward Carben, October 25, 1961.

a Catholic priest. The account of Hemingway's marriage to Martha Gellhorn, the wife who followed Pauline Pfeiffer, is recorded in the Washington Times Herald as follows:

Ernest Hemingway, the author and Martha Gellhorn, of St. Louis, were married here [Cheyenne, Wyoming] tonight by Justice of the Peace F. A. Stennett. The couple arrived in Cheyenne from Sun Valley, Idaho. Hemingway gave his age as 41, Miss Gellhorn as 28.

Hemingway recently was divorced by his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, who charged him with desertion. His first wife was Hadley Richardson, a childhood friend.¹

The American National Catholic Welfare Conference attempted to solve this riddle of Hemingway's Catholicism on a number of occasions, but each time they were hindered by Hemingway's reticence. A collect telegram to the National Catholic Welfare Conference from one of their correspondents, Reverend Harold Purcell, and dated October 5, 1933, read as follows:

Hemingways Conversion Reported Me By Ross Hoffman
New York University Himself A Convert = Rev.
Harold Purcell²

Another telegram dated October 5, 1933 from Charles Scribner's Sons, Hemingway's publisher, stated:

¹ Washington Times Herald, November 21, 1940.

² Convert File, National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, D. C.

Nothing New Stop Hemingway Member of Catholic Church For Years = Charles Scribners Sons¹

On October 30, 1933, the National Catholic Welfare Conference received the following communication from Father Manuel Grana, their correspondent in Spain:

Mr. Hemingway refused absolutely to make any declaration on his religion. I can only quote his wife to the effect that he has been a Catholic for many years, but that he did not wish anyone to investigate his affairs in any manner. For this reason he refused to be interviewed by any reporter.²

That the staff of the National Catholic Welfare Conference was still as bewildered in 1961 as it was in 1933 in so far as the question of Hemingway's Catholicism is concerned was evidenced by the news release which it sent out to all of the Catholic newspapers in the United States. This news release had the following heading: "HEMINGWAY PARTICIPATION IN CHURCH UNCLEAR: BURIED AFTER GRAVESIDE PRAYERS BY PRIEST." The news release itself read:

Author Ernest Hemingway's conversion to Catholicism and his participation in the Church remain clouded in mystery.

Hemingway, 61-year-old Nobel and Pulitzer prize-winning writer of adventure stories, was buried (July 6) in the public cemetery of Ketchum, Idaho, following prayers offered by a Catholic priest.

Hemingway died (July 3) from the blast of a 12-gauge shotgun in his country home in Ketchum.

1

Ibid.

2

Ibid.

Blaine County Coroner Ray McGoldrick said no inquest would be held. He said the death certificate reads: "Self-inflicted gunshot wound in the head."

Father Robert J. Waldmann, pastor of St. Charles church, Hailey, one of whose mission churches is Our Lady of the Snows in Ketchum, recited prayers at the graveside service.

Father Waldmann told newsmen that the question of whether Hemingway died accidentally or otherwise had no bearing on the service.

He said the prayers were "due to the family's request which we are following."

The 24-minute service at graveside was not a formal Catholic ceremony. Father Waldmann began with a quotation from Ecclesiastes 1:4, then recited a "meditation on death," and said the words of Alfred Lord Tennyson on the death of King Arthur in "Idylls of the King."

Hemingway is reported to have been baptized a Catholic after he married the second of his four wives. She was Pauline Pfeiffer, a Catholic.

Hemingway's oldest son, John, when asked by reporters if his father was a practicing Catholic at the time of his death, said: "He actually wasn't. No."

Reports of Hemingway's Catholicism appeared in Catholic publications years ago.

The late Father Daniel A. Lord, S. J., wrote in the Sign magazine in March, 1934, that he had lunched with Father Francis X. Dougherty, pastor of the parish in Key West, Fla., where Hemingway spent some time.

Father Lord said Father Dougherty reported that the author "never misses Sunday Mass," although he always stood in the back of church.

In 1936, Harry Sylvester wrote in the Commonwealth, New York, that Hemingway was baptized "some years ago." He added that "his reasons for leaving the Church are his own and may come out if he ever chose to do an autobiography."

In April, 1941, the Michigan Catholic, newspaper of the Detroit archdiocese, quoted an unidentified Redemptorist priest who said he had been told by Hemingway that "in the last war, I thought I was dying and those around me did too; and so I was baptized."¹

¹

Ibid.

Since the historical evidence of Hemingway's relationship to religion is so slight and so ambiguous, an indirect approach to this problem can contribute to solving it. In one respect, perhaps the indirect approach is even better and more valid than the direct one. Merely because a man is a nominal member of a church is no guarantee that his thought and personal life are influenced by that particular church. More will be said about this later in reference to Hemingway, but it suffices to point out here that a genuinely religious man bases his life upon his religion rather than his religion upon his life. While cognizant of the problem such an approach presents, as has already been pointed out at length in the Introduction, an examination of Hemingway's attitude towards the important questions of life and death, as expressed in both his fictional and nonfictional work, will be perhaps even more significant and revealing than any direct statement he could have made relative to his religious position.

Harry Sylvester said, in the passage already quoted, that one day Hemingway "may write the first great Catholic novel in the English language," and Father Daniel A. Lord hoped that he would eventually "turn his undoubted powers toward the Catholic Literary renaissance." The reason that Hemingway did not do

these things can be explained by the entire attitude towards life which he possessed, and even during the nineteen-thirties, when he was first claimed in some circles for Catholicism, an examination of this attitude in his works produced during this period, such as Death in the Afternoon, A Farewell to Arms, The Fifth Column, Winner Take Nothing, and To Have and Have Not, should have made it abundantly clear to both Mr. Sylvester and Father Lord that, unless Hemingway eventually experienced a genuine conversion of spirit which would have changed basic attitudes which these works expressed, their hopes were in vain.

* * *

To summarize: (1) Ernest Hemingway was reared as a member of the Congregationalist Church. (2) From all indications there seems to be no further mention of Hemingway's relationship to religion until the nineteen-thirties when contradictory reports began to be circulated to the effect that Hemingway was a Catholic. (3) It is significant that Hemingway himself not only made no comment relative to his religious beliefs but he actually refused such comment, as the repeated failure of investigations conducted by the National Catholic Welfare Conference in the United States clearly proves. (4) Much of the writing done during the nineteen-thirties by Catholics on the

question of Hemingway's Catholicism tends to be a sentimental attempt to claim Hemingway for the Church, while at the same time ignoring significant facts relative to his life and especially to his works which would have had an important bearing upon the question of his supposed Catholicism. (5) Of all the statements issued in regard to Hemingway's Catholicism perhaps the most significant was that made by his eldest son, John, at the time of his father's death. John said that his father became a Catholic at the time of his marriage to his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, a Catholic. He added that his father was not a Catholic at the time of his death. (6) The letter of Father Robert J. Waldmann indicates that even the priest who officiated at Hemingway's funeral was uncertain as to Hemingway's ideas concerning religion. Father Waldmann emphasizes that Hemingway did not receive a Catholic burial. (7) Since the evidence offered by Hemingway's life relative to his attitude towards religion is so inconclusive, it must be supplemented by a consideration of Hemingway's works themselves, both fictional and nonfictional. If properly understood and applied, this approach---at least in so far as Hemingway is concerned---can result in an appraisal of his attitude towards religion which will be perhaps more significant and revealing than any direct

statement Hemingway may have made relative to his nominal membership in a church.

CHAPTER II

ALLUSIONS TO RELIGION

In this chapter the direct allusions made to religion in Hemingway's works will be carefully examined. That this method is valid in reference to Hemingway's fictional works has already been pointed out and justified in the Introduction. It is quite proper to make use of the characters in Hemingway's fictional works as an aid in defining his philosophy of life provided that precaution is taken to consider the statements and actions of these characters in total context. Total context implies that the same themes recur repeatedly in Hemingway's works and that his characters are type-characters who appear under different names in successive works. The concept of total context also includes Hemingway's nonfictional works and the known facts of his life. The claims of those critics who see Catholicism in the allusions to religion in Hemingway's fiction will be carefully examined and evaluated. The other possibility, that these passages do not indicate Catholicism, will be carefully explored.

* * *

There are a number of direct allusions to

religion in the fiction of Ernest Hemingway. Leo J. Hertz, along with many other Catholics, finds in such allusions an attitude on the part of Hemingway which is at least friendly to Catholicism, and Hertz, in his enthusiasm, implies that perhaps there is even a little bit more than friendliness. He says:

In these novels, members of the Catholic society emerge by contrast as human beings in a desirable state of spiritual security. I do not mean to go so far as to say that Hemingway necessarily intends these novels as affirmations of the truth of Catholicism, but neither are the novels in any way a denial of that truth. Rather, he seems to say that for those whom faith is an actuality life is a great deal more satisfying than it is for those who do not believe. The priest in Farewell to Arms longs to return to the Abruzzi where a man's love of God is no dirty joke. We have the feeling that the priest in Abruzzi will lead a peaceful, satisfying life, but we have no such feeling about Frederick after he walks home in the rain.¹

That Hertz perhaps reads too much into the Abruzzi passage is evident from another comment which he makes in that regard:

As has been pointed out elsewhere ["Modern Literature," in The Homiletic and Pastoral Review, August, 1953, pp. 972-977], the symbolic meaning of the famous Abruzzi passage can hardly be understood in any other terms than a deep-seated desire on Frederick's part to embrace the cleanness of Christianity in general and, since it is intimately associated with the priest, probably Catholicism in particular. Frederick's experience with the pain of life might well lead him to a sober consideration of his need for faith.²

¹ Hertz, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

² Ibid., p. 31.

Hertzel makes the mistake here of attempting to read the minds of Hemingway's characters. He indicates that he believes they feel, or should feel, such and such. But in actuality, if we are to be objective, we should see in a character what the author wants us to see there and we should not follow the character, with our own conjectures, beyond the end of the story unless the author clearly expects us to do so. That Hertzel reads too much into the Abruzzi passage is evident from that passage itself:

That night at the mess I sat next to the priest and he was disappointed and suddenly hurt that I had not gone to the Abruzzi. He had written to his father that I was coming and they had made preparations. I myself felt as badly as he did and could not understand why I had not gone. It was what I had wanted to do and I tried to explain how one thing had led to another and finally he saw it and understood that I had really wanted to go and it was almost all right. I had drunk much wine and afterward coffee and Strega and I explained, winefully, how we did not do the things we wanted to do; we never did such things.

We two were talking while the others argued. I had wanted to go to Abruzzi. I had gone to no place where the roads were frozen and hard as iron, where it was clear cold and dry and the snow was dry and powdery and hare-tracks in the snow and the peasants took off their hats and called you Lord and there was good hunting. I had gone to no such place but to the smoke of cafes and nights when the room whirled and you needed to look at the wall to make it stop, nights in bed, drunk, when you knew that that was all there was, and the strange excitement of waking and not knowing who it was with you, and the world all unreal in the dark

and so exciting that you must resume again unknowing and not caring in the night, sure that this was all and all and all and not caring.¹

Hertzel and others see significance in the fact that Hemingway often sets his characters against the background of a predominantly Catholic culture and society. He says:

In each case, we see a more or less disoriented modern American in a setting of traditional culture where the society embraces Christian values.

Often, it seems to me, Hemingway readers and critics become so engrossed in the central figures in these novels that they overlook the fact that this Catholic atmosphere is handled with great respect, knowledge, and care.....the values and beliefs of the traditional culture are never treated as anything but desirable, beautiful and, at least by implication, good.²

It seems Hertzel does not realize that Hemingway is dealing with events, such as wars and bullfights, which took place in other countries. Since these countries happened to be Catholic countries, it is only natural that an allusion might be made to Catholicism, but such an allusion, in itself, cannot be used to prove that Hemingway in any sense favored Catholicism. There is one phrase in Hertzel's comments which is especially important, and that phrase is: "in a setting of traditional culture where the society embraces Christian

¹ Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms (New York: The Modern Library, 1932), p. 13.

² Hertzel, op. cit., p. 30.

values." As will be shown in detail, Hemingway does not portray the Christian values of Christian societies; he merely alludes to religious superficialities, and almost always, his Catholic characters are the antithesis of Catholicism and Christianity.

Before considering these passages, it might be well to consider an exception, since it is to the exceptions that critics often appeal. The exception is the portrayal of the priest in A Farewell to Arms. Lieutenant Henry is always kind to the priest and the general picture of a good priest is given.

...the captain commenced picking on the priest. The priest was young and blushed easily and wore a uniform like the rest of us but with a cross in dark red velvet above the left breast pocket of his gray tunic. The captain spoke pidgin Italian for my doubtful benefit, in order that I might understand perfectly, that nothing should be lost.

"Priest to-day with girls," the captain said looking at the priest and at me. The priest smiled and blushed and shook his head. This captain baited him often.

"Not true?" asked the captain. "To-day I see priest with girls."

"No," said the priest. The other officers were amused at the baiting.

"Priest not with girls," went on the captain.

"Priest never with girls," he explained to me. He took my glass and filled it, looking at my eyes all the time, but not losing sight of the priest.

"Priest every night five against one." Every one at the table laughed. "You understand? Priest every night five against one." He made a gesture and laughed loudly. The priest accepted it as a joke.

"The Pope wants the Austrians to win the war," the major said. "He loves Franz Joseph. That's where the money comes from. I am an atheist."

"Did you ever read the 'Black Pig'?" asked the lieutenant. "I will get you a copy. It was

that which shook my faith."

"It is a filthy and vile book," said the priest. "You do not really like it."

"It is very valuable," said the lieutenant. "It tells you about those priests. You will like it," he said to me. I smiled at the priest and he smiled back across the candlelight. "Don't you read it," he said.¹

It must be emphasized that the fact Lieutenant Henry is kind to a priest does not make Hemingway a Catholic. On the other hand, the baiters of the priest, officers in the Italian army, do not portray those Christian values, associated with Catholic culture, of which Hertzels² speaks.

Almost all of the passages in Hemingway's works which make direct reference to religion show, in a general way, lack of seriousness, true reverence, and

¹
Hemingway, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

²
Although the emphasis on this matter may seem to indicate a superfluous appeal to the obvious, many critics seem to have apparently ignored the obvious. Charles A. Brady, for example, writing in America following Hemingway's suicide, states: "It has become a critical truism to describe Hemingway's muse as Catholic and Faulkner's as Protestant. (The tangled question of Hemingway's exact religious status, after his early conversion to Catholicism, might be resolved by saying that he stayed croyant even while his marital coil prevented his being pratiquant.) For once, a truism turns out to be true. Hemingway's habit of imagery is ritually Catholic. So is his sense of limits. So is his admiration for the Spanish thing, even for the Jesuit mystique, as we note in a reference to 'the same town where Loyola got his wound that made him think.' Look, moreover, at the sympathy with which nuns and priests are drawn in his fiction." See Charles A. Brady, "Portrait of Hemingway," America, July 22, 1961.

even knowledge, on the part of his characters, in regard to religious matters. As one example of this attitude, Jake Barnes, the emasculated narrator of The Sun Also Rises, says:

Undressing, I looked at myself in the mirror of the big armoire beside the bed...Of all the ways to be wounded. I suppose it was funny. I put on my pajamas and got into bed...Perhaps I would be able to sleep.

My head started to work. The old grievance. Well, it was a rotten way to be wounded....In the Italian hospital we were going to form a society. It had a funny name in Italian. I wonder what became of the others, the Italians. That was in the Ospedale Maggiore in Milano, Padiglione Ponte. The next building was the Padiglione Zonda...That was where the liaison colonel came to visit me. That was funny. That was about the first funny thing. I was all bandaged up. But they had told him about it. Then he made that wonderful speech: "You, a foreigner...have given more than your life." What a speech!...He never laughed..."Che mala fortuna! Che mala fortuna!"

I never used to realize it, I guess. I try and play it along and just not make trouble for people. Probably I never would have had any trouble if I hadn't run into Brett when they shipped me to England...The Catholic Church had an awfully good way of handling all that. Good advice, anyway. Not to think about it. Oh, it was swell advice. Try and take it sometime. Try and take it.¹

When Jake Barnes is asked whether or not he is a Catholic, he replies that he is technically a Catholic.

We lay with our heads in the shade and looked up into the trees.

¹

Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1926), pp. 30-32. Italics added.

"You asleep?"

"No," Bill said. "I was thinking."

I shut my eyes. It felt good lying on the ground.

"Say," Bill said, "what about this Brett business?"

"What about it?"

"Were you ever in love with her?"

"Sure."

"For how long?"

"Off and on for a hell of a long time."

"Oh, hell!" Bill said. "I'm sorry, fella."

"It's all right," I said. "I don't give a damn any more."

"Really?"

"Really. Only I'd a hell of a lot rather not talk about it."

"You aren't sore I asked you?"

"Why the hell should I be?"

"I'm going to sleep," Bill said. He put a newspaper over his face.

"Listen, Jake," he said, "are you really a Catholic?"

"Technically."

"What does that mean?"

"I don't know."

"All right, I'll go to sleep now," he said.

"Don't keep me awake by talking so much."¹

It is interesting to note, as the preceding examples illustrate, that religion seems to be placed on the lips of Hemingway's characters almost as an afterthought. An outstanding example of such afterthought is found in A Farewell to Arms. Lieutenant Henry, the narrator, says:

We walked along together, along the sidewalk past the wine shops, then across the market square and up the street and through the archway to the cathedral square. There were streetcar tracks and beyond them was the cathedral. It was white and wet in the mist. We crossed the tram tracks. On

¹

Ibid., p. 127. *Italics added.*

our left were the shops, their windows lighted, and the entrance to the galleria. There was a fog in the square and when we came close to the front of the cathedral it was very big and the stone was wet.

"Would you like to go in?"

"No," Catherine said.¹

Similarly, in The Sun Also Rises, Jake Barnes relates:

During the morning I usually sat in the cafe and read the Madrid papers and then walked in the town or out into the country. Sometimes Bill went along. Sometimes he wrote in his room. Robert Cohn spent the mornings studying Spanish or trying to get a shave at the barber-shop. Brett and Mike never got up until noon. We all had a vermouth at the cafe. It was a quiet life and no one was drunk. I went to church a couple of times, once with Brett. She said she wanted to hear me go to confession, but I told her that not only was it impossible but it was not as interesting as it sounded, and, besides, it would be in a language she did not know. We met Cohn as we came out of church, and although it was obvious he had followed us, yet he was very pleasant and nice, and we all three went for a walk out to the gypsy camp, and Brett had her fortune told.²

In the passage just quoted, the subject of confession does not seem to be any more important than going to the barber-shop, drinking, or having one's fortune told.

In one passage Hemingway's characters indicate that drinking is even more important to them than religion. Jake Barnes of The Sun Also Rises states:

¹ Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 156.

² Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 155.

Going down the streets in the morning on the way to mass in the cathedral, I heard them singing through the open doors of the shops. They were warming up. There were many people at the eleven o'clock mass. San Fermin is also a religious festival.

.
I was introduced to the people at the table. They supplied their names to Mike and sent for a fork for me.

"Stop eating their dinner, Michael," Brett shouted from the wine-barrels.

"I don't want to eat up your meal," I said when some one handed me a fork.

"Eat," he said. "What do you think it's here for?"

I unscrewed the nozzle of the big wine-bottle and handed it around. Every one took a drink, tipping the wine-skin at arm's length.

Outside, above the singing, we could hear the music of the procession going by.

"Isn't that the procession?" Mike asked.

"Nada," some one said. "It's nothing. Drink up. Lift the bottle."¹

If religion has any meaning at all to the characters which Hemingway created, it seems to serve the purpose of magic, of the talisman, something to be used for luck or when one is in trouble. In A Farewell to Arms the following conversation takes place between Lieutenant Henry and Catherine Barkley:

"No. I'm leaving now for a show up above Plava."

"A show?"

"I don't think it's anything."

"And you'll be back?"

"To-morrow."

She was unclasping something from her neck.

She put it in my hand. "It's a Saint Anthony,"

she said. "And come to-morrow night."

"You're not a Catholic, are you?"

¹

Ibid., pp. 157-163. Italics added.

"No. But they say a Saint Anthony's very useful."¹

In The Sun Also Rises Brett and Jake Barnes converse as follows:

"Is that San Fermin's?"

Brett looked at the yellow wall of the chapel.

"Yes. Where the show started on Sunday."

"Let's go in. Do you mind? I'd rather like to pray a little for him [Romero, her bullfighter-lover] or something."

We went in through the heavy leather door that moved very lightly. It was dark inside...We knelt at one of the long wooden benches. After a little I felt Brett stiffen beside me, and saw she was looking straight ahead.

"Come on," she whispered throatily. "Let's get out of here. Makes me damned nervous."

Outside in the hot brightness of the street Brett looked up at the tree-tops in the wind. The praying had not been much of a success.

"Don't know why I get so nervy in church," Brett said. "Never does me any good."

We walked along.

"I'm damned bad for a religious atmosphere," Brett said. "I've the wrong type of face."²

In The Old Man and the Sea, the old man, who evidently has no close relationship to God, prays for luck in superstitious fashion.

"I am not religious," he said. "But I will say ten Our Fathers and ten Hail Marys that I should catch this fish, and I promise to make a pilgrimage to the Virgin of Cobre if I catch him. This is a promise.

He commenced to say his prayers mechanically. Sometimes he would be so tired that he could not

¹ Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, pp. 45-46.
Italics added.

² Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 216.

remember the prayer and then he would say them fast so that they would come automatically. Hail Marys are easier to say than Our Fathers, he thought.¹

A little later in the story the following is related:

For an hour the old man had been seeing black spots before his eyes and the sweat salted his eyes and salted the cut over his eye and on his forehead. He was not afraid of the black spots. They were normal at the tension that he was pulling on the line. Twice, though, he had felt faint and dizzy and that had worried him.

"I could not fail myself and die on a fish like this," he said. "Now that I have him coming so beautifully, God help me endure. I'll say a hundred Our Fathers and a hundred Hail Marys. But I cannot say them now."

