THREE PATHS TO RELIGIOUS INTEGRATION IN
ERNEST HEMINGWAY’S WAR FICTION

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ABSTRACT

My dissertation studies religiosity in Ernest Hemingway’s war fiction in terms of how his soldier characters connect to the divine. The means to understanding this connection is in refining how the characters express the utility of this connection and how these features fit into larger structural ideals. I argue that the wartime characters integrate with the divine through various methods: by contact with nature, by enacting a ritual, or by embodying Christian manliness. I base my dissertation on relevant phenomenological theories but also considers broader structural-functional theories, and I form the approach on structuralism in that I look at both single works and at the war fiction as a whole as well as looking for connections between literature and culture. Furthermore, I look to the theories of Northrop Frye in analyzing this literature because Frye’s structuralism allows for genre-bending oeuvres such as Hemingway’s. I argue that, contrary to much literary criticism, the Hemingway wartime protagonists are theists who seek the divine in times
of conflict, but, unlike the notion of “no atheists in the foxholes,” these characters harbor their religiosity not situationally but throughout their lives. I conclude by bringing together elements of Ernest Hemingway’s biography with mythoi of connection to nature, enacting rituals, and embodying Christian manliness to derive at a rough categorization of this religiosity.
The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, have examined a dissertation titled “Three Paths To Religious Integration In Ernest Hemingway’s War Fiction,” presented by Timothy James Pingelton, candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

These are the abbreviations used primarily in parenthetical citations followed by the specific edition used in this research. These abbreviations are approved and used by The Hemingway Society.


* ARIT  Across the River and Into the Trees (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950)


* FWBT  For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940. New York: Quality Paperback Book Club, 1993)

* IOT  In Our Time (1925. New York: Scribner's, 1958)

Additionally, please note that, following MLA style, movements (such as modernism or romanticism) are capitalized only when they could be confused with a generic term. This also applies to religious references (e.g., “first mover” will be used instead of “First Mover”).
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank my doctoral committee for all the academic assistance and for the friendship, too. The time we have had to chat never seems long enough. I also thank my wife Sophie and my children Ed and Maggie—three great people who always had the perfect word when I didn’t.
PREFACE

He was completely integrated now and he took a good long look at everything. Then he looked up at the sky. There were big white clouds in it. He touched the palm of his hand against the pine needles where he lay and he touched the bark of the pine truck that he lay behind. (Ernest Hemingway, *FWBT* 471)

These are the concluding images of Ernest Hemingway’s 1940 novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. When I first read the novel’s ending pages, I knew that, upon closing the back cover, I would flip the book over and re-enter the world of Robert Jordan, Maria, Pilar and the others hiding out in a cave in the Sierra de Guadarrama in central Spain. On the novel’s official publication day (21 Oct 1940), *New York Times* book critic Ralph Thompson wrote “*For Whom the Bell Tolls* is a tremendous piece of work. […] Mr. Hemingway has always been the writer, but he has never been the master that he is in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*” (Thompson). So there is some suggestion that my awe of the book’s artistry was not limited to myself.

I have carried for years Robert Jordan’s act of communing with nature on that pine-covered hillside as he faces imminent death—visualizing it, thinking about it, and researching its meaning and significance. I studied Ernest Hemingway’s life and visited a few of the places he lived; I (carefully) handled his unpublished works, notes, and liquor purchase receipts. Then I turned to his critics and relevant scholarship in literature, religious studies, and philosophy. My conclusion, presented in this dissertation, demonstrates that the warrior protagonists in Hemingway’s war oeuvre connect to the divine in three manners: by connecting with nature, through ritual, or by exhibiting
Christian manliness (as it was understood in Hemingway’s time). These new connections force new interpretations of Hemingway’s war writing and works of other modernists. They are the key to understanding religiosity in the war fiction of Ernest Hemingway; these connections mitigate and ameliorate the seeming disconnects between individual and society, atheist and monotheist, youth and maturity.

This dissertation, titled *Three Paths to Religious Integration in Ernest Hemingway’s War Fiction*, argues that the Hemingway soldier character, in times of tumult, seeks integration with the divine by integrating with nature. The second path to religious integration is by enacting ritual that move the warriors from a state of banality to one of enlightenment. The third means to integrating with the divine is by living a life of Christian manliness (also termed muscular Christianity). The result of this integration, through whatever means, is connection with an omnipotent and immutable force, the union which provides the soldier the comfort of a reality devoid of deceitful imagination or trite dogma.

This is a study of religiosity in Ernest Hemingway’s war fiction in terms of how his warrior characters connect to the divine. Their experiences link them with something profound and immutable for the purposes of solace and redemption. The purpose of the biographical chapter in this dissertation is to point to the deep empathy Hemingway seems to have had with his soldier characters. The inclusion of phenomenological aspects (meaning how both the author and his characters actually experience religiosity, à la Rudolph Otto and Mircea Eliade) may seem to stray from the more sociological approaches to religion (macro-level structuralism à la Émile Durkheim and Victor Turner) also detailed in this dissertation. While the premises of Durkheim and Turner are...
certainly relevant to this study and they are not disunited from the micro-level experience of Hemingway and his characters, Hemingway’s depictions of his soldiers transformative experiences (via nature, ritual, or embodying Christian manliness) speak to the apparent empathy the author carried for his soldiers.

A starting point for discussing my use of the term “religion” can begin with Émile Durkheim as defined in his landmark work *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912): “A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden—beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them” (Durkheim 46). The kind of religion practiced by the Hemingway soldier protagonist is certainly not the primitive religion practiced by the indigenous Australian tribes about whom Durkheim wrote; I will refine how the Hemingway wartime character demonstrates facets of Durkheim’s definition of religion in the course of this dissertation. In short, “religion” will come to mean a theism founded on Durkheim’s definition of religion augmented by the phenomenological theories of religiosity of Rudolph Otto and Mircea Eliade, William James and Alfred North Whitehead also factor into defining religion as these characters seem to live it. I use “divinity” in this dissertation to signify a god who transcends human capacities, specifically the Christian God, who is present in Jesus Christ.

My methodology also includes discussion of relevant historical criticism as it fits into the progression of my argument. Thus, a literature review, is not set apart into a disconnected chapter of its own but is taken apart, with the literature review pieces placed thematically where they bolster my claims, run contrary to my claims, or provide background to what I claim. Scholars have largely evaded the simultaneous study of the
three topics of great consequence in Ernest Hemingway’s works: war, nature, and
religion. Studies of the dynamics of all three of these elements in any body of literature
are few, although studies of any two of these elements are rather common. This
dissertation rectifies these three elements. Similarly, I study in turn cooperation of the
elements of war, ritual, and religion as well as war, Christian manliness, and religion.

My discussion is limited to Ernest Hemingway’s fiction either with a war/battle
setting and/or with character(s) who are soldiers or veterans. Specifically, the works to
be studied are as follows: *A Farewell to Arms* (novel, 1929), *For Whom the Bell Tolls*
(novel, 1940), *Across the River and Into the Trees* (novel, 1950), *The Fifth Column* (stage
play, 1938); and several short stories: “Big Two-Hearted River,” “A Natural History of
the Dead,” “Today is Friday,” “In Another Country,” “On the Quai at Smyrna,” “A Very
Short Story,” “Soldier’s Home,” “The Revolutionist,” “The Monument” (unpublished),
“Che Ti Dice La Patria?”, “A Simple Enquiry,” “Now I Lay Me,” “A Way You’ll Never
Be,” “Black Ass at the Crossroads,” and certain interchapters of the short story collection
*In Our Time.*

The characters within these works who will be studied are Nick Adams
(most of the short stories), Frederic Henry (*A Farewell to Arms*), Robert Jordan (*For
Whom the Bell Tolls*), Richard Cantwell (*Across the River and Into the Trees*), and a few
other soldiers, named or unnamed.

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1 *in our time* (no capitalization) was published in 1924 by Three Mountains Press; *In Our
Time* was published in 1925 by Boni & Liveright with some new material and
arrangement of stories. Scribner’s published another version in 1926 with a new
introduction and one more story added.
The following is an abstract of the subsequent four chapters in this dissertation. I organize each chapter deductively, moving from premise to premise to conclusion, showing how the characters in this study experience trauma (premise) seek out a connection to the divine (premise) in order to integrate with the divine for steadying grace and timeless immutability (conclusion).

In Chapter One, “The Premise Forms,” I offer biographical, historical, and cultural evidence to provide background to the argument I make. Important terms are defined using sources relevant to the study of Ernest Hemingway’s war fiction. My intention is to speculate from what influences Hemingway’s views on nature, war, and theology developed and to demonstrate how these données became manifest in his oeuvre. In Chapter One I also cite passages from his works and those of critics, I move to discussing how his warrior characters seek out nature. Chapter Two, “The Scarred Sacred Landscape,” posits evidence of the soldier characters turning to nature in times of crisis in order to integrate with the divine. They view nature as something immutable, omnipotent, and timeless. Chapter Three, “Ritual—Initiation,” discusses the role ritual plays as integrator of soldier and the divine. The rituals take the form of events wherein the soldier moves from one state to one more elevated in significance or closer to the divine. The warriors perform the rituals individually, yet they are based on those prescribed by ecclesiastical bodies. Chapter Four, “Christian Manliness—Divine Manhood,” details the third way these soldiers connect with the divine. There was a unique time in the life of Ernest Hemingway (and shortly before his time) when it was thought by many in America that adhering to a strong code and living “the strenuous life”
was to enact a kind of piety. The soldiers’ connection to the divine in this third manner is more long-term than the first two ways, but it is no less structured.
CHAPTER 1

THE PREMISE FORMS

My God painted many wonderful pictures and wrote some very good books and fought Napoleon’s rear-guard in the retreat from Moskova and fought on both sides at Gettysburg and did away with yellow fever and taught Picasso how to draw and sired Citation. He is the best god-damned God you ever knew. But I have never met him. I’ve seen a lot of his pictures though in the Prado and I read his books and his short stories every year. And I know the exact details of how he killed George Armstrong Custer, which nobody else knows, and my god when he played foot-ball was Jim Thorpe and when he pitched he was Walter Johnson and the ball looked as big as a small marble and it would kill you if it hit you. So my God never dusted anybody off ever.


This chapter builds the argument that Hemingway’s wartime characters, in times of chaos, seek the divine through nature, ritual, and/or Christian manliness for solace and strength. This argument is antithetical to many interpretations, which find these protagonists are atheists who find no divinity in their worlds or in society. The Cambridge Companion to American Novelists and Influencing Hemingway: People and Places that Shaped his Life and Work are but two books that declare the fictive works of Hemingway to be “godless,” and, writing in The Saturday Review, Granville Hicks informed nearly 350,000 readers in 1961 that “The consolations of religion are not available to his [Hemingway’s] characters” (Hicks 15). Hemingway has been declared a

1 Irving Thalberg (1899-1936) was a famed movie producer who died of pneumonia at the age of 37. Fitzgerald based the main character of his 1940 unfinished novel The Last Tycoon on Thalberg.
“poster boy for atheism,” (Comfort) as have as his character Robert Jordan (Robson) and Frederic Henry (Taylor). This dissertation refutes these claims and posits three ways Hemingway’s wartime protagonists display their theism. First, I will introduce biographical information about Ernest Hemingway relevant to this dissertation topic. This information is important to aid in understanding the defense of my argument and its broader implications from interpretations of the works to statements about modernism and American literature. I also include biographical information to demonstrate that I am not merely pasting my theories about Hemingway’s soldier characters finding the divine through nature in his war fiction onto pre-formed conclusions. This biographical information, along with discussion on the ethos of the times and places, act as a foundation supporting the structure of my argument built with inferences drawn from evidence in the oeuvre. Next, I will define key terms in my study. In so doing, I will present criticism and study on these works since Ernest Hemingway wrote them. My intention is to speculate from what influences Hemingway’s views on nature, war, and theology developed and to demonstrate how these données became manifest in his oeuvre. Hemingway’s views on religion weren’t always clear, and sometimes they seem to be contradictory, however. Differing time periods and life situations could cause these contradictions, or the inherent complexity of religious belief could cause them. This dissertation concerns his fictive wartime protagonists, but their author’s personality does affect how they are analyzed.

With an author like Ernest Hemingway, whose characters often closely resemble the author at different stages of his life, it is prudent to borrow the critical techniques of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and Northrop Frye (1912-1991). In what many
scholars find to be the founding text of modern hermeneutics, *Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings* (1838), Schleiermacher states, in detail, the procedure a critic should use to approach a text. He writes, “it is necessary to investigate the manner of writing of the writer exactly. To this end, one must know what period the author is from, because otherwise the procedure would be void” (Schleiermacher 179).

Hemingway’s manner of writing and the period in which he wrote are of significance to my argument because the settings of his works are significant to the storylines. This is why I am studying these works as a structuralist à la Northrop Frye.

Northrop Frye, in *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (1957), seems to build on Schleiermacher’s notion of literary criticism. Frye believes literary criticism should situate the work under study within the greater body of literature and within the culture that produced it. Again, this is an apt approach to studying Ernest Hemingway’s work in that his work is distinct from that of his contemporary writers, but it borrows strongly from visual artists and recalls elements from earlier literary movements. Frye wrote that some literature seems to be “centripetal” (moving inward, focusing on word and sound) and some is “centrifugal” (moving outward from the text into society and the social order). I find Hemingway’s war fiction to be the latter style; this concept is another reason for adopting Frye’s critical theories. Finally, Frye noted that his own style of criticism is rather romantic, focusing on imagination and individual feeling. I find many aspects of romanticism in Hemingway’s war fiction (this will not be developed in this dissertation), and I believe following Frye’s lead further suits the interpretation of these works.
I must pause to expound on my claim that much of Hemingway’s war fiction is roman à clef. Eminent Hemingway biographer Carlos Baker relates a conversation Hemingway had with writer Irving Stone in 1934 in which Hemingway termed his short stories “autobiographical short stories” (Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* 268). Baker paraphrases the conversation, writing that Hemingway said his novels “could be called biographical novels rather than pure fictional novels because they emerged out of ‘lived experience’” (Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* 269). Hemingway’s use of this device in his war fiction does not imply that he was playing a kind of guessing game with the reader, as could be claimed for *The Sun Also Rises*, where the roman à clef obfuscation is very transparent. He has a deep, personal, and empathetic relationship with his wartime protagonists. Hemingway strove to surpass merely recalling an event in his life; he wrote to make the event real to the reader. After receiving the copies of his first book publication his parents returned to him in Paris in 1925, he wrote them a letter justifying the rough language they found profane.

You see I am trying in all my stories to get the feeling of the actual life across—not to just depict life—or criticize it—but to actually make it alive. So that when you have read something by me you actually experience the thing. You

2 One notable exception is his short story “Che Ti Dice la Patria?”, which was originally published in the *New Republic* (May 18, 1927) as a non-fiction travel narrative but which was later (October 1927) included in the short story collection *Men Without Women* as a work of fiction (see *Hemingway’s Italy: New Perspectives*, by Rena Sanderson [Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State UP, 2006, p. 75]). In the piece, Hemingway/the veteran protagonist returns to the place in Italy where an Italian priest baptized him in the Catholic Church after Hemingway/the veteran protagonist was wounded in action.

3 Novelist and book reviewer Herbert S. Gorman reported that Ernest Hemingway revealed the “key” to connecting the characters in *The Sun Also Rises* and their real-life counterparts in a 14 November 1926 *New York World* review of the novel.
can’t do this without putting in the bad and the ugly as well as what is beautiful. Because if it is all beautiful you can’t believe in it. Things aren’t that way. It is only by showing both sides—3 dimensions and if possible 4 that you can write the way I want to. (J. Myers, Hemingway: A Biography 138)

Hemingway’s life experiences formed the core of much of his writing, and he didn’t try to hide that fact. He stylized the events artfully to make them accessible to the reader. Of course, some of his war fiction (such as “Today is Friday”) seems to have no basis in events that Ernest Hemingway experienced, yet, to get to the meaning of the works (or, as Frye terms it, the dianoia⁴), context is necessary. Context is the organizing principle of literary criticism, at least according to the Northrop Frye and other Structuralist critics, and the context I will be exploring to get at meaning in the body of war fiction is biographical and societal as it relates to the topic of this study.

As we will see, Ernest Hemingway placed great importance on nature, ritual, and Christian manliness—the three means his war time characters connect with the divine. He was an avid outdoorsman with an abiding nostalgia for preindustrial times; throughout his life he admired adherence to ritual, whether in fishing, on the battlefield, or in the bullring; and his adolescence consisted of learning the importance of the connection between manliness and Christianity, as taught to him by the reverend at his church and by Louis Agassiz via his father. He translated the importance of these three concepts in living a whole life into his war fiction. These elements, observable in even his latest works, can be traced to his infancy.

⁴ According to Northrop Frye in Anatomy of Criticism, dianoia is one of three elements of a literary work; the other two are mythos (narrative) and ethos (characterization).
Ernest Miller Hemingway was born on July 21, 1899 in Oak Park, Illinois to Clarence and Grace (née Hall) Hemingway. As Hemingway biographer James R. Mellow states, Ernest’s parents “did not fit the stereotypical image of late-Victorian parents. [...] Hemingway’s parents were individualists. They may have shared the religious and social values of the time, but on their own terms” (Mellow 6). Organized religion in young Ernest’s life was subordinate to the more liberal view of religion existing within the self, with church and its affiliate dogma as a place to reaffirm faith. Religion was more of an atmosphere than an influence. After setting the rather unique context of Hemingway’s youthful church (which was steeped in “the optimism of Emerson and not the gloom of Calvin” [Grimes 2]), biographer Larry Grimes writes, “My study of church materials leads me to conclude that the bastion of Victorian morality in Oak Park, Illinois was the home and not the church” (3). The church carried the atmosphere of mystery and confusion, which practice at home clarified and made more understandable. Words from the pulpit seemed mere theory, which practice outside the church made real.

In his adult life, Hemingway jotted down “The Sentimental Education of Frederic Henry” as a possible title of his latest book, replacing it later with A Farewell to Arms (Item # 76 - Hemingway Collection, JFK Library). This brings to mind Gustave Flaubert’s A Sentimental Education (1869) as well as Henry Adams’ The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography (printed privately in 1906, published in 1918). In this latter book, the template for subsequent autobiography, Adams uses the third-person point of view to describe religion in his home while growing up in terms also descriptive of Hemingway’s youth:
Of all the conditions of his [Henry Adams’] youth which afterwards puzzled the grown-up man, this disappearance of religion puzzled him most. The boy went to church twice every Sunday; he was taught to read the Bible, and he learned religion poetry by heart; he believed in a mild deism; he prayed; he went through all the forms; but neither to him nor to his brothers or sisters was religion real. (Adams 34)

For Adams, the religion of youth did not suit the religion of maturity. This appears to be true for Ernest Hemingway as well, but this does not lead to a conclusion that the mature Henry Adams or Ernest Hemingway did not harbor religious sentiment or that they were not theists. Hemingway took parts of his religious education that he felt were true onto maturity and left behind parts he felt were mere dogma learned by rote rather than by experience with useful meaning. Many of his works bear titles with religious significance, but his war characters do not exhibit typical Christian attitudes and uphold typical Christian values. As will be defined in this chapter, these characters constructed a hybrid religion of their own centered on belief in Jesus Christ, with access to Him and the divine (viz, God) through nature, Christian manliness, or ritual. In place of religious doctrine memorized by rote, they place their faith in concepts learned by gritty experience.

Regarding Scripture in the Hemingway household, Marcelline Sanford (née Hemingway), Ernest’s older sister, recalled

In addition to all the reading at home, and in connection with our schoolwork, we [Marcelline and Ernest] both entered a Bible reading contest. [...] It offered a prize to the member who first completed reading every word of the King James version of the Bible. [...] But though it took us longer to get through and we knew we'd missed the prize, both Ernie and I completed every word. [...] We passed a detailed test on the Bible reading, and we both learned a lot. (Sanford 134-135)
Ernest Hemingway, both in his youth and as a mature writer, seemed to view the bible as literature, appreciating the styles, imagery, and plots more than the religious instruction. Also, as Hemingway biographer Philip Young\(^5\) writes, “Samuel Putnam […] once heard Hemingway say, categorically, ‘that’s how I learned to write,—by reading the Bible.’ He went on to specify: Old Testament, King James Version” (Young 145). This is evident in Hemingway’s clear sentencing and parataxis (clauses or phrases arranged without the customary connectives) strikingly similar to the more poetic books of the Bible (Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and others). His religious education came not from church or the bible but from his experiences in nature, through ritual, and his self-definition as a man—ideas composing the heart of this dissertation.

William Barton\(^6\), the pastor who baptized young Hemingway in the Oak Park First Congregational Church, preached not “stern hell-fire Protestantism” but rather an “optative, progressive, liberal theology” marked by the idea of God as friend (Grimes 38). But evil was depicted by “new” Protestant clergy like Barton as, in the words of William James “a disease; and worry over disease is itself an additional form of disease, which only adds to the original complaint” (qtd. in Grimes 39). Ernest Hemingway’s parents furthered this form of preaching and taught their children a kind of homemade

\(^5\) A disclaimer: in a letter to Robert Morgan Brown dated 15 Sept. 1954, Hemingway wrote, “The most obscenely conceived and in-accurately written book about my work and myself that I ever read was by Philip Young” [intending Young’s *Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration*]. The letter is at the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas, Austin.

\(^6\) Minister in Oak Park from 1898 to 1924 and brother of American Red Cross founder Clara Barton.
aestheticism, breaking from the prevalent idea of a wrathful creator and teaching more the concept of God as first mover and friend. An interesting aside relevant to this is study is a listing Hemingway wrote on his on-going and future writing projects. He wrote an outline entitled “Stories to Write” (undated). Under section heading “A. Authentic,” the first line is: “Religion. trenches. Norton. Barton.” The researcher can assume that the items in line one are details of the Authentic. “Barton” probably denotes Reverend William Barton, and it is unclear what or who “Norton” is. “Art” is the sole listing on line number two. As will be demonstrated (and Hemingway’s scribbled outline indicates) authenticity in religion can be found in the profanity of the trenches—not only as a dying soldier prays for divine salvation, but as a man is stripped to his essence and connects with the spiritual world. Hemingway’s brief list suggests that there is religion, there are trenches, and there is Barton; these items are not the same, but they all belong together in the “Authentic.”

His father Clarence was the Barton family doctor, and Bruce Barton, the reverend’s son, recalled Ernest as being a “tough little boy” (Fried 13). Ernest Hemingway certainly sat through many of William Barton’s sermons, many of which the “Men of the Church” published. One such sermon Barton gave on March 17, 1912 (it is difficult to verify, but there is a strong likelihood that young Ernest Hemingway attended) titled “Religion in Relation to Righteousness” exemplifies Barton’s liberal theology:

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7 “Norton” might refer to hotelier Norton S. Baskin, whom Hemingway met in September 1946 and “clearly liked” (Tarr 136). Mr. Norton died in 1997. Or “Norton” might refer to the Norton-Harjes Ambulance Corps, which was an American Red Cross-affiliated volunteer group serving in France (headquartered near Verdun) during WWI. John dos Passos, e.e. cummings, and Robert W. Service were members.
Paganism has produced some noble men. I hope to meet in heaven a great many men who on earth were pagans, but whose love of goodness, and whose faithfulness to the best revelation of God they had, made them followers of the essential and eternal Christ. They were Christian though they never heard of Christ. [The pagan’s code of] ethics [...] depends on Him. (Barton, “Religion in Relation to Righteousness” 12)

This must have raised some eyebrows in church that day. Barton’s sentiment regarding Christian paganism is not unique. Nine years after Barton’s sermon on the nobility of some pagans, famed Kafka biographer Max Brod similarly wrote,

Doing away with allegories: Christianity, having entered the world opposing paganism, discovered--and not by accident, but following lawful reactions--within itself stronger and stronger affinities to paganism, and ended up by forming with the latter a mixture of ideas and feelings, a mixture which is now [c. 1921] being used everywhere in Europe and America, in private and in public. This Christian-pagan amalgamation--the final link in Christian development--dominates today’s world in such exclusiveness as no Weltanschauung has ever formed. (Brod 231)

Brod assumes that the world circa 1921 (when Hemingway was a young writer in his formative years) witnessed the “final link in Christian development,” an idea every generation feels to some extent. These words of Barton and Brod really get to the heart of the Hemingway warrior protagonist. He is a man of strong, good moral ethics but whose revelation of God is perhaps unlike that of his predecessors. The soldier’s God is

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8 For example, in 1930 English theologian Lionel S. Thornton finds that “Christendom will have arrived” when the material and “supernatural” resources of the masses are converged to “the point of mutual reinforcement” (“The Meaning of Christian Sociology,” 20 July 1930, MS Papers, L.S. Thornton Papers, Papers of Community of Resurrection, deposit 8. Quoted in Phillips, Paul 38). In 1945, Willard L. Sperry writes that the solution to this disunity (in particular American denominational conflicts) is not yet in sight” (Sperry 25) while noting that his [c. 1945] is an era “for which there is no precedent in our history” (Sperry 3).
not a divine being limited to the theoretical, unreal world of Genesis; his God is the
down-to-earth yet omnipotent Being of Ecclesiastes.

Ernest’s fraternal grandfather Anson, “a man of strict religious principles, a friend
and admirer of the evangelist Dwight Moody,” served in the American Civil War, and
later worked as secretary for the YMCA in Chicago (Mellow 7). He seemed almost a
mythological character to Ernest, a larger than life man, unlike Ernest’s father. Clarence
was a vigorous outdoorsman and athlete, but, to Ernest, he seemed kowtowed by his
domineering mother. Again citing biographer Mellow, “Clarence had more than a
conventional interest in Christian service” (Mellow 8) to the extent that he organized the
Oak Park Agassiz Club, a boy’s nature club which, according to its founder’s written
philosophy, taught boys that they are “competent to rise to the conception of His plan and
purpose in the works of Creation” (qtd in Beegel, “Eye and Heart” 72). Ernest
Hemingway seems to have more respect for his grandfather than for his father. His
grandfather exemplified Christian manliness more than did Clarence. As scholar
Apoorva Bharadwaj puts it, “The only family predecessor remembered with love and
pride by Hemingway and his protagonist is the grandfather-soldier of the [American]
Civil War (Bharadwaj 108). Character Robert Jordan muses on an earlier scene in his life
when he left on a train to go to college and his father bade him farewell at the station.
His father said a parting religious quote, and, at that moment, Robert felt he lost the
youthful admiration for his father.

His father had been a very religious man and he had said it simply and
sincerely. But his moustache had been moist and his eyes were damp with
emotion and Robert Jordan had been so embarrassed by all of it, the damp
religious sound of the prayer, and by his father kissing him good-by, that he had
felt suddenly so much older than his father and sorry for him that he could hardly bear it. (*AFTA* 405-406)

His father displayed the “feminine” emotions of weeping and using Christian dogma as a crutch where his grandfather, as far as Robert knows, displayed dignity on the battlefield and lived a more real spirituality, one based on a personal code, rather than one prescribed by the clergy.

In the last chapter of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Robert Jordan is lying on the hillside in the Guadarrama awaiting enemy troops as his lover Maria and others in her group flee to safety. This is a scene the chapters in this dissertation will revisit throughout this study. During what are surely his last moments alive, Jordan thinks of his grandfather. Jordan muses about the events of the last four days helping the Loyalist cause. “I’d like to tell grandfather about this one,” he thinks to himself (469). Then he realizes that it might be better if he commit suicide so the Nationalist troops he knows will arrive soon will be unable to extract information from him through torture. He thinks, “I don’t want to do that business that my father did” (ibid.). These are clear allusions to Hemingway’s real grandfather and father, respectively. Robert Jordan’s pain increases, and he think he will have to shoot himself to avoid torture by enemy troops. He addresses God, asking, “Listen, if I do that now you wouldn’t misunderstand, would you?” (ibid.).

This is an interesting situation because if Jordan succeeds in his mission to assassinate any of the oncoming enemy troops, he knows the surviving troops will eventually kill him. So he will die whether he kills himself or does not. The former way is a direct suicide, which represents an injustice to God, and the second is indirect, which
is an act of virtue, as he would die saving others. He addresses the divine three more times in this passage, twice justifying suicide to Him (“I think it would be all right to do it now? Don’t you?” [470]) and another time pleading for the troops to come so the scene could be over. Then his thoughts slip into mimicking the words of General Golz, who earlier in the novel states to his chief of staff, “Nous ferons notre petit possible” [We will do what we can] (430). Jordan muses, “And if you wait and hold them up even a little while or just get the officer that make all the difference. One thing well done can make—” (470). Jordan has moved from thinking about himself to thinking about others. As Hemingway states in two paragraphs later, amid a depiction of Jordan’s situation in nature, “He was completely integrated now” (471). Regarding direct suicide, which Jordan rejects, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* states,

> for a sane man deliberately to take his own life, he must, as a general rule, first have annihilated in himself all that he possessed of spiritual life, since suicide is in absolute contradiction to everything that the Christian religion teaches us as to the end and object of life and, except in cases of insanity, is usually the natural termination of a life of disorder, weakness, and cowardice. (Vander Heeren)

Thus, Jordan chose to engage in the spiritual rather than forgo it to end his suffering. This engagement integrates him with the divine. He chose the path Ernest Hemingway’s grandfather chose, not that of his father, who committed suicide.

The Agassiz Club, which Ernest joined at the age of four, seemed to hold a strong impression on him. The Hemingway’s spent every summer of Ernest’s life to the age of 20 (except 1918, when Ernest was recovering from wounds sustained in Italy) at Walloon Lake, in Northern Michigan, where young Ernest learned about nature from his father, who taught these lessons following the lead of Louis Agassiz. Ezra Pound, whom Hemingway greatly admired, defined modernism as the period “after the era of ‘Agassiz
and the fish’” (Pound 60). Thus, we could say that the beginning of modernism coincided with the maturity of Ernest Hemingway. I agree with Hemingway scholar Alex Shakespeare, who writes, “while Hemingway’s apprenticeship to Agassiz’s naturalism and Pound’s modernism have sometimes been understood to be at odds, I suggest instead their dual influence, and indeed their confluence, particularly in Hemingway’s vision and revision of [Hemingway’s short story] ‘Big Two-Hearted River’” (Shakespeare 37). Within every lesson on flora and fauna, the fideist Agassiz method taught young Ernest the beneficial connection between the organism under study and God. This style of natural education extended into his teen years, both in school and at home. Susan Beegel notes, “Hemingway’s education as a naturalist […] was almost entirely devoid of instruction in the scientific basis of evolutionary theory” (Beegel, “Eye and Heart” 72-74). The chapter of this dissertation on nature posits that this lesson Ernest Hemingway carried throughout his life, despite disrupting traditionally held beliefs and exploring a new literary style.

Explorer and naturalist Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) acted as a patron to Louis Agassiz, providing financial support and entrée into the world of academia.

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9 There is a well-known adage in which Agassiz asked one of his students to observe a fish for many hours over a few days in order to fully understand the organism. The fish decomposed and the student had moments of frustration, but the student learned to appreciate how each part of the fish worked with other parts, and, so, the unorthodox lesson was a success.

10 Michael Roos, in his essay “Agassiz or Darwin: Faith and Science in Hemingway’s High School Zoology Class” (The Hemingway Review, Vol. 32, No. 2, Spring 2013, pp. 7-27) analyzes the science textbooks used in Hemingway’s time and concludes that they do include Darwinian evolutionary science as well as the methodology of Agassiz.
Humboldt’s most acknowledged publication is his multi-volume *Cosmos* (published 1845-1858), a hugely popular work translated into numerous languages in which he traces the development of the sciences and discusses nature, from outer space to zoology. Writing in *Popular Science Monthly* in 1876, James Thompson Bixby finds religion and science to be allies. Bixby, a philosopher and Unitarian minister, discusses his findings of Humboldt’s *Cosmos*. Summarizing Humboldt, Bixby writes that, in the “modern” era,

> Christianity gradually diffused itself, and, wherever it was adopted as the religion of the state, it not only exercised a beneficial condition on the lower classes by inculcating the social freedom of mankind, but also expanded the views of men in their communion with Nature. The eye no longer rested on the form of the Olympic gods. The Fathers of the Church, in their rhetorically correct and often practically imaginative language, now taught that the Creator showed himself great in inanimate Nature no less than in animated Nature; and in the wild strife of the elements the tendency of the Christian mind to prove from the order of the universe and the beauty of Nature the greatness and goodness of the Creator, and this tendency to glorify the Deity in his works gave rise to a taste for natural observation. (Bixby 699, italics in original)

Humboldt’s view that one can experience the Deity through Nature seemed to be inherited by an object of Humboldt’s patronage—Louis Agassiz—whose teachings the young Ernest Hemingway embraced. Agassiz was a researcher and educator who held that things in nature were creations by God, who is omnipotent. The club taught boys equally about the science of and in divinity in nature. As William Wordsworth wrote that “One impulse from a vernal wood/May teach you more of man,/Of moral evil and of good,/Than all the sages can,” Agassiz “clearly believed that the forms of nature expressed the eternal ideas of a divine intelligence” (Cooper 3).

His education in all things natural imbued the youthful Hemingway with this notion of the divine presence in nature, and he carried it throughout his career. Critics often declare his writing to be modernist, but the theism of his wartime protagonists
comes from romanticism. Hemingway’s writing style falls into the minimalism that Virginia Woolf declared to be a hallmark of modernism. Contrasting “mid-Victorian” novelists to the modern novelists, Woolf writes, “Able by nature to spin sentence after sentence melodiously, they [novelists of the preceding generation] seem to have left out nothing that they knew how to say. Our ambition, on the other hand, is to put in nothing that need not be there” (Woolf 146). We certainly see this modern style in Hemingway’s writing, but the theism is more akin to that of romantics Wordsworth or Tennyson than of Woolf or Ezra Pound. Terms such as modernism and romanticism are mercurial, but, for the purpose of this study, modernism concerns form and writing style rather than content. Again, Hemingway’s thinking via his writing displays vestiges of preceding eras as well as innovations not before seen. He maintained the teachings of his father but modified them to suit modern times, or, to quote Alfred, Lord Tennyson (another writer exhibiting transitioning style and content), “The old order changeth, yielding place to new” (from “Idylls of the King”).

Clarence “Ed” Hemingway also taught his son about Native American culture. Hemingway’s father had a collection of American Indian artifacts, and Ernest stated that he believed he was a descendent of Native Americans (Mellow 29). According to Hemingway scholar Suzanne del Gizzo, tales of the pre-modern Native American way of life portrayed “a time when man lived more intimately and harmoniously with nature—that implicitly, but productively, questioned the valorization of rapid, unthinking industrialization and urbanization” (del Gizzo 499). Lessons about pre-Columbian culture and how Northern Michigan was heavily forested and wild before rampant logging in the late 1800s were features in Hemingway’s later short stories. As del Gizzo
puts it, “the primitive—in many different forms and manifestations—exerts itself as a powerful force and defining factor at nearly every major intersection of Hemingway’s life and career” (del Gizzo 497). This dissertation further discusses primitivism as part of the draw of Hemingway’s characters to nature in Chapters 2 and 4.

Gregory Hemingway, Ernest’s youngest son (often called Gig), wrote in his memoir of a fishing expedition aboard the Pilar off the Cuban coast he took with his father, when Gig was about the age his father was when he explored the wilds of Walloon Lake. The morning of their second day out was beautiful. Gregory’s narrative begins with his father exclaiming to him,

“Can you look at this country and doubt there’s a God, Gig?” I knew he didn’t expect an answer.

“But I’ve seen other country, too,” he went on. “Perhaps God has his good and bad days…”

“I thought you said it was blasphemy to joke about God,” I said.

“I joke a lot about organized religion because I don’t think Bible pushers have the Word any more than I do. I wouldn’t kid Our Lord, for example, if He was on the Cross, but I would try to joke with Him if I ran into Him chasing the money-changers out of the Temple.

“But never joke about a man’s religion in front of him,” he warned me. “A hell of a lot of people get comfort from their religion. Who knows, they might even be right.” (G. Hemingway 76)

This passage not only provides an example of Ernest Hemingway’s conception of the divine being the creator of nature and within nature, but the passage also illustrates his thoughts on organized religion and the religion to which he subscribed in maturity. This dissertation develops his and his characters’ apparent conceptions of religion in the Conclusion.
Ernest Hemingway’s eighteenth year held life-changing events for the young writer. He left the safe confines of Oak Park, Illinois to work as a cub reporter in the squalid alleyways of Kansas City. Numerous biographers have written that his experience writing for the Kansas City Star—everything from obituaries to investigative exposés—honed his writing voice and endowed him with a style that would remain with him throughout his life. Different theories exist about why he decided to then join the war effort. Most theories orbit the notion that not joining so many other men in fighting the enemy would erode his credentials, his manliness. Chapter 3 of this dissertation elaborates on the prevalent ethos of manliness contemporary to the 18-year-old Hemingway. His eventual service with the American Red Cross in Italy can be seen as another manifestation of his (and his fictional characters’) Christianity. Hemingway biographer Michael Reynolds writes, “Ernest had been to a European war in 1918 when he believed that the world could be made safe for democracy” (M. S. Reynolds, Hemingway: The Final Years 83). A key value taught by Reverend Barton in church and witnessed by grandfather Anson Hemingway was for a man to live the manliness of Christ, and men could achieve this by fighting the devil of tyranny and supporting democracy (á la Jesus shouldering the lost lamb in the biblical book of Matthew 15.5). In Ernest Hemingway’s time, this devil was the Central Powers, as portrayed by news outlets, pulpits, and propaganda posters of the time.

The time and manner of Hemingway’s maturity were unique. It is not my aim to here define modernism because I believe the concept defies definition. I will develop, throughout this dissertation, that the upheaval caused by the new warfare of World War I, the growth of cities in America, religious concepts made new, and several other cultural
trends in the West informed Hemingway’s fiction. It bears reiteration, though, that many aspects of romanticism are found in his work as well. One can’t justifiably point to one scene and declare the work to be modernism (which is similar to what his parents evidently did upon receiving advance copies of In Our Time). Furthermore, definitions of complex movements and subjective beliefs are mercurial. The best a scholar can do it establish what seem to be the markers of the subject, convince the reader that the markers are correct, and see how the evidence falls either inside or outside of the markers. This system provides both challenges and opportunities for the researcher.

In his book Dismissing God: Modern Writers’ Struggle Against Religion, Bruce Lockerbie devotes an entire chapter to Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Analyzing The Old Man and the Sea, Lockerbie notes that Santiago (as did Hemingway) has “relegated religion to a corner of his life. Prayer is no more than a reflex from childhood, and the Christian symbolism of the cross only a convenient metaphor for suffering” (Lockerbie 202). Consider the previous comparison to Henry Adams. Lockerbie’s comment is correct as far as symbolism goes; Hemingway wrote in several letters that words (and, by extension, symbols) have lost their edge from poor use. But the conclusion of Lockerbie’s assessment of religion to the adult Hemingway is imprecise: “If others chose to rail against an unjust or even nonexistent deity, Hemingway is more composed. After all, the God of his childhood upbringing has simply become irrelevant to the man” (Lockerbie 202). Hemingway scholar H.R. Stoneback is a well-known expert on religion in Hemingway’s life, having written many articles and two books on the author. In his article “Pilgrimage Variations: Hemingway’s Sacred Landscapes,” Stoneback informs us, “Far from being a ‘nominal’ or ‘bogus’
Catholic as some biographers would have it, Hemingway is a devout practicing Catholic for much of his life. He believed that “the only way he could run his life decently was to accept the discipline of the Church,” and he could not imagine taking any other religion seriously” (Stoneback 50).

Clearly, for Hemingway, “religion” does not equate to attending church services every Sunday. As were his parents, Ernest Hemingway was an individualist when it came to defining his religion. A general definition of religion is needed before proceeding to investigate how these war characters conceptualize the divine. It seems logical to use William James’ definition of religion because James’ philosophy was enormously popular in the time of Hemingway and his parents, and elements of the pragmatism that James promoted are, in my estimation, evident in Hemingway’s war fiction.

In *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), James defines religion quite simply. “Religion, therefore, as I now ask you arbitrarily to take it, shall mean for us the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine” (James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* 49). Two key points in this definition are the necessity of solitude and the tenor of something considered divine. Philosopher Alfred North Whitehead elaborates on James’ condition of solitariness in his 1926 book *Religion in the Making*, writing, “Religion is what the individual does with his solitariness. […] Thus religion is solitariness; and if you are never solitary, you are never religious” (Whitehead, *Religion in the Making* 16). James furthers what he considers to be divine, writing
…] when in our definition of religion we speak of the individual’s relation to ‘what he considers the divine,’ we must interpret the term ‘divine’ very broadly, as denoting any object that is god-like, whether it be a concrete deity or not. (James, The Varieties of Religious Experience 53) […] The divine shall mean for us only such a primal reality as the individual feels impelled to respond to solemnly and gravely, and neither by a curse nor a jest.” (James, The Varieties of Religious Experience 59)

The emphasis on the individual is contradictory to Émile Durkheim’s sense that religion is a social construct. Parts of Durkheim’s theory also suit the Hemingway war time protagonist, however. The theories of James, Whitehead, and Durkheim can co-exist in this study as these characters under study do not exactly fit every aspect of one of the philosopher’s theories. Edmund Wilson famously compared the influence of society in Hemingway’s writing to a Bourdon scale, which is a curved tube that uncoils as liquid pressure within it increases. Perhaps this metaphor could also be used to gauge religiosity in Hemingway’s war fiction.

William James’ mention of the worshipper’s feelings of solemnity and gravity in response to the divine seems to run counter to Ernest Hemingway’s notions of the divine expressed aboard the Pilar, where he said he would joke with Jesus Christ, and the fictional characters, at times, seem to hold this same notion. The seeming contradiction between Hemingway’s (and his characters’) conceptions of the divine and William James’ is tempered by James’ belief that “Things are more or less divine, states of mind are more or less religious, reactions are more or less total, but the boundaries are always misty, and it is everywhere a question of amount and degree” (James, The Varieties of Religious Experience 59). So at issue is not whether the Hemingway soldier character is religious or not but, rather, to what degree he is religious at a certain time. When Robert Jordan, in the last pages of For Whom the Bell Tolls, is lying injured on the hillside,
awaiting his certain death, he expresses religiosity quite clearly by placing his hands on a tree and on the forest floor and pondering religion versus luck (with Jordan concluding that he does not have luck). Earlier in the novel, after his beloved Maria tells the tale of her rape by the Falangists (“To understand is to forgive. That’s not true. Forgiveness has been exaggerated. Forgiveness is a Christian idea and Spain has never been a Christian country” [Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls 191]) or after Pablo stole the blasting caps Jordan needed to blow the bridge (“Muck them to death and hell. God muck Pablo” [Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls 198]). Jordan seems to have abandoned his faith.

But, even though Robert Jordan expresses religiosity at different times in different degrees, the soldier characters are still religious, according to the working definition established by William James.