Consider them said, he thought. I'll say them later.²

In The Sun Also Rises, even more clearly than in the case of the old man, Jake Barnes' prayer is rather meaningless and, like the old man's, superstitious. The passage which describes his prayer reads as follows:

At the end of the street I saw the cathedral and walked up toward it. The first time I ever saw it I thought the facade was ugly but I liked it now. I went inside. It was dim and dark and the pillars went high up, and there were people praying, and it smelt of incense, and there were some wonderful big windows. I knelt and started to pray and prayed for everybody I thought of, Brett and Mike and Bill and Robert Cohn and myself, and all the bull-fighters, separately for the ones I liked, and lumping all the rest, then I prayed for myself

¹ Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), pp. 71-72.

² Ibid., p. 96.

again, and while I was praying for myself I found I was getting sleepy, so I prayed that the bull-fights would be good, and that it would be a fine fiesta, and that we would get some fishing. I wondered if there was anything else I might pray for, and I thought I would like to have some money, so I prayed that I would make a lot of money, and then I started to think how I would make it, and thinking of making money reminded me of the count, and I started wondering about where he was, and regretting I hadn't seen him since that night in Montmartre, and about something funny Brett told me about him, and as all the time I was kneeling with my forehead on the wood in front of me, and was thinking of myself as praying, I was a little ashamed, and regretted that I was such a rotten Catholic, but realized there was nothing I could do about it, at least for a while, and maybe never, but that anyway it was a grand religion, and I only wished I felt religious and maybe I would the next time; and then I was out in the hot sun on the steps of the cathedral, and the forefingers and the thumb of my right hand were still damp, and I felt them dry in the sun. The sunlight was hot and hard, and I crossed over beside some buildings, and walked back along side-streets to the hotel.¹

In other words, religion for Barnes was something which made him feel good. He did not understand it as forming a close, personal relationship between God and man. He liked the "wonderful big windows" of the cathedral. He prayed selfishly and in a distracted fashion, his inane reverie accentuating the inanity of prayers which bordered on blasphemy. Catholicism was merely "a grand religion," a sort of lift which Barnes felt when he was in a receptive mood. St. Ignatius points out those things which are important

¹
Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, pp. 99-100.

to the genuine Christian, and these things are the exact reverse of what Jake Barnes seeks in prayer.

St. Ignatius says:

Man is created to praise, reverence and serve God Our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. And the other things on the face of the earth are created for man and that they may help him in prosecuting the end for which he is created. From this it follows that man is to use them as much as they help him on to his end, and ought to hinder himself of them so far as they hinder him as to it... it is necessary to make ourselves indifferent to all created things in all that is allowed to the choice of our free will and is not prohibited to it; so that, on our part we want not health rather than sickness, riches rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, long rather than short life, and so in all the rest; desiring and choosing only what is most conducive for us to the end for which we are created.¹

Lieutenant Henry of A Farewell to Arms, who has shown no evidence of being really religious, prays almost hysterically for luck when he feels that his mistress is going to die. That passage reads:

Upstairs I met the nurse coming down the hall.
 "I just called you at the hotel," she said.
 Something dropped inside me.
 "What is wrong?"
 "Mrs. Henry has had a hemorrhage."
 "Can I go in?"
 "No, not yet. The doctor is with her."
 "Is it dangerous?"
 "It is very dangerous." The nurse went into the room and shut the door. I sat outside in the hall. Everything was gone inside of me. I did not think. I could not think. I knew she was going to die and I prayed that she would not. Don't

¹ St. Ignatius Loyola, The Spiritual Exercises, trans. E. Mullan, S. J. (New York: Kenedy, 1941), p. 21.

let her die. Oh, God, please don't let her die. I'll do anything for you if you won't let her die. Please, please, please, dear God, don't let her die. Dear God, don't let her die. Please, please, please don't let her die. God please make her not die. I'll do anything you say if you don't let her die. You took the baby but don't let her die. That was all right but don't let her die. Please, please, dear God, don't let her die.¹

Religion for Lieutenant Henry thus becomes something entirely divorced from the ordinary affairs of his life. God is something to be used, half-hysterically, almost as a charm, as a last resort, when the direst misfortunes strike.

The attitude towards prayer of such characters in Hemingway's works as Jake Barnes, Brett Ashley, the old man of the sea, and Lieutenant Henry is important. It indicates that they do not understand even the most elementary meaning of the Christian notion of prayer. They have no conception of prayer as the lifting of mind and heart to God, as a mode of union with God, or as a striving for such union; as a begging of God to give Himself to us and also to give us the power to surrender ourselves to Him. The Church prays over the grave of the Christian departing from this world: "Teach us to watch and pray, that when Thy summons comes, we may go forth to meet the Bridegroom and enter with Him into life everlasting." The real

¹

Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*, pp. 352-353.

meaning of Christian prayer is exemplified by a prayer in the Mass which gives the end of man and shows how this end is realized: "O God, Who has most wonderfully created man and even more wonderfully recreated him, grant that through the mystery of this water and wine, we may be made partakers in the divinity of Him Who has deigned to become a partaker in our humanity, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, through all eternity."

On some occasions Hemingway's characters ignore traditional religion entirely and even find a substitute for it. In A Farewell to Arms the following conversation takes place between Lieutenant Henry and his mistress, Catherine:

"Couldn't we be married privately some way? Then if anything happened to me or if you had a child."

"There's no way to be married except by church or state. We are married privately. You see, darling, it would mean everything to me if I had any religion. But I haven't any religion."

"You gave me the Saint Anthony."

"That was for luck. Some one gave it to me."

"Then nothing worries you?"

"Only being sent away from you. You're my religion. You're all I've got."

"All right. But I'll marry you the day you say."

"Don't talk as though you had to make an honest woman of me, darling. I'm a very honest

woman. You can't be ashamed of something if you're only happy and proud of it. Aren't you happy?"¹

When Catherine lay dying she still continued to insist that Lieutenant Henry was her religion.

"Do you want me to get a priest or any one to come and see you?"

"Just you," she said. Then a little later, "I'm not afraid. I just hate it."

"You must not talk so much," the doctor said.

"All right," Catherine said.

"Do you want me to do anything, Cat? Can I get you anything?"

Catherine smiled. "No." Then a little later, "You won't do our things with another girl, or say the same things, will you?"

"Never."

"I want you to have girls, though."²

In The Sun Also Rises, Brett substitutes not being a bitch for God. That account reads as follows:

The barman went far enough up the bar so that he would not hear our conversation. Brett had sipped from the Martini as it stood, on the wood. Then she picked it up. Her hand was steady enough to lift it after that first sip.

"It's good. Isn't it a nice bar?"

"They're all nice bars."

"You know I didn't believe it at first. He was born in 1905. I was in school in Paris, then. Think of that."

"Anything you want me to think about it?"

"Don't be an ass. Would you buy a lady a drink?"

"We'll have two more Martinis."

"As they were before, sir?"

"They were very good." Brett smiled at him.

"Thank you, Ma'am."

"Well, bung-o," Brett said.

"Bung-o!"

"You know," Brett said, "he'd only been with

¹
Ibid., p. 123. Italics added.

²
Ibid., p. 354.

two women before. He never cared about anything but bull-fighting."

"He's got plenty of time."

"I don't know. He thinks it was me. Not the show in general."

"Well, it was you."

"Yes. It was me."

"I thought you weren't going to ever talk about it."

"How can I help it?"

"You'll lose it if you talk about it."

"I just talk around it. You know I feel rather damned good, Jake."

"You should."

"You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch."

"Yes."

"It's sort of what we have instead of God."

"Some people have God," I said. "Quite a lot."

"He never worked very well with me."

"Should we have another Martini?"¹

Pilar, in For Whom the Bell Tolls, tells

Robert Jordan that intimate conversation should replace religion. The passage reads:

"Que va," said Robert Jordan. "Another Sunday is very far. If we see Wednesday we are all right. But I do not like to hear thee talk like this."

"Every one needs to talk to some one," the woman said. "Before we had religion and other nonsense. Now for every one there should be some one to whom one can speak frankly, for all the valor that one could have one becomes very alone."²

It is significant that Hemingway's characters exhibited no change in their attitude towards religion

¹ Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, pp. 256-257. Italics added.

² Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), p. 89. Italics added.

after his reported conversion to Catholicism. As a matter of fact, Hemingway's basic philosophy remains the same right up to and including The Old Man and the Sea. If Hemingway had taken the matter of Catholicism seriously, a change could have been expected in the entire tenor of his works. As Saint Paul says: "If then any man is in Christ, he is a new creature:¹ the old things are passed away!"

* * *

To summarize: (1) This chapter examines direct allusions made to religion in Hemingway's works. (2) As has already been pointed out in the Introduction, in the case of Hemingway, it is perfectly valid to utilize the characters in his fictional works as an aid in defining his personal philosophy of life, provided that the precaution is taken to consider the utterances and actions of characters in a total context---a context which accepts the fact that the same themes recur again and again in Hemingway's works and that his characters are type-characters who appear under different names in work after work. This total context also includes Hemingway's nonfictional writings and the facts of his own life which are definitely known. (3) Catholic critics sometimes attempt to prove

¹

II Corinthians 5, 17.

that Hemingway was Catholic in his thinking by pointing out that priests are treated with respect in his works and that his characters sometimes act out their lives against a Catholic background. An examination of the passages quoted by such critics to prove their point of view clearly indicates that their assumptions are unwarranted. There is nothing in these passages to indicate that Hemingway was Catholic in his thinking. (4) On the other hand, there are passages in Hemingway's fictional works which indicate a definite shallowness, callousness, and perhaps even misunderstanding, towards the basic truths of religion in general and Catholicism in particular. (5) That such a tone continued to pervade his work after the rumors of his conversion in the nineteen-thirties is significant. As St. Paul said in II Corinthians 5, 17: "If then any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away!"

CHAPTER III

DISTRUST OF THE INTELLECT

This chapter will be devoted to a brief consideration of the attitude towards the intellect found in Hemingway's works and in Hemingway himself. The chapter is brief for two reasons. First of all, critics are generally agreed in regard to Hemingway's attitude towards the intellect and most of the chapter will be devoted to substantiating the fact that this is one matter in which critics, for the most part, agree. Secondly, Hemingway's attitude towards the intellect is not only emphasized by the facts of his own life, as comments by Putnam, Fadiman, Ross, and others indicate, but it is emphasized repeatedly throughout his works and will appear indirectly again and again in quotations and comments within this thesis. The attitude towards prayer and the reference to substitute religion in the preceding chapter, for example, offer just one example of the consistent attitude towards the intellect which is found in Hemingway's works and life. The importance of the intellect in reference to religion is obvious, of course. It is the intellect which distinguishes man from the brute and which

presents him with the very possibility of engaging in religious activity.

* * *

Arthur Dewing, writing in The North American Review, pointed out that while other writers wrote about the mind and the psychological, Hemingway did not.¹

Maxwell Geismar commented that Hemingway's characters "act as if thought is unthinkable," and Clifton Fadiman noted a "lack of interest in rational analysis" in Hemingway.² Robert Penn Warren said that "...Hemingway is anti-intellectual, and has a great contempt for any type of solution arrived at without the testings of immediate experience."³ Philip Young, in one of his books on Hemingway, comments:

The critics who write for what are called the 'little magazines' are very nearly the only serious critics we have, and it is interesting to consider Hemingway's objections to what he calls 'the Kierkegaard circuit.' He has only one big objection, really. It is to anything which he does not regard as virile enough, and for some reason any kind of intellectualism seems to indicate to him a lack

¹ Arthur Dewing, "The Mistake about Hemingway," The North American Review, 232 (October, 1931), 364-366.

² Clifton Fadiman, "Ernest Hemingway: An American Byron," Nation, 136 (January 18, 1933).

³ Robert Penn Warren, "Hemingway," The Kenyon Review, IX (Winter, 1947), 7.

of masculinity. In writing a blurb for Nelson Algren's Man with the Golden Arm, for instance, he manages to voice his confusion: 'Truman Capote fans grab your hats, if you have any, and go. This is a man writing....' He once tried less delicately but by the same tactics to dispose of Proust, Racine, Radiguet, Cocteau and others.¹

In his book, Paris Was Our Mistress, Samuel Putnam records one of his visits with Hemingway:

He talked of hunting and fishing and drinking. Especially of drinking, which he regarded, apparently, as something of a big-game exploit. Here, sitting opposite me now, was the creator of that character who had uttered the famous dictum about the bottle as 'a sovereign means of direct action.' He sat there, talking on and on, and brilliantly, of flying, skiing, boxing, bull-fighting. The 'three most exciting things in life,' he gravely informed me, were flying, skiing, and sexual intercourse. Only, he did not say sexual intercourse but used the short and not unlovely word.²

A favorite expression of Hemingway's characters, which appears over and over again in his works, is the expression: "Let's not think about anything." In A Farewell to Arms, Lieutenant Henry ponders: "I was not made to think. I was made to eat. My God, yes. Eat and drink and sleep with Catherine."³

That Ernest Hemingway was a typical product

¹ Young, Ernest Hemingway (Rinehart), p. 128.

² Samuel Putnam, Paris Was Our Mistress (New York: Viking, 1947), p. 129. Italics added. A similar description of Hemingway was given by Lilian Ross. See Lilian Ross, "How Do You Like It Now, Gentlemen?" The New Yorker, May 13, 1950.

³ Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 249.

of his time in his distrust of the intellect was pointed out by John Atkins in the following way:

Denis Saurat in Modernes reminded his readers that the 17th Century had exalted reason, the 19th Century romantics had enthroned emotion, but it was in the 20th Century that this trend tipped into a search for sensation. Our civilised on-looker heard his values being ridiculed, was informed that the very thing he had been taught to distrust, his animal nature, was his only admirable possession. What the senses demanded, they should be given. An old nursery song which acquired adult currency put it, Give a dog a bone.¹

As Clifton Fadiman said:

In historical crises, when the flesh of the dominant system has withered away and laid bare the bones of chaos, the superior individual either makes common cause with his fellows in some attempt at a finer order or, as in the novels of Hemingway, retreats upon his instincts. He abandons, as Hemingway puts it, all efforts "to save the world." He cultivates to the point of fetishism...primal emotions....In the last analysis he worships his reflexes, tending to exalt any activity which the act of introspection cannot corrode. He reverts, however subtly, to the primitive and even the brutal....He puts his faith in simple things rather than in complicated words and shakes off all phrases that smack of the metaphysical or the moral.²

If there is any one nation which in the twentieth century has, more than any other, exalted the primitive and anti-intellectual, it is the United States of America; and it is clear that Hemingway was both influenced by and influenced this situation. It is in

¹ John A. Atkins, The Art of Ernest Hemingway: His Work and Personality (London: P. Nevill, 1952), pp. 4-5.

² Clifton Fadiman, op. cit., p. 63.

the America of the twentieth century that the opprobrious term "egghead" was created to signify American distrust of, and disdain for, intellectuals.

Another aspect of American anti-intellectualism and religion in relation to Hemingway will be dealt with in a later chapter, but what is to be emphasized here is that an anti-intellectualism which results in an attachment to mere sensual activity---as we clearly find stressed by Hemingway in conversation and in his works---is entirely antithetical to genuine religion. Saint Paul points out that "the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other."¹ And in another place Saint Paul says: "If by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the flesh, you will live."² The importance of this distinction between the sensuous and rational appetites, according to the mind of Saint Thomas, is expressed in the following words:

To understand how the sensuous and the rational appetite can be opposed, it should be borne in mind that their natural objects are altogether different. The object of the former is the gratification of the senses; the object of the latter is the good of the entire human nature and consists in the subordination of the lower to the rational

¹ Galatians 5, 17.

² Romans 8, 12.

faculties, and again in the subordination of reason to God, its supreme good and ultimate end.¹

The importance which the Catholic Church has traditionally attached to the intellect, and the Church's hostility to anti-intellectualism, is emphasized by Canon George D. Smith in the following manner:

The Catholic theologian sets out with the supposition---which as a philosopher he is prepared to vindicate---that the human mind is able to know truth...From all...attempts to disparage the powers of the human reason the Catholic Church has remained ever aloof...The teaching of the Catholic Church on this all-important subject is stated clearly by the Vatican Council....²

It is evident that Ernest Hemingway's attitude towards the intellect was not a Catholic attitude. It is also evident that Hemingway's disdain for the intellect and worship of the senses could result in an approach to life which would be the antithesis of religion in general and Catholicism in particular. In subsequent chapters some of the results of Hemingway's attitude towards the intellect will be examined in detail. As has already been pointed out, some of these results have already been seen in the previous chapter

¹ "Concupiscence," The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. IV (1908).

² Canon George D. Smith (ed.), The Teaching of the Catholic Church (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953), I, 2-3.

in the unintellectual and totally emotional attitude towards prayer and substitute religion.

* * *

To summarize: (1) This chapter dealt with Hemingway's attitude towards the intellect as exemplified by his works and by the man himself. (2) The importance of Hemingway's attitude towards the intellect in so far as religion is concerned rests upon the fact that it is the intellect which distinguishes man from the brute and enables man to engage in religious activity. (3) Critics are generally agreed that Hemingway was anti-intellectual. The comments of a number of representative critics have been recorded in this regard and brief reference has been made to Hemingway's works and to the man himself. The possibility of Hemingway's having been influenced by the anti-intellectualism current in twentieth-century America has been mentioned as well as the possible influence of Hemingway himself in this matter. (4) Hemingway's anti-intellectualism and his emphasis upon the sensual is antithetical to the true spirit of religion in general and Catholicism in particular. Saint Thomas explains the opposition which can exist between the sensuous and the rational appetite. Saint Paul points out that "the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are opposed to each

other." The Catholic Church has traditionally attached great importance to the intellect, and the Church has been hostile towards anti-intellectualism. (5) Hemingway's attitude towards the intellect was not a Catholic attitude. His concern for the senses and unconcern for the intellect could result in attitudes towards life which would be anything but religious and Catholic. Some of these attitudes were already examined in the previous chapter, specifically those dealing with the unintellectual and emotional attitude towards prayer and substitute religion.

CHAPTER IV

THE LIFE OF UNFULFILLMENT

The direct result of worshipping the sensual in man, apart from the intellect, can result only in a sense of unfulfillment, the feeling that life does not provide those joys expected of it. In this chapter that sense of unfulfillment will be examined as it is found in Hemingway's works. It will be considered under three general aspects: unfulfillment in sexual relations; unfulfillment in obtaining what is considered to be some earthly good, or in obtaining it too late, or in obtaining something one does not really desire; and unfulfillment in a higher sense, the inability to identify oneself with something or someone outside oneself and thus overcome one's feeling of utter isolation and loneliness in a hostile world. The question of unfulfillment in Hemingway's own life will also be considered briefly.

* * *

Saint Thomas points out that "Man is placed midway between the things of this world and spiritual goods, in which eternal happiness consists; so that the more he clings to one set of goods, the further

he gets away from the other, and vice versa.¹ When a man clings to the sensual at the expense of the intellectual or higher faculties in man, the result can be none other than an experience of unfulfillment, a feeling that life never provides the joys expected of it. As Jesus said: "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."² And Saint Paul makes clear the ultimate result of worshiping the sensual: "Their end is ruin, their God is the belly, their glory is in their shame, they mind the things of earth."³

If there is one theme which occurs repeatedly in Hemingway's works it is that of unfulfillment. It occurs with such absolute consistency and regularity, as a matter of fact, that one would be safe in concluding that this was one of Hemingway's basic attitudes towards life, and this assumption is strengthened further by the fact of Hemingway's suicide. One does not find Hemingway's characters experiencing that sense of fulfillment in regard to life which only religious faith can engender; that sense of fulfillment which comes

¹ Saint Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 1 a 2 ae, q. 108, a. 4.

² Matthew 4, 4.

³ Philippians 3, 19.

with the realization that no matter how frustrating the particular incidents of one's life may be, that life has a purpose, a final end, a sublime destiny; namely union with God.

If man is to live on the sensual level, if he is to emphasize the brute in himself at the expense of the spiritual, then it is only natural that once his appetite for food has been satisfied that he will most often turn to sexuality in his attempt to find fulfillment. This is precisely what the characters in Hemingway's works constantly do. Sex is their predominant occupation.

Jake Barnes in The Sun Also Rises represents the epitome of a Hemingway character's inability to fulfill himself sexually. He is impotent. As a consequence of his impotence, Brett also fails to find fulfillment. Jake Barnes, the narrator of the story, explains the situation in the following way:

We were sitting apart and we jolted close together going down the old street. Brett's hat was off. Her head was back. I saw her face in the lights from the open shops, then it was dark, then I saw her face clearly as we came out on the Avenue des Gobelins...Brett's face was white and the long line of her neck showed in the bright light of the flares. The street was dark again and I kissed her. Our lips were tight together and then she turned away and pressed against the corner of the seat, as far away as she could get. Her head was down.

"Don't touch me," she said. "Please don't touch me."

"What's the matter?"

"I can't stand it."

"Oh, Brett."
 "You mustn't. You must know. I can't stand it, that's all. Oh, darling, please understand!"
 "Don't you love me?"
 "Love you? I simply turn all to jelly when you touch me."
 "Isn't there anything we can do about it?"
 . . . "I don't know," she said. "I don't want to go through that hell again."
 "We'd better keep away from each other."
 "But, darling, I have to see you. It isn't all that you know."
 "No, but it always gets to be."
 . . . "When I think of the hell I've put chaps through. I'm paying for it all now."
 "Don't talk like a fool," I said. "Besides, what happened to me is supposed to be funny. I never think about it."
 "Oh, no. I'll lay you don't."
 "Well, let's shut up about it."
 "I laughed about it too, myself, once." She wasn't looking at me.
 . . . "It's funny," I said. "It's very funny. And it's a lot of fun, too, to be in love."
 "Do you think so?" her eyes looked flat again.
 "I don't mean fun that way. In a way it's an enjoyable feeling."
 "No," she said. "I think it's hell on earth."
 "It's good to see each other."
 "No. I don't think it is."
 "Don't you want to?"
 "I have to."¹

In a later passage the same problem arises:

"Couldn't we live together, Brett? Couldn't we just live together?"
 "I don't think so. I'd just tromper you with everybody. You couldn't stand it."
 "I stand it now."
 "That would be different. It's my fault, Jake. It's the way I'm made."
 "Couldn't we go off in the country for a while?"

¹

Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, pp. 25-27.