To define the other key term in my argument that the Hemingway soldier character is religious and finds religion in nature, Christian manliness, or ritual, it is apt to turn again to Alfred North Whitehead. In his series of lectures titled The Concept of Nature (1919), Whitehead states, “Nature is that which we observe in perception through the senses” (Whitehead, The Concept of Nature 3). After this simple definition, however, Whitehead elaborates quite fully on his belief that the study of nature is carried out through both objectively (without thought, different from “sense-perception”) and subjectively, or, as he terms it, with “sense-awareness.” This sense-awareness, which has an element of the subjective, is how humans conceive of things in nature. Whitehead’s lectures can take us far afield from our current study, but his assurance that there is an element of the subjective in the natural sciences is relevant to this study because literary characters are the focus of this study, and the interpretation of literature (and all arts) has
elements of the subjective. As it is used in this study, nature is that which is not created
by humans. Specific to this study, nature is flora and fauna, earth, and forests before they
were clear-cut. Nature is the very antithesis of war, as will be discussed later in this
dissertation.

In his essay “Nature” (1836), Ralph Waldo Emerson writes,

Who looks upon a river in a meditative hour, and is not reminded of the
flux of all things? Throw a stone into the stream, and the circles that propagate
themselves are the beautiful type of all influence. Man is conscious of a universal
soul within or behind his individual life, wherein, as in a firmament, the natures of
Justice, Truth, Love, Freedom, arise and shine. This universal soul, he calls
Reason: it is not mine, or thine, or his, but we are its; we are its property and men.
And the blue sky in which the private earth is buried, the sky with its eternal calm,
and full of everlasting orbs, is the type of Reason. That which, intellectually
considered, we call Reason, considered in relation to nature, we call Spirit. Spirit
is the Creator. Spirit hath life in itself. And man in all ages and countries,
embodies it in his language, as the FATHER. (Emerson 18)

Where Emerson was effusive in defining nature, Hemingway was reticent, applying his
theory of the iceberg. 11 In a display of the concept of negative capability 12 in For Whom
the Bell Tolls (1940), Hemingway writes “It was all calm now and the sun beat down on
his neck and on his shoulders as he crouched and as he looked up he saw the high,

11 "If a writer of prose knows enough of what he is writing about he may omit things that
he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those
things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an
ice-berg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water. A writer who omits things
because he does not know them only makes hollow places in his writing.” (Hemingway,
Death in the Afternoon 192)

12 Conceptualized by romantic poet John Keats in 1817, this is the notion that effective
writers can omit certain detail and leave some matters unsolved yet still make their point
to their audience—to reimagine the target feeling or vision unencumbered by logical
thought or reason.
cloudless sky and the slope of the mountain rising beyond the river and he was not happy but he was neither lonely nor afraid” (443). I contend that what Hemingway’s soldier narrator omits (the seven-eighths of the iceberg that is submerged) are sentiments such as Emerson’s, which closely link nature to the divine.

This brings us to the sense of the divine or the holy I claim the Hemingway wartime character finds via communion with nature, enacting a ritual, or expressing Christian manliness. Linguists have not determined the etymology of the English word “holy”\(^\text{13}\), but a general consensus is that it is derived from the Old English *hailo*, meaning “inviolate, inviolable, that must be preserved whole or intact, that cannot be injured with impunity” ("holy"). This is the sense of holy carried by these characters; they seek integration with the inviolate divine, particularly in times when they feel disconnected. This phenomenon was borne out in Ernest Hemingway’s life and in those of his characters. The concept of losing integration with the divine is a repeated motif in the war fiction, as is integrating with the divine through nature. On the night of July 8, 1918, as American Red Cross Volunteer Hemingway was handing out chocolates and other items to soldiers near Fossalta, Italy on the banks of the Piave River, a trench mortar exploded near Hemingway, seriously injuring him and killing a man nearby. This very same incident also happened to his fictional characters Nick Adams, Frederic Henry, and Richard Cantwell, as noted in “Now I Lay Me,” *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and *Across the

\(^{13}\) After discussing other possible roots of “holy,” *The Oxford English Dictionary* states, “The sense arrangement here is therefore merely provisional; we cannot in Old English get behind Christian senses in which *holy* is equated with Latin *sanctus, sacer* (“holy”).
River and Into the Trees, respectively. These characters and their author, moments after the mortal exploded, felt their soul leave their bodies, an occurrence that terrified them. This “soul” is the divine and immortal, and, to these men, losing integration with the divine is the most dreadful thing that can befall a human.

Hemingway and these characters who were similarly grievously wounded in wartime all experience an out of body experience in which they felt their souls leave their bodies for a time, signaling to them death. Their souls return, though, and life is restored. Hemingway wrote about his experience and discussed it several times. Malcolm Cowley wrote what Hemingway told Guy Hickock, a journalist friend, about the incident at Fossalta. “I died then. I felt my soul or something coming right out of my body, like you’d pull a silk handkerchief out of a pocket by one corner. It flew around and then came back and went in again and I wasn’t dead any more,” Hemingway said (Cowley 96). Defining death as the absence of a soul is interesting in this study because notions of the soul run very close to notions of religion. In an article titled “Hemingway’s Out of Body Experience,” eminent Hemingway scholar Allen Josephs cites Dr. Charles T. Tart, psychologist at the University of California-Davis. Dr. Tart finds that “the OBE was obviously the basis for the religious idea of a soul” (Josephs 12).

Since ancient times and around the world, many peoples believe the soul is the one part of a human that is immortal. Plato wrote about the immortality of the soul most notably in Phaedo (after 399 BCE), where he discusses death as a separation of body and soul. The philosopher welcomes this separation because he despises physical pleasures

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14 Nick’s wounding also appears in “Big Two Hearted River,” as will be discussed.
such as food and sex. For example, in *A Farewell to Arms*, the priest says to Frederic Henry, “What you tell me about in the nights. That is not love. That is only passion and lust” (*AFTA* 42), and there are many scenes in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in which we are told of Robert Jordan’s sensory and sensual delight in food, drink, and Maria. The Hemingway wartime protagonist, however, loves these carnal delights and perceives the separation of the soul from the body to be complete death—not merely physical death but a cessation of cause, after which the future will bear no trace of him. This, to these characters, is defeat. For the author and his characters, the fear of losing the soul would return at night for many years after the incident of the wounding. They have to have a light on in the room in which they slept for fear of losing the soul. Nick Adams, in the short story “Now I Lay Me,” discusses that fear. “If I could have a light I was not afraid to sleep, because I know my soul would only go out of me if it were dark” (*CSS* 279). Again, this losing of the soul borders on ideas of eschatology—death, judgement, heaven, hell. Durkheim links the human soul with humanity, so, following his theory, perhaps Hemingway’s wounded, traumatized wartime characters fear slipping out of humanity, which equates to death. Contact with nature, however, is contacting a timeless and immutable force or entity; connecting with nature helps the soul achieve a divine timelessness. One of the primary themes of this dissertation is the dynamics of war, nature, and religion in Hemingway’s war fiction. Allen Josephs, who writes about Nick Adam’s wounding, out of body experience, and subsequent therapy to recover himself, exemplifies this theme quite succinctly. Josephs writes, “Nick does not go fishing because his body has been blown up but because he has nearly lost his soul” (Josephs 16). His war wound caused his soul to leave his body for a time, to return. And Nick
goes into nature, away from war, for divine assistance to achieve integration. This is the connection among war, nature, and the divine. As Josephs further points out, “Just as he once thought about fishing in ‘Now I Lay Me’ to keep his soul from leaving his body, by actually going fishing, it may be that he begins the slow and difficult process of integrating his experience—the sure knowledge of his living and dying that so torments him—with the rest of his life” (ibid.).

Slipping from pseudo-religious notions of the soul fully into the realm of religion, Hemingway wrote, in a 1945 letter to his father-in-law Thomas Welsh (the father of Mary Welsh, Hemingway’s fourth wife), “If it is any use to you to know how war affects one man’s religious faith this may help start our discussion. In first war […] was really scared after wounded and very devout at the end. Fear of death. Belief in personal salvation or maybe just preservation through prayers for intercession of Out Lady and various saints that prayed to with almost tribal faith” (Italics in original. Baker, Selected Letters 592). This mention of saints is a far cry from the Congregationalist religion of his youth in Oak Park. He is stylizing his religion. Hemingway was scared after the war, after his grievous wounding and believed in personal, rather than universal, salvation. His characters echo this sentiment, too. The soul is something to be cherished. The New Testament book of Matthew asks, “How is a man the better for it [long life], if he gains the whole world at the expense of losing his own soul? For a man’s soul, what price can be high enough?” (The Bible, Matthew 8:36-37). The main message in this biblical chapter is that people can either “carry the cross” and save their lives, or they can live a life of ease and die. The Hemingway wartime character chooses the former, although it is the more difficult choice. This is one instance in this study of absolutes: when thoughts
of death confuse these characters, they depict the choice of taking up the cross. This can be in the form of some kind of labor or uncomfortable duty (e.g., Robert Jordan giving his life to protect Maria and the other guerrillas, Nick Adams adhering to his beliefs so strongly that he fights in a war despite hating war), or it could take the form of charitable labor over a long period of time (e.g., Frederic Henry helping Catherine enjoy Switzerland and her pregnancy). At other times, however, they might conceal this devotion.

Throughout Hemingway’s biography and in studying his wartime characters, heeding William James’ caution of avoiding “either/or” conclusions can be very fruitful. By gauging amount and degree rather than declaring “yes” or “no,” research here is more accurate. Consider the dichotomies of Protestant and Catholic, modernism and romanticism, or the individual and society. It appears that the Hemingway war time protagonist expresses Catholicism, but disregards some of the Church’s dogma, which is heretical. He is written about in a modern style but seems to harbor nostalgia for earlier times. He worships individually yet often in a manner also found among congregations. Again, hints from Hemingway’s life and aid in conclusions about the fictive men under study.

After his wounding, the eighteen-year-old Hemingway was ministered to and anointed by a Roman Catholic priest (Father Don Giuseppi Bianchi) in a battlefield dressing station. He seemed to have taken these ministrations to heart. In an article tracing Ernest Hemingway’s religious influences, Morris Buske writes, “his [Hemingway’s] early experiences led him to embrace Catholicism. He had found his father’s faith cold and unsatisfying; he had known his grandfather’s belief in a God of
warmth and trust and now sought it for himself” (Buske 83). Ernest’s maternal grandfather, Ernest Hall, was brought up in the Church of England and embraced the Episcopal Church when he came to Oak Park, Illinois. His daughter Grace, Ernest’s mother, seemed to take up Mr. Hall’s belief in God as a friend, rather God the punisher as Ernest’s father Clarence believed.

Hemingway attended Catholic mass frequently in the subsequent years, and, in 1927, he married Pauline Pfeiffer, his second wife, in a Catholic ceremony. She began calling him “Papa,” and the nickname persisted throughout his life. This was about the time when he sustained a long series of concussions, automobile and airplane accidents (both plural), an accidental shooting, and many other injuries. In addition to capturing Paris in the 1920s with his novel *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), he worked as a correspondent, observing the Greco-Turkish War, the Spanish Civil War, the Second Sino-Japanese War, and World War II (he observed the landings at Normandy). He was never officially authorized to take up arms, but he apparently felt compelled to go to war. This, despite writing and stating numerous times that he hated war and those who made war.

The life of Ernest Hemingway ended in bathos. While attempting to continue as a novelist, physical ailments and electroconvulsive therapy hampered his thinking to the point where writing a single sentence was impossible. Despite being married to four women and committing suicide, he was buried with a Catholic graveside service (although not a high mass service). Perhaps the reason many find godlessness in Hemingway and his fiction is the non-traditional manner of expressing their faith. While Hemingway did attend mass and walked part of the Camino de Santiago to Compostela to
venerate the shrine of St. James, he and his characters also exhibited thoughts and deeds not in keeping with traditional Christianity. Again, determining the degree religiosity is a complex task, and this task is made more complicated by the unique blend of modern style and romantic ideals in Hemingway’s war fiction.

Again, I am claiming Ernest Hemingway’s soldier characters demonstrate religiosity (theism). This is not a popular idea. Much criticism claiming that these characters are agnostic or atheistic begins by analyzing Hemingway himself, an approach I, too, am taking in this dissertation, although my claim is that the soldiers are theists. In his book *Intellectuals*, Paul Johnson flatly, and incorrectly, calls Hemingway an atheist.

Indeed Hemingway seems to have been devoid of the religious spirit. He privately abandoned his faith at the age of seventeen when he met Bill and Kate Smith (the latter to become the wife of John Dos Passos), whose father, an atheist don, had written an ingenious book ‘proving’ Jesus Christ had never existed. [. . .] He not did only not believe in God but regarded organized religion as a menace to human happiness. (Johnson 144)

And, later in his chapter entitled “The Deep Waters of Ernest Hemingway,” Johnson writes, regarding Hemingway’s novels, “The author himself does not point the moral but he presents everything within an implicit moral framework so that the actions speak for themselves. The framework is personal and pagan; certainly not Christian” (Johnson 151). Throughout the chapter, Johnson does not discriminate between time periods of

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15 In this book, Johnson includes Hemingway among others he finds to be true intellectuals. Conversely, Vince Passaro, in an August 1999 *Harper’s Magazine* book review, writes this: “Today's short fiction tends to be smart, and wit is an aspect of the literary art form that Hemingway couldn't master and that his followers, consciously or unconsciously, put aside. (His anti-intellectualism, perfectly American and perfectly tuned to the needs of an ever-less-educated reading public, meshed well with his own marked lack of intelligence)” (Vol. 299, Iss. 1791, 79-89, page 80).
Hemingway’s life other than to imply that Hemingway practiced “religion” until he met the daughter of a man who wrote a book disavowing the reality of Jesus Christ. Hemingway, for the most part, did not strictly follow Catholic convention (three divorces; pro-abortion principles; frequent over-indulger in liquor, sex, and blasphemy) but stating that he did not practice religion is incorrect. Following Johnson’s logic would lead to the decanonization of numerous saints, including Saint Teresa of Avila, a patron saint of Spain and one-time flirt (and Johnson would probably add “pagan”) who lived a “double life” (Chervin 200) balancing non-orthodox ways with deep, contemplative prayer. Her religious life grew over many years in a Carmelite convent until she was able to direct her personable character to the love of Christ, while maintaining a high level of human contact.

Paul Johnson does not discriminate between the writer and his work, but, concerning Hemingway’s writing, Julanne Isabelle states it succinctly by writing, “At no time in his writing do we read a complete denial of God” (Isabelle 82). This is close to a denial of Cleanth Brooks’ statement, “Hemingway is a writer who, through most of his mature life, seems to have had no religious commitment. Indeed, his work is regarded by some people as hostile to religion and perhaps as subversive to Christian morals” (Brooks 6). Johnson’s and Brooks’ conclusions lead to flawed readings of the motivations and ethics of Hemingway’s characters. Michael Reynolds, a scholar who

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16 Brooks’ discussion on Hemingway in *The Hidden God* is a rather inconsistent one, a mix of respect and derision. Reviewer Robert H. Fossum, writing in *The Christian Scholar* journal, states it this way: “With the exception of a brilliant explication of Warren’s ‘Original Sin,’ Brooks’s critiques--especially of Hemingway--are truncated, superficial, sometimes downright insensitive” (Fossum 169).
devoted over thirty years of his life researching in great detail the life of Ernest

Hemingway (and author of the multi-volume set on Hemingway’s life and work), wrote,

Having first satirized authors of his generation turning to the church [. . .],
Hemingway, too, embraced Catholicism, partially as the price for embracing
Pauline Pfeiffer, a dedicated Catholic. If he sometimes seemed less concerned
about his soul’s fate in the hereafter and more worried about sustaining himself in
the here and now, his religious need is no less genuine or deeply seated.
(Reynolds, *Hemingway: The 1930s* 21)

That same decade in Key West, the priest of St. Mary’s Catholic Church noted, “Oh, yes,
wife and children, all of them Catholics, good Catholics too” (qtd. in Reynolds,
*Hemingway: The 1930s* 127) 17.

As an adult, Hemingway seemed to have formed more solid beliefs then as a
teenager away from home for the first time. In a 1933 letter to his uncle, Hemingway
wrote, “I would not wish to embarrass the church with my presence. You may state [. . .]
that Ernest Hemingway, the writer, is a man of no religion. My beliefs I cannot change
but I have no right at present to practice them” (qtd. in Reynolds, *Hemingway: The 1930s*
14918). Note his qualified “Hemingway, the writer”; this was his public persona, and,
though his personal feelings were true to the church, he did not want his public image to
embarrass the church because he knew people read him as they read his books. In his

17 From an undated clipping from Daniel Lord’s column in *The Sign*, part of
Hemingway’s notebook in The Hemingway Collection at the JFK Library in Boston.
Furthermore, in a letter to Robert Morgan Brown (dated 14 July 1954 from Cuba)
Hemingway wrote, “Bob; you see joking is barred. The only priests who like me are the
ones that I know and that know me” (Hemingway, Letter to Robert Morgan Brown).

18 For original, see Hemingway, Letter to Mr. Hall.
short story “The Butterfly and the Tank,” an officious patron squirts a waiter in Chicote’s bar in Madrid with a water gun. The waiter says to the man who squirted him, “No hay derecho.” The narrator, a soldier, lets the reader know, “This means ‘You have no right to do that,’ and is the simplest and strongest protest in Spain” (E. Hemingway, CSS 431). Hemingway’s sentiment in his letter to his uncle is “No hay derecho”; he did not have the right to be called a practicing Christian at that time. This further illustrates the esteem Hemingway had for the faith and also his sense of misalignment with its notions of public spirituality.

In his maturity, Hemingway’s God was not like that of near-atheists Kate and John Dos Passos but rather like that of famed attorney Clarence Darrow. In The Story of My Life (1932, a book Hemingway owned), Darrow, the son of an ardent Freethinker, writes,

>This God whom we ask to bring us what we need, to cure the sick, and heal the maimed, to defend the weak and vanquish the strong, whom men are urged to call upon in dire need, a real God whom the German asks to help kill Frenchmen and Englishmen, and whom the French and English besought to destroy Germans.

>Since men have been taught to worship this being, man’s God is endowed with all the characteristics of man; he loves and hates, he destroys and saves [. . .]
>All his traits are human traits, all feelings and passions are human emotions. [. . .]

19 John Dos Passos was a close friend of Hemingway throughout the 1920’s, but the friendship deteriorated in the 1930’s. Dos Passos edited and wrote a lengthy preface to The Living Thoughts of Tom Paine, in which he writes, “It’s too bad that the excellence of Paine’s later journalism had been obscured by the long wrangle over religion that occupied so much of the end of his life. The Age of Reason is a work of enthusiastic deism that contrasts the Bible as absolute truth, with the Bible in the light of scientific knowledge and the streetcorner common sense of the time” (Dos Passos 45). While he seems to share some of the anti-Christian sentiment of his father in-law, Dos Passos tempers this by noting Paine’s time period and highlighting Paine’s writing over Paine’s religion.
Probably few people of any sense or decent feeling would damn a race because an ancestor ate an apple when he was told that he should not. Such a God would be a devil, and could be worshipped only for fear. Neither could anything but a demon put a man to death for gathering sticks on Sunday, or drown all living things, or rain fire and brimstone on a city, or create a hell in which to torture human beings for all eternity. (Darrow 390-391)

Their God is a human-like God who is to be worshipped, but worshipped without the obstacles of dogma and unnatural propriety. Much of the thinking of modernism involves the imprecision and fallibility of words. The universality of thought the prison of words forces is impossible, as is unification. “God” to one is not necessarily “God” to another, while both may be “right.” Susan Beegel in her essay “Eye and Heart: Hemingway’s Education as a Naturalist” makes note of the ambiguous ideology of the Agassiz Club on the topic of Creation versus Evolution. The Agassiz method seemed to encourage boys to study the effects of evolution without losing belief in a divine Creator. Agassiz taught in a time when theology dominated curricula in the United States. Agassiz, however, strove for students to focus not on dogma or concepts but on nature itself—the scales of a fish or the veins in a leaf. This is where one can find the creator’s intelligent actions.

Both evolution and creation may be right to Agassiz, and they can co-exist. He had a slow time coming to Darwinism, but his beliefs in evolution did soften a bit a decade or so after the publication of On the Origin of Species (1859). Agassiz faulted Darwin not so much for his conclusions but for his methodology. Physicist Werner Heisenberg (1901-1976), another looming figure in Hemingway’s time, would agree with Agassiz on this point. In Physics and Beyond: Encounters and Conversations, Heisenberg’s 1971 collection of discussions on topics ranging from atomic power,
politics, quantum mechanics, and religion, Heisenberg notes a 1927 conversation he had with fellow scientists Wolfgang Pauli and Paul Dirac. Heisenberg, in defining his views on religion, writes,

> Science deals with the objective, material world. It invites us to make accurate statements about objective reality and to grasp its interconnections. Religion, on the other hand, deals with the world of values. It considers what ought to be or what we ought to do, not what is. In science we are concerned to discover what is true or false; in religion with what is good or evil, noble or base. Science is the basis of technology, religion the basis of ethics. In short, the conflict between the two, which has been raging since the eighteenth century, seems founded on a misunderstanding, or, more precisely, on a confusion of the images and parables of religion with scientific statements. [...]

Thus, to Werner Heisenberg and Louis Agassiz, evolution and creation are not polar opposites; they can co-exist. It is doubtful Hemingway knew Heisenberg personally, but the physicists’ publications and speeches extended into topics of philosophy and religion. Perhaps it is with a similar dualism that we should consider Hemingway’s soldier characters and their seemingly ambivalent views on theism.

The famous “Scopes Monkey Trial” of 1925 inspired America to think beyond where Agassiz leaves off. Clarence Darrow’s losing defense against the fundamentalist William Jennings Bryan made its way into *The Sun Also Rises* as a humorous scene, but

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20 Jake and Bill are having lunch while fishing in Burguete. “‘First the egg,’ said Bill. ‘Then the chicken. Even Bryan could see that.’ ‘He’s dead. I read it in the paper yesterday.’ ‘No. Not really?’ ‘Yes. Bryan’s dead.’ Bill laid down the egg he was peeling. ‘Gentlemen,’ he said, and unwrapped a drumstick from a piece of newspaper. ‘I reverse the order. For Bryan’s sake. As a tribute to the Great Commoner. First the chicken; then the egg’” (*SAR* 121). “Bill Bryan” also appears in Hemingway’s poem “I
full-blown disavowal of a creator is never reached in Hemingway’s fiction. As Susan Beegel writes, “during the crucial years for the author’s education as a naturalist, Darrow had not yet risen to defend the right to study evolution and to collapse the religious foundation of the Agassiz method” (Beegel, Eye and Heart: Hemingway's Education as a Naturalist 73). Thus, Hemingway did not learn an atheistic naturalism in boyhood, nor did Darrow ever completely slip into atheism. Rather, these men came to a personal amalgam of what God and Jesus are. Scripture may be the alloy, but worship is the amorphous mercury, which decides the composition of the compound. Of course, some parts of scripture are read more literally than others; some sections are read allegorically (Adam and Eve’s apple, the Flood) and some more literally (the messages of Ecclesiastes or Proverbs). Compare this with these words spoken by Luther Burbank, famous botanist and casual theologian:

I reiterate: The religion of most people is what they would like to believe, not what they do believe, and very few stop to examine its foundation underneath. The idea that a good God would send people to a burning hell is utterly damnable to me--the ravings of insanity, superstition gone to seed! I don’t want to have anything to do with such a God. I am a lover of man and of Christ as a man and his work, and all things that help humanity; but nevertheless, just as he was an infidel then, I am an infidel to-day. I prefer and claim the right to worship the infinite, everlasting, almighty God of this vast universe as reveled to us gradually, step by step, by the demonstrable truths of our savior, science. (Clampett 40-41)

This address was delivered in San Francisco in 1926 in the First Congregational Church.

Luther Burbank’s father was a close friend of Louis Agassiz, and the younger Burbank was a noted botanist who, in his earlier years, had conversed with his idol Ralph Waldo Like Americans” (1923). Furthermore, in 1915, Bryan spoke in Oak Park on “A Causeless War” (Reynolds, The Young Hemingway 13).
Emerson\textsuperscript{21} (Clampett 19). Burbank’s theology was similar to that of the Hemingway war character; “Let us read the Bible without the ill-fitting colored spectacles of theology, just as we read other books, using our own judgment and reason, listening to the voice, not to the noisy babble without” (Clampett 39).

To bring in another character from the era of Hemingway’s maturity, the title character in Sinclair Lewis’s novel \textit{Elmer Gantry} (1927) has similar sentiments and falls from his Baptist faith after reading the works of Robert Green Ingersoll. Ingersoll (1833-1899) was an itinerant Congregational minister, Civil War colonel, women’s rights advocate, and outspoken proponent of the American Freethought movement. The Freethought movement eschewed biblical teachings and focused on individual human morality. There was little universality of belief concerning a divine creator with atheists and believers (à la Emerson or Thoreau) grouped together under the umbrella term of Freethinker. As evidenced in his fiction, Hemingway seems to have been of this latter subgrouping, those suspicious of the rhetoric of scripture but with a belief in God.

Congregationalism, the faith of Hemingway’s youth, was the public faith of such notable historical figures as Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson; but these men held the personal ethos of Freethinkers\textsuperscript{22} (Marty 732). Congregationalism, a religion based on biblical teachings, places its emphasis on the


\textsuperscript{22} Other sources term these people “deists,” and Kant preferred the term “theist.
individuals’ morality. This theology was at a point of escalation during Ernest Hemingway’s formative years.

Through the early decades of the twentieth century, very quietly, the faculties of most of the seminaries related to the Northern Baptist Convention, the Congregationalist Church, [and certain others] shifted their sympathies toward the modernist perspective. For them, the contemporary intellectual climate demanded an appreciation of the new role of science, especially sociology and biology; an understanding of the Bible as the product of human history; a theology that emphasized Jesus as a moral exemplar more than a sacrificial Savior; and an emphasis upon social change as a means of bringing about the kingdom of God. (Melton 196)

This thought is also evident in the works of Mark Twain, Ambrose Bierce, Theodore Dreiser, H.L. Mencken, and E.M. Forster. Despite waxing and waning popularity throughout the nineteenth century, Freethought experienced resurgence among many immigrant groups in the early twentieth century. A large group of Finnish immigrants in Northern Michigan (where the Hemingway’s vacationed every summer) embraced Freethought (cf. Marty 737). The American social progressivism of the era made its way to pulpits in the Midwest.

In Dismissing God (cited earlier in this chapter), Bruce Lockerbie writes that the Hemingway protagonist does not rail against God because God, to them, does not exist. Actually, Hemingway does rail against an unjust deity (in the manner of the Old Testament Job). And if his characters’ thoughts and actions resemble him, the God of his

\[23\] Hemingway mentions Mencken somewhat disparagingly in SAR.

\[24\] An absolute connection of the Hemingway family with Freethought via Finnish immigrants has not been proven. Jack Jobst, a Hemingway scholar avows a large Finnish population in Northern Michigan but questions such in the Petoskey area where the Hemingways vacationed (Jobst).
youth is relevant to the elder Hemingway—He is re-fashioned but still relevant. To this point, in the introduction to sociologist Karl Mannheim’s *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, editor Paul Kecskemeti wrote that, regarding the post-W.W.I collapse felt by the “front generation,”

> a complete reorientation was felt to be necessary: a re-examination of all traditional ideas about reality, all values, all principles. There was, on the whole, no undertone of despair in all this. One may have lost much that one had cherished; one may have had to go through many ordeals and tribulations. But, at least, one also shed a great many illusions; one no longer lived in the shameful situation of taking the unreal for the real, of trusting illusory authorities and values. (Mannheim 2)

This is partially germane to the characters of Hemingway’s fiction who could be considered part of the “front generation,” but Mannheim’s caveat “on the whole” excepts these characters. John Killinger is more precise in this regard when he writes,

> No one with a proper feeling for the mystery of God and its opaqueness, its imperviousness, will be put off by the apparent “atheism” of Hemingway’s writing. He does not really derive from Feuerbach and Nietzsche, as has been claimed. The irrepressible joy of Zarathustra’s announcement of the death of God is missing in him. There is instead a kind of mournfulness, a weight of grief. Hemingway’s personae are never exultant at having lost God; they simply see the loss as the way things are. Most of the time they are really sorry about it. [...] The God he has slain is only a God who deserved to be slain. The honesty with which he faced the contemporary religious situation is—or should be—a welcome curative to an unfortunate kind of supernaturalism quite popular in any age, whose God just floats around up in the wild blue yonder without really seeming to be in touch with things. (Killinger 47)

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25 Hemingway biographer and critic Philip Young chose a quote from Nietzsche’s *Thus Spake Zarathustra* as the epigram to his *Hemingway: A Reconsideration*, and a copy of Nietzsche’s treatise was borrowed by Ernest Hemingway from Sylvia Beach’s Paris lending library/bookstore “Shakespeare and Company” in 1926 (Reynolds, *Hemingway’s Reading* 163).
Hemingway’s literary sentiments are not completely removed from Nietzsche, however. As Nietzsche biographer Walter Kaufmann writes, “what he [Nietzsche] denounces is not sincere Christianity, but insincere Christianity--those who are unchristian in their practice but nevertheless profess Christianity, as well as those who superficially seem Christian in their practice but whose motivation and state of mind is essentially unchristian” (Kaufmann 364). This disdain for false Christianity is shared by Hemingway’s protagonists, too (viz. Frederic Henry’s disdain for Mr. Britling and his ilk, Krebs in “Soldier’s Home,” and others).

Their wartime experiences (living in complete terror, witnessing atrocities) stripped the former civilians of those defenses they used pre-war to protect their personas. After battle, they had very little left of these personas, and they had to work to protect that. Quite often, this results in the characters stating that they do not love much of anything, and, besides portraying a slothful nature, this contradicts the paramount divine virtue of loving God.\(^\text{26}\) Again, critics often point to this seeming lack of love for anything (including God) as atheism, but there is an equally compelling opposite interpretation that does not paint these characters as atheists. For example, Harold Krebs, the veteran recently returned from hot fighting in Belleau Wood, Soissons, the

\(^{26}\) Deuteronomy 6:5 (“thou shalt love the Lord thy God with the love of thy whole heart, and thy whole soul, and thy whole strength”), Matthew 22:37 (“Jesus said to him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and thy whole soul and thy whole mind”), and Luke 10:27 (“And he answered, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with the love of thy whole heart, and thy whole soul, and thy whole strength, and thy whole mind; and thy neighbour as thyself”) (*The Bible*).
Champagne, St. Mihiel, and in the Argonne in “Soldier’s Home,” is asked by his Fundamentalist mother if he loves her.

“No,” Krebs said.

His mother looked at him across the table. Her eyes were shiny. She started crying.

“I don’t love anybody,” Krebs said. (CSS 116)

We see a similar scene in *A Farewell to Arms*, when narrator Frederic Henry is talking with the priest about how they think the war will proceed. Their conversations are always somewhat theological in nature.

“I don’t believe in victory any more.” [said the priest]

“I don’t. But I don’t believe in defeat. Though it may be better. [said Frederic Henry]

“What do you believe in?”

“In sleep,” I said. He stood up.

“I am very sorry to have stayed so long. But I like so to talk with you.”

“It is very nice to talk again. I said that about sleeping, meaning nothing.” (AFTA 179)

In an earlier conversation with the priest, Henry admits a belief in God but cannot state that he loves Him because Henry feels that he does not love anything. In both of these scenes, the warrior character declares that he loves or believes in nothing after his war time trauma, certainly not in the profound subjects of love or religion the loved ones they are addressing adhere to. The soldiers hurt these people by shutting down the

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27 Each of these battles were fierce. At Soissons, almost 90,000 men lost their lives. At St. Mihiel, it took three months for American and French troops to advance 300 meters.
conversation because their war time trauma has stripped from them the defenses civilians use for protection. Krebs narrates that the army has destroyed the persona of a guy lusting after women, a personality trait evidently widespread throughout the Kansas town he returned to. “Besides he did not really need a girl. The army had taught him that. It was all right to pose as though you had to have a girl. Nearly everybody did that. But it wasn’t true. [...] That was all a lie. [...] He had learned that in the army” (CSS 113).

Krebs wants a life with consequences, without the trouble of courtship, as Frederic Henry wants nothing but sleep. These soldiers experienced trauma in war, and that trauma taught them two important lessons: first, that superficial, seemingly inconsequential mannerisms are worthless and cannot be appeased; and, second, that they have little of their former selves left, so they have to be very careful with that remaining bit of character (which is akin to “soul,” the loss of which was discussed previously). The fact that Krebs cannot say that he loves his mother or pray with her and the fact that Henry cannot declare to the priest that he believes in anything in the priest’s bailiwick (i.e., religion, God, Jesus) could mean that they hold these ideals so dear they are afraid of losing them by sharing. After Krebs’ awkward scene with his mother, he allows his mother to pray for him, he kisses his mother, and goes outside. Then he thinks, “He had tried so to keep his life from being complicated. Still, none of it had touched him” (CSS 116). He had not been touched by outside intrusion that can take away his last bit of self. He probably experienced this as shelling ceased in France, too. He was alive, and, hopefully, he will live without intrusion to grow his defenses back after the army stripped
them. This process will take time, as Hemingway himself learned throughout the years when he required a light at night lest his soul slip away, signaling ultimate defeat.

Despite many stories of reckless bravado, Hemingway seems to have held life as something precious and priceless. Begging fistfights from strangers is not as dangerous as being blown up by a trench mortar because fighting can get a person beat up, but a trench mortar can cause the ultimate defeat, which is the loss of the soul. In the fiction, integration with the divine seems to strengthen this elemental piece of the characters. And this divinity is monotheistic, as the character in danger of losing it carries on a one-way conversation with God or Jesus. This is not a pantheism in which all of nature, for example, is sacred; this is a theism in which the character feels the power of the divine by way of nature, ritual, or Christian manliness.

In this chapter, I have provided biographical information relevant to a discussion of religiosity in Ernest Hemingway’s war fiction. The information points to the fact that his personal religion seems to have been a modification on that prevalent among the Congregationalist parishioners in Oak Park, Illinois. Despite the findings of many biographers, though, Hemingway does not appear to have been an atheist. The primary focus of this dissertation, however, is his war fiction. Research into that body of work comprises the remainder of this dissertation.
CHAPTER 2

NATURE—THE SCARRED SACRED LANDSCAPE

Which ever way I turned, nothing appeared but danger and difficulty. I saw myself in the midst of a vast wilderness in the depth of the rainy season, naked and alone’ surrounded by savage animals, and men still more savage. I was five hundred miles from the nearest European settlement [...] I confess that my spirits began to fail me. I considered my fate as certain, and that I had no alternative, but to lie down and perish. The influence of religion, however, aided and supported me [...] The extraordinary beauty of a small moss flower, in fructification, irresistibly caught my eye [...] I could not contemplate the delicate conformation of its roots, leaves, and capsula, without admiration. Can that Being (thought I) who planted, watered, and brought to perfection, in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after His own image?--surely not! Reflections like these would not allow me to despair. I started up, and disregarding both hunger and fatigue, travelled forwards, assured that relief was at hand; and I was not disappointed. (Mungo Park, c. 1797 [Rhys 186])

The primary argument in this chapter is that, in times of unsettling distress, Ernest Hemingway’s wartime characters commune with nature as a conduit to the divine. They fulfill this need with deliberation and with the knowledge that in contacting nature, they are contacting the divine. I will be working from definitions of “nature” and “divine” as stated in the previous chapter, but here they will be refined as will be the type of divinity expressed by these characters (e.g., deism, theism, pantheism). Again, in this study, nature is “what takes place without the agency, or without the voluntary and intentional agency, of man” (Mill 8). Further refining this definition is the notion that individuals
strike a negotiation on what nature is. Factoring into this definition also are American versus European perspectives and the perspectives of those at home versus those away in a foreign land. My intentions are to show that these soldier characters see nature and war as two opposing poles of the sacred, with nature being perceived as good or desirable and war being evil and undesirable. Benevolent nature being distinct from evil war is not uncommon in post-WWI literature, but equating the benevolence to the divine and the evil to the anathema of the divine is absent from most current research. In short, I am investigating how the Hemingway soldier reconciles the opposition between nature and war.

In defining “sacred” and “profane,” I am following the concepts of Émile Durkheim¹, who found the profane to be inimical to the sacred or religious. Sacred and profane do not equate to good and bad, respectively, though. As I show in a few pages, the sacred can be comforting and caring, or it could be terrifying and gruesome. Thus, in this study, by grouping “nature” under the “sacred” heading and “war” under the “profane” heading, my intention is to demonstrate that the soldier characters, through their words and actions, hold nature to be part of religion and war to work counter to religion. Again, this follows Durkheim’s findings.

The dramatic excerpt above from Scottish explorer Mungo Park’s *Travels in the Interior of Africa* is very similar to several scenes in Ernest Hemingway’s war fiction. Park, finding himself near death in a remote, unknown land, gives up and falls to the sand in the wilds of present day Mali. Spying a miniscule flower near him reminds him of the

¹ Primarily as detailed in his 1912 book *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life.*
greatness of God (“that Being”), finds new strength through the idea that God cares about him, lifts himself up, and helps him stagger to safety. The moss flower is the very definition of what Mircea Eliade, in his groundbreaking 1961 book *The Sacred and the Profane*, terms a “hierophany.”

A hierophany denotes a thing that facilitates breakthrough to the sacred or manifests the sacred. For example, if a tribe venerates a certain stone as a link to their god, that stone is a hierophany. While calling on both Émile Durkheim and Mircea Eliade, sociologist and religious studies scholars, respectively, with divergent views on the nature of religion might seem careless, I do so with deliberation. Where Durkheim believes religion is a social construct, Eliade believes it occurs *sui generis*; Durkheim sees socially created sacred symbols as a path to the divine where Eliade sees individually created hierophanies as incidents of divine manifestation; Durkheim conceptualizes positive and negative qualities of the sacred where Eliade conceptualizes the sacred as positive and the profane as negative. Yet, my use of these scholars’ theories as I use them in this study do not contradict each other but rather work together as do many other sociological or philosophical ideas in the “modern” era.

In his book, Eliade first defines the sacred by stating that it is the opposite of the profane. He elaborates by writing that “Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane” (Eliade

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2 Mircea Eliade defined “Hierophany” originally by in his *Patterns of Comparative Religion* (1958) but elaborated upon it in *The Sacred and the Profane*. This term is akin to Gerard Manly Hopkins’ “inscape,” James Joyce’s “epiphany,” Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “moment,” William Wordsworth’s “spot of time,” or Northrop Frye’s “monad.”
11). This manifestation of the sacred he defines as a hierophany, and he notes that, while all hierophanies have the same degree of being rarefied and mysterious, religious people and religions find the sacred “from the most elementary hierophany—e.g., manifestation of the sacred in some ordinary object, a stone or a tree—to the supreme hierophany (which, for a Christian, is the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ” [ibid.]). The stone or the moss flower are no longer merely a stone or a moss flower; they are something very different to the believer. They could be the Godhead Himself, urging the despairing explorer to persevere or they could be a less precise sacred force providing calm to the injured and scared soldier. Relevant to Mungo Park, Ernest Hemingway’s soldier characters, or the tribal worshipper, Eliade writes, “for those to whom a stone reveals itself as sacred, its immediate reality is transmuted into a supernatural reality” (Eliade 12).

Predating Eliade, Durkheim discusses the sacred/profane dichotomy in his 1912 book *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. He writes, “The division of the world into two domains, one containing all that is sacred and the other all that is profane—such is the distinctive trait of religious thought […] Sacred things are not simply those personal beings that are called gods or spirits. A rock, a tree, a spring, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house, in a word anything, can be sacred” (Durkheim 34-35). Throughout his landmark work, Durkheim states that the sacred is defined by the person experiencing it, using terms such as “in man’s mind” (Durkheim 37) and noting that the sacred is such by “the powers attributed to them” (Durkheim 39) by people. Sacrality does not exist *sui generis*. Furthermore, “sacred things are those things protected and isolated by prohibitions; profane things are those things to which such prohibitions apply and which
must keep their distance from what is sacred” (Durkheim 38). I argue that, in the body of literature under study, the soldiers view nature as sacred and place prohibitions against warfare, for war mingling with nature “dangerously contradicts the state of dissociation in which these ideas [notions of the sacred and the profane] are found in human consciousness” (Durkheim 39). Recalling the first chapter of this dissertation, Durkheim claims, “religion must be an eminently collective thing” (Durkheim 44). The attribute of collectivity or a congregation applies to the lone Mungo Park as to the isolated Hemingway soldier protagonist, as we will learn in the next chapter. We see in Hemingway’s wartime protagonists certain features of Durkheimian religiosity, but, of course, there is not a complete duplication of visions between the writer and the sociologist.

While Mungo Park serendipitously discovered the life-saving moss flower, Hemingway’s soldier protagonists purposely seek nature as out a connection to the divine in their times of tumult. This is the primary argument in this chapter. First, I will provide examples of these characters deliberately contacting nature physically or invoking a natural element in times of emotional instability for nature’s calming powers. Second, I will show that this calming power is, to the characters, equivalent to divinity. Contrary scenes—moments when the characters or the reader cannot find a hierophany in nature or when the sacrality of nature seems to have fallen into the profane —will develop these two intentions. In Hemingway’s war fiction, the antithesis of nature is technology and, leading to the next logical step, human artifice distances creations from Creation or Nature. Frederic Henry as narrator in *A Farewell to Arms* notes how
The forest of oak trees on the mountain beyond the town was gone. The forest had been green in the summer when we had come into the town but now there were the stumps and the broken trunks and the ground was torn up, and one day at the end of the fall when I was out where the oak forest had been I saw a cloud coming over the mountain. (*AFTA* 6)

The cloud was full of snow that ceased fighting for the year. This simple scene could relate to the omnipotence of nature by the snow stopping man’s warring. Furthermore, the priest suggests that Henry, on his holiday, go to the Abruzzi. The banal lieutenant in the mess hall states that there is more snow there even than where they are, but the priest uses that fact as an attribute of its goodness and purity.

Hemingway usually inserts natural details in war fiction before introducing the plot, and he writes the natural details in a tone of regret over lost ways; this nostalgic tone is used as a foil to the atrocities of warfare. Chapter XXXVIII of *A Farewell to Arms* begins thusly, “The fall the snow came very late. We lived in a brown wooden house in the pine trees on the side of the mountain and at night there was frost so that there was thin ice over the water in the two pitchers on the dresser in the morning” (*AFTA* 289). As in the first chapter of this novel ("In the late summer of that year [. . .] the leaves fell early that year. . ." [*AFTA* 3]), the narrator notes that the natural cycles of snowfall and leaves falling vary from what they usually are (or are supposed to be). This sets up the theme of the unnatural status of war. Two pages after the prophetic late snowfall comment, the narrator clarifies, “The war seemed as far away as the football games of some one else’s college. But I knew from the papers that they were still fighting in the mountains because the snow would not come” (*AFTA* 291). This implies that the fighting was, to some degree and according to the papers, because the snow would not fall. The snow does eventually fall three days before Christmas, and, historically, it was
on December 22, 1917 that the Central Powers and Soviets opened peace negotiations on
the Polish border at Brest-Litovsk. The peace treaty was short lived, but the snow did
stop the fighting\(^3\) and opened the peace talks.

Hemingway uses this device also in *Across the River and Into the Trees* when,
upon the parting of Colonel Cantwell and Renata, the narrator notes, “The trees were
black and moved in the wind, and there were no leaves on them. The leaves had fallen
early, that year, and been swept up long ago” (*ARIT* 276). In this case, the unnatural fall
is not directly due to war, but it is still a sign that things are not as they should be or
normally are. Renata cries, breaking her vow never to cry, and the Colonel realizes that
he is no longer of use to the Army.