"It wouldn't be any good. I'll go if you like. But I couldn't live quietly in the country. Not with my own true love."

"I know."

"Isn't it rotten? There isn't any use my telling you I love you."

"You know I love you."

"Let's not talk. Talking's all bilge. I'm going away from you, and then Michael's coming back."

"Why are you going away?"

"Better for you. Better for me."¹

The Sun Also Rises concludes on the same dismal note:

Down-stairs we came out through the first-floor dining-room to the street. A waiter went for a taxi. It was hot and bright. Up the street was a little square with trees and grass where there were taxis parked. A taxi came up the street, the waiter hanging out at the side. I tipped him and told the driver where to drive, and got in beside Brett. The driver started up the street. I settled back. Brett moved close to me. We sat close against each other. I put my arm around her and she rested against me comfortably. It was very hot and bright, and the houses looked sharply white. We turned out onto the Gran Via.

"Oh, Jake," Brett said, "we could have had such a damned good time together."

Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.

"Yes," I said. "Isn't it pretty to think so?"²

Richard Gordon in To Have and Have Not, while being unfaithful to his wife, is unable to satisfy Helene Bradley as her husband looks on, and consequently both suffer from a sense of unfulfillment and

¹
Ibid., p. 57.

²
Ibid., pp. 258-259.

disappointment.

That afternoon she had not seen him as the door opened. She had not seen anything but the white ceiling with its cake-frosting modeling of cupids, doves and scroll work that the light from the open door suddenly made clear.

Richard Gordon had turned his head and seen him, standing heavy and bearded in the doorway.

"Don't stop," Helene had said. "Please don't stop." Her bright hair was spread over the pillow.

But Richard Gordon had stopped and his head was still turned, staring.

"Don't mind him. Don't mind anything. Don't you see you can't stop now?" the woman had said in desperate urgency.

The bearded man had closed the door softly. He was smiling.

"What's the matter, darling?" Helene Bradley had asked, now in the darkness again.

"I must go."

"Don't you see you can't go?"

"That man----"

"That's only Tommy," Helene had said. "He knows all about these things. Don't mind him. Come on, darling. Please do."

"I can't."

"You must," Helene had said. He could feel her shaking, and her head on his shoulder was trembling. "My God, don't you know anything? Haven't you any regard for a woman?"

"I have to go," said Richard Gordon.

In the darkness he had felt the slap across his face that lighted flashes of light in his eyeballs. Then there was another slap. Across his mouth this time.

"So that's the kind of man you are," she had said to him. "I thought you were a man of the world. Get out of here."

That was this afternoon. That was how it had finished at the Bradley's.¹

After a quarrel during which Richard Gordon and his wife decide to separate, Richard Gordon still

1

Ernest Hemingway, To Have and Have Not (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), pp. 188-190.

feels the same sense of inadequacy and unfulfillment.

His wife is similarly grieved.

"Good-by," she said, and he saw her face he always loved so much, that crying never spoiled, and her curly black hair, her small firm breasts under the sweater forward against the edge of the table, and he didn't see the rest of her that he'd loved so much and thought he had pleased, but evidently hadn't been any good to, that was all below the table, and as he went out the door she was looking at him across the table; and her chin was on her hands; and she was crying.¹

A minor character in To Have and Have Not, Dorothy, is unable to sleep and she contemplates the problem of sexual unfulfillment as her drunken lover sleeps beside her. She thinks:

I wonder how Eddie would be if we were married. He would be running around with some one younger I suppose. I suppose they can't help the way they're built any more than we can. I just want a lot of it and I feel so fine, and being some one else or some one new doesn't really mean a thing. It's just it itself, and you would love them always if they gave it to you. The same one I mean. But they aren't built that way. They want some one new, or some one younger, or some one that they shouldn't have, or some one that looks like some one else. Or if you're dark they want a blonde. Or if you're blonde they go for a redhead. Or if you're a redhead then it's something else. A Jewish girl I guess, and if they've had really enough they want Chinese or Lesbians or goodness knows what...There must be men who don't get tired of you or of it. There must be. But who has them?

Since Eddie is drunk Dorothy ends up masturbating.²

Not only do Hemingway's characters experience

¹

Ibid., p. 192.

²

Ibid., pp. 244-246.

a sense of unfulfillment in the sexual act itself, but they also suffer because they find that people or goods they happen to want are unattainable. This is evidenced by a conversation which takes place between Robert Cohn's mistress, Frances, and Jake Barnes in The Sun Also Rises. Frances tells Jake Barnes that Robert Cohn intends to leave her.

"What's the matter, Frances?"

"Oh, nothing," she said, "except that he wants to leave me."

"How do you mean?"

"Oh, he told every one that we were going to be married, and I told my mother and every one, and now he doesn't want to do it."

"What's the matter?"

"He's decided he hasn't lived enough. I knew it would happen when he went to New York."

She looked up, very bright-eyed and trying to talk inconsequentially.

"I wouldn't marry him if he doesn't want to. Of course I wouldn't. I wouldn't marry him now for anything. But it does seem to me to be a little late now, after we've waited three years, and I've just gotten my divorce."

I said nothing.

"We were going to celebrate so, and instead we've just had scenes. It's so childish. We have dreadful scenes, and he cries and begs me to be reasonable, but he says he just can't do it."

"It's rotten luck."

"I should say it is rotten luck. I've wasted two years and a half on him now. And I don't know now if any man will ever want to marry me. Two years ago I could have married anybody I wanted, down at Cannes. All the old ones that wanted to marry somebody chic and settle down were crazy about me. Now I don't think I could get anybody."

"Sure, you could marry anybody."

"No, I don't believe it. And I'm fond of him,

too. And I'd like to have children. I always thought we'd have children."¹

Robert Cohn himself, on the other hand, suffers because he is rejected by Brett.

He was crying. His voice was funny. He lay there in his white shirt on the bed in the dark. His polo shirt.

"I'm going away in the morning."

He was crying without making any noise.

"I just couldn't stand it about Brett. I've been through hell, Jake. It's been simply hell. When I met her down here Brett treated me as though I were a perfect stranger. I just couldn't stand it. We lived together at San Sebastian. I suppose you know it. I can't stand it any more."²

In To Have and Have Not, as Harry Morgan lies mortally wounded on his boat, he thinks about all the money aboard and is frustrated in the realization that it has come too late. He contemplates his failure to achieve a suitable position in life, and he regrets that his wife will now be alone.

...I wonder what she'll do. I wonder what Marie will do? Maybe they'll pay her the rewards. God damn that Cuban. She'll get along, I guess. She's a smart woman. I guess we would all have gotten along. I guess it was nuts all right. I guess I bit off too much more than I could chew. I shouldn't have tried it. I had it all right up to the end. Nobody'll know how it happened. I wish I could do something about Marie. Plenty money on this boat. I don't even know how much. Anybody be O. K. with that money. I wonder if the coast guard will pinch it. Some of it, I guess. I wish I could let the old woman know what happened.

¹

Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, pp. 48-49.

²

Ibid., p. 201.

I wonder what she'll do? I don't know. I guess I should have got a job in a filling station or something. I should have quit trying to go in boats. There's no honest money going in boats any more... I guess what a man like me ought to do is run something like a filling station. Hell, I couldn't run no filling station. Marie, she'll run something. She's too old to peddle her hips now.¹

Lieutenant Henry, in a Farewell to Arms, feels no sense of fulfillment in the birth of his first son but actually feels disappointment in having been forced to accept what he does not want.

A doctor came out followed by a nurse. He held something in his two hands that looked like a freshly skinned rabbit and hurried across the corridor with it and in through another door. I went down to the door he had gone into and found them in the room doing things to a new-born child. The doctor held him up for me to see. He held him by the heels and slapped him.

"Is he all right?"

"He's magnificent. He'll weigh five kilos."

I had no feeling for him. He did not seem to have anything to do with me. I felt no feeling of fatherhood.

"Aren't you proud of your son?" the nurse asked. They were washing him and wrapping him in something. I saw the little dark face and dark hand, but I did not see him move or hear him cry. The doctor was doing something to him again. He looked upset.

"No," I said. "He nearly killed his mother."

"It isn't the little darling's fault. Didn't you want a boy?"

"No," I said. The doctor was busy with him. He held him up by the feet and slapped him. I did not wait to see it. I went out in the hall.²

Even when Hemingway's characters attempt to

1

Hemingway, To Have and Have Not, pp. 174-175.

2

Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 346.

rise above mere sexuality and wish to give themselves to something or someone outside themselves, the result is inevitably dismal failure, which brings them back to their hostile world of isolation and loneliness. In Hemingway's first published story, Up in Michigan, for example, Liz Coates was attracted to Jim Gilmore, but she expected more than mere sexuality from him, and when she received no more than this she experienced only feelings of loneliness and emptiness. Hemingway describes as follows the events which occurred one night after Jim had been drinking:

The hemlock planks of the dock were hard and splintery and cold and Jim was heavy on her and he had hurt her. Liz pushed him, she was so uncomfortable and cramped. Jim was asleep. He wouldn't move. She worked out from under him and sat up and straightened her skirt and coat and tried to do something with her hair. Jim was sleeping with his mouth a little open. Liz leaned over and kissed him on the cheek. He was still asleep. She lifted his head a little and shook it. He rolled his head over and swallowed. Liz started to cry. She walked over to the edge of the dock and looked down to the water. There was a mist coming up from the bay. She was cold and miserable and everything felt gone. She walked to where Jim was lying and shook him once more to make sure. She was crying.

"Jim," she said, "Jim. Please, Jim."

Jim stirred and curled a little tighter. Liz took off her coat and leaned over and covered him with it. She tucked it around him neatly and carefully. Then she walked across the dock and up the steep sandy road to go to bed. A cold mist was coming up through the woods from the bay.¹

1

Ernest Hemingway, "Up in Michigan," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), pp. 85-86.

As Robert Penn Warren has pointed out, when sexual attraction reaches the status of love in Hemingway's characters, the process becomes "one which attempts to achieve a meaning rather than to forget meaninglessness in the world."¹ But because this love ever remains only earthly love, even here frustration is the inevitable conclusion. In A Farewell to Arms, for example, Lieutenant Henry apparently develops a love for Catherine which rises above the merely sexual, but the end result is still loneliness and defeat, as the following passage indicates:

Outside the room, in the hall, I spoke to the doctor, "is there anything I can do to-night?"

"No. There is nothing to do. Can I take you to your hotel?"

"No, thank you. I am going to stay here a while."

"I know there is nothing to say. I cannot tell you----"

"No," I said. "There's nothing to say."

"Good-night," he said. "I cannot take you to your hotel?"

"No, thank you."

"It was the only thing to do," he said. "The operation proved----"

"I do not want to talk about it," I said.

"I would like to take you to your hotel."

"No, thank you."

He went down the hall. I went to the door of the room.

"You can't come in now," one of the nurses said.

"Yes I can," I said.

"You can't come in yet."

¹
Robert Penn Warren, "Hemingway," The Kenyon Review (Winter, 1947), IX, 9.

"You get out," I said. "The other one too."
 But after I had got them out and shut the door and turned off the light it wasn't any good. It was like saying good-bye to a statue. After a while I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain.¹

Similar preclusions to fulfillment, even when love rises to an affection above the simply physical, are found in For Whom the Bell Tolls and Across the River and Into the Trees. In For Whom the Bell Tolls Robert Jordan's leg is crushed and he forces Maria to go on without him, leaving him behind to die. In Across the River and Into the Trees Colonel Cantwell, who has had an unhappy marriage, at last gains the love of a young Italian countess. He savagely hopes for the future, but deep down inside he knows that it is all to no avail because he has a heart condition. Eventually he dies of a heart attack.

* * *

To summarize: (1) Worshipping the sensual in man, apart from the intellect, results in a sense of unfulfillment, the feeling that life does not provide those joys expected of it. (2) The characters in Hemingway's fiction experience this sense of unfulfillment. They experience it in at least three ways: (a) unfulfillment in sexual relations; (b) unfulfillment

¹

Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 355.

in obtaining what is considered to be some earthly good, or in obtaining it too late, or in obtaining something one does not really desire; (c) unfulfillment in a higher sense, the inability to identify oneself with something or someone outside oneself and thus overcome one's loneliness and forlornness. (3) The fact that Hemingway himself experienced a feeling of unfulfillment is evidenced not only by his works but by his life, especially his suicide. (4) The reason that Hemingway and his characters are unable to experience a sense of fulfillment is that they lack genuine religious faith. A sense of fulfillment comes with the realization that no matter how frustrating the particular incidents of one's life may be, life nevertheless has a purpose, a final end, and that final end is union with God for all eternity.

CHAPTER V

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DESPAIR

When one experiences a sense of unfulfillment in sexual relations, in the matter of earthly goods, and in the inability to overcome loneliness and a feeling of isolation in the world through identification of oneself with someone or something outside the self, and when religion does not fill the gap thus created, the resultant philosophy, if any philosophy at all is developed, is the philosophy of despair. This chapter will be devoted to establishing the fact that a philosophy of despair is to be found in Hemingway's fictional works as well as in his avowed philosophy of life. It should be noted that while Hemingway's philosophy of despair is established in this chapter, it will not be treated exhaustively since this philosophy of despair is the source of many other attitudes towards life which Hemingway possessed; and since these attitudes in themselves are closely connected with religion they are dealt with separately, even though the philosophy of despair continuously wends its way through them. The philosophy of despair as the root of other philosophies is to be found in Hemingway's attitude towards

war (Chapter VI), his attitude towards death (Chapter VII), his concept of manhood (Chapter VIII), his attitude towards women (Chapter IX), and his code (Chapter X). The philosophy of despair in the light of the Christian religion will be examined in this chapter explicitly, and in following chapters implicitly.

* * *

When unfulfillment in sexual relations, in the matter of earthly goods, and in the inability to overcome loneliness and forlornness through establishing a satisfactory relationship outside oneself, occurs again and again, and there is no solid religious foundation in the light of which such unfulfillment can be examined and seen in its proper perspective, the end result can only be despair. That Hemingway's philosophy was one of despair, there can be little doubt. In a foreword to The Hemingway Reader Charles Poore quotes Hemingway as saying in reference to A Farewell to Arms: "the fact the book was a tragic one did not make me unhappy since I believed that life was a tragedy and knew it could only have one end."¹ In Death in the Afternoon Hemingway said that "all stories, if

¹
Ernest Hemingway, The Hemingway Reader (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. xviii.

continued far enough, end in death, and he is no true-story teller who would keep that from you."¹ In another passage of Death in the Afternoon Hemingway stated that "there is no remedy for anything in life. Death is a sovereign remedy for all misfortunes...."² Lillian Ross describes an interview with Hemingway during the course of which he is said to have made the following comment: "Only suckers worry about saving their souls. Who the hell should care about saving his soul when it is a man's duty to lose it intelligently, the way you would sell a position you were defending, if you could not hold it, as expensively as possible, trying to make it the most expensive position that was ever sold. It isn't hard to die."³

In speaking of death, Hemingway is obviously not thinking of death as a Christian would think of it. The Christian's life also is often one of misfortunes and his life also ends in death, but the Christian has no guarantee that his misfortunes will end at the grave. Nowhere in his works does Hemingway speak

¹ Ernest Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 122.

² Ibid., p. 104.

³ Lillian Ross, op. cit., p. 46.

of a future life, and when he speaks of death he apparently means annihilation. As John Peale Bishop noted, "His vision of life is one of perpetual annihilation."¹

Hemingway prefaces his Winner Take Nothing with the following statement of despair: "Unlike all other forms of...combat the conditions are that the winner shall take nothing; neither his ease, nor his pleasure, nor any notions of glory; nor, if he win far enough, shall there be any reward within himself."² In consequence of this philosophy of despair Hemingway states that "no one owes anything to the world."³ As Philip Young says:

Hemingway's world is one in which things do not grow and bear fruit, but explode, break, decompose, or are eaten away. It is saved from total misery by visions of endurance, competence, and courage, by what happiness the body can give when it is not in pain, by interludes of love that cannot outlast the furlough, by a pleasure in the countries one can visit, or fish and hunt in, and the cafes one can sit in, and by very little else.⁴

In Hemingway's scheme of things man must continuously wage a life and death struggle against the

¹ John Peale Bishop, "Homage to Hemingway," The Collected Essays of John Peale Bishop (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 45.

² Ernest Hemingway, Winner Take Nothing (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), p. iii.

³ Ernest Hemingway (ed.), Gattorno (Habana: Vcar, 1935), p. 15.

⁴ Young, Ernest Hemingway (U. of Minn. Press), p. 40.

world, while the world is always out to destroy man, especially the courageous, and is always the victor in the end. As Lieutenant Henry, the narrator in A Farewell to Arms, says:

If people bring so much courage to this world the world has to kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry.¹

In another passage Lieutenant Henry observes:

Now Catherine would die. That was what you did. You died. You did not know what it was about. You never had time to learn. They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you. Or they killed you gratuitously like Aymo. Or gave you the syphilis like Rinaldo. But they killed you in the end. You could count on that. Stay around and they would kill you.²

During the throes of her difficult delivery Catherine and Lieutenant Henry carry on the following conversation:

"I'm not brave any more, darling. I'm all broken. They've broken me. I know it now."

"Everybody is that way."

"But it's awful. They just keep it up till they break you."³

In commenting on his mistress's difficult

¹
Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 267.

²
Ibid., p. 350.

³
Ibid., p. 345.

delivery Lieutenant Henry mentions a theme which occurs frequently in Hemingway's works: the idea that everything obtained or enjoyed in the world has its price, and the world always exacts this price, with a vengeance, in the end.

Poor, poor dear Cat. And this was the price you paid for sleeping together. This was the end of the trap. This was what people got for loving each other. Thank God for gas, anyway. What must it have been like before there were anaesthetics? Once it started, they were in the mill-race. Catherine had a good time in the time of pregnancy. It wasn't bad. She was hardly ever sick. She was not awfully uncomfortable until toward the last. So now they got her in the end. You never got away with anything. Get away hell! It would have been the same if we had been married fifty times. And what if she should die?...Why would she die? What reason is there for her to die? There's just a child that has to be born, the by-product of good nights in Milan. It makes trouble and is born and then you look after it and get fond of it maybe.¹

Harry Morgan's wife, in her despair after his death, has the following thoughts:

I don't know, Marie Morgan was thinking, sitting at the dining-room table. I can take it just a day at a time and a night at a time, and maybe it gets different. It's the goddamned nights... And that's how he always was with me and that's the way I always was about him. He said he never had anything like me and I know there wasn't any men like him. I know it too damned well and now he's dead. Now I got to get started on something. I know I got to. But when you got a man like that and some lousy Cuban shoots him you can't just start right out; because everything inside of you is gone. I don't know what to do. It ain't like when he was away on trips. Then he was always coming

¹

Ibid., p. 341.

back but now I got to go on the rest of my life. And I'm big now and ugly and old and he ain't here to tell me that I ain't. I'd have to hire a man to do it now I guess and then I wouldn't want him. So that's the way it goes. That's the way it goes all right...But Jesus Christ, what do you do at nights is what I want to know. How do you get through nights if you can't sleep? I guess you find out like you find out how it feels to lose your husband. I guess you find out all right. I guess you do all right. I guess I'm probably finding out right now.¹

In The Snows of Kilimanjaro, Harry, the frustrated author, contemplates his death in despair.

So now it was all over, he thought. So now he would never have a chance to finish it. So this was the way it ended in a bickering over a drink. Since the gangrene started in his right leg he had no pain and with the pain the horror had gone and all he felt now was a great tiredness and anger that this was the end of it. For this, that now was coming, he had very little curiosity. For years it had obsessed him; but now it meant nothing in itself. It was strange how easy being tired enough made it.

Now he would never write the things that he had saved to write until he knew enough to write them well. Well, he would not have to fail at trying to write them either. Maybe you could never write them, and that was why you put them off and delayed the starting. Well he would never know, now.²

In A Clean, Well-Lighted Place, the older waiter reaches the pinnacle of despair when he parodies the Lord's Prayer in his thoughts.

¹ Hemingway, To Have and Have Not, pp. 257-261.

² Hemingway, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 54.

What did he fear? It was not fear or dread. It was a nothing that he knew too well. It was all a nothing and a man was nothing too. It was only that and light was all it needed and a certain cleanness and order. Some lived in it and never felt it but he knew it all was nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada. Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name thy kingdom nada thy will be nada in nada as it is in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada and nada us our nada as we nada our nadas and nada us not into nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada. Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee. He smiled and stood before a bar with a shining steam pressure coffee machine.¹

Occasionally Hemingway's characters seek the solution for their despair in suicide, and in To Have and Have Not some of the methods used in making that sort of exit from the world are catalogued.

Some made the long drop from the apartment or the office window; some took it quietly in two-car garages with the motor running; some used the native tradition of the Colt of Smith and Wesson; those well-constructed implements that end insomnia, terminate remorse, cure cancer, avoid bankruptcy, and blast an exit from intolerable positions by the pressure of a finger; those admirable American instruments so easily carried, so sure of effect, so well designed to end the American dream when it becomes a nightmare, their only drawback the mess they leave for relatives to clean up.²

The majority of Hemingway's characters, those who do not use the foregoing methods of escape, resign themselves to a capricious fatalism which eventually and inevitably ends in tragedy. In The Killers Ole

¹ Hemingway, "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 382.

² Hemingway, To Have and Have Not, pp. 237-238.

Andreson accepts his fate as certain; he does not even attempt to flee.

"I was up at Henry's," Nick said, "and two fellows came in and tied up me and the cook, and they said they were going to kill you."

It sounded silly when he said it. Ole Andreson said nothing.

"They put us out in the kitchen," Nick went on. "They were going to shoot you when you came in to supper."

Ole Andreson looked at the wall and did not say anything.

"George thought I better come and tell you about it."

"There isn't anything I can do about it," Ole Andreson said.

"I'll tell you what they were like."

"I don't want to know what they were like," Ole Andreson said. He looked at the wall. "Thanks for coming to tell me about it."¹

In Hemingway's scheme of existence the avoidance of, or meeting with, misfortune is determined by luck or chance. Even in reference to a number of his manuscripts which were lost by his wife Hemingway commented that "She was a lovely and loyal woman with bad luck with manuscripts."² Luck is mentioned frequently in Hemingway's works. In The Old Man at the Bridge an old man who was too weak to flee any further during the war sat beside a bridge and worried about

¹ Hemingway, "The Killers," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 287.