War being inimical to nature is an idea also found in Stephen Crane’s *Pictures of
War* (1898), a book Hemingway owned and which contains Crane’s *The Red Badge of
Courage*, a novel Hemingway called “a tour de force” (Reynolds, *Hemingway’s Reading
114*). In *The Red Badge of Courage*, Crane writes,

> The youth went again into the deep thickets. The brushed branches made a noise
> that drowned the sounds of cannon. He walked on, going from obscurity into
> promises of a greater obscurity.

> At length he reached a place where the high arching boughs made a chapel. He
> softly pushed the green doors aside and entered. Pine needles were a gentle
> brown carpet. There was a religious half light.

> Near the threshold he stopped, horror-stricken at the sight of a thing.

> He was being looked at by a dead man, who was seated with his back against a
column-like tree. The corpse was dressed in a uniform that once had been blue,

\(^3\) The early, long, and brutal winter of 1916-17 along the eastern front spawned the term
“turnip weather,” as snow and cold destroyed the potato crop, leaving soldiers and
citizens turnips for sustenance.
This excerpt has most of what I claim proves a character turns to the divine via nature in times of distress and hates war for the damage it does to nature (discussed in the next chapter). This excerpt does not fully develop the claim, however; it serves as a starting point into our study of Hemingway’s war fiction. We see the link from war to nature, but the link from nature to the divine is incomplete. In Crane’s novel, the narrator states that the branches (nature) made a noise that drowned the sounds of war. The youth (Henry Fleming) kept walking deeper into the thickets, presumably with the purpose of further detaching from battle. He comes upon a formation of boughs not unlike a chapel, and he is shocked to see the body of a dead soldier. Fleming is deeply distressed, and he brings one of his hands against a tree. Using the tree for support (physically and, possibly, spiritually), he leaves the area, albeit stumblingly, and soon finds himself back at the battle line. Nature, in its benevolence, silences the evil of war, but the calm of peace is incomplete, with the dead soldier in striking contrast to the pastoral, romantic, religious scene. Nature forms a chapel, and the metaphor continues into the next chapter of the novel. The natural element of the tree does steady Fleming, but the sense of divine is not evident in this scene. There is no firm indication whether Fleming turned to nature as hierophany providing spiritual support or whether he merely leaned against a tree to steady himself physically. The connection of nature to divine is incomplete.

Developing the idea of tree as hierophany in *The Red Badge of Courage* would require more information about the character of Henry Fleming, most likely delivered in
an interior monologue. The reader needs to know that the character seeks the connection or manifestation to the divine and does so with deliberation. This we do find in Hemingway’s war fiction. The three novels (A Farewell to Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls, and Across the River and Into the Trees) use weather, flora, and fauna as hierophanies. The length of these works afforded Hemingway the space to develop the profound features of religious feeling in the main characters. We can draw full conclusions in the short stories (some of them less than a full page in length) as well because Hemingway used the character Nick Adams in two dozen⁴ of his stories, with Adams depicted at different stages of life and in different situations, forming a continuous whole. Notable Hemingway scholar Philip Young states it thus: “as we follow Nick across the span of a generation in time we have got a story worth following” (qtd. in Benson 30).

Part of the Hemingway wartime character connecting with nature concerns cheating death in a way. Death and dying are tropes throughout almost all of Hemingway’s fiction, as are the related concept of humankind’s role in the universe. In “The Butterfly and the Tank,” soldiers kill a civilian because the civilian disrespected unwritten rules of order and respect. This death was pathetic because the civilian died without apparently leaving any mark for history. The Hemingway wartime protagonist avoids wasteful mortality by contacting the divinity of nature (and/or the other two methods noted in this dissertation). Robert Jay Lifton and Eric Olson a study entitled

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⁴ As compiled by Philip Young in The Nick Adams Stories (1972, Charles Scribner’s Sons).
Living and Dying (1974) in which they note that people seem to avoid the despair of certain eventual death by five modes: biological, creative, theological, natural, and experiential. These categories of experience allow people to sustain “a sense of attachment to human flow, to both their biology and their history. They feel a sense of immortality which enables active, vital life to go on” (Lifton 34). This “symbolic immortality” provides significance to life in times when existence seems pointless and random, such as in wartime. The Hemingway wartime soldier exemplifies the symbolic immortality mode of continuity with nature noted by Lifton and Olson. The researchers state that the kinetics of this mode is that “whatever happened to man, the trees, mountains, seas, and rivers endure. Partly for this reason, we constantly do back to nature, however briefly, for spiritual refreshment and revitalization” (Lifton 36). “The earth abideth forever,” as Hemingway stated in a paraphrase of a verse in Ecclesiastes (discussed later in this chapter).

The young Nick Adams, before he was old enough to don a military uniform stood by while his father, a physician, performed a Caesarean section in a cabin in the woods in Hemingway’s short story “Indian Camp.” During the operation, the patient’s husband committed suicide, a seemingly random happening to the young Nick. Nick asked his father about suicide and a couple of other things as they paddled back to camp in a rowboat at daybreak. Nick’s questions were on profound topics, and his father’s answers were barely more than a single sentence. One can imagine the confusion Nick must have felt. Then Nick connected with nature— with a symbol of immorality—and he, himself felt immortal:
They were seated in the boat, Nick in the stern, his father rowing. The sun was coming up over the hills. A bass jumped, making a circle in the water. Nick trailed his hand in the water. It felt warm in the sharp chill of the morning.

In the early morning on the lake sitting in the stern of the boat with his father rowing, he felt quite sure that he would never die. (CSS 70)

With his hand in the lake water and amid jumping trout, Nick was connected to the immutability of nature and felt immortal. This connection with nature assuages death. This is not unlike Robert Jordan’s feeling in the pine forest as Lieutenant Berrendo approached. Frederic Henry, however, in *A Farewell to Arms*, does not tap into this immortality at the end of the novel because he is in the sterile confines of a hospital, where his deceased wife looks like a statue. However, Henry does go outside into the rain, and we can speculate if that brief connection with nature (the rain) is enough to provide him spiritual refreshment and revitalization. One would guess that the rain is not enough, as Henry is returning to the hotel and not, say, hiking into a wilderness.

Again, the premises in this dissertation are 1) that nature is vital, as through it one can commune with immutable divinity, and 2) that war is anathema to nature, so someone must stop war. The dead soldier Henry Fleming encounters will eventually decompose into the earth. Between war and nature, nature wins this round, but there is not an assurance that this will always be the case. The excerpt from Crane approaches the first premise (the dead soldier symbolizing war). Discussion on deriving an approach to the second premise (war is anathema to nature) can begin by analyzing an unpublished short story draft written by Ernest Hemingway. Then analysis of more fully developed works will support the premises.
In the untitled, undated short story fragment (kept at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Hemingway Collection, Boston), two soldiers are reconnoitering an area in advance of troop movement.

Great trees had been notched and felled by explosives across the highway as it dropped down into town and Stevie and Peter climbed over the trunks and through the branches where the leaves were still fresh and green against the black pavement. We were looking for wires and for other things but there were only the new felled trees and the silence of the town.

In a war silence is the most frightening thing. Noises announce and reveal the position of the players. Silence, in a fresh taken town, is not golden. We worked down the road through the felled trees methodically and slowly and I thought the saddest thing to see in war or civil life is old great trees wantonly felled along a road. (E. Hemingway, Item #746)

While this brief scene contains the weight of suspicious anxiety, camaraderie, and the general upheaval brought about by war, the vehicle to convey the surreal, unnatural feeling is the felled trees. War destroyed the trees, and, to the narrator, trees wantonly felled signify something more than merely killing a living thing. The scene is reminiscent of Moses’ directives in the Biblical book of Deuteronomy.5 One of the laws of war given by Moses in Deuteronomy is this:

When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an ax against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man’s life) to employ them in the siege. (Deut. 20.19)

Moses’ decree is broken several biblical books later, in 2 Kings, when Eliseus tells the Israelites to attack Moab. “Every fortress and every cherished city of theirs you must

5 The admonition to not harm trees in wartime also appears in the Qur’an, and the Buddhist and Hindu concept of ahimsa similarly prohibits unnecessary harm to the natural environment (see The Environmental Consequences of War: Legal, Economic, and Scientific Perspectives by Austin and Bruch [New York: Cambridge UP, 2000]).
overthrow, cut down every fruit-tree, stop up every well, strew all their best plough-land with boulders” (2 Kings 3:19). This, the Israelites did (2 Kings 3:25) to punish the Moabites for their idolatry and rebellion. The wanton felling of great trees by the enemy in Hemingway’s short story solidifies the enemy’s wickedness.

In Hemingway’s story, the narrator, in a rough jump from the third person point of view to first person point of view, feels great pity for the trees, which enemy soldiers recently killed by to slow the progress of Stevie and Peter’s troops. Linking the scene to Moses’ directive for armies to not fell trees in wartime does approach the notion that war is contrary to a human connection with the divine, but the linking is tenuous. Again, I provide this example to illustrate how the premises in this study must sustain rigor testing, which the excerpt from Crane and this short story fragment do not. Both of these examples lack evidence that the characters purposefully seek out, or believe in, nature as hierophany. Recalling Mircea Eliade’s definition of hierophany as “the act of manifestation of the sacred” (Eliade 11)—the act of the sacred revealing itself through something (Eliade uses rocks and trees as examples), the hierophany could come from anything believed to be sacred, not just things in nature. A believer could find the sacred in a crucifix made by a goldsmith or in a woven garment a holy person might have worn. This study, however, is limited to hierophanies in nature, as the Hemingway soldier most often finds things created by humans to be profane, not sacred.

Hemingway did write scenes explicitly demonstrating the soldiers’ belief in the divine via nature, however. In the final pages of For Whom the Bell Tolls, a horse falls on Robert Jordan, shattering his leg and ruining his flight from war with his lover and the other Loyalists fighters. He sends the others on while he protects them by holding off
oncoming Nationalist fighters. The injured Robert Jordan, sprawled in the Sierra de Guadarrama in central Spain, notices the nature around him as he awaits near certain death. He had passed out three times from pain and exertion, and he has to focus on nature to calm his mind. When he manages to do that, to connect with not just nature but also the divinity it represents, he is able to function. “He was completely integrated now and he took a good long look at everything. Then he looked up at the sky. There were big white clouds in it. He touched the palm of his hand against the pine needles where he lay and he touched the bark of the pine truck that he lay behind” (*FWBT* 471). The etymological roots of the word “integration” are “renewal” and “to make whole.” In contacting nature, Robert Jordan is renewed and made whole. The pine forest is emblematic of the pinecone-topped *thyrsus* presented to successful initiates in ancient Greek rituals.

Jordan deliberately contacts nature in order to avoid getting into “any sort of mixed-up state” mentally. His choice to contact the stabilizing, immutable divine through nature forms earlier in this scene when, contemplating death, he wonders,

> 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 that’s bad. Dying is only bad when it takes a long time and hurts so much that it humiliated you. That is where you have all the luck, see? You don’t have any of that. (*FWBT* 468)

This is the link between nature and the divine. The casual reader may believe that Jordan is musing only on the physical, taking the part of he who is “just taking it straight” rather than those “ones with religion.” A more careful reading, however, provides a deeper, richer meaning. From his time at the Kansas City *Star* onward, Ernest Hemingway was a writer of acute sensibilities when it came to grammar and sentence
structure. On the surface, there are some serious grammatical errors in this excerpt, excepting the casual, minimal syntax found in all his prose. The first sentence addresses the reader in a section devoid of other such speech (except when Jordan is clearly thinking to himself, without the pronoun “you”). The second sentence above is of mixed construction and has an unclear pronoun reference (taking what straight?). The third sentence contains a confusing subject (no thing? what thing?). The fourth has another ambiguous reference (missing what?). The remaining sentences are fairly clear; when Jordan muses that he doesn’t have “any of that,” he is referring to the fact that he has no feeling in his crushed leg, so it doesn’t hurt to the point of humiliation. In writing in this peculiar way, Hemingway allows readers to make two important, and contrasting, interpretations. First, that it is better to take pain and fear straight, as if it were a physical thing, because religion is nothing more than a mental bandage. Although Jordan misses not having religion, he is lucky because he does not have it. But this is still confusing and does not fit with Jordan’s other character traits.

Second, and more apt, is the interpretation that those with religion have an easier and better life. Taking it straight comforts those who try to do so, but those with religion know there is no entity to fear. The only thing to fear is living without God. Jordan does not suffer humiliation from his injury, so he must be the one with religion rather than those “just taking it straight.” He is, in fact, congratulating those readers who do live without religion, only in an ironic sense. Irony is one of the archetypal literary devices of the modernists, and Ernest Hemingway is one of the archetypal modern writers.

On that hillside, Robert Jordan “tried to hold on to himself that he felt slipping away from himself as you feel snow starting to slip sometimes on a mountain slope”
(FWBT 469). He shifts from taking it straight to contacting nature to ease his suffering and fear. Therefore, Robert Jordan selects the first option, as one with religion does, and seems to find this to be the easy choice. Robert Jordan is in a highly agitated state. He needs calm and ease to complete his plan of assassinating the oncoming enemy Lieutenant Berrendo, and he wants to take the easy route to the end of this inevitable scene. It seems he tries to first take it “straight” by exerting purely humanistic powers to overcome his pain and anxiety, but, after realizing he might have to commit suicide so Berrendo can’t extract information from him via torture, he gives up the plan of “taking it straight.” This final scene in For Whom the Bell Tolls is a clear example of Hemingway’s soldier character turning to the divine, through nature, for its calming influence. Hemingway tells the reader that Jordan is not taking it straight, thus signifying that he is seeking divine protection. The notion of a Hemingway protagonist being religious is counter to much Hemingway scholarship, but instances of integration with nature and, by extension, the divine are not difficult to find.

A year before For Whom the Bell Tolls was published, Ernest Hemingway penned a poetic inscription for the memorial of Gene van Guilder, Hemingway’s fishing buddy and close friend who was killed in a hunting accident. Hemingway makes use of the notion of being “completely integrated” realized by Robert Jordan.

Best of all he loved the fall
The leaves yellow on the cottonwoods
Leaves floating on the trout streams
And above the hills
    The high blue windless skies
…Now he will be a part of them forever
(“Eulogy to Gene van Guilder” 31)
Clearly, Hemingway is not expressing a Christian notion of the afterlife in Heaven or in the company of God, but the inertia portrayed in the verse is from the quotidian through integration with nature to, one can assume, the divine ("be a part of them forever"). Hemingway attended van Guilder’s funeral on November 1, 1939 and gave a short speech. In it, he continued from where the inscribed poem finishes, "He loved to shoot, he loved to ride and he loved to fish. Now those are all finished. But the hills remain. […] He has come back to the hills that he loved and now he will be a part of them forever" (ibid.). This ending is another example of Hemingway expressing a belief in the endurance and immutability of nature and the peace and calm it can give those who integrate with it. Nature is given constancy through God’s will (cf. Ecclesiastes 3:14, “But be sure all God has made will remain for ever as he made it; there is no adding to it, no taking away from it; so he will command our reverence” [The Bible]), and immutability is considered a metaphysical attribute of God in that it involves His relationship with the physical world. This immortal integration with nature, or wilderness, recalls Eliade’s dictum that “The dying man desires to return to Mother Earth” (Eliade 140). It also requires a certain forfeiture of the self also seen in Eliade’s hierophanies.

Looking at one aspect of nature that the soldier character would find comforting in times of distress, Ernest Hemingway often wrote of the immutability of nature. In a 1926 letter to editor Max Perkins about the meaning of his novel The Sun Also Rises, Hemingway wrote, “The point of the book to me was that the earth abideth forever—having a great deal of fondness and admiration for the earth and not a hell of a lot for my generation and caring little about Vanities. […] I didn’t mean the book to be a hollow or
bitter satire but a damn tragedy with the earth abiding for ever as the hero” (qtd in Baker 229). Hemingway derived the novel’s title from the biblical book of Ecclesiastes, which states “One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever. The sun ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose” (The Bible, Eccles. 1:4-5). The notion of “the earth abideth forever,” with Hemingway borrowing some King James-era rhetoric, brings to mind the earth, or nature, as an immutable, timeless, and omnipotent force. This, of course, is similar to the qualities commonly associated with the sacred.

Memorializing fallen American soldiers in the Spanish Civil War in a February 1938 article in New Masses, Hemingway wrote,

Just as the earth can never die, neither will those who have ever been free return to slavery. […] The dead do not need to rise. They are a part of the earth now and the earth can never be conquered. For the earth endureth forever. It will outlive all systems of tyranny. Those who have entered it honorably, and no men ever entered earth more honorably than those who died in Spain, already have achieved immortality. (Hemingway, “On the American Dead in Spain”)

The stability of nature can be calming, integrating solace for those who live honorably. This notion is another reason for the moments of tumult the soldier characters feel at times in the fiction, as honor is a construct created by the character himself. The contradiction of doing what they are instructed to do and what they feel is right torments them. The solution is to shed selfishness and view the world as others must. This selflessness is not solitariness, which Alfred North Whitehead equates to religion.6 The

6 “Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness. It runs through three stages, if it evolves to its final satisfaction. It is the transition from God the void to God the enemy, and from God the enemy to God the companion. Thus religion is solitariness; and if you are never solitary, you are never religious. Collective enthusiasms, revivals,
honorable selflessness is caring for others above oneself, or caritas, the Christian love for humanity. This involves integrating with a community, an idea Émile Durkheim stressed in his writing.

In the war fiction, “integration” refers to the character uniting with nature. Literary critic Georg Lukács noted the Modern concept of separation from nature. In his essay “Ideology of Modernism,” he notes, “by destroying the complex tissue of man’s relations with his environment, it furthered the dissolution of personality. For it is just the opposition between a man and his environment that determines the development of his personality” (Lukács 1132). This dissolution of personality (or the privation of a natural self perhaps never actually lived but felt through its obvious present omission) is the primary conflict working in these characters. War causes disunity of the character and nature or the divine. Furthermore, trauma (physical or mental) in warfare can have a strong depersonalizing effect, as the previous chapter states regarding Hemingway’s war wounding.

The spiritual lives of Hemingway’s soldier characters are in great disorder. Robert Jordan’s spiritual perigee occurs after he blows the bridge. After realizing the death of the aged Anselmo, who Jordan came to respect, Jordan does not look back at the bridge. This scene echoes that of the biblical tale of Lot’s wife turning back to view the cities God was destroying (Genesis 19:12-26). This act turns her into a pillar of salt because she disobeyed the angel’s command to “look not behind thee” (Gen. 19:17, institutions, churches, rituals, bibles, codes of behaviour, are the trappings of religion, its passing forms (Whitehead, Religion in the Making 17).
Furthering this biblical allusion, if Anselmo serves as an equivalent to Lot’s wife, then Robert Jordan (or antifascist Loyalist on the whole) plays the role of God.

The anger and the emptiness and the hate that had come with the let-down after the bridge, when he had looked up from where he had lain and crouching, seen Anselmo dead, were still all through him. In him, too, was despair from the sorrow that soldiers turn to hatred in order that they may continue to be soldiers. Now it was over he was lonely, detached and unelated and he hated every one he saw. (FWBT 447)

Warfare separated Jordan from the integration he once felt with God, as (recalling Durkheim) the sacred and the profane cannot co-exist. Contrast Robert Jordan’s feelings at this time with the feelings of Nick Adams’ father in Hemingway’s story “Indian Camp” after Nick’s father successfully delivers an Indian woman’s baby—“He was feeling exalted and talkative as football players are in the dressing room after a game” (IOT 19). These scenes require much context for a true comparison, but here it suffices to say that Nick’s father was elated because he felt like an incredibly potent life-giver (“Oh, you’re a great man, all right,” he [Uncle George] said [to Nick’s father]” [IOT 20]), and Robert Jordan felt like a destroyer. Jordan felt strongly his disintegration and detachment from salvation because of the riotous chaos of his spirit. The hate he had created obscured the meaning of blowing the bridge and, on a more profound level, of achieving the earthly goals of the Loyalist cause. Furthermore, to view young Nick’s feeling “quite sure that he would never die” (CSS 70) through Durkheim’s theories, Nick and his father successfully passed through a rite (Uncle George, the suspected father of

7 I do not mean to imply that the short story exemplifies a piacular rite, as Durkheim details in his book. Durkheim’s study on rites, and the study of rites and rituals in general, is beyond the scope of this study. I introduce the topic here to demonstrate again
the child Nick’s father delivered, passed out cigars in an Anglo tradition), whereas Robert Jordan merely followed General Golz’s orders. Jordan believed in the Republican cause, but he was unimpressed with the authority that Golz symbolizes. Regarding Nick’s sensation of immortality, consider this passage from Durkheim’s *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*: “When one feels life in oneself—in the form of pain or anger or joyful enthusiasm—one does not believe in death; one is reassured, one takes greater courage, and, subjectively, everything happens as if the rite really had set aside the danger that was feared” (Durkheim 411).

Additionally, and perhaps more strongly, Robert Jordan suffered a profound spiritual distance because he slipped out of the Christian values he held on to dearly (albeit in his own fashion). His desire to achieve political goals momentarily superseded the charitable protection of the gypsies. Jordan cares less about Fernando and Eliado, who were killed at the sawmill, and Pablo, who is engaged in heated combat, than with his personal pain and fright and letting Maria know he is alive. He felt “numb all through himself” (*FWBT* 443), opposed to the acute sensibility he feels at the end of the novel when in a natural setting. This is similar to the spiritual downfall of the biblical Ananias who, instead of sharing his wealth with his brothers and sisters in the Jerusalem Christian community, thought to keep some proceeds from the sale of his land. Peter declares, “Why has thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:4). Pilar does not think that Jordan has done wrong because of his how warfare, in the works studied, is portrayed as being out of sync with the natural course of humanity.
successful blowing of the bridge, but he is sickeningly aware of his selfishness (heightened by the realization of Anselmo’s death) which, in essence, equates to lying to God. “Now it was over he was lonely, detached and unrelated and he hated everyone he saw” (FWBT 447). Jordan feels what Spanish people would call ensimismado, which, in short, means a dark, introverted, lost, and selfish feeling.

Pilar assuages his spiritual chaos in this scene is assuaged quickly, however, when she speaks.

“If there had been no snow—” Pilar said. And then, not suddenly, as a physical release could have been (if the woman would have put her arm around him, say) but slowly and from his head he began to accept it and let the hate go out. Sure, the snow. That had done it. The snow. Done it to others. Once you saw it again as it was to others, once you got rid of your own self, the always ridding of the self that you had to do in war. Where there could be no self. Where yourself is only to be lost. (FWBT 447)

When Pilar (“with her earthy sensuality, her bedrock wisdom,” as Terry Tempest Williams writes (T. T. Williams 11), and who Allen Guttmann describes as “a kind of Iberian Earth-Mother” [Guttman 98]) mentions the snow, clarity is brought to Jordan’s mixed-up mind by providing insight from a foreign perspective. He enters the realm of caritas, which calms him. The self, to Robert Jordan, is an individual’s temporary behavior, the dehumanizing persona (from the Latin word denoting “mask”) that soldiers create as a protective and disguising mechanism. The mention of snow also clarifies Jordan’s thinking because snow fell on the bridge and the Fascists’ sentry box as it fell outside the cave where Jordan and Maria hid. The two paragraphs cited above note a divide in Jordan’s thinking. Before the scene of his internal chaos, Jordan seeks to work alone and does not associate with the other guerrillas (e.g. “To hell with Pablo. Let him cover himself with mierda [shit]” [FWBT 447]); and after Pilar’s calming words, Jordan
seeks integration within the community (e.g. “Let us do this well and all together” [FWBT 447]). As Reinhold Niebuhr writes in The Nature and Destiny of Man (1941), “it [“modern anthropology”] hopes to rescue man from the dæmonic chaos in which his spiritual life is involved by beguiling him back to the harmony, serenity, and harmless unity of nature”; he must “descend from the chaos of spirit to the harmony of nature in order to be saved” (Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man 24).

This descent is portrayed in For Whom the Bell Tolls when, at the end of the novel, Robert Jordan “touched the palm of his hand against the pine needles where he lay and he touched the bark of the pine trunk that he lay behind” (FWBT 471). This comes immediately after the narrator informs the reader “He was completely integrated now” (ibid.). His centering actions are indicative of movement from the chaos of spirit to the harmony of nature. Jordan notes several times in this final scene that he hopes he does not lose his more material grounding and slip wholly into immaterial spirit.8 Hemingway writes this consistently as a very bad feeling (which Durkheim would call “unlucky”).

In The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, Émile Durkheim discusses the ambiguity of the idea of the sacred.9 He finds that believers can hold favorable or unfavorable values with the sacred. Thus, a believer could perceive deity as a source of

8 This concept also appears in “A Very Short Story,” where, when going being prepped for surgery to repair a war would, the narrator protagonist “went under the anaesthetic holding tight on to himself. . .” (IOT 83). Similar is the scene of Frederic Henry being blown up in A Farewell to Arms—“I felt myself rush bodily out of myself and out and out and all the time bodily in the wind. I went out swiftly, all of myself, and I knew I was dead and that it had all been a mistake to that you just died. Then I floated, and instead of going on I felt myself slide back” (AFTA 54).

9 As did W. Robertson Smith in his Lectures on the Religion of the Semites (1889).
comfort and integration or as a source of awe and terror. And in turn, a soldier could view warfare as something that is terrible, but, according to Durkheim, that does not exclude warfare from having elements of the sacred. In Durkheim’s words,

> Religious forces are of two kinds. Some are benevolent guardians of physical and moral order, as well as dispensers of life, health, and all the qualities that men value. [...] On the other hand, there are evil and impure powers, bringers of disorder, causes of death and sickness, instigators of sacrilege. The only feelings man has for them is a fear that usually has a component of horror. (Durkheim 412)

In the scenes cited above, we could portray snow (or, rather, nature) as a positive religious force and warfare as an evil power. Nature and warfare are contrary to each other. Again citing Durkheim, “Between these two categories of forces and beings, there is the sharpest possible contrast, up to and including the most radical antagonism” (412). He also terms these two poles of the same sacred genera the “lucky and the unlucky sacred” (417). Snow can stop battle, and warfare can destroy nature; that is radical antagonism. Such opposites, as Durkheim believes, express a dynamic wherein the believer can, at times, recognize the impure as pure, and vice versa. Also, the pure can form the impure, and vice versa. One feels at ease after mourning, the village venerates the once-terrible corpse.

Returning to the first words of this chapter, Hemingway was familiar with this scene from the Mungo Park epigram. He included an excerpt of it in his short story “A Natural History of the Dead” (written 1930), which was first published in Death in the Afternoon (1932). The story begins with the narrator declaring, “It has always seemed to me that the war has been omitted as a field for the observation of the naturalist” (CSS 335). The narrator of this work notes that he is a civilian who has also seen battle as a
soldier. He writes with a detachment that expresses both tongue-in-cheek storytelling and true anger. Here is but one example of this tone from “Natural History” wherein the narrator and his fellow soldiers, riding through the “beautiful Lombard countryside,” discuss their clean-up duties after a munitions explosion outside of Milan:

“We agreed too that the picking up of the fragments had been an extraordinary business; it being amazing that the human body should be blown into pieces which exploded along no anatomical lines, but rather divided as capriciously as the fragmentation in the burst of a high explosive shell” (CSS 337). This bathos occurs throughout Hemingway’s war fiction and is not atypical of fictionalized or actual accounts of soldiers recalling horrific events they witnessed. Obscuring the vileness and true pain of war with a lightness of style and even humor is common in war memoirs and fiction. Words are inadequate to convey the deep emotions war evokes, and most writers (especially, I would argue, writers who have been on a battlefield) set the facts and omit much discussion. Collecting shattered body parts is obviously a gruesome and horrific task; Hemingway omits elaboration because readers know his characters felt what all must feel in such a

10 In the first week of June 1918, Ernest Hemingway and other Red Cross volunteers were sent to the Milan suburb of Bollate to clean up human remains from a munitions explosion in which all 35 female employees were killed (Fenstermaker 24).

11 Consider the popular comics of Heath Robinson or The Wipers Times, a farcical newsletter published by the British Expeditionary Forces on the Ypres Salient front starting in February 1918 on a press found in rubble. A parody advertisement offers the perfect clothing for “going over the top,” which means leaving the muddy trench to make a very dangerous attack across no-man’s-land: “Are you going over the top? If so be sure to first inspect our new line of velveteen corduroy plush breeches” (Unknown 6).
hideous task. Some critics fail to realize the use of this negative capability, which Hemingway used extensively throughout his entire oeuvre.

Noted Hemingway scholar Michael Reynolds writes that the narrator “speaks in a sardonic voice and with the detachment of a natural historian,” but a deeper, incredibly personal meaning may be read below the apparent detachment (Reynolds, Hemingway: The 1930s 51). Reynolds further writes, “Nothing the narrator has seen gives him much cause to rejoice in God’s presence in the natural world” (ibid.). Michael Reynolds’ conclusion requires refinement to make it true and to make his conclusion fit the story. It is true that the narrator sees no divinity in what he sees, but what he sees is not wilderness; it is war. There are no hierophanies because war had violated nature; the two cannot coexist. This is stated quite plainly in a paragraph following a page discussing the putrefaction of war dead left on the battlefield in the heat.

One wonders what that persevering traveller, Mungo Park, would have seen on a battlefield in hot weather to restore his confidence. There were always poppies in the wheat in the end of June and in July, and the mulberry trees were in full leaf and one could see the heat waves rise from the barrels of the guns where the sun struck them through the screens of leaves; the earth was turned a bright yellow at the edge of holes where mustard-gas shells had been and the average broken house is finer to see than one that has been shelled, but few travellers would take a good full breath of that early summer air and have any such thoughts as Mungo Park about those formed in His own image. (CSS 338)

The poppies, wheat, and mulberry trees in leaf are obscured by the heat waves from the barrels of guns recently fired, and in places the earth was painted an unnatural yellow from mustard gas, a blistering agent that can cause prolonged, painful death.
Hemingway, in his signature unaffected style, writes about this contrast with very little emotion.12

Discussing Hemingway’s citation of Mungo Park in “A Natural History of the Dead” Miriam Mandel writes,

In *Death in the Afternoon* Hemingway shows his familiarity with the worshipful attitude of an early nineteenth-century explorer of Africa and natural historian, Mungo Park [...] an attitude that Hemingway mocks and derides. Mungo Park’s reports of his exploration of west and northern Africa in the 1790’s were inaccurate and hyperbolic, probably designed to capture a particular audience. Although Hemingway rejects this religious approach to natural history, he is clearly familiar enough with Park’s work to quote him. (*Hemingway and Africa 128*)

The ellipses in the quote take the place of a quoted section of Park’s writing of his hierophany. I cannot argue that the mention of Park shows Hemingway’s knowledge of the explorer and his religious naturalism, and I certainly cannot argue with the notion of Park writing for a particular audience, but Mandel’s assertion that Hemingway mocks and derides Park’s attitude is unsupported. Mandel furthers her theory, writing, “Hemingway rejects this religious approach to natural history” (ibid.). This seems counter to the young Hemingway’s extensive education in the Agassiz system of natural study, but another aspect of the story further brings her theory into question.

Mandel perhaps interprets the phrase “One wonders what that persevering traveller, Mungo Park, would have seen on a battlefield in hot weather to restore his confidence” as the narrator implying that there is nothing like Park’s moss flower on the

12 A passage in a similar tone appears at the last two sentences of the first chapter of *A Farewell to Arms*: “At the start of the winter came the permanent rain and with the rain came the cholera. But it was checked and in the end only seven thousand died of it in the army” (4).
battlefield to call divine (CSS 338). Thus, Mandel might conclude, the narrator has no feelings of religion via nature. An alternate theory might prove more suitable than this ill-founded conclusion. Indeed, nature reveals no divinity on a battlefield, but that fact does not solely lead to a conclusion that Hemingway is deriding Mungo Park. In fact, the narrator of “A Natural History of the Dead” venerates Park and empathizes with his need for divinity via nature for survival. The narrator has seen battlefields and has been in life-threatening positions similar to Mungo Park’s as Park staggered across the desert in Mali.

Early in “A Natural History of the Dead,” the narrator relates a scene of nature being obscured by the machines of war. Much of Hemingway’s war literature contains this trope. Approaching the munitions dump explosion site, the narrator states, “We drove to the scene of the disaster in trucks along poplar-shaded roads, bordered with ditches containing much minute animal life, which I could not clearly observe because of the great clouds of dust raised by the trucks” (CSS 338). The mention of “minute” animal life clearly harkens back to Mungo Park’s sighting of the moss-flower that awakened within him a desire to fight for survival brought about by thoughts of the divine. In Hemingway’s story, however, the machines of war have obscured this natural hierophany. The narrator could not see the minute life because the dust raised by military vehicles obscured it. This is a Modernist conceit added onto the naturalism of predecessors such as Mungo Park and Bishop Stanley; it is not an annulment of these predecessors’ conceptions of the divine in nature.

Nature is juxtaposed with war, and, since war has violated nature, either directly (the earth torn up from mustard gas shelling) or indirectly (the correlation of poppies to
war dead has been a proverb since Canadian gunner and surgeon John McCrae penned his 1915 poem “In Flanders Fields”), positive, desired sacrality (or divinity) is obscured. The narrator is highly engaged in the scenes in this story, and his empathy is evident. He is not mocking naturalists but rather introducing them to the worst part of nature: the ruination of it by war. Michael Reynolds is correct in stating that the narrator cannot here rejoice in God’s presence. It does not follow that the soldier has lost his faith and does not see divinity in nature. War has obscured nature, but there is no indication that this has permanently extinguished nature or his belief in divinity.

In “A Natural History of the Dead,” Ernest Hemingway lets his readers know that he is aware of the differences between science-based naturalism, the naturalism of Mungo Park and Bishop Stanley\(^ {13} \), and nature as hierophany. He accomplished this not with mocking or parody but with honest, plain narration that illuminates an aspect of nature not written about by peacetime naturalists. The Hemingway narrator is unable to see a flower/hierophany in the desert because war has obscured it. It is not necessarily dead, but the characters cannot see it and perceive it as an indicator to the divine. The Hemingway narrator differs from those of Mungo Park, Bishop Stanley, and the others\(^ {14} \).

\(^ {13} \) Hemingway owned Bishop Edward Stanley’s *A Familiar History of Birds* (*Reynolds Hemingway’s Reading* 186) in which Park’s account is written as evidence of God’s perfection (“proving beyond contradiction, that as ‘the works of the Lord are manifold, so in wisdom hath He made them all’) (1). The Hemingway Collection at the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library in Boston contains other works by naturalists owned by Ernest Hemingway, including works by Alan Devoe, whose book *Down to Earth* (1937) connects humankind and nature with religious faith.

\(^ {14} \) William Henry Hudson, Reverend Gilbert White, as noted in the first paragraph of the story.
mentioned in Hemingway’s story primarily in chronology; before The Great War, one could find flowers/hierophanies in the desert. After The Great War, clouds of dust from trucks full of soldiers detailed to clean up the dead from a military explosion hid the flowers/hierophanies. Philip Larkin, in the last line of his 1964 poem “MCMXIV,” perhaps describes the societal gulf between pre- and post-WWI is most succinctly: “Never such innocence again.”

Hemingway or his editors originally placed “A Natural History of the Dead” at the end of Chapter 12 of Death in the Afternoon. Hemingway appended a kind of coda to a pre-publication draft of the story in which the narrator muses to historical figures mentioned in the story (Mungo Park, Bishop Stanley, W.H. Hudson, and Reverend Gilbert White). Is it worthwhile to note that Ernest Hemingway kept fourteen novels by W.H. Hudson (1841-1922, author of several books on ornithology and novels praising the natural, outdoors life) in his Key West House (Reynolds, Hemingway's Reading 1910-1940: An Inventory 138-139), positively noted Hudson’s novel The Purple Land in The Sun Also Rises, and wrote in a 1935 Esquire article that Hudson’s Far Away and Long Ago is one of 20 books necessary for writers (Hemingway, “Remembering Shooting-Flying: A Key West Letter”). Gilbert White (1720-1793) wrote The Natural

15 The mentions here and elsewhere that certain books were in Hemingway’s personal library are not necessarily to imply that he thoroughly perused the texts and took their meanings to heart. It is only meant as a side-note, although some credence should be given to Hemingway’s knowledge of the books’ contents. As evidence, after visiting Hemingway’s Key West home, journalist Kurt Bernheim wrote, “Books are all over the place, spreading out into every room. Upon a magazine’s cables query, Mary Hemingway has just finished counting the book supply in stock. There are 4,623 volumes around the house, all read with the exception of Who’s Who” [emphasis added] (Bernheim 107).
History and Antiquities of Selborne [Hampshire, England], a book continuously in print since its original publication. Hemingway also owned Edward Stanley’s (Bishop, Church of England, Norwich) A Familiar History of Birds (1854) in which Mungo Park’s account of survival in the desert is excerpted (Reynolds, Hemingway's Reading 1910-1940: An Inventory 186). All of these writers viewed nature as hierophany. The original, pre-publication coda did not appear in Death in the Afternoon or later story collections (Winner Take Nothing [1933], Complete Short Stories [1987]). In this omitted ending, Hemingway wrote, “Ah, Mungo Park, You [sic] should have seen the dead. You should have seen them Bishop. All of you naturalists should have seen the dead. You should have seen them” (qtd in Beegel, “That Always Absent Something Else” 91).

They should have seen the dead because they would learn an aspect of nature missing in their works. If these nineteenth century naturalists had seen the war dead, as the narrator did, they would learn that warfare could detract from the wilderness. Following Durkheim’s logic, war-scarred nature can still be sacred, but its sacrality is not positive and directed toward the divine but rather negative and directed to the material world. They would be amazed and horrified to see how war can change nature itself. The human bodies mentioned in the short story are depicted as being outside of nature ("the quality of unreality" [CCS 337]) because war has transformed them. The protagonists describe human body parts as “fragments” and “bits.” This continues throughout the story to the end (of the published version), in a scene where a military doctor, who has been wounded himself with mustard gas, bluntly states to an artillery officer that he (the doctor) can do nothing more to help a soldier who had been shot in the head. The artillery officer states, “You are not a human being” (CSS 340). The doctor
does not refute that claim because it is so. The doctor, his eyes “red and the lids swollen, almost shut from tear gas” (CSS 339), has been tainted from his natural state into this unhealthy venue of war.

Matthew Forsythe, in his essay “Fragmented Origins of ‘A Natural History of the Dead,’” writes that the narrator’s point in the short story is to provide satirical loathing at naturalists broadly (142). Forsythe writes that the narrator builds an “attack on the naturalists,” but another interpretation is that the narrator is, in fact, reaching out to naturalists of the preceding generation in dismay at the state of the world as the narrator sees it. The narrator expresses clear disdain for humanists but respect for the naturalists named in the story. Similarly, Susan Beegel’s conclusion that, “through a pseudoscientific study of corpses decaying on an Italian battlefield, Hemingway provides positivistic proof of an absence at the heart of the universe” only partially explains what the narrator is expressing (Beegel, Hemingway’s Craft of Omission 34). There is no evidence in the story to suggest that there is an absence at the heart of the universe or that the divine is forever lost. True, war has obscured the hierophany the miniscule flower provides, but some force did cause Park’s flower to appear as noted in Hemingway’s story. Also recall the “pleasant, though dusty, ride through the beautiful Lombard countryside” the narrator and his comrades experience on the way back from

16 Agassiz’s methodology has been termed “pseudoscience” for his mix of creationism with hard science.

17 Susan Beegel’s words echo those of Robert Penn Warren, who, in 1947, wrote “But if one calls Hemingway’s attention to the fact that the natural world is a world of order, his reply is on record in a story called ‘A Natural History of the Dead’” (Warren 4)
munitions explosion cleanup \((CSS\ 337)\). It is war, as depicted by bodies on a battlefield, that is inimical to nature and the divine; nature, and, thus, the divine, are absent from the battlefield, but, once off the scene of war, they may be found again. Finally, it must be noted that the narrator prefaces his observation of corpses on the battlefield with “In war, the dead are…” \((CSS\ 335)\). War, not the ethos of a modern \(génération\ perdue\), provides the elements that mask sacred nature, a connection to the divine.

American Marine Second Lieutenant William Henry Radcliffe, writing from France in June 1916 to his parents in England, notes a similar juxtaposition of war and nature. Radcliffe writes about war in terms in common with the narrator of “A Natural History of the Dead.” Second Lieutenant Radcliffe was killed in action in France about two months later.

I was reading a story in of the magazines that you sent out which was trying to prove that this war had a good effect on men’s minds and made them more religious than they were before. […] What is there out here to raise a man’s mind out of the rut? […] Everywhere the work of God is spoiled by the hand of man. One looks at a sunset and for a moment thinks that at least is unsophisticated, but an aeroplane flies across, and puff! puff! And the whole scene is spoilt by clouds of schrapnel smoke! So you can understand that men who are at war really become more bestial than when at peace, despite opinion to the contrary. \((Housman\ 224)\)

World War I battle recollections such as Radcliffe’s are not difficult to find. Radcliffe does not loathe or attack the magazine writers who state that war makes men more religious, as Forsythe claims of the Hemingway narrator. He rather states his contradictory opinion based on his unique experience. He does not bemoan the “absence at the heart of the universe,” as Beegel would state it. In fact, a few lines about the quoted excerpt, he writes that he wishes there was time for religious worship, but, even on Sunday, the war goes on. Again, war does not kill religiosity in Hemingway’s soldier
characters, but they must work to stop warfare because they view war as that which is killing divinity (via killing nature). The next chapter of this dissertation develops this latter concept more fully.

The narrator of “A Natural History of the Dead” does not view death on the battlefield (or, in this case, the surrounds of an exploded munitions dump) to be natural. This is a key to understanding the antithetical relationship between nature (which symbolizes the divine) and war. After musing about the many war dead he has seen, the narrator says, “I’d never seen a natural death, so called, and so I blamed it on the war and like the persevering traveller, Mungo Park, knew that there was something else; that always absent something else, and then I saw one” (CSS 338). The narrator has seen much death in wartime but none outside the realm of war—no natural deaths. He knows that there is something else to death, but he cannot specify what that is. Then he witnesses a man die from Spanish influenza (which the narrator considers to be a natural death), and the tone of the story becomes overtly angry as he, together with Mungo Park, wishes death to philosophical humanists.

The narrator states, “So now I want to see the death of any self-called Humanist because a persevering traveler like Mungo Park or me lives on and maybe yet will live to see the actual death of members of this literary sect and watch the noble exits that they make” (CSS 338). Hemingway places a footnote marker after the word “Humanist” in the above quote, which refers to this content note: “The reader’s indulgence is requested for this mention of an extinct phenomenon. The reference, like all references to fashion, dates the story but it is retained because of its mild historical interest and because its omission would spoil the rhythm” (ibid.). The narrator switches from a rather casual
discussion of the dead in wartime to a rant against humanists because, now that he has witnessed a natural death (defined by himself as a death outside of war), he is furious with those who hold that human activity is more significant than that of a god and with those who believe that rationalism is superior to the divine or faith in the divine. This anti-humanism is certainly not unprecedented in modernism. For example, in his poem “Hugh Selwyn Mauberly,” Ezra Pound refers to the post-WWI “botched civilization” of humanism as “an old bitch gone in the teeth” (Davies 47).