² Ernest Hemingway in Lee Samuels, A Hemingway Check List (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 6.

the animals he had been forced to leave behind. It was a consolation to him that at least his cat could take care of itself. The narrator of the story comments:

There was nothing to do about him. It was Easter Sunday and the Fascists were advancing toward the Ebro. It was a gray overcast day with a low ceiling so their planes were not up. That and the fact that cats know how to look after themselves was all the good luck that old man would ever have.¹

In Fathers and Sons Hemingway refers to a suicide, apparently his own father, in the following way: "Also, he had much bad luck, and it was not all of it his own. He had died in a trap that he had helped only a little to set, and they had all betrayed him in their various ways before he died."²

But even reasonably good luck was no sure safeguard against despair. Rinaldi, the surgeon, attempted to give meaning to his life through work. In A Farewell to Arms he carries on the following conversation with Lieutenant Henry:

"Oh, yes. That is true. Already I am only happy when I am working." He looked at the floor again.

"You'll get over that."

"No. I only like two other things; one is

¹ Hemingway, "The Old Man at the Bridge," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 80.

² Hemingway, "Fathers and Sons," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 489.

bad for my work and the other is over in half an hour or fifteen minutes. Sometimes less."

"Sometimes a good deal less."¹

In reference to the thing which is bad for Rinaldi's work Rinaldi and Lieutenant Henry converse as follows:

"I'll go get the bottle," Rinaldi said. He went off up the stairs. I sat at the table and he came back with the bottle and poured us each a half tumbler of cognac.

"Too much," I said and held up the glass and sighted at the lamp on the table.

"Not for an empty stomach. It is a wonderful thing. It burns out the stomach completely. Nothing is worse for you."

"All right."

"Self-destruction day by day," Rinaldi said. "It ruins the stomach and makes the hand shake. Just the thing for a surgeon."

"You recommend it?"

"Heartily. I use no other. Drink it down, baby, and look forward to being sick."²

The philosophy of despair which is found in Hemingway's fiction, examples of which have been given in this chapter, and in his general attitude towards life, as expressed in his nonfiction and personal statements quoted in this chapter and ultimately confirmed by his suicide, is certainly not a Christian philosophy. The Christian is often sorely distressed by the problems of life but he never despairs completely of the world because it is in the world that he

¹ Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 181.

² Ibid., pp. 182-183.

must work out his eternal salvation. Man in Hemingway's interpretation of the world is much like Camus' man; he is like Sisyphus who was condemned by the gods to roll a great boulder to the top of a hill, a boulder which always rolled back down again and would roll back down again until the end of time.¹ Such a meaningless state of existence can be finally summed up by the words of Nietzsche's The Birth of Tragedy:

There is an ancient story that kind Midas hunted in the forest a long time for the wise Silenus, the companion of Dionysus, without capturing him. When at last he fell into his hands, the king asked what was the best of all and most desirable for man. Fixed and immovable, the demon remained silent; till at last, forced by the king, he broke out with shrill laughter into these words: "Oh, wretched race of a day, children of chance and misery, why do ye compel me to say to you what it were most expedient for you not to hear? What is best of all is for ever beyond your reach: not to be born, not to be, to be nothing. The second best for you, however, is soon to die."²

The Christian, in contradistinction to such a dismal and nihilistic view of life, not only sees purpose to life but even willingly embraces the sufferings of life because he understands the nature of sin. The Christian who takes seriously Christ's sermon

¹ Albert Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), passim.

² Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy (London: T. N. Foulis, 1910), p. 34.

on the mount would actually be quite disturbed if this world fulfilled all his hopes and if he never suffered frustration, because he would then know that he had surrendered himself to the maxims of the world, a world which was capricious and which would one day remove its pleasures from him; but even more important, a world which would ultimately deprive him of eternal salvation because of his surrender to it. As Christ said:

...Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for you shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for you shall laugh. Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Be glad in that day and rejoice: for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For according to these things did their fathers to the prophets. But woe to you that are rich: for you have your consolation. Woe to you that are filled: for you shall hunger. Woe to you that now laugh: for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you when men shall bless you: for according to these things did their fathers to the false prophets.¹

But even though the Christian realizes that he must suffer pain, frustration, and unfulfillment in so far as the things of this world are concerned, he experiences, through his close relationship to God, a sense of joy and fulfillment which comes because he lives in terms of ultimate realities, in terms of

¹
Luke 6, 20-26.

eternity. As Christ said: "Come to me, all you that labour and are burdened: and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you and learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is sweet and my burden light."¹ Unfortunately, the characters of Hemingway's fiction, and apparently Hemingway himself, never experienced this spiritual sense of fulfillment.

* * *

To summarize: (1) The feeling of unfulfillment leads to despair, and this despair is found in Hemingway's fictional works as well as in his personal statements. (2) The characters in Hemingway's fiction, just as Hemingway himself finally did, sometimes seek a solution to their despair in suicide. (3) The majority of Hemingway's characters, as a result of their despair, resign themselves to a capricious fatalism which eventually and inevitably ends in tragedy. (4) According to Hemingway's view of the world, good fortune or ill-fortune was determined solely by luck or chance. But even good luck was no guarantee against the ultimate inevitability of despair. (5) The philosophy of despair is not a Christian, and certainly not a

¹
Matthew 11, 28-30.

Catholic, philosophy. The Christian thinks in terms of eternity, and irregardless of what he suffers in this world, he continuously keeps his eyes focused upon the next world. (6) Hemingway's philosophy of despair is found in his attitude towards war (Chapter VI), his attitude towards death (Chapter VII), his concept of manhood (Chapter VIII), his attitude towards women (Chapter IX), and his code (Chapter X). Since these chapters in themselves deal with themes which have relevance to religion, the element of despair is not re-emphasized continuously. It is to be understood, however, that the philosophy of despair is important to these chapters; it is, in fact, the cause of Hemingway's basic attitude towards those subjects with which these chapters deal.

CHAPTER VI

WAR

This chapter will deal with Hemingway's attitude towards war and the significance of this attitude in so far as the question of religion is concerned. First, Hemingway's understanding of war will be considered in terms of his fictional and nonfictional works and personal statements. An attempt will then be made to establish Hemingway's attitude towards war. This attitude will then be examined in the light of Christianity, particularly in light of the Gospel.

* * *

Most of Hemingway's works are related to war in one way or another, and this obsession with war has led a number of critics to believe that Hemingway actually enjoyed war. As Stephen Spender said: "So far the typical atmosphere of a Hemingway story is familiar. War is good and real, violence is necessary, the only way of judging men is to find out whether they are tough or yellow."¹ Other critics have noted that

¹ Stephen Spender, "Books and the War---IV," The Penguin New Writing, 5 (London: Penguin Books), p. 137.

Hemingway himself became involved in wars even when it was entirely unnecessary for him to do so since the American army rejected him during the First World War for physical reasons.

If Hemingway enjoyed war, then certainly his tastes were anything but Christian, for as Christ said: "...all that take the sword shall perish with the sword."¹ But Hemingway's attitude towards war is not so simply explained. On the surface, at least, his attitude was paradoxical. In his preface to All the Brave by Luis Quintanilla, Hemingway himself proclaims: "War is a hateful thing. It is inexcusable except in self-defense."²

In attempting to resolve this paradox, it is important to note, first of all, that Hemingway understood the true nature of war. In a poem which first appeared as early as 1923 he wrote:

Drummed their boots on the camion floor,
Hob-nailed boots on the camion floor.
Sergeants stiff,
Corporals sore.
Lieutenant thought of a Mestre whore---
Warm and soft and sleepy whore,
Cozy, warm and lovely whore;
Damned cold, bitter, rotten ride,
Winding road up the Grappa side.
Arditi on benches stiff and cold,
Pride of their country stiff and cold,

¹
Matthew 26, 51-52.

²
Luis Quintanilla, All the Brave (New York: Modern Age Books, 1939), p. 11.

Bristly faces, dirty hides---
 Infantry marches, Arditi rides.
 Grey, cold, bitter, sullen ride---
 To splintered pines on the Grappy side
 At Asalone, where the truck-load died.¹

Further evidence that Hemingway not only understood war but the nature of those who partook in war is to be found in one of his descriptions in To Have and Have Not where Richard Gordon visits a bar at which veterans and sailors congregate. Part of that passage reads:

"Boy, you can hit," said one.

"That son-of-a-bitch comes in to town and puts all his pay in the postal savings and then hangs around here picking up drinks off the bar," the other said. "That's the second time I cooled him."

"You cooled him this time."

"When I hit him just then I felt his jaw go just like a bag of marbles," the other said happily. The man lay against the wall and nobody paid any attention to him.

"Aren't they fine boys?" said the tall man.

"War is a purifying and ennobling force. The question is whether only people like ourselves here are fitted to be soldiers or whether the different services have formed us."

"I don't know," said Richard Gordon.

"I would like to bet you that not three men in this room were drafted," the tall man said.

"These are the elite. The very top cream of the scum. What Wellington won at Waterloo with...The ones with nothing to lose. We are the completely brutalized ones."

"Listen," the other Vet who was drinking beer with Richard Gordon said, "let me tell you about

¹

Ernest Hemingway, "Riparto D'Assalto," Three Stories and Ten Poems (Paris: Contact Publishing Company, 1923), p. 50.

in the Navy. Let me tell you, you goddamn radical."

"Don't listen to him," the red-headed one said. "When the fleet's in New York and you go ashore there in the evening up under Riverside Drive there's old guys with long beards come down and you can piss in their beards for a dollar. What do you think about that?"

"I'll buy you a drink," said the tall man, "and you forget that one. I don't like to hear that one."

"I don't forget anything," the red-headed one said. "What's the matter with you, pal?"

"Is that true about the beards?" Richard Gordon asked. He felt a little sick.

"I swear to God and my mother," the red-headed one said. "Hell, that ain't nothing."¹

Besides having a good understanding as to the nature of war and its participants, Hemingway also had an uncommonly good insight into the real causes of war. Writing in Esquire before the beginning of the Second World War he said:

Not this August, nor this September; you have this year to do in what you like. Not next August, nor next September; that is still too soon; they are still too prosperous from the way things pick up when armament factories start at near capacity; they never fight as long as money can be made without...But the year after that or the year after that they fight. Then what happens to you?

.....
If there is a general European war we will be brought in if propaganda..., greed, and the desire to increase the impaired health of the state can swing us in.

.....
The first panacea for a mismanaged nation is inflation of the currency; the second is war. Both bring a temporary prosperity; both bring a permanent ruin. But both are the refuge of political and

¹

Hemingway, To Have and Have Not, pp. 205-207.

economic opportunists.

.....
 A man has ambitions, a man rules until he gets into economic trouble; he tries to get out of this trouble by war. A country never wants war until a man through the power of propaganda convinces it. Propaganda is stronger now than it has ever been before. Its agencies have been mechanized, multiplied and controlled until in a state ruled by any one man truth can never be presented.

War is no longer made by simply analysed economic forces if it ever was. War is made or planned now by individual men, demagogues and dictators who play on the patriotism of their people to mislead them into a belief in the great fallacy of war when all their vaunted reforms have failed to satisfy the people they misrule.¹

It is evident that Hemingway placed the ultimate blame for war upon the shoulders of unscrupulous politicians. His feeling towards such politicians is evidenced by the comments of the Colonel in Across the River and Into the Trees. When Renata asks the Colonel why he is not President of the United States he replies sarcastically with an unmistakable reference to President Harry Truman:

"Me President? I served in the Montana National Guard when I was sixteen. But I never wore a bow tie in my life and I am not, nor ever have been, an unsuccessful haberdasher. I have none of the qualifications for the Presidency. I couldn't even head the opposition even though I don't have to sit on telephone books to have my picture taken. Nor am a no-fight general. Hell, I never even was at SHAEF. I couldn't even be an elder statesman.

¹
 Ernest Hemingway, "Notes on the Next War," Esquire, IV (September, 1935), 19 and 156. Also see Ernest Hemingway, "The Malady of Power," Esquire, IV (November, 1935), 199.

I'm not old enough. Now we are governed in some way, by the dregs. We are governed by what you find in the bottom of dead beer glasses that whores have dunked their cigarettes in. The place has not even been swept out yet and they have an amateur pianist beating on the box.¹

Interviewed by Harvey Breit of the New York Times

Hemingway himself had the following to say about politics:

All the contact I have had with it has left me feeling as though I had been drinking out of spittoons. The self-confessed patriot, the traitor and the regulator of other people's lives, beliefs, etc., and the Regimentator all run in a photo-finish. The Senate may develop the picture if they can find a photographer who can photograph a photo-finish.²

It is significant, and in the light of religion even contradictory, that while Hemingway thoroughly understood the nature of war, the nature of its combatants, and its causes, and in describing these things proved that war is the antithesis of everything Christian, he nowhere declared that war, as he portrayed it, is thoroughly unchristian, nor did he state that Christians should refuse to take part in such wars. In one place Hemingway did say: "They wrote in the old days that it is sweet and fitting to die for one's country.

¹
Ernest Hemingway, Across the River and Into the Trees (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 227.

²
The New York Times, September 17, 1950.

But in modern war there is nothing sweet nor fitting in your dying. You will die like a dog for no good reason."¹ But nowhere did Hemingway say that one should utterly refuse to "die like a dog for no good reason," nor did he say that one should utterly refuse to kill for no good reason, and that it is, in fact, immoral and unchristian to do so.

Hemingway himself seems to have had an ambivalent attitude towards the question of war. In one sense he saw its utter futility, but in another sense he seemed to hope that under certain circumstances war might not be absolutely futile and that some good might spring from it. Once the Second World War had begun, Hemingway, in his introduction to Men at War, wrote:

The editor of this anthology, who took part and was wounded in the last war to end war, hates war and hates all the politicians whose mismanagement, gullibility, cupidity, selfishness and ambition brought on this present war and made it inevitable. But once we have a war there is only one thing to do. It must be won. For defeat brings worse things than any that can ever happen in a war.²

That Hemingway consistently saw some hope in war can be seen from the fact that he himself, through the

¹ Hemingway, "Notes on the Next War," Esquire, IV (September, 1935), 156.

² Ernest Hemingway (ed.), Men at War (New York: Crown Publishers, 1942), pp. xi-xii.

contribution of money and his prestige, had aided the cause of the Loyalists against the Fascists during the Spanish Civil War.¹ As Hemingway said: "Having fought fascism in every place that I know how, in the places where you could really fight it, I have no remorse---neither literary nor political."² Hemingway further explained his position in a letter to Carlos Baker, dated April 1, 1951:

There were at least five parties in the Spanish Civil War on the Republic side. I tried to understand and evaluate all five (very difficult) and belonged to none....I have no party but a deep interest in and love for the Republic....In Spain I had, and have, many friends on the other side. I tried to write truly about them, too. Politically, I was always on the side of the Republic from the day it was declared and for a long time before.³

That Hemingway understood that even the motives of those who fought against the Fascists were only too often anything but pure is evidenced by a number of passages in his works, such as the following from

¹ See Carlos Baker, Hemingway, the Writer as Artist (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), pp. 229-230; Ernest Hemingway, The Spanish Earth (Cleveland: J. B. Savage Company, 1938), p. 10; Ernest Hemingway, "On the American Dead in Spain," New Masses, XXX (February 14, 1939), 3; Edmund Wilson, "Ernest Hemingway: Bourdon Gauge of Morale," The Atlantic Monthly, 164 (July, 1939), 43.

² Time, XXXV (June 24, 1940), 92.

³ Carlos Baker, op. cit., p. 228.

For Whom the Bell Tolls:

"Have you gypsy blood?"

"No. But I have seen much of them and clearly, since the movement, more. There are many in the hills. To them it is not a sin to kill outside the tribe. They deny this but it is true."

"Like the Moors."

"Yes. But the gypsies have many laws they do not admit to having. In the war many gypsies have become bad again as they were in the olden times."

"They do not understand why the war is made. They do not know for what we fight."

"No," Anselmo said. "They only know now there is a war and people may kill again as in the olden times without a surety of punishment."

"You have killed?" Robert Jordan asked in the intimacy of the dark and of their day together.

"Yes. Several times. But not with pleasure."

...
"And the sentry. You joked of killing the sentry."

"That was in joke. I would kill the sentry. Yes. Certainly and with a clear heart considering our task. But not with pleasure."

"We will leave them to those who enjoy it," Robert Jordan said. "There are eight and five. That is thirteen for those who enjoy it."

"There are many of those who enjoy it," Anselmo said in the dark. "We have many of those. More of those than of men who would serve for a battle."¹

The reason for Hemingway's ambivalent attitude towards war, the reason that he tried to convince his doubting mind that anything at all can be achieved through it, seems to rest in the fact that while he claimed to hate war, he hated war only under certain circumstances. That is why he never opposed it

1

Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, pp. 40-42. See also For Whom the Bell Tolls, pp. 125-126 and To Have and Have Not, pp. 157-168.

categorically. As he himself said:

If a war was fought by those who wanted to fight it and knew what they were doing and liked it, or even understood it, then it would be defensible. But those who want to go to the war, the elite, are killed off in the first months and the rest of the war is fought by men who are enslaved into the bearing of arms and are taught to be more afraid of sure death from their officers if they run than possible death if they stay in the line or attack.¹

In other words, Hemingway seems to oppose war because of the stupidity which causes it and the incompetence with which it is fought rather than because it is wrong morally. He makes it clear that war "would be defensible" if fought "by those who wanted to fight it" and "knew what they were doing and liked it." The commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," is not even taken into consideration by Hemingway. Thus, Hemingway's attitude towards war appears to have been fundamentally pragmatic and irreligious.

Further evidence that Hemingway's attitude towards war is unchristian is to be found in his suggestion as to what was to be done with the Germans at the end of the Second World War. He wrote:

When this war is won...Germany should be so effectively destroyed that we should not have

¹
Hemingway, "Notes on the Next War," Esquire, IV (September, 1935), 156. Italics added.

to fight her again for a hundred years, or, if it is done well enough, forever. This can probably only be done by sterilization. This act can be accomplished by an operation little more painful than vaccination and as easily made compulsory.¹

Such an opinion is far removed from the teachings of Jesus who said:

You have heard that it hath been said: An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you not to resist evil: but if one strike thee on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other: And if a man will contend with thee in judgment and take away thy coat, let go thy cloak also unto him... You have heard that it hath been said: Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: That you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise upon the good and bad and raineth upon the just and the unjust.²

* * *

To summarize: (1) Because most of Hemingway's works deal with war, some critics have taken this obsession with war to mean that Hemingway himself enjoyed war. Such an attitude in itself, of course, would be unchristian. Although these critics may be right in their assumption, Hemingway's attitude towards war was much more involved and complex. Hemingway himself described war as "a hateful thing" and "inexcusable except in self-defense." (2) Hemingway

¹ Hemingway (ed.), Men at War, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

² Matthew 5, 38-48.

understood the true nature of war; he understood the nature of the combatants in war; he understood the real causes of war. (3) Although Hemingway thoroughly understood the nature of war, the nature of the combatants, and war's causes---all the antithesis of Christianity---he nowhere describes war as unchristian, nor does he maintain that Christians should take no part in such wars. (4) Hemingway's attitude towards war is ambivalent. He proclaims the utter futility of war but at the same time seems to hope that some good may come out of it. (5) The reason for Hemingway's seemingly contradictory attitude towards war can be found in the fact that he did not oppose war categorically but only under certain circumstances. He opposed war because of the stupidity which causes it and the incompetence with which it is fought. He says that war is "defensible" if fought "by those who wanted to fight it" and "knew what they were doing and liked it." (6) Hemingway did not condemn war on moral grounds. He did not take the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," into consideration. (7) Additional evidence that Hemingway's attitude towards war was unchristian is to be found in the fact that he recommended that the Germans be sterilized at the end of the Second World War. Such a recommendation was not in keeping with Christ's admonition to forgive one's enemies.

CHAPTER VII

DEATH IN THE MORNING

Not only was Hemingway obsessed by war, but he was also haunted by the question of death. This chapter will be devoted to examining Hemingway's attitude towards death in relation to Christianity. First, Hemingway's philosophy relative to inflicting death will be investigated. This will be accomplished through considering Hemingway's own statements in his nonfictional works, through statements of characters in his fictional work who apparently expound Hemingway's own attitudes in this matter, and through the comments of critics. Secondly, Hemingway's philosophy relative to receiving death will be investigated. Special attention will be paid to the question of suicide in this regard.

* * *

If Hemingway was obsessed with war, he was also obsessed with that concomitant of war, death. It would be difficult to find an author who has written of death as often as Ernest Hemingway. As Granville Hicks said: "All of Hemingway's compulsions stem from his feeling about death, with which he has been

concerned in a way that few authors have since John Donne posed for a sculptor, wrapped in his winding sheet."¹ On the flyleaf of a book which Hemingway himself inscribed to Frank J. Hogan appear the rather morbid words:

To Frank J. Hogan
with two signatures
Ernest Hemingway 1938
Ernest Hemingway (?)²

Charles Fenton points out that violence and death always had a special fascination for Hemingway.³ As a reporter he always wanted to be assigned to cover catastrophes, and as an ambulance driver in the war he wanted to see as much action as possible.

It may be well to re-emphasize here that while Hemingway stated that he hated war, he did not reject it. Perhaps his reason, as has already been suggested, was that he was not so much opposed to the violence and killing in war as he was to the stupidity which accompanied such violence and killing. As he said in

¹ Granville Hicks, "Twenty Years of Hemingway," The New Republic (October 23, 1944), 524.

² Ernest Hemingway, In Our Time (Paris: Three Mountains Press, 1924), in the Rare Book Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

³ See Charles Fenton, op. cit., pp. 34-35, 55-58, 93-94.

a passage which has already been quoted: "If a war was fought by those who wanted to fight it and knew what they were doing and liked it, or even understood it, then it would be defensible." In commenting on Hemingway's love of violence Philip Young notes:

Henry Thoreau once concerned himself briefly with the problem of whether or not a boy should be taught to shoot. He decided that 'We cannot but pity the boy who has never fired a gun; he is no more humane, while his education has been sadly neglected.' But he went on to limit his approval sharply by saying that he gave it while trusting that the youngsters who were bent on the pursuit 'would soon outgrow it.'