According to Norman Foerster, in his preface to Humanism and America (1930, the time which “A Natural History of the Dead” was written), humanists strive “to make a resolute distinction between man and nature and between man and the divine” (Foerster vii). To the narrator of the story, however (following the trajectory of Nick Adams in the other stories), the divine is accessible through nature, so any distinction between man and nature and between man and the divine is a categorical mistake. The distinction is between the divine and war or that which destroys nature. A humanist like Foerster would be unlikely to endorse the existence of hierophanies. Mircea Eliade explains the modernists’ disbelief in connections to the sacred, writing in 1957, “The modern Occidental experiences a certain uneasiness before many manifestations of the sacred. He finds it difficult to accept the fact that, for many human beings, the sacred can be manifested in stones or trees, for example” (Eliade 11). Finding the sacred manifested in stones or trees might seem a primitive idea, but Hemingway’s breed of primitivism runs to ruing a wild America lost to deforestation and industrialism. For example, in his analysis of Hemingway’s works on the Spanish Civil War, Allen Guttmann writes, “for Hemingway the Spanish Civil War was dramatized as, among other things, a struggle
waged by men close to the earth and to the values of a primitive society against men who had turned away from the earth, men who had turned to the machine and to the values of an aggressive and destructive mechanical order” (Guttman 547). His was not a “middle landscape” as praised by Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, or St. John de Crèvecoeur but straight pre-industrial primitivism, a life fully appreciative of the truth of hierophanies, as was discussed in the previous chapter.

Several Hemingway scholars\(^\text{18}\) agree that Robert Herrick (1868-1938, not the seventeenth century “Cavalier” poet) would be one such humanist the narrator of “A Natural History of the Dead” despises. Professor Herrick wrote an essay titled “What is Dirt?” (1929) in which he declared both *A Farewell to Arms* and Erich Maria Remarque’s *All Quiet on the Western Front* to be “dirt,” or pornography. He claims that Hemingway, Remarque, and their banal ilk “will inevitably go to the dust heap of the ages. Dirt would remain, of course—dirty thoughts and habits. But imaginative beings would be free to explore those hidden spiritual significances of sex, which the present age seems to be forgetting” (Herrick 262). Herrick also writes in his essay that certain human activities can reach the height of being “art,” but “few actually do bear the sacred mark” (262). Herrick’s deplorable (in the eyes of the Hemingway narrator in “A Natural History of the Dead”) humanism comes forth in passages such as this, where he states that human

activity can be sacred. As stated at the outset of this dissertation, the Hemingway soldier protagonist is not a humanist but a theist.

Bertrand Russell was another humanist most likely in the narrator’s sights. Russell wrote the humanist manifesto, *A Free Man’s Worship*, which drove T.S. Eliot to the Church of England (from Unitarianism).19 In his short volume, Russell discusses how “mind asserts its subtle mastery over the thoughtless forces of Nature” (20) and how “Man creates God” (10) rather than God existing *sui generis*. If we follow the theology of Émile Durkheim (religion is an eminently social construct), the Hemingway soldier character does exhibit this characteristic. This is not the aspect of Humanism the Hemingway soldier character is so fiercely rebelling against, however. These men do not believe on blind faith but rather a kind of natural theology wherein religious truth emanates from nature and not from revelation. The next chapter discusses the soldiers’ religious beliefs in more detail, but, in broad terms, the characters would appreciate the humanists’ disdain for religious dogma but would eschew their doubts of the supernatural or divine. Humanism was in flux when the narrator discusses, at some point in the decades following the Great War, the horrific battlefield sights. Hemingway wrote the story from January 1929 to August 1931, before Roy Wood Sellars and Raymond Bragg wrote the first “Humanist Manifesto.” Charles Francis Potter’s published *Humanism: A New Religion* in 1930. Written with assistance from his wife Clara, the book discusses the failure of not only Christianity but Theism at large. Without a god, I contend, the

soldier in a battlefield cloud of mustard gas or on a hillside awaiting certain death would have to anchor or solace, and his time on earth would have little true meaning.

In his analysis of *A Farewell to Arms*, Paul Civello asserts that Hemingway writes about war as a natural occurrence. Civello writes that time is a natural force, as evidenced by Frederic Henry and Catherine’s struggle against natural time. Catherine imagines herself dead in the rain, and she dies during the natural process of childbirth. Civello cites Henry’s excerpt of Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress” (“But at my back I always hear / Time’s wingèd chariot hurrying near” [*AFTA* 154]) and notes, “The allusion is to his impending departure—to a war that is a product of natural force and from which, later, he will be retreating ‘against time’—but it also refers to the biological force symbolized by the rain and manifest by their unborn child” (Civello 85). No doubt Henry and Catherine (as well as Robert Jordan and Maria, Colonel Cantwell and Renata, and other soldiers and their lovers in Hemingway’s fiction) struggle against time, and time is written as a natural concept (changing of seasons, the night and the day, aging), but Civello offers no more development to his assertion that war is a product of a natural force. There appears to be no end of statements from Central Powers military leaders agreeing with Mr. Civello, but the Hemingway soldier protagonist would not agree with the claim that war “is a miraculous trinity—composed of primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force” (Clausewitz 101).

Ford Madox Hueffer (later Ford) published his World I observations in *Between St. Dennis and St. George* (1915), in which he includes 100 quotes on war from German or Prussian military and government officials. Many of these quotes equate the absence of war to either materialism or commercialism. Prussian general Helmuth Moltke is
quoted as writing, “Without war the world would grow corrupt, and lose itself in materialism” (Hueffer 255). Also, author/professor Leo Heinrich writes, “May God deliver us from the inertia of other European peoples, and give us a good war, fresh and joyous […]” (Hueffer 260). Plans of ethnic cleansing comprise these sentiments—plans such as German chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg and his plan in 1914 to rid a strip of Polish land of residents before German colonization (cf. Hull 233). This was a non-military operation in the guise of a military necessity. Again, these pro-military ideas are in direct opposition to the Hemingway characters’ notions of war being contrary to nature and, thus, to the divine.

As noted earlier, Ernest Hemingway’s life spanned differing cultures, periods, and styles both biographically and literally. His war experience and war fiction begin with the Great War, and his experiences there had a dramatic effect on his life and his fiction. One of the most esteemed studies of World War I literature is Paul Fussell’s *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975). In chapter titled “Arcadian Recourses,” Fussell writes,

> If the opposite of war is peace, the opposite of experiencing moments of war is proposing moments of pastoral. Since war takes place outdoors and always within nature, its symbolic status is that of the ultimate anti-pastoral. In Northrop Frye’s terms, it belongs to the demonic world, and no one engages in it or contemplates it without implicitly or explicitly bringing to bear the contrasting ‘model world’ by which its demonism is measured. (231)

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20 The National Book Foundation awarded *The Great War and Modern Memory* the National Book Award (1976), and the National Book Critics Circle awarded the book its National Book Critics Circle Award (1975).
The “demonic world” to which Paul Fussell refers comes from Frye’s essay “Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths” (1954). In discussing what he finds to be three organizations of myths and archetypal symbols in literature, Frye writes of the primary, “First, there is undisplaced myth, generally concerned with gods or demons, which takes the form of two contrasting worlds of total metaphorical identification, one desirable and the other undesirable. These worlds are often identified with the existential heaven and hells of the religions contemporary with such literature” (Frye, *Collected Works of Northrop Frye* 129). The other two organizations he identifies are those he terms romantic and realism. Elaborating on the god and demon dichotomy of symbols in literature, Frye states that the god aspects are parts of the world human desire accepts, and demons are parts of the world human desire rejects. Godlike metaphors, according to Frye, include such things as God (and gods), the garden, the sheepfold, and doves. On the demon side, Frye points out labyrinths, the ouroboros, cannibalism, and “engines of torture, weapons of war, armour, and images of a dead mechanism which, because it does not humanize nature, is unnatural as well as inhuman” (139).

Thus, a garden or sheepfold can be viewed as hierophanies—manifestations of the sacred. Another scholar of comparative religion, Rudolf Otto, the preferred term for the phenomenon of the divine revealing itself is “numinous”—revealing or indicating the

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21 In his essay, Frye contains the word realism in quotation marks, parenthetically stating, “my distaste for this inept term is reflected in the quotation marks” (Frye 129).

22 Frye looks at symbols beyond Christianity, too, noting ancient Greek polytheistic religious icons and Hindu’s *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. 
presence of a divinity ("Numinous")\textsuperscript{23}. Combining these cursory definitions (which the following chapter of this dissertation will fleshed out) with Paul Fussell’s quote, we can summarize that, whether a hierophany or the numinous, these natural, sacred items are in contrast with the profane. Humanity desires sacred things and not profane things. To Frye, things human nature desires (like nature) oppose things human desire rejects (like war). The epithet “War is hell,”\textsuperscript{24} commonly ascribed to William Tecumseh Sherman (soldier and Union general during the American Civil War), is an apt, brief definition, with hell being the archetypal opposite of the desirable sacred. Durkheim and Eliade write of the sacrality being experiences rather than spaces because they reveal themselves as such to “religious man,” whom Eliade also calls “\textit{homo religious}.”

In a brief review of Hemingway’s novel \textit{Across the River and Into the Trees} and three of Samuel Beckett’s novels among other twentieth century works, Northrop Frye states, “Many of the characters of Hemingway and Beckett are most remarkable for their inarticulateness and their inability to communicate” (Frye, \textit{Northrop Frye on Twentieth-Century Literature} 305). It is interesting to consider Frye’s conclusion in light of Durkheim’s conception of how religion is formed. Expounding on the thoughts of

\textsuperscript{23} Otto did not coin this term, as Eliade did with hierophany, but Otto’s usage of numinous is specific to religious studies or psychology where earlier usages denote something universal or sublime. Otto’s numinous may be used as an adjective or noun.

\textsuperscript{24} On August 18, 1918 (about six weeks after his injury in Fossalta, Italy), Hemingway wrote a letter home to his parents: “You know they say there isn’t anything funny about this war. And there isn’t. I wouldn’t say it was hell, because that’s been a bit overworked since Gen. Sherman’s time, but there have been about 8 times when I would have welcomed Hell. Just on a chance that it couldn’t come up to the phase of war I was experiencing” (qtd in Atlas 24).
religious studies scholar Max Müller, Durkheim wrote, “Language is not only the outward clothing of our thought; it is thought’s internal skeleton. Language does not merely stand outside thought, translating something that is already formed, but in actuality serves to form thought” (Durkheim 73). Thus, the sum of these conclusions applied to the works here under study is this: these soldier characters are, at times, inarticulate because their thoughts are disjointed. Consider Robert Jordan in the ending of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, as he is lying on the hillside alone with a shattered leg, awaiting enemy troops to approach nearer. He tries to think about certain things to avoid slipping into unconsciousness due to overwhelming pain and exertion. “Think about Montana. *I can’t*. Think about Madrid. *I can’t*. Think about a cool drink of water. *All right*” (Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* 470, italics in original). Thinking about water calmed his mind for a short time, but he again feels himself slipping into unconsciousness. Then he contacts nature by placing a palm against a pine tree and also on the forest floor. Hemingway writes, “He was completely integrated now” (ibid.). Nature helps form Jordan’s thoughts and calms him to the point that he can delicately handle a submachine gun. War is confusing, disjointed, and hellish, but, in this literature, contacting nature can provide some articulation.

General Sherman was certainly not alone in equating war to hell. In his 1917 memoir of fighting in World War I in France, *Over the Top*, American machine gunner Arthur Guy Empey appends his book with a lexicon of soldier terminology. He titled this “Tommy’s Dictionary of the Trenches.” “Tommy” is any English soldier. Empey’s

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25 *Natural Religion*, 1899.
definition of “Après la Guerre” is “After the war.’ Tommy’s definition of Heaven” (Empey). This falls in line with Paul Fussell’s idea that the opposite of enduring moments of war is enjoying moments of pastoral. The sacred, which the Hemingway soldier might take to be poppies or minute life along a dirt road, can be, in times of war, obscured by vileness, which the works show to be military actions.

The characters under study are very reticent in expressing sentiments approaching dogma. In *A Farewell to Arms*, Lt. Henry muses, “I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glory, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. [...] Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates” (185). And in *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway writes, “All our words from loose using have lost their edge” (71). This makes the task of proving the premise of the soldier characters seeking out nature as divinity more difficult because what much of society holds to be sacred or authoritative (such as the *Ave Maria* to a Catholic) holds virtually no value to these characters. They may fully appreciate and understand the meaning of such dogma, but they do not hold it to be sacred because it was ordained or prescribed to them. It is practice without religious belief, to paraphrase James Frazier in *The Golden Bough*. In their insightful 2013 article “‘Making Things Sacred’: Re-Theorizing the Nature and Function of Sacrifice in Modernity,” sociologists Chris Shilling and Phillip A. Mellor argue that sacrifice (Latin *sacer facere*, ‘the making of sacred things’) is an overlooked mediator among the sacred, religion, and society. Failure to recognize that the sacred is made (and how and why it is made), they argue,
hinders our knowledge of why certain phenomena become sacred, and in so doing
limits our appreciation of how societies develop cultural priorities, of how they
stimulate individuals to become certain types of social subjects, and of the risks
and opportunities that arise in milieux characterized by shrinking or expanding
prospects for creating sacred phenomena. (Shilling 319)

The Hemingway soldiers do not forget sacrifice, which, in their milieu, usually equates to
defeat. In Hemingway’s world, however, to be defeated does not necessarily equate to
destruction. This is what Santiago thinks to himself in The Old Man and the Sea. Defeat
is neither good nor bad, and to be destroyed, a person has to believe he or she is
destroyed. The Hemingway soldiers brace, tabula rasa, for the next battle. They use the
experience to make sacred things; this is why the site of a brave stand or the nickname of
a hero they personally knew becomes revered, sacred. As Frederic Henry, in A Farewell
to Arms, tells the priest,

“[…] It is in defeat that we become Christian.”
“The Austrians are Christians—except for the Bosnians.”
“I don’t mean technically Christians. I mean like Our Lord” (AFTA 178).

People make things divine. To the Hemingway wartime protagonist, the divine does not
reveal itself; he creates it. This man creates aspects of nature as sacred or divine. This
natural theology is more real to him than that dogma forced upon congregations without
the context of sacrifice. The Hemingway soldier “had read them, on proclamations that
were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had
seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices
were like the stock-yards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it”
(AFTA 185).

Those words revered by sergeants as they shouted them to their charges are not
sacred because the recruits have not felt sacrifice for these things as the wartime
characters have felt for the numbers of regiments and certain dates. Similarly, the old waiter has not made the Ave Maria sacred through sacrifice, but he has done so with an orderly, well-lighted bar. Such dogmatic words and expressions are no more than advertising copy to these characters; they had no internal dignity as the names of places did, such as Caporetto (site of a huge loss of Italian soldiers in 1917 and a subsequent retreat), Teruel (site of a terrible Spanish Civil War battle in 1938 which became a turning point, with advantage given to the enemy Nationalists), or Abruzzi (a town in Central Italy that comes to connote the pastoral sacred in A Farewell to Arms). Finding banality in some words or ideas where others find sacredness does not equate to a lack of religiosity; the characters have not made the words or ideas sacred through sacrifice.

In a few scenes in this war literature, the soldier character expresses disdain for dogma—military, religious, or otherwise. The old waiter in Hemingway’s short story “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” seems to mock the Ave Maria, and, in an interchapter of In Our Time (Chapter VII), a soldier during a bombardment prays fervently to God and promises to “tell everybody in the world that you are the only thing that matters” (IOT 87). But, when the bombing is over, the soldier goes to brothel (which can be read as a way of him expressing his vitality, celebrating the fact that he is alive) and tells neither the prostitute nor anyone else (which is contrary to his preyed promise). The ethos of modernism might cause the blasphemy in these scenes, which might seem to express a lack of religion. Regarding religious dogma in the modern era, Alfred North Whitehead writes, “Thus religion is primarily individual, and the dogmas of religion are clarifying modes of external expression. The intolerant use of religious dogmas has practically destroyed their unity for a great, if not the greater part, of the civilized world”
(Whitehead 122). This sounds very much like the embarrassment upon hearing over-used important words and of such words losing their edge from misuse. Whitehead furthers his point in writing, “A dogma may be true in the sense that it expresses such interrelations of the subject matter as are expressible within the set of ideas employed. But if the same dogma be used intolerantly so as to check the employment of other modes of analyzing the subject matter, then, for all its truth, it will be doing the work of a falsehood” (ibid.). Dogma shouted by a drill sergeant or a priest can have meaning for those who think beyond the words into analysis of the subject matter, but the Hemingway war protagonist finds deeper meaning in his natural hierophanies.

Thus, the old Spanish waiter, who has probably said the Ave Maria thousands of times in his long life, finds no sacredness in the prayer because it has been learned and used through rote ways. And it is possible the soldier who prayed during the bombardment, was dismayed, when the threat was over, that he tried to find utility in tired dogma. This does not necessarily label them unbelievers, though. They praise and thank God on their own terms.

Just as much dogma became corrupted into rather meaningless platitudes, wilderness itself has been made less primitive. There is less nature in nature. Railroads, logging operations, and the machines of war obfuscate the hierophany the Hemingway soldier needs. The American “middle landscape” was defined by Jefferson, Madison, and Crèvecœur as a setting with natural characteristics (trees, wild flowers, sheep) that is not too removed from human industry (as in today’s suburbs or the notion of rural “improved” land). In an 1811 letter to Charles Wilson Peale, Thomas Jefferson writes, “I have often thought that if heaven had given me choice of my position and calling, it
should have been on a rich spot of earth, well-watered, and near a good market for the productions of the garden” (qtd in Marx 138). This is the very definition of “middle landscape” and could well be a description of the Horton Bay area of Northern Michigan where young Ernest Hemingway first appreciated to the wonders of the natural world.

Hemingway’s soldier characters do indeed locate value far from society (think of Nick Adams in “Big, Two Hearted River”) and do not venture into resolving a conflict between nature and artifice. He is usually in civilized settings, but, when he needs divine assistance, he retreats to the nature that he finds around himself. “Pastoral” could denote Jefferson’s “middle landscape,” but “primitive” denotes an ancient and original pre-civilization—a tribal setting not unlike that evoked by Mircea Eliade’s hierophanies by touching a sacred stone or tree. In *The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway*, Rena Sanderson writes, “The repeated motif of a lost paradise appears in his [Hemingway’s] earliest stories and again, more markedly, in his later books. From one work to another, his characters seek to recapture what he called “the happiness of the Garden that a man must lose”\(^\text{26}\) (175). The cause of the lost paradise in the war fiction is war—either its direct, physical effects or its indirect, mental/spiritual effects.

As discussed in the previous chapter of this dissertation, Hemingway sought a landscape completely removed from modern society. He, and his soldier characters, sought Horton Bay before loggers came, when only Native Americans lived in the area, and the Abruzzi, away from culture and civilization. The Abruzzi is where “the roads

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\(^{26}\) This quote is attributed to Carlos Baker (*Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story*, New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1969, page 460).
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” (AFTA 13). To these characters, being in raw, undisturbed nature is being closer to the divine. Humankind’s works (“the machine in the garden”) make it more difficult to connect with the divine, as exemplified by military troops and their gear moving across the countryside obscuring minute plant life.

“Hemingway’s primitivism was drenched in nostalgia. Native Americans in Hemingway’s stories are always associated with youth,” writes Susanna Pavloska (71). In many letters to family and friends, he bemoans the forestry encroaching on the wilds of the family’s Michigan retreat. He longs for not a pastoral but a primitive environment, and the Hemingway soldier strives for a landscape more primitive than Jefferson’s ideal to reach the divine. These are not interchangeable terms, as Leo Marx clarifies in his book *The Machine in the Garden*:

Both seem to originate in a recoil from the pain and responsibility of life in a complex civilization—the familiar impulse to withdraw from the city, locus of power and politics, into nature. The difference is that the primitivist hero keeps going, as it were, so that eventually he locates value as far as possible, in space or time or both, from organized society; the shepherd, on the other hand, seeks a resolution of the conflict between the opposed worlds of nature and art. (22)

In addition to the image of Robert Jordan’s heart beating against the pine needle floor of the forest in the last sentence of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, there is another scene in Hemingway’s war fiction where a character feels her heart beating against the ground. In the short story “Nobody Ever Dies” (set in Cuba but about a soldier in the Spanish Civil War on leave to organize further support for the Republicans fighting Nationalist forces), Enrique and Maria flee authorities by crawling across a field. Enrique is shot
(and presumably killed). Maria freezes when she hears the shots fired at Enrique while the searchlights continue to scan the field for her. “She had not moved since she heard the burst of firing. She could feel her heart beating against the ground” (CSS 479). After Maria’s subsequent capture and confinement in the back seat of a car, he omniscient narrator further notes, “She sat there holding herself very still against the back of the seat. She seemed now to have a strange confidence. It was the same confidence another girl her age had felt a little more than five hundred years before in the market place of a town called Rouen” (CSS 480).

The other girl is Joan of Arc (also mentioned in *The Sun Also Rises* and *Across the River and Into the Trees*), the Roman Catholic saint (canonized 1920) who was burned at the stake in 1431. These two women derived their confidence from religion to some degree. Joan of Arc was a deeply religious visionary whose theophanies urged her to save France by fighting to have Charles VII crowned. Despite the fact that readers are told, while Maria is being arrested, “At one time she would have prayed, but she had lost that and now she needed something,” Maria demanded deceased Republican fighters were urging her on as deceased saints urged on her predecessor 500 years prior. Maria does not pray the way she was most likely taught as a youth to pray, by reciting ancient and obscure scripture; Maria elicits aid “said into the weeds” (CSS 479). Hemingway writes that the stool pigeon who alerted the authorities to Enrique and Maria’s hideout practiced voodoo. When he sees the divine confidence displayed by Maria, “The Negro was frightened and he put his fingers all the way around the string of blue voodoo beads and held them tight. But they could not help his fear because he was up against an older magic now” (CSS 481). While Maria’s divination through nature is not as explicit as
Robert Jordan’s, the overall essence of strength derived from nature exists. This “older magic” may not be Christianity per se, but Christian virtues are paramount, forming the kind of paganism Reverend William Barton found to be extremely compatible with Christianity.