It would be good if we could go on to ask this man what we are to think of an adult---and, what is more, an adult who is very likely the finest writer of American prose to come along since Thoreau himself---who never did outgrow it.¹

Atkins, in considering this same aspect of Hemingway's life, wrote:

But so far we have been skirting the real problem of Hemingway's approach to war. It is easy to sense the fascination but not nearly so easy to understand the core of that fascination. Acknowledging the acceptance of war and the formation of a political attitude that will contain war does not bring us any nearer to the reality we seek. To find that reality it is best to seek for something that exists in both his war stories and in his stories of civilian life. That thing is surely death, the end of life, how men approach it and what it means to them. One phrase I have already recorded is significant: 'death and its occasional temporary avoidance which we describe as life.' Death not only on the battlefield but also in the afternoon and in the

¹ Young, Ernest Hemingway (Rinehart), p. 106.

bedroom and in the Gulf of Mexico, death providing the background for life and not vice versa. In the back of his mind, perhaps, the feeling that we are dead much longer than we are live.¹

The Christian, like Hemingway, is also deeply concerned with the problem of death. In fact, the entire life of a Christian is served in preparation for the moment of death, and it is the quality of this preparation which will determine whether or not he will live in happiness for all eternity. As Christ said: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live: And every one that liveth and believeth in me shall not die for ever."² Hemingway's attitude towards death, however, can be best explained not in terms of Christ, but in terms of thinkers like Camus, the existentialist writer, and Freud, the psychoanalytic philosopher.

Camus, like Hemingway, was also obsessed with the problem of death. As Thomas Hanna says, "The universe which Camus has described is limited by death and man's estrangement from the world, and Camus calls for a refusal of the world which is not a renouncement and which means having 'the conscious certainty of

¹ Atkins, op. cit., pp. 115-116.

² John 11, 25-26.

death without hope."¹ Camus' ideal character lives in constant revolt against his own finitude which is due to death, and, as Camus explains it, absolute freedom is the freedom to kill, to take life.² Freud said that "the goal of all life is death," and man, in order not to surrender to this instinct impelling him towards self-destruction, destroys other things.³ Hemingway, too, paradoxically enough, saw killing as a means of holding on a while longer to that "temporary avoidance of death which we describe as life." Hemingway delighted in fishing, bullfighting, and killing animals,⁴ and he made it clear in Death in the Afternoon that one of the "greatest pleasures" involved in "the true enjoyment of killing" resulted from "the feeling of rebellion against death which comes from its administering." That passage in its entirety reads:

¹ Thomas Hanna, The Thought and Art of Albert Camus (Chicago: Regnery, 1958), p. 8.

² Albert Camus, The Rebel, trans. Anthony Bower (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954), p. 251.

³ Sigmund Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, trans. C. Hubbock (London: International Psychoanalytic Press, 1932), pp. 44 passim.

⁴ See Ernest Hemingway, quoted by Charles Poore in The Hemingway Reader (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 380.

The truly great killer must have a sense of honor and a sense of glory far beyond that of the ordinary bullfighter. In other words he must be a simpler man....Killing cleanly and in a way which gives you aesthetic pleasure and pride has always been one of the greatest enjoyments of a part of the human race. Because the other part, which does not enjoy killing, has always been the more articulate and has furnished most of the good writers we have had a very few statements of the true enjoyment of killing. One of its greatest pleasures, aside from the purely aesthetic ones...is the feeling of rebellion against death which comes from its administering. Once you accept the rule of death thou shalt not kill is an easily and a naturally obeyed commandment. But when a man is still in rebellion against death he has pleasure in taking to himself one of the Godlike attributes; that of giving it. This is one of the most profound feelings in those men who enjoy killing.¹

Atkins, in commenting on this particular passage, says:

His closeness to death remained a horror which never left him until he discovered that death can only be overcome by inoculation---death is defeated by the administration of death. To give death is a godlike attribute. The man who gives it does not kneel to death but gains the right of mastery over it. Hemingway reinforces this mystical interpretation by reference to the undoubted delight that has been felt by many human beings in the bequest of death. He admits that he himself enjoys killing. This is the education, as he calls it, that has been given to the young men of Europe, Asia and America over the last two generations.²

It was in bullfighting especially that Hemingway's philosophy of killing came to find its symbolic

¹
Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, pp. 232-233. Italics added.

²
Atkins, op. cit., p. 123.

expression. He gave a "religious interpretation" to bullfighting "in which we see the bullfighter as a sacrificial priest, officiating in a religion where bulls are offered as substitutes for men."¹ Lincoln Kirstein calls Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway's book on bullfighting, "a spiritual autobiography."² Hemingway himself explained the origin of his interest in bullfighting in these words:

...I went to Spain to see bullfights and to try to write about them for myself. I thought they would be simple and barbarous and cruel and that I would not like them, but that I would see certain definite action which would give me the feeling of life and death that I was working for. I found the definite action; but the bullfight was so far from simple and I liked it so much that it was much too complicated for my then equipment for writing to deal with....³

Hemingway came to the following conclusion about bullfighting:

The bullfight is not a sport in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the word, that is, it is not an equal contest or an attempt at an equal contest between a bull and a man. Rather it is a tragedy; the death of the bull, which is played, more or less well, by the bull and the man involved and in which there is danger for the man but certain death for the animal.⁴

¹ Ibid., pp. 156-157.

² Lincoln Kirstein, "The Canon of Death," Hound & Horn, ⁶ (January-March, 1933), 336.

³ Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 3.

⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

Hemingway's philosophy of administering death in order to rebel against it by taking unto oneself the "Godlike" attribute of giving it is, needless to say, not only an unchristian philosophy but a thoroughly primitive and pagan escape from reality. First of all, any real escape from death through the pleasure of killing or in any other way is pure delusion. Secondly, the true Christian is ever aware that death is ultimately unavoidable and inevitable, and he does not attempt to escape it through primitive orgies and contagious magic but prepares for it accordingly. As a matter of fact, the true Christian not only embraces death willingly but actually looks forward to it because it means union with God for all eternity. Moreover, this entire notion of taking pleasure in killing, when applied to man, is totally repugnant to the Christian, whether such killing takes place directly, in war or outside of war, or whether it takes place symbolically in the bull ring where the bull is interpreted as taking the place of a human being.

If Hemingway's philosophy of inflicting death is unchristian, his philosophy of receiving death is likewise unchristian. As has already been pointed out, the moment of death is overwhelmingly important for the Christian in that it will determine his happiness or unhappiness for all eternity. Hemingway, however,

who accepts the idea of temporarily avoiding the fear of death through inflicting it, apparently saw no supernatural significance in death. Nowhere in his works or in his personal statements does he express a belief in immortality. In fact, in The Spanish Earth, he makes the following statement: "When you were young you gave death much importance. Now you give it none.¹ You only hate it for the people that it takes away."

All of Hemingway's concern with death was in terms of this world; not in Christian terms of eternity. This is evidenced by the fact that he showed no concern as to the spiritual state of the soul at the moment of death; his only concern was for the physical aspect of death, and this involved the question as to whether or not the body would be able to meet death with "dignity." Hemingway had great respect for the lion, an animal which seemingly met death with dignity, but the death of hyenas disturbed him because the hyena was an animal which, to him at least, met death² ignominiously.

Hemingway believed that most men had the

¹ Hemingway, The Spanish Earth, p. 60.

² See Ernest Hemingway's description of the hyena's death in Green Hills of Africa (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), pp. 37-38.

misfortune to meet death ignominiously. Harry, in Hemingway's The Snows of Kilimanjaro, as he himself lay dying, recalled the death of Williamson, a bombing officer in the war, who experienced such a misfortune. That account reads:

He remembered long ago when Williamson, the bombing officer, had been hit by a stick bomb some one in a German patrol had thrown as he was coming in through the wire that night and, screaming, had begged every one to kill him. He was a fat man, very brave, and a good officer, although addicted to fantastic shows. But that night he was caught in the wire, with a flare lighting him up and his bowels spilled out into the wire, so when they brought him in, alive, they had to cut him loose. Shoot me, Harry. For Christ sake shoot me. They had had an argument one time about our Lord never sending you anything you could not bear and some one's theory had been that meant that at a certain time the pain passed you out automatically. But he had always remembered Williamson, that night. Nothing passed out Williamson until he gave him all his morphine tablets that he had always saved to use himself and then they did not work right away.¹

In Death in the Afternoon Hemingway himself gave this version of the way most men die:

The first thing that you found about the dead was that, hit badly enough, they died like animals. Some quickly from a little wound you would not think would kill a rabbit. They died from little wounds as rabbits die sometimes from three or four small grains of shot that hardly seem to break the skin. Others would die like cats, a skull broken in and iron in the brain, they lie alive two days like cats that crawl into the coal bin

1

Hemingway, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 73.

with a bullet in the brain and will not die until you cut their heads off. Maybe cats do not die then, they say they have nine lives, I do not know, but most men die like animals, not men.¹

Whether a man, especially a brave man, would be able to die with "dignity" or not was determined, as were so many other things in Hemingway's scheme of things, by luck. In For Whom the Bell Tolls, Robert Jordan is left behind to die, and as he awaits death he contemplates both the "humiliation" which dying can bring and also the matter of luck.

Who do you suppose has it easier? Ones with religion or just taking it straight? It comforts them very much but we know there is no thing to fear. It is only missing it that's bad. Dying is only bad when it takes a long time and hurts so much that it humiliates you. That is where you have all the luck, see? You don't have any of that.²

As has already been intimated, the question for the Christian is not whether his body will meet death with "dignity," as Hemingway uses this term, but whether his soul is in such a state of dignity that it will be able to meet God. The Christian dies well who is in the state of grace, even though his death may seem absolutely repugnant and appalling physically. It is for this reason that the Christian---no matter how hideous and "undignified" his physical condition

¹ Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 138.

² Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, p. 468.

and his suffering---may not take it upon himself to terminate his life through suicide. In Hemingway's scheme of things, on the other hand, suicide seems to be acceptable if it is deemed necessary to preserve one's "dignity."

In Indian Camp, for example, an Indian's wife was having a difficult delivery and the Indian killed himself. Nick carries on the following conversation with his father, the attending physician:

"Do ladies always have such a hard time having babies?" Nick asked.
 "No, that was very, very exceptional."
 "Why did he kill himself, Daddy?"
 "I don't know, Nick. He couldn't stand things, I guess."
 "Do many men kill themselves, Daddy?"
 "Not very many, Nick."
 "Do many women?"
 "Hardly ever."
 "Don't they ever?"
 "Oh, yes. They do sometimes."
 . . . "Is dying hard, Daddy?"
 "No, I think it's pretty easy, Nick. It all depends."¹

Robert Jordan, in For Whom the Bell Tolls, carries on a conversation relative to his father who committed suicide. There are many critics who feel that the reference is really to Hemingway's own father who likewise committed suicide.

¹
 Hemingway, "Indian Camp," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 95.

"My father was also a republican all his life. Also my grandfather," Robert Jordan said.

"In what country?"

"The United States."

"Did they shoot them?" the woman asked.

"Que va," Maria said. "The United States is a country of republicans. They don't shoot you for being a republican there."

"All the same it is a good thing to have a grandfather who was a republican," the woman said. "It shows a good blood."

"My grandfather was on the Republican national committee," Robert Jordan said. That impressed even Maria.

"And is thy father still active in the Republic?" Pilar asked.

"No. He is dead."

"Can one ask how he died?"

"He shot himself."

"To avoid being tortured?" the woman asked.

"Yes," Robert Jordan said. "To avoid being tortured."

Maria looked at him with tears in her eyes. "My father," she said, "could not obtain a weapon. Oh, I am very glad that your father had the good fortune to obtain a weapon."

"Yes. It was pretty lucky," Robert Jordan said.¹

Near the end of For Whom the Bell Tolls, as Robert Jordan lies injured waiting for the enemy to appear so that he can die fighting, he considers suicide and does not find it totally unacceptable.

Oh, let them come, he said. I don't want to do that business that my father did. I will do it all right but I'd much prefer not to have to. I'm against that. Don't think about that. Don't think at all. I wish the bastards would come, he said. I wish so very much they'd come.

His leg was hurting very badly now. The pain had started suddenly with the swelling after he had moved and he said, Maybe I'll just do it now. I guess I'm not awfully good at pain. Listen, if

¹

Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, pp. 66-67.

I do that now you wouldn't misunderstand, would you? Who are you talking to? Nobody, he said. Grandfather, I guess. No. Nobody. Oh bloody it, I wish that they would come.¹

Although Hemingway, like his hero, Robert Jordan, would probably much rather have died fighting, he, like his father before him, took the way of suicide. For Hemingway it was not death in the afternoon but death in the morning. On the morning of July 3, 1961, he took his own life. From all the evidence, as has already been pointed out, Hemingway's approach to the question of death was not Christian; nor was the means by which he chose to leave the world.

* * *

To summarize: (1) Hemingway was obsessed with the problem of death, notably violent death. (2) Hemingway's attitude towards death cannot be explained in terms of Christianity. It can, however, be explained in terms of such thinkers as Camus and Freud. (3) Hemingway saw killing as a means of holding on a while longer to that "temporary avoidance of death which we describe as life." He believed that one of the "greatest pleasures" involved in "the true enjoyment of killing" resulted from "the feeling of rebellion against death which comes from its administering."

¹
Ibid., p. 469.

(4) In bullfighting especially Hemingway's philosophy of killing found its symbolic expression. Hemingway gave a "religious interpretation" to bullfighting "in which we see the bullfighter as a sacrificial priest, officiating in a religion where bulls are offered as substitutes for men." (5) Hemingway's philosophy of administering death in order to rebel against it is not only an unchristian philosophy but a thoroughly primitive and pagan escape from reality. Moreover, the notion of taking pleasure in killing, when applied to man, is totally repugnant to Christianity, whether such killing takes place directly, either in war or outside war, or whether it takes place symbolically in the bull ring where the bull is interpreted as taking the place of a man. (6) Hemingway's philosophy of receiving death is likewise unchristian. While the moment of death is overwhelmingly important for the Christian, in that it will determine his happiness or unhappiness for eternity, Hemingway apparently saw no supernatural significance in death. Nowhere in his works or in his personal statements does Hemingway express a belief in immortality. (7) While Hemingway did not express concern for death in terms of eternity, he did express concern for the physical aspect of death, which involved the question of whether or not the body would be able to meet death with "dignity."

Hemingway believed that most men had the misfortune to meet death ignominiously, and whether or not an individual were fortunate in this regard was contingent upon luck. The concern of the Christian, on the other hand, would be whether or not his soul were in a state of sufficient dignity befitting it to meet God; the question of physical "dignity" would be relatively unimportant. (8) In Hemingway's scheme of things even suicide is apparently acceptable provided it is deemed necessary to preserve one's "dignity." Such a philosophy is totally unchristian.

CHAPTER VIII

MANHOOD AND COJONES

This chapter will examine Ernest Hemingway's conception of manhood. Special stress will be placed upon the question of competitiveness in relation to Hemingway himself, his personal statements relative to this matter, the expression of his philosophy in this regard in his works, and a consideration of his views in relation to religion. The idea of competitiveness will then be related to Hemingway's notion of manhood. As part of Hemingway's notion of manhood, the question of bravery will be given special consideration. This notion of manhood, in conjunction with that of bravery, will be explored in the light of Christianity.

* * *

Ernest Hemingway was a highly competitive individual. From very early in life he wanted to be first in whatever he did. "In high school the young Hemingway characteristically tried to excel, not only in one thing but in everything...Even today, he says smilingly of himself as a writer, 'I'm modest.

I just want to be Champion.¹" At Oak Park High School Hemingway was active in the orchestra, dramatics, debating, football, track, swimming, water basketball, the Boy's Rifle Club, the Hanna Club (met to listen to prominent businessmen and local civic leaders), the Burke Club (stressed oratory and parliamentary procedure), the Boy's High School Club (offered series of addresses "on efficiency, Christianity and such things that are durable to the life of a boy"), and the Athletic Association. He was also a reporter and editor for the school paper and was chosen to write the Class Prophecy, which automatically admitted him² to the group of Class Day Speakers. At fourteen Hemingway took boxing lessons and had his nose broken, but he kept on with boxing, even though one of his eyes became severely damaged.³

In 1935 when Hemingway won the fishing tournament at Bimini there was some complaining and jealousy and Hemingway offered two hundred dollars to anyone who could stay four rounds with him in the ring. Hemingway beat all contenders and then went on

¹ Boal, op. cit., p. 36.

² Fenton, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

³ Atkins, op. cit., p. 92.

to box exhibition rounds with Tom Heeney, the British heavyweight champion.¹ In Paris Was Our Mistress Samuel Putnam records one of his visits with Hemingway:

On this particular day he was quite excited over a boxing match which he had just staged with Morley Callaghan, who was passing through Paris... Callaghan, it seemed, had defeated him in a set of tennis and he had had to have his revenge. They accordingly had put on the gloves in the basement of Hemingway's house, and Ernest, by his own account, had "knocked hell out of" his opponent. He appealed to Mrs. Hemingway to corroborate this, and it seemed to me that she treated him somewhat as one might a bright and lovable child. But it was plain that for him this was another of life's important exploits.²

Philip Young wrote in regard to Hemingway that "The man is...fabulously ambitious, and extraordinarily competitive. He seems himself in the ring not only with everyone who writes but with everyone who has ever written...He is also inordinately vain."³

John Atkins notes:

One gets the feeling with Hemingway that he made up his mind very early to become top writer and made everything else subservient to it. There must have been cases in which a writer was determined to become a good writer, but the competitive spirit that flows from Hemingway anecdotes is something new. Whatever he does, he wishes to

¹
Ibid., p. 161.

²
Putnam, op. cit., p. 130.

³
Young, Ernest Hemingway (Rinehart), p. 131.

do it best. Some people, including writers like Shaw, hold the competitive spirit in such horror that this trait tends to destroy their appreciation of Hemingway's work.¹

In speaking of competition in writing, Hemingway himself points out:

There is no use writing anything that has been written better before unless you can beat it. What a writer in our time has to do is write what hasn't been written before or beat dead men at what they have done. The only way he can tell how he is going is to compete with dead men. Most live writers do not exist. Their fame is created by critics who always need a genius of the season, someone they understand completely and feel safe in praising, but when these fabricated geniuses are dead they will not exist. The only people for a serious writer to compete with are the dead that he knows are good.²

This competitive spirit of Hemingway is also evinced in his works. The following passage appears in Green Hills of Africa:

"But I don't want that guy to beat me. Pop, he's got the best buff, the best rhino, the best water-buck---"

"You beat him on oryx," Pop said.

"What's an oryx?"

"He'll look damned handsome when you get him home."

"I'm just kidding."

"You beat him on impalla, on eland. You've got a first-rate bushbuck. Your leopard's as good as his."³

¹
Atkins, op. cit., p. 95.

²
Ernest Hemingway, "Monologue to the Maestro," Esquire, IV (October, 1935), 174 B.

³
Hemingway, Green Hills of Africa, p. 153.

It is evident from Hemingway's own statements, from his works, and from the interpretation of critics that for Hemingway the world was not only a battlefield, but it was a battlefield on which he had to win, and winning for Hemingway meant defeating his fellow beings. In other words Hemingway's competitive spirit was based upon the maxims of this world: self-love, pride, vanity, worldly ambition, desire for success, determination to excel over others, and love of honors. His philosophy in these matters had nothing of the supernatural about it, and in considering this specific philosophy of Hemingway in relation to religion, it is well to remember the words of Christ: "No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other: or he will sustain the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."¹

That the spirit of worldly competition is alien to the spirit of Christianity becomes clear from even the most elementary reading of the Gospels. "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth," Christ said, "where the rust and moth consume and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither the rust

¹
Matthew 6, 24.

nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."¹ In another passage Christ says:

Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the meat and the body more than the raiment?... And which of you by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?... Be not solicitous therefore, saying, What shall we eat: or, What shall we drink: or, Wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and his justice: and all these things shall be added unto you.²

The genuine Christian does not strive to win over others in this world. He strives, rather, to reach the Kingdom of God himself and to aid others in achieving that goal. His spirit, in relation to his fellow man, is one of helpfulness rather than competitiveness. He knows that the goods of this world are dross in terms of eternity, and thus he is wise enough to realize that there is really nothing in this world worth the effort of competition. The true Christian's aim, in so far as this world is concerned, is not to excel over others but to do the best he can with those talents which God has given him, and he does the best he can with those talents solely that he may best serve

¹ Matthew 6, 19-20.

² Matthew 6, 25-33.

God and his fellow man. As Christ said: "And unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required..¹ .." And in still another place Christ said: "He that is the greatest among you shall be your servant."²

Not only does Hemingway advocate a competitive struggle of man against man, but he also sees man competing against animals, and the manner in which he envisions such competition is totally unchristian, just as is his philosophy of man competing against man. In the first place, man, because he has an immortal soul, cannot be seen, in a Christian view of the world, as competing against animals in the sense that they are his equals or even superior to him in certain ways. As God says in Genesis: "Let us make man to our image and likeness; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth."³ In other words, animals were created for the use of man; they were not created as his equals and there could be no question of man's competing with them in the sense that

¹
Luke 12, 48.

²
Matthew 23, 11.

³
Genesis 1, 26.

he had to prove himself their equal or their better. Hemingway, on the other hand, identifies man and the brute, and he sees them locked in a pathetic struggle for survival in a hostile world, and he sees the animal as being as worthy as man to survive---in some ways worthier.

An example of this philosophy of Hemingway is found in The Old Man and the Sea where Hemingway has the old man think in reference to the Marlin:

"Make him pay for the line....Make him pay for it."¹

The old man analyzes his competitive struggle with the fish in these words:

He is a great fish and I must convince him, he thought. I must never let him learn his strength nor what he could do if he made his run. If I were him I would put in everything now and go until something broke. But, thank God, they are not as intelligent as we who kill them; although they are more noble and more able.

Let him think I am more man than I am and I will be so. I wish I was the fish, he thought, with everything he has against only my will and my intelligence.

"I must save all my strength now. Christ, I did not know he was so big."

"I'll kill him though," he said. "In all his greatness and his glory."

Although it is unjust, he thought. But I will show him what a man can do and what a man endures.²

¹ Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea, p. 91.

² Ibid., pp. 70-73.

After the great fish has been caught but destroyed by sharks the following conversation takes place between the boy and the old man:

Finally the old man woke.

"Don't sit up," the boy said. "Drink this."

He poured some of the coffee in a glass.

The old man took it and drank it.

"They beat me, Manolin," he said. "They truly beat me."

"He didn't beat you. Not the fish."

"No. Truly. It was afterwards."¹

In Hemingway's naturalistic scheme of things one does not necessarily compete with or attempt to destroy an opponent because he hates that opponent or even dislikes him. A man fights man or beast because of the very nature of the world in which he lives; a world which is hostile and in which only the fit or strongest survive. For this reason, according to Hemingway's way of thinking, a man may actually be very fond of his opponent, but he fights him out of the grim necessity of either doing so or being vanquished himself. In The Sun Also Rises, for example, Romero calls the bulls he slaughters his "best friends."

"Oh!" he said in English, "you tell fortunes?"

"Sometimes. Do you mind?"

"No. I like it." He spread his hand flat on the table.

¹

Ibid., pp. 136-137.

"Tell me I live for always, and be a million-
aire."

He was still very polite, but he was surer of himself. "Look," he said, "do you see any bulls in my hand?"

... "There are thousands of bulls," Brett said...

"Good," Romero laughed. "At a thousand duros apiece," he said to me in Spanish. "Tell me some more."

"It's a good hand," Brett said. "I think he'll live a long time."

... "I know it," Romero said. "I'm never going to die."

I tapped with my finger-tips on the table. Romero saw it. He shook his head.

"No. Don't do that. The bulls are my best friends."

I translated to Brett.

"You kill your friends?" she asked.

"Always," he said in English, and laughed.

"So they don't kill me."¹

In The Old Man and the Sea, the old man addresses the fish in the following way: "'Fish,' he said, 'I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends.'²" In another passage of The Old Man and the Sea the old man expresses the closest kinship for the fish.

"The fish is my friend too," he said aloud. "I have never seen or heard of such a fish. But I must kill him. I am glad we do not have to try to kill the stars."

... Then he was sorry for the great fish that had nothing to eat and his determination to kill

¹ Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, pp. 192-193.

² Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea, p. 60.

him never relaxed in his sorrow for him. How many people will he feed, he thought. But are they worthy to eat him? No, of course not. There is no one worthy of eating him from the manner of his behaviour and his great dignity.

I do not understand these things, he thought. But it is good that we do not have to try to kill the sun or the moon or the stars. It is enough to live on the sea and kill our true brothers.¹

Hemingway identified the competitive spirit with manhood; and manhood by Hemingway was understood in completely naturalistic terms, terms which entirely excluded the supernatural. Manhood for Hemingway meant the physical, the elemental, the primitive, the violent. It was symbolized by the term "cojones," which means testicles. In other words manhood was determined by one's ability to defeat, to propagate, to survive. Such a philosophy had nothing in common with Christ's suggestion that men become "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven."² Nor did it have anything in common with the following words of Christ: "And fear ye not them that kill the body and are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell."³

Bravery for Hemingway was determined not by the

¹
Ibid., pp. 82-83.

²
See Matthew 19, 10-12.

³
Matthew 10, 28.

spiritual battles which a man waged on the way to salvation, as would be the case with the Christian, but by his physical prowess, by his "cojones." As Atkins points out:

In Death in the Afternoon Hemingway explained the importance of cojones (testicles) to the bull-fighter. Without them he is nothing...Cojones are the seat of virility....And in this world of unconscious motivation virility is equated with virtue. The lover possessing great stamina is, rather unrealistically, the physical superman. Similarly references are made to Harry Morgan's cojones. Harry always satisfies his wife and therefore, it is implied, he is fearless and strong.¹

To have cojones was to be able to endure, to be able to "take it." When the old man, in The Old Man and the Sea, suffers, he says: "It is not bad....And pain does not matter to a man."² To have cojones also meant the ability to kill. In For Whom the Bell Tolls the following exchange takes place between Pablo, who enjoys murdering, and Robert Jordan:

"Don Roberto," Pablo said heavily.
 "Don Pablo," Robert Jordan said.
 "You're no professor," Pablo said, "because you haven't got a beard. And also to do away with me you have to assassinate me and, for this, you have not cojones."³

¹ Atkins, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

² Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea, p. 40.

³ Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, p. 212.

In disagreeing with Hemingway's conception of bravery Lincoln Kirstein commented:

Mr. Hemingway believes in the courage of immediate physical action above all other. It is an implicit belief in the innocence of animals, in the purity of uncorrupted flesh....He is not busied with the courage of the mind, the energy of a moral activity resistless in its penetration to the heart of truth, unflinching at any self-imposed limits. He does not recognize that valor above the quickened pulse and caught breath, the valor necessary to ignore one's own hand erected categories....He does not admit the simple bravery of a man doomed to an exploitation of every possibility of human morality, for whom physical death, however superbly received, is no release.¹

That Hemingway's notion of bravery, with its emphasis upon the physical and primitive qualities of man, leads to violence, the exact opposite of that peacefulness and meekness which Christ taught while on earth, is evidenced by Alfred Kazin's description of Hemingway as "the progenitor of the new and distinctively American cult of violence."² If Hemingway was not actually a "progenitor" of this cult of violence, he was influenced by it, and he did much to propagate it. Dr. Marcel Frym, a noted American criminologist, stated

¹ Lincoln Kirstein, "The Canon of Death," Hound & Horn (January-March, 1933), 338.

² Alfred Kazin in John McCaffery, Ernest Hemingway, the Man and His Work (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1950), p. 204.

that a strong preoccupation with masculinity is involved in delinquency. "Physical strength and the solving of conflicts by force are admired," Dr. Frym said, "while intellectual and artistic endeavors are identified with weakness and unmanliness." "Heart" is the American criminal's most valued attribute and the coward who "punks out" is disdained and likely to be punished by his confreres. "Puro corazon" or all heart is the important thing---or all "cojones,"¹ to use Hemingway's term. As Fulton Sheen said of Hemingway:

What sex was to Lawrence, brute force is to Ernest Hemingway. His characters are seldom people of intelligence. They rarely live on an intellectual plane, but...inhabit a world of sensuous love, war, and bullfights. They exhibit few feelings except the purely animal feelings; they ...move about amid sensations of greed and lust and rape.²

* * *

To summarize: (1) Ernest Hemingway himself was a highly competitive individual who advocated the spirit of competition. The idea of such competition

¹
See Time, April 7, 1958; December 19, 1960; August 12, 1957.

²
Fulton J. Sheen, Philosophy of Religion (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948), p. 348.

was to overcome all other individuals and achieve first place. (2) Hemingway's spirit of competition was unchristian and based upon the maxims of the world: self-love, pride, vanity, worldly ambition, desire for success, determination to excel over others, and love of honors. (3) Even Hemingway's idea that men should compete against animals was unchristian since Hemingway, according to his naturalistic view of the universe, made animals the equals of man in a battle in which the fit or strongest survive. Such a notion was inconsistent with Genesis which gave man dominion over the animal kingdom. Thus, according to Genesis, animals were created for the use of man. They were not, on the other hand, created as his equals and there could be no question of man's competing with them in the sense that he had to prove himself their equal or their better. (4) According to Hemingway's naturalistic interpretation of reality man does not fight another man or beast because he necessarily dislikes that creature, but because he must preserve his own existence in a hostile world. (5) Hemingway identified the competitive spirit with manhood, and he defined manhood in a naturalistic fashion which excluded the supernatural. For Hemingway manhood meant the physical, the elemental, the primitive, and the violent; and it was symbolized by the term "cojones," which means

testicles. Thus, one's manhood was determined by one's ability to defeat, to propagate, to survive. Such a philosophy is unchristian. (6) Bravery in Hemingway's scheme of things was determined not by the spiritual battles which a man waged in order to reach the Kingdom of God, but was determined, rather, by his physical prowess, by his "cojones." (7) Hemingway's notion of bravery, with its emphasis upon the physical and primitive qualities in man, leads to violence, and violence is the antithesis of that peacefulness and meekness which Christ taught while on earth. (8) Hemingway was not only influenced by, but he was one of the propagators of an unchristian cult of violence, especially in America.

CHAPTER IX

MEN, WOMEN, AND LOVE

In this chapter the love relationship between man and woman, according to Hemingway's view of the world, will be examined, particularly through his works. The Christian concept of love will be defined in terms of Saint Bernard, Saint Thomas Aquinas, and Saint Paul. The love relationship as found in Hemingway's scheme of things will then be contrasted with this Christian view of love and marriage.

* * *

Nowhere in Hemingway's works do man and woman achieve a relationship in love which could be considered satisfactory according to the Christian concept of love and marriage. That Hemingway himself, like his characters, must have experienced difficulty in the love relationship is attested to not only by the theme of unsatisfactory relationships between man and woman which is often repeated in his works but by the fact that he himself was divorced three times. The Christian concept of love, as Saint Bernard

says, begins with God and ends that way.¹ In other words, in the Christian scheme of things, man and woman love God, and through their love of God they are enabled to genuinely love each other. The Christian knows that if he attempts to love according to the maxims of the world, in other words to love creatures for their own sake, the result will be frustration. As Saint Thomas said:

There are two things that increase charity once it is possessed. The first of these is withdrawal of the heart from earthly goods. For the heart cannot be perfectly attentive to different things. Hence no one can love God and the world. Therefore, by as much as our soul leaves the love of earthly things, so much the more is it established in the love of God.²

The basic problem of all Hemingway characters, in so far as the love relationship is concerned, is that none of these characters really love God.

Saint Paul, in Ephesians, expresses the ideal Christian love relationship between man and woman in the following manner:

Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord: Because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church...Therefore as the church is subject to Christ: so also

¹ Etienne Gilson, The Mystical Theology of Saint Bernard (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1940), pp. 89 ff.

² See Saint Thomas Aquinas, Opusculum XXXV, De Duobus Praeceptis Caritatis et Decem Legem Praeceptis.

let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church and delivered himself up for it....¹

Hemingway's characters experienced a twofold difficulty in their love relationships, and both difficulties were the direct result of not heeding the admonition of Saint Paul. First of all, Hemingway's woman often refused to subject herself to the man. Secondly, even when she did subject herself to the man, the man saw only the physical or animal in her, not the spiritual, and possessed her accordingly. Thus the Christian concept of love was totally rejected.

In so far as the first of these considerations is concerned, there are a number of instances in Hemingway's works where the woman attempts to dominate the male. In The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife, for example, a work which critics generally feel has reference to the relationship between Hemingway's own father and mother, the wife torments her husband with one petty barb after another.

"Oh," said his wife. "I hope you didn't lose your temper, Henry."

"No," said the doctor.

"Remember, that he who ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city," said his wife. She was a Christian Scientist. Her Bible, her copy of Science and Health and her Quarterly

¹
Ephesians 5, 22-25.

were on a table beside her bed in the darkened room.

Her husband did not answer. He was sitting on his bed now, cleaning a shotgun. He pushed the magazine full of the heavy yellow shells and pumped them out again. They were scattered on the bed.

"Henry," his wife called. Then paused a moment. "Henry!"

"Yes," the doctor said.

"You didn't say anything to Boulton to anger him, did you?"

"No," said the doctor.

"What was the trouble about, dear?"

"Nothing much."

"Tell me, Henry. Please don't try and keep anything from me. What was the trouble about?"

"Well, Dick owed me a lot of money for pulling his squaw through pneumonia and I guess he wanted a row so he wouldn't have to take it out in work."

His wife was silent. The doctor wiped his gun carefully with a rag. He pushed the shells back in against the spring of the magazine. He sat with the gun on his knees. He was very fond of it. Then he heard his wife's voice from the darkened room.

"Dear, I don't think, I really don't think that any one would really do a thing like that."¹

Macomber's wife, in The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber, ridicules and torments her husband when he runs from the lion, but the moment he actually² does become courageous she becomes disturbed. Finally, she shoots her husband, apparently because she now fears his new-felt independence and because she sees

¹ Hemingway, "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, pp. 101-103.

² Hemingway, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, pp. 33-34.

her power over him vanishing. Dorothy, in The Fifth Column, is another shrew who insists upon dominating her lover, Philip,¹ but in this particular instance Philip eventually musters the courage to escape from her wiles.

Hemingway's own feelings towards the domineering female is shown by his division of the women in his works into bad and good categories according to the extent to which they complicate a man's life. Women who are demanding, who constrict the liberty of the heroes, who attempt to possess them, are the bad women men can live without. The doctor's wife, the Marjorie of the Nick Adams tales, Mrs. Macomber, and Dorothy of The Fifth Column are such women. Those women, on the other hand, who are simple, who participate in relationships with the heroes and yet leave the heroes as free as possible, are considered good women and receive sympathetic treatment. Into this category fall the little Indian girls of the Nick Adams stories, Harry Morgan's wife, Catherine Barkley, Maria, and Renata.

Catherine Barkley is portrayed as one of the best of all Hemingway's women because she tried not

¹ Hemingway, The Fifth Column, pp. 14, 34-35.

to complicate Lieutenant Henry's life. In one passage of A Farewell to Arms she says: "I'll say just what you wish and I'll do what you wish and then you will never want any other girls, will you?...I'll do what you want and say what you want and then I'll be a great success, won't I?"¹ Lieutenant Henry, in a number of passages of A Farewell to Arms, tells how Catherine tried not to cause him inconvenience or difficulty. For example:

I wanted us to be married really because I worried about having a child if I thought about it, but we pretended to ourselves we were married and did not worry much and I suppose I enjoyed not being married, really. I know one night we talked about it and Catherine said, "But, darling, they'd send me away."

"Maybe they wouldn't."

"They would. They'd send me home and then we would be apart until after the war."

"I'd come on leave."

"You couldn't get to Scotland and back on a leave. Besides, I won't leave you. What good would it do to marry now? We're really married. I couldn't be any more married."

"I only wanted to for you."

"There isn't any me. I'm you. Don't make up a separate me."

"I thought girls always wanted to be married."

"They do. But, darling, I am married. I'm married to you. Don't I make you a good wife?"

"You're a lovely wife."²

Brett, in The Sun Also Rises, was likewise considered a good woman in Hemingway's scheme of

¹ Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 112.

² Ibid., p. 122.

things because she was no trouble to her male companions. She was available and yet she never got into their way.

Brett was damned good-looking. She wore a slipover jersey sweater and a tweed skirt, and her hair was brushed back like a boy's. She started all that. She was built with curves like the hull of a racing yacht, and you missed none of it with that wool jersey.

.....
When the taxi stopped I got out and paid. Brett came out putting on her hat. She gave me her hand as she stepped down. Her hand was shaky. "I say, do I look too much of a mess?" She pulled her man's felt hat down and started in for the bar. Inside, against the bar and at tables, were most of the crowd who had been at the dance.

"Hello, you chaps," Brett said. "I'm going to have a drink."¹

In a Hemingway story, when women are not as amenable as Catherine and Brett, a man must lie and use stratagems if his lust is not to go unsatisfied. In the Snows of Kilimanjaro, for example, Harry had married his wife because of her money and because she appealed to him sexually. He always resented her nagging, however, and now that death was a certainty for him he revealed his true feelings.

"Why, I loved you. That's not fair. I love you now. I'll always love you. Don't you love me?"

"No," said the man. "I don't think so. I never have."

"Harry, what are you saying? You're out of your head."

1

Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, pp. 22 and 27.

"No. I haven't any head to go out of."

"Don't drink that," she said. "Darling, please don't drink that. We have to do everything we can."

"You do it," he said. "I'm tired."

• • • • •
"Love is a dunghill," said Harry. "And I'm the cock that gets on it to crow."

"If you have to go away," she said, "is it absolutely necessary to kill off everything you leave behind? I mean do you have to take away everything? Do you have to kill your horse, and your wife and burn your saddle and your armour?"

"Yes," he said. "Your damned money was my armour. My Swift and my Armour."

"Don't."

"All right. I'll stop that. I don't want to hurt you."

"It's a little bit late now."

"All right then. I'll go on hurting you. It's more amusing. The only thing I ever really liked to do with you I can't do now."

• • • • •
It was not her fault that when he went to her he was already over. How could a woman know that you meant nothing that you said; that you spoke only from habit and to be comfortable? After he no longer meant what he said, his lies were more successful with women than when he had told them the truth.¹

Another good example in Hemingway's works of a man lying to a woman in order to get her sexual favors is to be found in the relationship between Philip and Dorothy in The Fifth Column.²

Although the woman is definitely at fault in those instances, in Hemingway's works, where she is

¹ Hemingway, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, pp. 55-59.

² Hemingway, The Fifth Column, pp. 36-37, 75, 80.

a domineering shrew, the man, from a Christian standpoint, is also to blame in those instances where he views woman as merely a sexual object, a creature worthwhile only if she can be easily possessed sexually and then gotten rid of, a creature to be lied to in order that lust might be satisfied, a creature without an immortal soul. There is a great deal of truth in Edmund Wilson's statement that the only women with whom Nick Adams (i. e., Nick Adams as he is traced through the entire development of the Hemingway hero) ever had satisfactory relations were the little Indian girls because they were of a lower caste and he could get rid of them easily.¹ Thus, the male in Hemingway's scheme of things rejects the Christian concept of love and views woman in a purely earthy sense, emphasizing her sexual qualities, while ignoring her spiritual qualities. In Hemingway's world one does not find husbands loving their wives "as Christ also loved the church and delivered himself up for it."

* * *

To summarize: (1) Man and woman in Hemingway's works do not achieve a relationship in love which

¹ Wilson, op. cit., p. 45. See also Hemingway, "Fathers and Sons," The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p. 497.

could be considered satisfactory in terms of the Christian concept of love and marriage. (2) In addition to the theme of unsatisfactory relationships between man and woman which runs through Hemingway's works, the fact that Hemingway was thrice divorced seems to indicate that he himself experienced difficulty in the love relationship. (3) In the Christian scheme of things, man and woman love God, and through their love of God they are enabled to genuinely love each other. (4) Saint Paul mentions two qualities which the ideal Christian love relationship should possess: (a) women should be subject to their husbands; (b) husbands should love their wives as Christ loved the church and delivered himself up for it. (5) The women in Hemingway's works are frequently domineering shrews who refuse to subject themselves to the male, thus ignoring one of Saint Paul's precepts. (6) The men in Hemingway's works, on the other hand, view woman as merely a sexual object, a creature worthwhile only if she can be easily possessed sexually without making demands upon masculine freedom, a creature to be lied to in order that lust might be satisfied, a creature without an immortal soul. Thus, the men in Hemingway's scheme of things reject Saint Paul's second admonition: that husbands love their wives

as Christ loved the Church and delivered himself up
for it.

CHAPTER X

THE CODE

In lieu of a religious code, Hemingway established his own code of values and behavior. This chapter will be devoted to defining that code more precisely, the chief elements of which have already been examined in Chapters III, V, VI, VII, VIII, and IX. The method of procedure used in accomplishing this goal will consist in a consideration of Hemingway's code as found in his works, as found in his personal statements, and as applied in his personal life. All of these factors, in turn, will be weighed in terms of the religious question.

* * *

Because Hemingway accepted no code for human behavior based upon religious principles, he found it necessary to devise his own code, his own system of values.¹ The principles embodied in Hemingway's

¹ See Green D. Wyrick, "The World of Ernest Hemingway: A Critical Study," The Emporia State Research Studies, II (September, 1953), 28.

code emanated from his distrust of the intellect (Chapter III), his philosophy of despair (Chapter V), his attitude towards war (Chapter VI), his feelings about death (Chapter VII), his conception of manhood (Chapter VIII), and his attitude towards the love relationship between man and woman (Chapter IX). In general, it can be safely said that Hemingway based his code upon the pleasure principle, the same principle which rules the American social system which produced Hemingway. As Hemingway himself confessed:

"So far, about morals, I know only that what is moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after...."¹

This worshiping of the pleasure principle runs throughout Ernest Hemingway's works. In so far as the bull ring is concerned, for example, it is not the cruelty involved in allowing the steer to be gored to death which is important; the important thing is that one enjoys it and is not bothered by it. This is made very clear in The Sun Also Rises.

"My God, isn't he beautiful?" Brett said. We were looking right down on him.

"Look how he knows how to use his horns," I said. "He's got a left and a right just like a boxer."

"Not really?"

¹
Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 4.

"You watch."

"It goes too fast."

"Wait. There'll be another one in a minute."

They had backed up another cage into the entrance. In the far corner a man, from behind one of the plank shelters, attracted the bull, and while the bull was facing away the gate was pulled up and a second bull came out into the corral.

He charged straight for the steers and two men ran out from behind the planks and shouted, to turn him. He did not change his direction and the men shouted: "Hah! Hah! Toro!" and waved their arms; the two steers turned sideways to take the shock, and the bull drove into one of the steers.

"Don't look," I said to Brett. She was watching, fascinated.

"Fine," I said. "If it doesn't buck you."

"I saw it," she said. "I saw him shift from his left to his right horn."

"Damn good!"¹

The same idea is repeated in another passage of The Sun Also Rises, this time in connection with the goring of the horses:

"Hello, men," I said.

"Hello, gents!" said Brett. "You saved us seats? How nice."

"I say," Mike said, "that Romero what'shisname is somebody. Am I wrong?"

"Oh, isn't he lovely," Brett said. "And those green trousers."

"Brett never took her eyes off them."

"I say, I must borrow your glasses to-morrow."

"How did it go?"

"Wonderfully! Simply perfect. I say, it is a spectacle!"

"How about the horses?"

"I couldn't help looking at them."

"She couldn't take her eyes off them," Mike said. "She's an extraordinary wench."

"They do have some rather awful things happen to them," Brett said. "I couldn't look away,

¹

Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 144.

though."

"Did you feel all right?"

"I didn't feel badly at all."

"I wish they didn't have the horse part," . . .

Cohn said.

"They're not important," Bill said. "After a while you never notice anything disgusting."

"It is a bit strong just at the start," Brett said. "There's a dreadful moment for me just when the bull starts for the horse."

"The bulls were fine," Cohn said.

"They were very good," Mike said.

"I want to sit down below, next time," Brett drank from her glass of absinthe.¹

In A Farewell to Arms, because having a child interfered with Catherine Barkley and Lieutenant Henry's pleasure, it is indicated that it would have been better if they could have gotten rid of the child:

"Tell me when you're tired," I said. Then a little later, "watch out the oar doesn't pop you in the tummy."

"If it did"---Catherine said between strokes---"life might be much simpler."

I took another drink of the brandy.²

Since all life is governed by the pleasure principle in Hemingway's works, there is no concept of sin in the Christian sense. The concept of sin, in the Hemingway code, is replaced by the idea of "behaving badly" or acting in poor taste, taste being defined by the group. The fact that Brett, for example,

¹
Ibid., pp. 171-172.

²
Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 293.

in The Sun Also Rises, had slept with Cohn and other men was not the important thing---the important thing was that Cohn had "behaved badly."

"Come on, Robert," Bill said.

"What do you follow her around for?"

Bill stood up and took hold of Cohn.

"Don't go," Mike said. "Robert Cohn's going to buy a drink."

Bill went off with Cohn. Cohn's face was sallow. Mike went on talking. I sat and listened for a while. Brett looked disgusted.

"I say, Michael, you might not be such a bloody ass," she interrupted. "I'm not saying he's not right, you know." She turned to me.

The emotion left Mike's voice. We were all friends together.

"I'm not so damn drunk as I sounded," he said.

"I know you're not," Brett said.

"We're none of us sober," I said.

"I didn't say anything I didn't mean."

"But you put it so badly," Brett laughed.

"He was an ass, though. He came down to San Sebastian where he damn well wasn't wanted. He hung around Brett and just looked at her. It made me damned well sick."

"He did behave very badly," Brett said.

"Mark you. Brett's had affairs with men before. She tells me all about everything. She gave me this chap Cohn's letters to read. I wouldn't read them."

"Damned noble of you."

"No, listen, Jake. Brett's gone off with men. But they weren't ever Jews, and they didn't come and hang about afterward."

"Damned good chaps," Brett said. "It's all rot to talk about it. Michael and I understand each other."¹

Another passage of The Sun Also Rises repeats the same theme:

¹

Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 147.

Through the window we saw them, all three arm in arm, going toward the cafe. Rockets were going up in the square.

"I'm going to sit here," Brett said.

"I'll stay with you," Cohn said.

"Oh, don't!" Brett said. "For God's sake, go off somewhere. Can't you see Jake and I want to talk?"

"I didn't," Cohn said. "I thought I'd sit here because I felt a little tight."

"What a hell of a reason for sitting with any one. If you're tight, go to bed. Go on to bed."

"Was I rude enough to him?" Brett asked. Cohn was gone. "My God! I'm so sick of him!"

"He doesn't add much to the gayety."

"He depresses me so."

"He's behaved very badly."

"Damned badly. He had a chance to behave so well."¹

When Brett decided to carry on an affair with the nineteen-year-old bullfighter in The Sun Also Rises there was no question of sin involved. Because she intended to behave badly, she admitted to feeling like a "bitch," but that was all.

In the park it was dark under the trees.

"Do you still love me, Jake?"

"Yes," I said.

"Because I'm a goner," Brett said.

"How?"

"I'm a goner. I'm mad about the Romero boy. I'm in love with him, I think."

"I wouldn't be if I were you."

"I can't help it. I'm a goner. It's tearing me all up inside."

"Don't do it."

"I can't help it. I've never been able to help anything."

"You ought to stop it."

"How can I stop it? I can't stop things. Feel that?"

¹

Ibid., p. 187.

Her hand was trembling.

"I'm like that all through."

"You oughtn't to do it."

"I can't help it. I'm a goner now, anyway. Don't you see the difference?"

"No."

"I've got to do something. I've got to do something I really want to do. I've lost my self-respect."

"You don't have to do that."

"Oh, darling, don't be difficult. What do you think it's meant to have that damned Jew about, and Mike the way he's acted?"

"Sure."

"I can't just stay tight all the time."

"No."

"Oh, darling, please stay by me. Please stay by me and see me through this."

"Sure."

"I don't say it's right. It is right though for me. God knows, I've never felt such a bitch."

"What do you want me to do?"

"Come on," Brett said. "Let's go and find him."

.
Pedro Romero was in the cafe. He was at table with other bull-fighters and bull-fight critics. They were smoking cigars. When we came in they looked up. Romero smiled and bowed. We sat down at a table half-way down the room.

"Ask him to come over and have a drink."

"Not yet. He'll come over."

"I can't look at him."

"He's nice to look at," I said.

"I've always done just what I wanted."

"I know."

"I do feel such a bitch."

"Well," I said.

"My God!" said Brett, "the things a woman goes through."

"Yes?"

"Oh, I do feel such a bitch."¹

When Brett finally decides to give up the

¹

Ibid., pp. 189-191.

bullfighter there is still no sense of sin. In fact, she feels virtuous for deciding not to continue as a "bitch."

"Darling! I've had such a hell of a time."

"Tell me about it."

"Nothing to tell. He only left yesterday. I made him go."

"Why didn't you keep him?"

"I don't know. It isn't the sort of thing one does. I don't think I hurt him any."

"You were probably damn good for him."

"He shouldn't be living with any one. I realized that right away."

"No."

"Oh, hell!" she said, "let's not talk about it. Let's never talk about it."

"All right."

.. "He wanted to marry me, finally." ..

"Really?"

"Of course. I can't even marry Mike."

.. "You ought to feel set up." ..

"I do. I'm all right again. He's wiped out that damned Cohn."

"Good."

"You know I'd have lived with him if I hadn't seen it was bad for him. We got along damned well."

.. She put out the cigarette.

"I'm thirty-four, you know. I'm not going to be one of these bitches that ruins children."

"No."

"I'm not going to be that way. I feel rather good, you know. I feel rather set up."

"Good."

She looked away. I thought she was looking for another cigarette. Then I saw she was crying. I could feel her crying. Shaking and crying. She wouldn't look up. I put my arms around her.

"Don't let's ever talk about it. Please don't let's ever talk about it."

"Dear Brett."

"I'm going back to Mike." I could feel her crying as I held her close. "He's so damned nice and he's so awful. He's my sort of thing."

She would not look up. I stroked her hair. I

could feel her shaking.

"I won't be one of those bitches," she said.
 "But, oh, Jake, please let's never talk about it."¹

Even when Catherine Barkley of A Farewell to Arms lay dying, there was no concern for her eternal salvation in the religious sense, although she had been living immorally with Lieutenant Henry. For Catherine Barkley death was merely something which took away one's pleasures. It was something unpleasant, "a dirty trick."

The nurse opened the door and motioned with her finger for me to come. I followed her into the room. Catherine did not look up when I came in. I went over to the side of the bed. The doctor was standing by the bed on the opposite side. Catherine looked at me and smiled. I bent down over the bed and started to cry.

"Poor darling," Catherine said very softly. She looked gray.

"You're all right, Cat," I said. "You're going to be all right."

"I'm going to die," she said; then waited and said, "I hate it."

. . . "Please go out of the room," the doctor said. "You cannot talk." Catherine winked at me, her face gray. "I'll be right outside," I said.

"Don't worry, darling," Catherine said. "I'm not a bit afraid. It's just a dirty trick."²

Thus, religious values are not to be found in Ernest Hemingway's works. The code followed by Hemingway's characters is solely the pleasure principle,

¹
Ibid., pp. 252-255.

²
 Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, pp. 353-354.

a deification of the senses. In The Sun Also Rises the following exchange takes place between Jake Barnes and the count:

"You see, Mr. Barnes, it is because I have lived very much that now I can enjoy everything so well. Don't you find it like that?"

"Yes. Absolutely."

"I know," said the count. "That is the secret. You must get to know the values."¹

And the values are drinking...bullfights...drinking²
...parties...drinking...love affairs...drinking...

Not only is the worship of the pleasure principle found in Hemingway's works, but it is found in his own life as well. Hemingway married four times, tramped about the world, and in general pursued the life of a sensualist. Malcolm Cowley described one aspect of that life as follows:

He lives on a patriarchal scale, surrounded by his family, his friends and his retainers. There are no flocks or herds on his Cuban estate, but there are cats---25 by a recent count---and half a dozen dogs that wander in and out of the big Spanish-style farmhouse. Finca Vigia (or Lookout Farm) is the name of the property and it consists of 15 acres, with gardens, a tennis court, a swimming pool and a white tower at the top of which is Hemingway's study.

On the terrace outside the farmhouse door is a Ceiba tree, sacred in voodoo rites, with its smooth bark the color of an elephant's hide. The living room, 60 feet long, has its walls lined

¹ Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 63.

² Ibid., pp. 21, 22, 213-214.

with the heads of beasts that Hemingway shot in Africa. In the late afternoon the room is often noisy with guests, and the Chinese cook seldom knows how many to expect for dinner. Finca Vigia needs a staff of servants; besides the cook there are two houseboys, two or three gardeners and a chauffeur for the two big cars and the station wagon, not to mention an engineer for the fishing boat anchored in the little harbor at Cojimar.¹

It was because Hemingway was so concerned with the typical middle-class American values of success, prestige, wealth, display, and sensuous living that Gertrude Stein called Hemingway a Rotarian. That account, given in Gertrude Stein's autobiography, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, reads as follows:

For some years after this Gertrude Stein and Hemingway did not meet. And then we heard that he was back in Paris and telling a number of people how much he wanted to see her. Don't you come home with Hemingway on your arm, I used to say when she went out for a walk. Sure enough one day she did come back bringing him with her.

They sat and talked a long time. Finally I heard her say, Hemingway, after all you are ninety percent Rotarian. Can't you, he said, make it eighty percent. No, said she regretfully, I can't. After all, as she always says, he did, and I may say, he does have moments of disinterestedness.²

It is in youth that the animal appetites and pleasures are most intense, and it is for this reason,

¹ Cowley, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

² Gertrude Stein, The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933), p. 270.

no doubt, that Hemingway, in later years, expressed such great concern relative to old age. Philippe Soupault said of Hemingway that "The fact of old age itself, as he told me at our last meeting, frightened him."¹ Eugene McNamara pointed out in The Critic that this concern for perpetual youth and fear of old age were typical of contemporary American thought. He said: "Thus, in these countless unconscious symbols in our popular media we see this spirit of longing for youth, for the mystery and wonder of young love, for the turmoil and turbulence of adolescence. Little is said of the deeper wonder of mature love, of the solid ripeness of age."²

Although the name of God is occasionally mentioned in the works of Hemingway and in comments about his life, one does not find God either in his works or in his life. In fact, his works and his life read as though he is joining Nietzsche's Zarathustra in singing "Dead are all Gods."³ Such a

¹ Philippe Soupault, Les Lettres Francaises, Paris, July 12, 1961, quoted in Atlas, September, 1961.

² Eugene McNamara, "The Lost Innocence of Childhood," The Critic, XVII (April-May, 1959), 15-16.

³ Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra, trans. A. Tille (New York: Dutton, 1933), p. 69.

philosophy, as has already been pointed out, leads to moral anarchy, an emphasis of pagan values, a world in which natural acts take precedence over the supernatural. It leads, in Nietzsche's words, to a world that is beyond good and evil. As Dostoevski's Smerdyakov said: "if there's no everlasting God, there's no such thing as virtue, and no need of it." In such a world only the will and the pleasure of the individual need prevail. "Yea," said Nietzsche, "this I, with its contradiction and confusion, reporteth most truly of its being---this creating, willing, valuing I that is the measure and the value of things."¹ Or as one critic of Sartre put it: "On a shattered and deserted stage, without script, director, prompter, or audience, the actor is free to improvise his own part."²

* * *

To summarize: (1) Hemingway, who accepted no code for human behavior based upon religious principles, found it necessary to devise his own code of values. (2) The principles which were embodied in

¹ Ibid., p. 24.

² Maurice Natanson, "Jean-Paul Sartre's Philosophy of Freedom," Social Research, XIX (September, 1952), 378.

Hemingway's code sprang from his distrust of the intellect, his philosophy of despair, his attitude towards war, his feelings about death, his conception of manhood, and his attitude towards the love relationship between man and woman. (3) In general, it can be said that Hemingway based his code upon the pleasure principle. (4) Worship of the pleasure principle is found throughout Hemingway's works. It can also be found in Hemingway's personal life. (5) The Christian concept of sin is replaced in Hemingway's scheme of things by the idea of "behaving badly," or acting in poor taste, taste being defined by the group. (6) Religious values are not to be found in Hemingway's works. The code followed by Hemingway's characters is solely a code which defies the senses, which relies upon the pleasure principle. (7) The name of God is sometimes mentioned in the works of Hemingway and in comments about his life, but God is not to be found in his works, and from all available records, is not to be found in his life. In fact, Hemingway's code can best be explained in terms of such nihilistic and anti-religious philosophers as Nietzsche and Sartre.

CHAPTER XI

THE ARTIST

This chapter will be devoted to establishing Hemingway's relationship, as a literary artist, to religion. Hemingway's own concepts as to the function of a literary artist, especially in regard to such matters as sincerity, honesty, truth, and matters of style, will be examined. These concepts will then be explored in the light of a Christian appraisal as to an artist and his functions. This will be done chiefly through a consideration of the word "soul" in relation to the artist and the Christian.

* * *

Even though, as has already been pointed out, personal vanity, the idea that he must be champion, was no doubt one of the major influences upon Hemingway as an artist, and even though he may have been ninety percent Rotarian in his thinking, as Gertrude Stein claimed, nevertheless he did take his craft seriously and he attempted to present the truth as he saw that truth. Carlos Baker says that "In the Paris years Hemingway was an independent spirit, a sidelong

observer of the vagaries of the Montparnassians, aggressively critical of poor writing and of all forms of literary pretension."¹ In reference to other expatriates who were in Paris to become writers Hemingway wrote:

They are nearly all loafers expending the energy that an artist puts into his creative work in talking about what they are going to do....By talking about art they obtain the same satisfaction that the real artist does in his work.²

Speaking of the pleasure he found in writing Hemingway said: "But finding you were able to make something up; to create truly enough so that it made you happy to read it; and to do this every day you worked was something that gave a greater pleasure than any I had ever known. Beside it nothing else mattered."³

Hemingway apparently sincerely believed that it was the writer's duty to tell the truth. He wrote:

A writer's job is to tell the truth. His standard of fidelity to the truth should be so high that his invention, out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be. For facts can be observed badly;

¹
Baker, op. cit., p. 46.

²
Ernest Hemingway, "Paris Letter," Toronto Star Weekly (March 25, 1922), p. 15.

³
Hemingway, quoted by Charles Poore in The Hemingway Reader, p. xviii.

but when a good writer is creating something, he has time and scope to make it of an absolute truth.¹

Speaking of honesty in creating people for a novel

Hemingway wrote:

If the people the writer is making talk of old masters; of music; of modern painting; of letters; or of science then they should talk of those subjects in the novel. If they do not talk of those subjects and the writer makes them talk of them he is a faker, and if he talks about them himself to show how much he knows then he is showing off. No matter how good a phrase or a simile he may have if he puts it in where it is not absolutely necessary and irreplaceable he is spoiling his work for egotism. Prose is architecture, not interior decoration, and the Baroque is over. For a writer to put his own intellectual musings, which he might sell for a low price as essays, into the mouths of artificially constructed characters which are more remunerative when issued as people in a novel is good economics, perhaps, but does not make literature. People in a novel, not skillfully constructed characters, must be projected from the writer's assimilated experience, from his knowledge, from his head, from his heart and from all there is of him.²

It is probably because of Hemingway's belief that the writer should be truthful and honest that he advocated a simplicity of style. When asked what he tried to do in writing, he replied: "Put down what I see and what I feel in the best and simplest way I can tell it."³ Jaspers calls the striving for

¹ Hemingway, Men at War, p. xv.

² Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 191.

³ Putnam, Paris Was Our Mistress, p. 129.

simplicity the "drive toward honesty" or the "drive toward the basic." It is significant, in this regard, that Hemingway listed the Bible as being the chief influence upon his style. "That's how I learned to write," he said, "by reading the Bible.....the Old Testament. That's all any writer needs."¹ In Death in the Afternoon, Hemingway wrote:

If a man writes clearly enough any one can see if he fakes. If he mystifies to avoid a straight statement, which is very different from breaking so-called rules of syntax or grammar to make an effect which can be obtained in no other way, the writer takes a longer time to be known as a fake and other writers who are afflicted by the same necessity will praise him in their own defense. True mysticism should not be confused with incompetence in writing which seeks to mystify where there is no mystery but is really only the necessity to fake to cover lack of knowledge or the inability to state clearly. Mysticism implies a mystery and there are many mysteries; but incompetence is not one of them....²

In order for an artist to be truthful, honest, and sincere in his works, much self-sacrifice and self-discipline are required. But Maritain makes an interesting observation in this regard by pointing out that "In itself, independently of the motives that set man to his work, the artist's purity, however dear it may cost him, helps him in no way

¹ Ibid., pp. 128-129.

² Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, p. 54.

to save his soul."¹ In so far as the question of Hemingway's relationship, as artist, to religion is concerned, it is this word "soul" which is the key in analyzing Hemingway's concept of himself as artist and his functioning in society in that capacity. "Good writing," Hemingway said, "is true writing. If a man is making a story up it will be true in proportion to the amount of knowledge of life that he has and how conscientious he is; so that when he makes something up it is as it would truly be."² What Hemingway says here is very true, but when applied to the Christian as writer, it would translate into something far different from what Hemingway apparently intended. It would mean that a writer is capable of telling the truth---truth in the absolute rather than in the relative sense---not only "in proportion to the amount of knowledge of life that he has and how conscientious he is" but also in direct proportion to the degree that his soul is Christian.

Man is both the creator and the product of

¹
Jacques Maritain and Jean Cocteau, Art and Faith (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1948), p. 93.

²
Ernest Hemingway, "Monologue to the Maestro," Esquire, IV (October, 1935), 21.

literature. If the soul of the artist who creates literature is imbued with the Christian concept of man and his destiny, then the characters he creates, at least in so far as the total scheme of his work is concerned, will quite naturally reflect the artist's soul, in that the work itself, even though only indirectly, will show evidence of the Christian concept of man and his destiny. Nowhere in Hemingway's works is found the slightest glimmer of the Christian concept of man as composed of body and soul and made to the image and likeness of God. Instead, man as he is found in Hemingway's works is all body and no soul; he is not made to the image and likeness of God but rather to the image and likeness of man, man conceived primarily as pure animal.

The Christian thinks of man in terms of knowledge which he received from both the Greeks and the Hebrews. In contradistinction to the two dominant themes of the ancient world which had been the omnipotence of the state and the fatality of environment, from the Greeks the Christian learned the importance of reason and from the Hebrews he learned of a God Who is both transcendent and immanent. To the Hebrews, God was a perfect being, and consequently He was above every other being. He was just, and He was not governed by the caprice which governs men. He was

interested both in man and in men. He had a very definite plan in governing the universe, and this plan was benevolent. Even when the just man suffered, as in the case of Job, his suffering had meaning and reason. Even though Job's friends sneered and jeered at what they considered his self-righteous attitude, God showed him that this was all part of being the "suffering servant" of his Master and that suffering purified even the good and made them better. Saint Paul expressed the same sentiment when he said that God chastises those whom He loves for the very reason that He does love them.

As has already been pointed out, man, as Hemingway viewed him, is not a rational animal in the Christian sense, but a sensual animal. In fact, Hemingway distrusted reason and was avowedly anti-intellectual. Hemingway also believed in the fatality of environment or in "luck," as he preferred to call it.

In so far as the Christian concept of God is concerned, God has no real place in Hemingway's works, in general; nor in the lives of Hemingway's characters, in particular. There is no ultimate justice in Hemingway's interpretation of the world, and the world serves only the function of providing for man's ultimate destruction and annihilation. Suffering, in Hemingway's

scheme of things, has absolutely no meaning for man other than that it is unpleasant and is to be avoided at all possible cost---even the cost of suicide. Nowhere in Hemingway's works do we find the lesson of Calvary, the lesson that the meeting of the vertical and the horizontal, the divine and the human, always meet in suffering and in eventual crucifixion; but even so, suffering and crucifixion, for the Christian, terminate in the resurrection.

Hemingway the artist did not depict the Christian soul because Hemingway the man did not possess the soul of a Christian. Hemingway did, however, depict a vast area of the world in which he lived, and the particular area which he portrayed was the area with which he had identified his own soul. He depicted the world of the sensualist, a nonthinking world devoid of spiritual values; a world brought about by what the historian Toynbee terms "schism in the soul." Toynbee says that this "schism in the soul" is found in disintegrating societies, and its common symptoms are abandon, truancy, drift, promiscuity, vulgarity, and general barbarism. In other words, all of the qualities which are found in the characters which Hemingway created.

Novelist Mary McCarthy laments the fact that "Western literature is the mirror on the ceiling of

the whorehouse."¹ She may have been even more precise if she had said that western civilization has become the mirror on the ceiling of the whorehouse and that western literature is but one portion of the entire dismal picture. But that Hemingway's works reflect the general picture of western civilization today, and of American civilization in particular, there can be little doubt. As John Atkins notes:

...let us regard Hemingway as a recording instrument. He put down what he saw, just as Conrad did, and also what he heard...Henry Seidel Canby, introducing the Modern Library edition of The Sun Also Rises, said the novel, "among other things, is an example of first-rate reporting."...Stephen Spender had the right idea when he wrote that Hemingway is "corrupt in his values to the extent that his age is corrupt."²

Samuel Putnam in pointing out that Hemingway did write about the world which he knew, observes:

The result was that, in listening to Hemingway as in reading him, I did not give a thought to the nature of his thesis---it is only afterward that one does that. Most of these subjects had never held any interest for me. Were they not the common avocations of the Babbitt, big or small, of the Rotarians, the Chamber of Commerce, the millionaire Explorers' Club, the Blue Book sportsman?...Yet this young man in front of me, from the suburb of Oak Park which I knew so well, was obviously bent upon taking these things and making literature of them. They happened to be his world, and it was his world that he was writing about....³

¹
Time, July 4, 1960.

²
Atkins, op. cit., p. 42. Italics added.

³
Putnam, op. cit., p. 130.

Clifton Fadiman says:

Hemingway is the modern primitive, who makes a fresh start with the emotions as his forefathers did with the soil. He is the frontiersman of the loins, heart, and biceps, and the stoic Red Indian minus traditions, scornful of the past, bare of sentimentality, catching the muscular life in a plain and muscular prose.....he is the prophet of those who are without faith.¹

Not only did Hemingway record what he saw, but, as has already been pointed out, he also influenced people to see things as he saw them. As Malcolm Cowley notes:

Hemingway, as Lord Byron had done a century before, gave the young people attitudes to strike and patterns of conduct to follow. They not only wrote like him, if they wrote, and walked with his rolling slouch, if they had seen him, but also drank like his heroes and heroines, cultivated a hard-boiled melancholy and talked in page after page of Hemingway dialog.²

John Middleton Murray once said that to know a work of literature is to know the soul of the man who created it. Murray's statement is reminiscent of the words of Christ: "by their fruits you shall know them."³ When Pilate was questioning Christ about His Kingdom, and Christ told him that His Kingdom was not of this world, Christ also said that He had come into

¹ Fadiman, op. cit., p. 63. Italics added.

² Cowley, op. cit., p. 98.

³ Matthew 7, 20.

the world to bear witness to the truth. "Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice," He said. Then Pilate said to him: "What is truth?" Christ never gave Pilate an answer, for he had already answered the question before Pilate had a chance to ask it. He said "I bear witness to the truth." In the art of Hemingway we do not find the Christian bearing witness to the truth. Rather, we find the pagan bearing witness to the pagan world which engendered him and of which, from all the evidence, he ever remained a part.

"Then what is life?" asks Shelley. Keats tells us that "Life is the vale of Soul-making." "Do you not see how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an intelligence and make it a Soul?" asks Keats. Keats was right in so far as he went, but the Greek poet Pindar might have suggested to him a complete answer when he says: "Become who you are." In other words, the soul is, but yet has to ceaselessly become what it is. For the soul to finally become what it is, it must achieve complete union with God, and the task of the Christian in this life is to work towards that goal, and the closer he gets to that goal the more will he have become what he is, and the more will he, if he is a literary artist, reveal through his works that he is truly a child of God. Because Hemingway never saw the importance of soul-

making is the reason that, even though his intention was to express truth, he never could express ultimate truths, but only excellent descriptions, the superficial truths, of the world in which he lived and worked.

Saint John tells us that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; and the Word was God." The literary artist who is genuinely Christian realizes that in order to achieve truth, honesty, sincerity, and true reality in art he must become one with the Word of which Saint John speaks. Claudel tells us that he who does away with the Word destroys speech. And it is this truth which prompted Maritain to say: "Art for art's sake, art for the people are equally absurd. I propose Art for God."¹ It is this art, truly Christian art---art for God---which Hemingway never had the good fortune to achieve.

* * *

To summarize: (1) Although personal vanity, the idea that he must become champion, was, no doubt, one of the major influences upon Ernest Hemingway as an artist, he nevertheless did take his craft seriously and he attempted to present the truth as he saw that truth. Hemingway was ever critical of poor writing

¹
Maritain, op. cit., p. 97.

and of all forms of literary pretension. He also continued to reiterate that a writer must tell the truth.

(2) Probably because of his belief that the writer should be truthful and honest, Hemingway advocated a simplicity of style. Jaspers calls the striving for simplicity the "drive toward honesty" or the "drive toward the basic." (3) If an artist is to be sincere, honest, and truthful in his works, much self-discipline and self-sacrifice are required. (4) Maritain points out, however, that "the artist's purity, however dear it may cost him, helps him in no way to save his soul."

The key word in understanding Hemingway's relationship to religion, as an artist, is this word "soul." (5)

Hemingway said that if "a man is making a story up it will be true in proportion to the amount of knowledge of life that he has and how conscientious he is."

What Hemingway says is true, but when applied to the Christian as writer it would translate into something different from what Hemingway intended. It would mean that a writer is capable of telling the truth---truth in the absolute rather than in the relative sense---not only "in proportion to the amount of knowledge of life that he has and how conscientious he is" but also in direct proportion to the degree that his soul is Christian. If the soul of the artist who creates literature is imbued with the Christian concept of

man and his destiny, his work will reflect this concept. (6) The Christian concept of man as composed of body and soul and made to the image and likeness of God is not to be found in Hemingway's works. (7) The reason that Hemingway the artist did not depict the Christian soul is that Hemingway the man did not possess the soul of a Christian. (8) Hemingway did, however, portray a vast portion of the society in which he lived, the particular portion of society with which he had identified his own soul. (9) It is the duty of the Christian to bear witness to the truth, and the artist bears such witness through his work. In Hemingway's work, however, we find not the Christian bearing witness to the truth, but the pagan bearing witness to the pagan world which produced him and of which, from all the evidence, he ever remained a part.

CONCLUSION

Harry Sylvester, writing in The Commonweal,
said in reference to Ernest Hemingway:

Puritans, of whom the Catholic Church in America has more than a fair share, condemn Hemingway as an artist because of his subject-matter, as if subject-matter went more than only a very little way toward determining a man's artistry. People without subtlety, people who are overawed by purple writing....¹

Harry Sylvester has a point in that Catholics have only too often condemned---as well as praised---Hemingway for the wrong reasons. But the real problem with Hemingway was never his subject-matter but the manner in which he treated that subject-matter. The real question was never one of his purple passages but of his entire outlook upon man and upon life.

As has already been pointed out, there are passages in Hemingway's works which indicate a basic misunderstanding of the important truths of religion, and this misunderstanding continued to pervade his work even after the rumors in the nineteen-thirties of his conversion to Catholicism. In addition, a

¹
Sylvester, op. cit., p. 10.

profound distrust of the intellect is found in Hemingway's works, as well as in his life, and a frank appeal to the senses as the guide and criterion for human behavior. Since it is the intellect which distinguishes man from the animal and enables him to engage in religious activity, it seems evident that in his renunciation of the intellect, with his simultaneous appeal to the senses, Hemingway was renouncing the very basis for forming a religious attitude towards life. Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Paul, as well as other theologians and saints of the Church, stress the opposition which can exist between the sensuous and rational appetites. It is for this reason that the Catholic Church has traditionally attached great importance to the intellect and has fought against anti-intellectualism.

All of the evidence points to the fact that Hemingway's characters, as well as Hemingway himself, suffered from a sense of unfulfillment; they came to the conclusion that life did not provide the joy and happiness which they expected to receive from it. Unfulfillment was experienced in sexual relations, in obtaining and using earthly goods, and in being unable to overcome one's loneliness through identification with someone or something outside the self. This sense of unfulfillment was the direct result of

Hemingway's having failed to find fulfillment through religion in his own life and in having created characters who shared his own experience and the experience of others in the world around him.

The fact that Hemingway's characters experienced a sense of unfulfillment led them to accept the unchristian philosophy of despair, a despair which sometimes ended in suicide, just as it did for Hemingway himself. The majority of Hemingway's characters, however, resigned themselves to a pagan fatalism which ultimately led to tragedy. The grace of God, in Hemingway's scheme of things, was replaced by chance or luck. But even good luck, in the end, resulted in despair.

Hemingway's attitude towards war, just as his attitude in other matters, was basically unchristian, and this attitude is expressed both in his works and in his personal statements. Even though Hemingway thoroughly understood the true nature of war, the true nature of the combatants who engage in war, and the true causes of war, he does not describe war as unchristian, nor does he advocate that Christians refuse to take part in such wars. Hemingway did oppose most wars because of the stupidity which causes them and the incompetence with which they are fought, but he believed that the concept of war was defensible, provided that those who engaged in it wanted to fight,

knew what they were doing, and liked war. Hemingway, in forming his conclusions about war, failed to take the fifth commandment into account. His attitude that Germans should be sterilized following the Second World War was likewise irreligious.

The attitude towards death expressed by Hemingway through his fictional characters and in his own personal statements as well, is totally unchristian. In killing, Hemingway saw a means of temporarily avoiding death, and he believed that one of the greatest pleasures involved in killing resulted from the feeling of rebellion against death which occurred through its administering. It was in bullfighting particularly that Hemingway's philosophy of killing found its symbolic expression, and Hemingway gave a religious interpretation to bullfighting, in that the bullfighter was a sacrificial priest who officiated in a religion where bulls were sacrificed as substitutes for men. The idea of taking pleasure in killing, when applied to man, is totally unchristian, whether such killing takes place directly in war or outside war, or whether it takes place symbolically in the bull ring where the bull is interpreted as taking the place of a human being in a pageant which Hemingway turned into a pagan ceremony.

While the Christian believes that the state

of his soul at the time of death will determine his happiness or unhappiness for all eternity, Hemingway apparently saw no such supernatural significance in so far as the matter of death was concerned. Not only did Hemingway never express a belief in, or a concern for, immortality in his works or in what is known of his personal statements, but the concern he did express in connection with death involved only the physical aspect of death, the concern as to whether or not the body would be able to meet death with "dignity." Even the unchristian act of suicide, in Hemingway's scheme of things, apparently became acceptable if it were a means of preserving one's "dignity," and avoiding the "indignity" which resulted when the body or mind suffered excessively.

Another of the unchristian attitudes to be found in Hemingway's works and in his personal statements is his idea of competition. Hemingway's belief that men should compete to achieve first place was based upon such worldly and unchristian maxims as pride, vanity, self-love, worldly ambition, the desire for success, the love of honors, and the determination to excel over others. The idea that men should compete against animals, as Hemingway conceived of this notion, was also unchristian, for Hemingway made animals the equals of men in a battle in which the fit or strongest

survive. Such an idea was in direct contradiction to Genesis which teaches that animals were created for the use of man, rather than as competitors against which man had to prove his equality or his superiority.

In identifying the competitive spirit with manhood, Hemingway defined manhood in an unchristian and naturalistic fashion which excluded the supernatural. Manhood, for Hemingway, meant the primitive, the violent, the elemental, and the physical. It was symbolized by the word "cojones," which, in translation, means testicles. Consequently, manhood, as it is found in Hemingway's works and personal statements, is determined by one's ability to defeat, to propagate, and to survive. Hemingway conceived of bravery not as the ability to wage and win spiritual battles which stood in the way of union with God, but as a means of displaying one's physical prowess, one's "cojones." Hemingway's concept of bravery, with its emphasis upon the primitive and physical qualities in man, leads to violence, and such violence is in total opposition to that meekness which Christ advocated while on earth.

Just as Hemingway himself apparently experienced difficulty in establishing a satisfactory relationship in love, the characters in his fiction experience a similar difficulty, and the cause of this difficulty is that they do not accept the Christian concept as

to what the ideal relationship between man and woman should be. Man and woman, according to the Christian concept of love, love God and are thus enabled to genuinely love each other. In the ideal love relationship, as Saint Paul expresses it, women should be subject to their husbands, and husbands should love their wives as Christ loved the Church and delivered himself up for it. The men and women in Hemingway's fiction do not meet either one of these qualifications. The women are either domineering shrews or the men view the women solely as sexual objects.

The code which Hemingway establishes in lieu of Christian principles is also unchristian. In this code, which defies the senses and is based entirely upon the pleasure principle, the Christian concept of sin is replaced by the idea of "behaving badly," or acting in poor taste, taste being defined by the norms of the group. Hemingway's code can be best explained not in terms of Christianity but in terms of such anti-religious philosophers as Nietzsche and Sartre.

Although some Catholic critics continue to maintain as "a critical truism" that Hemingway's muse

was Catholic,¹ it should be evident from both his works and his life that his philosophy was neither Catholic nor even Christian. Although Hemingway was concerned with expressing the truth in his work, he was unable to present ultimate truth because his soul had not become identified with ultimate truth; in other words, with God Himself. Consequently, Hemingway became an excellent stylist who described exceptionally well much of the society around him, but because he lacked the soul of a Christian he was able to present merely surface truths; not the perennial and profound truths which are to be found in man's relationship to God and in all of the struggles, frustrations, and joys which such a relationship entails.

In one of those extremely rare references on the part of critics to Hemingway and religion Philip Young remarks that "Here is the writer who announced the death of all the gods save those of the senses and at the same time was attending mass at a Roman Catholic church every Sunday, and who still reads regularly a periodical called the Southern Jesuit." Actually, perhaps Hemingway's attitude towards Catholicism is

¹ See Charles A. Brady, "Portrait of Hemingway," America, July 22, 1961.

not so difficult to explain when one considers the religious pragmatism which is quite the vogue in America today. There was already evidence of such pragmatism early in Hemingway's career. Gertrude Stein, for example, describes the baptism of Hemingway's first son as follows:

The first thing to do when they [Hemingway and his wife] came back was as they thought to get the baby baptized. They wanted Gertrude Stein and myself to be god-mothers and an English war comrade of Hemingway was to be god-father. We were all born of different religions and most of us were not practising any, so it was rather difficult to know in what church the baby could be baptized. We spent a great deal of time that winter, all of us, discussing the matter. Finally it was decided that it should be baptised episcopalian and episcopalian it was. Just how it was managed with the assortment of god-parents I am sure I do not know, but it was baptised in the episcopalian chapel.¹

In an age when even some American Protestant² bishops consider the Bible myth, it would not be at all strange to find a man with Hemingway's beliefs listing himself as a Catholic for a time if he could see some immediate advantage in doing so. Perhaps he merely wanted the physical sensation of "experiencing" Catholicism. Or, since the vague and contradictory

¹ Stein, op. cit., p. 262.

² Bishop James A. Pike of California, for example. See Time, February 24, 1961.

rumors of his "conversion" began to circulate around the time of his second marriage, it could be that he was attempting to please his second wife who was a Catholic. Then again, there still persists the possibility that he was never even baptized. But what is really important is not whether Hemingway attended church services or not but whether he had the mind, heart, and soul of a Catholic; and all of the evidence points to the contrary.

Even when Hemingway's characters refer to religion, this reference is often preceded or followed by a reference to the bar and drink, and by implication at least, one is no better than the other. That this is all part of the Zeitgeist or spirit of the modern age in America is evidenced---to sight just one example---by the huge success of religious songs. Strangely enough, few people apparently see any contradiction in the fact that such hits as Our Lady of Fatima, It Is No Secret What God Can Do, and I Believe appear side by side on the juke box with such frank appeals to sensualism as Make Love to Me or Teach Me Tonight. Then there is the Reverend Norman Vincent Peale, one of the most popular---and financially successful---preachers in America whose sermons are the very antithesis of religion and deal with such topics as: The Key to Self-Confidence, How to Feel

Alive and Well, Ways to Improve Your Situation, Wonderful Results of Faith Attitude, Live with Joyous Vitality, and Empty Fear from Your Thoughts.¹ Ironically, these "popularizers" of "Christianity" seem to take no notice of the fact that most of the Hebrew prophets came to very uncomfortable ends and that Jesus Himself died upon a cross.

Canon George D. Smith notes in reference to this modern attitude towards religion that "The agnosticism of Kant and his disciples, which, denying the validity of metaphysical argument, takes refuge, in order to justify religious belief, either in the dictates of the practical reason or in an unreasoning religious sense, is an essentially Protestant philosophy; and of this tendency to rely upon a blind instinct in religious matters the modern forms of exaggerated--- and therefore false---mysticism, the systems of religious pragmatism and sentimentalism, so common outside the Church, are the more or less direct descendants."²

In so far as setting oneself down as a Catholic

¹ See Paul Hutchison, "Have We A 'New' Religion?," Life, April 11, 1955, pp. 140-151.

² Smith, op. cit., p. 2.

is concerned, as Hemingway apparently once did, it is well to remember the case of Santayana, a more humane and more intellectual pagan than Hemingway. Santayana's respect and feeling for religious tradition led one critic to remark that "Santayana believes that there is no God, and that Mary is His mother." Santayana himself said: "Like my parents, I have always set myself down officially as a Catholic: but this is a matter of sympathy and traditional allegiance, not of philosophy....I have never had any unquestioning faith in any dogma, and have never been what is called a practicing Catholic."¹

The New York Times of July 4, 1961 states: "Antonio Ordenez killed two bulls here (Spain) today in memory of Ernest Hemingway...Senor Ordenez won the two ears and tail of one bull he killed, and one ear of the other. The ears and tail are trophies for gallant performances. The matador wept openly over the death of 'Ernesto.' He said that his tears were justified 'because I am sure that Papa Hemingway would have liked this form of praying for the repose of his soul.'" It is no doubt true that Hemingway

¹ George Santayana, I Believe (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1939), p. 235.

would have liked that way of "praying" for his soul; it apparently would have meant as much to him as a priest conducting his funeral, and unfortunately, it seems that he would have seen no difference between the two.

Hemingway's formal career as a writer was launched with the book, The Sun Also Rises. He prefaced that book with a quotation from Ecclesiastes:

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever....The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose....The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits....All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

In closing his career to the accompaniment of the words "nada...nada...nada," Hemingway might well have added another very appropriate verse from chapter one of Ecclesiastes: "Vanity of vanities...vanity of vanities, and all is vanity."

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis, THE QUESTION OF RELIGION IN THE LIFE AND WORKS OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY, is to establish Hemingway's relationship to religion, a relationship which has been confusing, ambiguous, and misunderstood in the past, and upon which no work of significance has been done previously. This is accomplished in three ways: personal pronouncements by Hemingway which are in any manner connected with religion are carefully weighed; what is known historically of the function of religion in the life of Hemingway is examined; Hemingway's attitude towards religion as expressed by his works is considered.

In boyhood Ernest Hemingway was a member of the Congregationalist Church, but from all indications there is no further information regarding Hemingway's relationship to religion until the nineteen-thirties when contradictory reports began to be circulated to the effect that Hemingway was a Catholic. Hemingway himself consistently refused to comment upon his attitude towards religion. Hemingway's eldest son, John, at the time of his father's death, stated that his father had become a Catholic at the time of his

marriage to his second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, a Catholic. He added that his father was not a Catholic when he died. Father Robert J. Waldmann, the priest who officiated at Hemingway's funeral, pointed out that even he remained uncertain as to matters pertaining to Hemingway's relationship to religion. Father Waldmann emphasized that Hemingway did not receive a Catholic burial.

Some Catholic critics have attempted to prove that Hemingway was Catholic in his thinking by pointing out that priests are treated with respect in his works and that his characters sometimes act out their lives against a Catholic background. An examination of the passages quoted by these critics to prove their particular point of view clearly indicates that their assumptions are unwarranted. On the other hand, there are passages in Hemingway's works which indicate a definite shallowness, callousness, and perhaps even misunderstanding, towards the basic truths of religion in general and Catholicism in particular. That such a tone continued to pervade his work after the rumors of his conversion to Catholicism in the nineteen-thirties is significant.

Critics are generally agreed that Hemingway was anti-intellectual. Hemingway's anti-intellectualism and his emphasis upon the sensual in place of the

intellect is antithetical to the true spirit of religion in general and to Catholicism in particular. Worshipping the sensual in man, apart from the intellect, results in a sense of unfulfillment, the feeling that life does not provide those joys expected of it. The characters in Hemingway's fiction experience this sense of unfulfillment in three ways: unfulfillment in sexual relations; unfulfillment in obtaining what is considered some earthly good, or in obtaining it too late, or in obtaining something one does not really desire; unfulfillment in a higher sense, the inability to identify oneself with something or someone outside oneself and thus to overcome one's loneliness and forlornness. The fact that Hemingway himself experienced a feeling of unfulfillment is evidenced not only by his works but by his life, especially by his suicide. The reason that Hemingway and his characters are unable to experience a sense of fulfillment is that they lack genuine religious faith.

The feeling of unfulfillment leads to despair, and this despair is found in Hemingway's fiction as well as in his personal statements. The characters in Hemingway's fiction, just as Hemingway himself finally did, sometimes seek a solution to their despair in suicide. The majority of Hemingway's characters, however, as a result of their despair, resign

themselves to a capricious fatalism which eventually and inevitably ends in tragedy. Hemingway believed that good fortune or ill-fortune was determined solely by luck or chance, but even good luck was no guarantee against the ultimate inevitability of despair. Hemingway's philosophy of despair can be found in his attitude towards war, his attitude towards death, his concept of manhood, his attitude towards women, and his code. This philosophy of despair is not a Christian, and certainly not a Catholic, philosophy.

Hemingway accepted no code for human behavior based upon religious principles, and he found it necessary, consequently, to devise his own code of values. In general, it can be said that Hemingway based his code upon the pleasure principle. He found even war "defensible," for example, if fought "by those who wanted to fight it" and "knew what they were doing and liked it." Hemingway was obsessed with the problem of death, notably violent death. He saw killing as a means of holding on a while longer to that "temporary avoidance of death which we describe as life." He believed in the unchristian principle that one of the "greatest pleasures" involved in "the true enjoyment of killing" resulted from "the feeling of rebellion against death which comes from its administering." Hemingway was a highly competitive individual whose

spirit of competition was unchristian and based upon the maxims of the world: self-love, pride, vanity, worldly ambition, desire for success, determination to excel over others, and love of honors. He identified the competitive spirit with manhood, and he defined manhood in unchristian terms of the physical, the elemental, the primitive, and the violent. The men in Hemingway's works view woman as merely a sexual object, a creature worthwhile only if she can be easily possessed sexually without making demands upon masculine freedom, a creature to be lied to in order that lust might be satisfied, a creature without an immortal soul. Worship of the pleasure principle is to be found not only throughout Hemingway's works but also in his personal life. The Christian concept of sin is replaced in Hemingway's scheme of things by the idea of "behaving badly," or acting in poor taste, taste being defined by the group.

The real problem with Hemingway from a Christian point of view was never his subject matter but the manner in which he treated that subject matter. The real question was never one of his "purple passages" but his entire outlook upon man and upon life. In so far as Hemingway's relationship to Catholicism is concerned, his works attest the fact that his soul---and consequently his philosophy---was neither Catholic nor even Christian.