Returning to Robert Jordan’s seeking stability from timeless nature at the end of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, contemporary author André Malraux ends his 1937 Spanish Civil War novel *L’Espoir* [*Man’s Hope*] with images very similar to those Hemingway used to conclude his novel. Where Hemingway writes, “He [Robert Jordan] could feel his heart beating against the pine needle floor of the forest” after he observed the sky (*FWBT* 471). Malraux writes, “And he [Manuel] felt in him this presence mingled with the noise of the brooks and the pace of the prisoners, permanent and deep as the beating of his heart” after he observed “this eternal sky and fields” (Malraux 361). This is significant because these two writers, who had fairly similar experiences in the Spanish Civil War (and in later wars), both express a sense of their protagonists coming to peace at the end of their novels by connecting their deepest being with nature. The degree to which this realization is common among soldiers would be interesting to explore, but this study is limited to such expressions of the nature/divine connection in Ernest Hemingway’s war fiction.

27 For much more on comparing several facets of Ernest Hemingway and André Malraux, see Jeffrey Meyer’s essay “Hemingway & Malraux: The Struggle” (*The New Criterion*, Nov. 2015, Vol. 34, Iss. 3, p. 75-80).
In Hemingway’s story “Big Two Hearted River,” Nick Adams\textsuperscript{28} returns from war to the therapeutic peace of the Two Hearted River. His war experience is not explicitly noted, but several clues\textsuperscript{29} lead to a conclusion that the protagonist is Nick Adams, and he is returning from war. Furthermore, in A Moveable Feast, Hemingway writes, “The story was about coming back from the war but there was no mention of the war in it” (Hemingway, A Moveable Feast 76). The burnt forest he trods over while hiking to the river symbolize the battlefield he left. While Frederick Crews (writing in The Critics Bear It Away: American Fiction and the Academy [Viking, 1992]) and Kenneth Lynn (writing in Hemingway [Simon & Schuster, 1987]) disagree with this, almost all other Hemingway scholars\textsuperscript{30} believe “Big, Two-Hearted River” to be part of the Nick Adams saga, with Nick returning to civilian life after being shot by the enemy in interchapter VI of In Our Time (between “The Battler” and “A Very Short Story”). “Nick sat against the wall of the church where they had dragged him to be clear of machine gun fire in the street. Both legs stuck out awkwardly. He had been hit in the spine” (IOT 81).

\textsuperscript{28} The character is unnamed, but many scholars (Philip Young among others) believe it is Nick Adams at the most mature point of Hemingway’s portrayal of him.

\textsuperscript{29} The narrator names the protagonist of “Big Two Hearted River” Nick. He wears a khaki shirt (noted twice in the story), and the history revealed through his actions and thoughts fit into the trajectory of Nick Adams after his combat injury.

\textsuperscript{30} Notably Malcolm Cowley, Philip Young, and Edmund Wilson. In A Moveable Feast, Hemingway himself writes, “The story [“Big Two-Hearted River”] was about coming back from the war but there was no mention of the war in it” (77). For a discussion on Crews’ and Lynn’s viewpoints, see “Ernest Hemingway and World War I: Combating Recent Psychobiological Reassessments, Restoring the War” by Matthew C. Stewart (Papers on Language & Literature, Vol 35, Iss 2, Spring 2000, p 198-217).
A church is physically supporting him, but, as we will see, the divinity represented by the church spiritually supports him in “Big Two-Hearted River.” After this interchapter, we see Nick Adams (again mentioned by name) in “A Way You’ll Never Be.” In this story, his war experience has clearly traumatized him, and the military has “reformed him out of the war,” which, in his case, equates to a disability discharge (CSS 312). He often loses control of himself and babbles, such as in this scene when, near the Italian front, an adjutant notices that Nick has been wounded and asks about it: “If you are interested in scars I can show you some very interesting ones but I would rather talk about grasshoppers” (CSS 312). Then Nick launches into a frenzied monologue on grasshoppers. He clearly needs psychological treatment. At some time period after that scene, Nick, in “Big Two-Hearted River,” muses on grasshoppers, but in a controlled, brief, and methodical manner, revealing the therapeutic force of his natural environs.

As in the biblical book of Luke, in which Jesus states, “A man cannot be my disciple unless he takes up his own cross, and follows after me” (The Bible, Luke 14.27, also Matthew 8:34), in “Big Two-Hearted River,” Nick straps on his pack and heads to the river. Nick’s pack was “too heavy. It was much too heavy. […] It was hard work walking up-hill. His muscles ached and the day was hot, but Nick felt happy (CSS 164). Continuing the allusion to the New Testament, the narrator earlier states that Nick “felt he had left everything behind” (ibid.), a gesture akin to earlier in Luke when the disciples Simon, Andrew, James, and John leaving behind their boats, fishing nets, and parents to follow Jesus (The Bible, Luke 5.11). In his article “The Religious Implications of Fishing and Bullfighting in Hemingway’s Work,” Agori Kroupi finds,
Nick’s decision to take refuge in the woods can be interpreted as indirectly choosing God—the provider of life—over a sinful society of men who have betrayed God and led themselves to war and self-destruction. [...] This does not mean that nature is deified in Hemingway’s work. Rather the natural world is a place where man can sense God’s profound love for His children. (Kroupi 110)

Hiking to the river, Nick thinks how unnatural the former lush landscape now looks and notes that even once green grasshoppers are now blackened by ash. Away from war and in the natural setting of the river, however, he is able to steady himself (literally, in the swirling waters as he fishes) and return to calmness. The story is a paean to the calming timelessness of nature. As Hemingway scholar Gregory E. Sojka states it, “In this journey from the expatriate-ridden city to the mystical country, the outdoor activities surrounding and including fishing serve as a healthy outlet for physical energy and provide a source of momentary spiritual rebirth” (Sojka 67).

H.R. Stoneback would concur, as he finds Adams’ journey to the river a “redemptive [...] quest and the search for peace, for inner spiritual harmony and serenity” (Stoneback 58). Stoneback claims that Nick Adams makes the river “numinous”—“The landscape is sacralized by the pilgrim’s [read Adams’] ordering of it” (Stoneback 59). Stoneback’s use of the word “numinous” is quite apt. Philosopher Rudolph Otto used this word to denote an encounter with the sacred, which I claim Nick has in returning to the unchanged, spiritually calming river. “The river was there,” writes Hemingway, leading the reader both to think “Of course it is” and “Why would Nick think it might not be there?” (CSS 163). The answer to this question is that war has totally changed Nick’s life, and he is not exactly sure what remains unaltered. As Nick approaches the river, the old town is different, destroyed, but, nearing the river, he sees trout in the stream “keeping themselves steady in the current with wavering fins” (ibid.).
The river steadies the trout just as it will steady him, except it will steady him spiritually, as the pine forest did for Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. In an article focusing on the role of food in “Big Two-Hearted River,” Goretti Benca writes that, encamped at the river, Nick Adams experiences “a spiritual union with the natural world bringing him closer to some kind of healing” (Benca 71). Recalling Lifton and Olson’s ideas on symbolic immortality, when Nick touches the first trout he catches, Nick contacts the timelessness of nature and is attached to the human flow. The fish is a strong symbol of Christianity and of Jesus Christ (the *ichthys* acrostic directly connecting “fish” with “Iesous Christos Theou Yios Soter” [Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour]) since primitive times.

Nick is afraid to fish the depths of the swampy part of the river, however, farther downstream from where he began fishing that day. His healing takes time, and he must attempt the healing in stages, with each stage deeper and more personal. The deepest stage noted in the story as the swamp. The swamp was a part of river further from where Nick caught his second trout. Cedar trees hung over the water, and it was shadowy and the water was deeper. This is similar to a stage in therapy when a patient has to analyze the experience that caused his ailment, and, for Nick, that would be a difficult stage to endure. Looking downriver at the swamp, the narrator states, “Nick did not want to go in there now […] in the fast deep water, in the half light, the fishing would be tragic. In the swamp, fishing was a tragic adventure. Nick did not want it. He did not want to go down the stream any further today” (*CSS* 180). Note that Hemingway wrote the adverb “further,” which denotes “to a greater degree or extent,” instead of “farther,” which denotes a greater distance. Nick is considering going a greater distance downstream, but
the adverb used does not refer to distance but to profundity. The narrator states, in the last sentence of the story, that “there were plenty of days coming when he could fish the swamp” (CSS 180). Thus, Nick will deepen his spiritual therapy with nature in due course.

Nick Adams seeks spiritual support also in the short story “Now I Lay Me.” It takes place after Nick’s injury on the battlefield, and Nick, as with Hemingway, could not fall asleep without a light on. Even then, it was difficult finding solace from the fear of the soul leaving the body, as Hemingway and the fictional Nick Adams felt after their battlefield injuries. One of the ways he tried to find peace at night was to think of a trout stream he used to fish. He would focus on natural detail. That second-hand connecting with nature did not always work. Hemingway writes, “But some nights I could not fish, and on those nights I was cold-awake and said my prayers over and over and tried to pray for all the people I had ever known” (CSS 277). He tries to think about girls he has known, too, but they all blur together and he returns to nature and religion to calm his mind. Recalling the swamp in “Big Two-Hearted River,” approaching the divine can be frightening because, in its way, it is unknown, and to approach it means extinguishing our persona. In addition to communing with nature, Hemingway used bullfighting as a metaphor for courageously shedding our persona to regain true spirituality. He wrote much about bullfighting, including Death in the Afternoon (1932), which many readers and bullfighting aficionados hold to be the preeminent literary work on the subject. In the corrida de toros, however, the character does not experience spirituality in isolation but in public. Again quoting Agori Kroupi, “In the bullring, nature does not play a consolatory or healing role. The set-ting (arena) is man-made and the sun illuminates the
fighting scenes. The drama of the bullfight is different from the spiritual struggle in complete isolation” (Kroupi 117). The degree of a toreador’s courage is much more evident to an observer than it is in the soldier confronting death or mutilation alone in battle and trying to confront his god. Whether in isolation or in a full plaza de toros, the actor must call courage and deny defeat to approach the numinous.

In addition to “numinous,” Rudolph Otto’s concept of mysterium tremendum et fascinans is apt in describing aspects of the swamp, as well. As Otto writes, “mysterium denotes merely that which is hidden and esoteric, that which is beyond conception or understanding, extraordinary and unfamiliar” (Otto 13). Tremendum is a hybrid of the emotion of fear that is “more than fear proper” (ibid.). As Otto notes, this is a connotation akin to the Hebrew hiqdish (“hallow”); the German gruseln (“grue”), grässlich (“grisly”), or Scheu (“dread”); or the English “awe,” “horror,” or “shudder” (Otto 13-17). Et fascinans refers to an attraction to what leaves us awestruck—that is, according to Rudolph Otto, the divine. As Otto explains it,

These two qualities, the daunting and the fascinating now combine in a strange harmony of contrasts, and the resultant dual character of the numinous consciousness, to which the entire religious development bears witness, at any rate from the level of the “daemonic dread” onwards, is at once the strangest and most noteworthy phenomenon in the whole history of religion. (Otto 31)

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31 Mysterium tremendum in war-time is illustrated in a highly visual scene from William Rothenstein’s Men and Memories (1931, ordered and owned by Hemingway). The artist Rothenstein makes his way to Ypres in 1914 “to see something of the war” (174). “We entered the grande place and came on the great Cloth-Hall and the Cathedral, livid and scarred with wounds against a lowering sky, a magnificent and unforgettable sight. It came as a sudden shock, awful and distressing, as though the buildings felt the agony of approaching dissolution, but the scene had a sombre beauty” (Rothenstein 175).
To call in another philosopher who addressed this topic, Edmund Burke, writing in *On the Sublime and Beautiful* (1885), finds the sublime to invoke feelings of astonishment and frequently terror. “The passion caused by the great and sublime in *nature*, when those causes operate most powerfully, is astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror” (Burke 50).

 Thoughts of fishing in the deep, dark swamp create in Nick Adams a feeling of *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* and possibly the sublime as defined by Burke. This is what is absent in the scene from *The Red Badge of Courage* in which Henry Fleming discovers a dead soldier among the peace of a forest. Nick wants to fish the swamp as he wants to leave fully the war through nature/the divine, but he is scared to do so because losing contact with a world that destroys nature, or God, and contacting the divine is a jarring change that takes time to complete. The story that, to many readers, is solely about a guy fishing touches on this concept that is the “most noteworthy phenomenon in the whole history of religion.” Nick Adams does not return to the Two-Hearted River for sentimental reasons. He does remember moments with his friend Hopkins, but Nick is primarily there for therapeutic reasons; he desires quiet his thoughts and to connect to the divine through nature. William James believed that, “Were one asked to characterize the life of religion in the broadest and most general terms possible, one might say that it consists of the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto” (James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* 78). While James would have disagreed with the Hemingway soldier about the intersection of nature and religion (this is an *a priori* statement for the fictional characters
but almost an impossibility for James), James’ notion of a striving to connect with the unseen other, which, in this study, is the divine.

Regarding the divinity in nature and striving for its calming powers in times of stress, two ideas from seventeenth century philosopher Baruch Spinoza are relevant to Hemingway studies. The first idea is what he termed “conatus,” and the second is a three-word phrase he wrote in the preface to his 1677 masterpiece *Ethics*. “Conatus” is the endeavor to persevere, to maintain as a part of nature. Spinoza’s theories do not agree with those of René Descartes, who believed the mind is separate from the natural world. Spinoza believes that humankind is an integral part of nature and, as such, endeavors to remain an integral part of nature. For a character like Robert Jordan, Frederic Henry, or Nick Adams, this undertaking takes the form of deliberately seeking out nature, particularly in times of tumult, and not merely “taking it straight.” Frederic Henry realizes that defeat is a personal construct that, with perseverance, he can turn to a closer connection with the divine. The first two chapters of *A Farewell to Arms* reveal a bleak outlook for military victory, and the narrator, Frederic Henry, seems to take this realization, and, as later chapters reveal, he uses this defeat (and his serious war injury) as a foil for a brighter life. Henry’s conversation with the priest about using defeat to become closer to the divine (“It is in defeat that we become Christian.”) calls to mind St. John Chrysostom’s words on the biblical book of Matthew. In his Homily 84, the fourth century Archbishop of Constantinople writes “they that seemed to have conquered, these most of all were put to shame, and defeated, and ruined; but He [sic] that seemed to be defeated, this man above all has both shone forth, and conquered mightily. […] he that is wronged, and seems to have been conquered, if he have borne it with self-
command, this above all is the one that has the crown” (Chrysostom). Frederic Henry’s
desire to maintain as part of nature (dramatized when he runs from the military
checkpoint and jumps into the Piave River\textsuperscript{32}) and Robert Jordan’s endeavor to stave of
the temptation of suicide in the pine forest are examples of Spinoza’s concept of conatus.

Spinoza’s second idea relevant to this study appears in this sentence from \textit{Ethics}:
“That eternal and infinite being we call God, or Nature\textsuperscript{33}, acts from the same necessity
from which he exists” (Nadler).\textsuperscript{34} “God, or Nature” are three words that set the world of
philosophy afire. This premise is similar to the notion of conatus in that things (including
God) endeavor to persevere. The shocking element, though, is that Spinoza here equates
God with Nature. In the next chapter of this dissertation, we will see that this is a view
shared by the Hemingway soldier, but, unlike Spinoza, this perspective does not,
perforce, equate to the pantheism alluded to elsewhere in \textit{Ethics}\textsuperscript{35}.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{32} Interestingly, the point of view shifts to second person in this scene, and, as Henry
floats down the river clutching on a log, he refers to himself and the log as “we” (eg, “I
was afraid of cramps and I hoped we would move toward the shore. We went down the
river in a long curve” [\textit{AFTA} 241]). This scene is further detailed in the next chapter on
ritual.
\item\textsuperscript{33} “\textit{Deus, sive Natura}” in the original.
\item\textsuperscript{34} Contrast this sentiment with the words of influential sixteenth century philosopher/
humanist/physician/alchemist Paracelsus, who wrote, “If one was to regard such events
as Christ’s resurrection [and the wonders of the Saints] as natural phenomena and signs,
then Christ’s words ‘there will be great signs’ would be confirmed. But ignorance
caused man to see these events as supernatural […]” (Paracelsus 99). Thus, the divine
can be in nature, but this does not necessarily indicate supernatural phenomena.
\item\textsuperscript{35} Spinoza does claim a personal deity in his \textit{Tractatus theologico-politicus} (published
posthumously in 1677).
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Historically, there is great conflict between revealed religion, in which pantheism is typically grouped, and natural religion (or, more specifically natural theology), which claims existence of God on the basis of observed natural facts. The Hemingway soldier seems to exhibit tendencies of both in a kind of latitudinal theology. They take part in the rites and sacrifice of natural religion but find revelation to be in nature (not beyond the ordinary course of nature). General ideas of religiosity appear above, but, in studying Hemingway’s war fiction, we can hone the type of religiosity the soldier protagonists embody. Elements of what define pantheism, Romain Rolland’s/Sigmund Freud’s “oceanic feeling” of being one with the universe, deism, theism, transcendentalism, “cosmic consciousness,” and other feelings of religion can be found in the oeuvre. Alfred North Whitehead, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Rudolf Otto believe religion to be in the individual, but Mircea Eliade does not. The characters’ thoughts, actions, and speech can situate them in this dynamic array. Again, the novels and the serialized Nick Adams story provide enough material to reach a more precise definition of the protagonists’ religiosity. The next chapter of this dissertation categorizes the religion exhibited by these characters.

While some readers may take the notion of Hemingway’s soldier characters viewing elements in nature as hierophanies as bathos, the concept of these characters as theists is anything but commonplace. Covering the “Ernest Hemingway” chapter of The Cambridge Companion to American Novelists, Eugene Goodheart discusses a large theme in Hemingway’s oeuvre, courage. He cites Hemingway’s famous definition of courage as “grace under pressure” and focuses on the word “grace.” “The religious connotation of grace makes it a matter of endowment (you simply have it or don’t have
it), in which case there is no story to tell. In Hemingway’s godless world, temperament may play a part, but, as we find in all his work, courage is always a struggle to sustain” (Goodheart 106). To prove the godlessness in Hemingway’s work, Goodheart notes the post-war anxiety of several characters and the “Nada” scene in “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place.” In that classic short story, the old waiter walks to a bodega late at night after closing the bar at which he worked. Pondering the meaning of life, he concludes that the potential nothingness of life is what drove one of his customers to attempt suicide, and that troubles the old waiter himself. After listening to the promise of life from the young waiter and contemplating this void in life, the old waiter “continued the conversation with himself”: “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 out nadas and nada us not into nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada. Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee” (CSS 291, italics in original).

Goodheart is apparently interpreting the old waiter’s musing as existential atheism (or apostasy), and his is a common reading of this passage. There can be another interpretation. The old waiter appears as the speaker of the biblical book of Ecclesiastes, who is old and tired (as is the old waiter), who writes, “Thus I became weary of life itself; so worthless it seemed to me, all that man does beneath the sun, frustration all of it, and labour lost. And I, beneath that same sun, what fond labours I had spent” (The Bible, Eccles. 2.17). He is comparing his life to that of the young waiter and is finding nothingness in everything. Hemingway replaces nada (Spanish “nothing”) with most nouns in the Ave Maria not necessarily out of disdain for God or the biblical Mary but because such dogma in general is, to the old waiter, empty. Also, as the narrator states,
“It was too late at night for conversation” (ibid.). The old waiter finds an emptiness in the actions of man and meaning in the small things such as a polished bar top and adequate lighting at night. These things are gifts from God, as the Preacher in Ecclesiastes tells the reader. Without God, life is meaningless, but the old waiter cherishes these small gifts, so life does have meaning. And we know Hemingway was familiar with the book of Ecclesiastes, as Ecclesiastes 1:5 contains the title of his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*. Interestingly, the King James version translates the opening lines of Ecclesiastes as “A shadow’s shadow, he tells us, a shadow’s shadow; a world of shadows!” (*The Bible*, Eccles. 1:1), using “Shadow” rather than “vanity,” which is often used (viz the English Standard Version). In “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place,” Hemingway writes four times that the old customer, with whom the old waiter empathizes, is in the shadow of leaves.

While “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” is not a part of the war oeuvre, I make this aside to offer an alternate conclusion to that of Eugene Goodheart and others, who find Hemingway’s fictional world to be godless, using the *nada* in “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” as primary evidence. Ecclesiastical authorities might declare the “nada” monologue to evidence heresy, but Santiago can remain a Catholic Christian nonetheless. Goodheart implies that this godlessness extends to Hemingway’s other works (including those discussed in this study), and, there again, I offer an alternate conclusion in the body

36 In summarizing Hemingway’s body of work, scholar Allen Josephs writes, “Hemingway is a proto-ecological writer and his deepest source is Ecclesiastes. Simple” (qtd in A. Baker).
of this dissertation. But Goodheart is not alone concluding that these soldier characters exhibit atheism. H.L. Mencken reportedly\(^\text{37}\) found that *in our time* revealed Hemingway’s atheism, and Granville Hicks wrote, “The consolations of religion are not available to his [Hemingway’s] characters” (Hicks 15). The consolation of religion is available to these characters—through nature. In his discussion on a scene in Hemingway’s novel *Across the River and into the Trees* in which Colonel Cantwell returns to the scene of his war wounding in Italy, defecates on that spot, and carefully digs a neat hole into which he inserts a ten thousand lira note, Richard Lehan notes, “The earth in the real God in Hemingway’s fiction, and in this scene we see a Hemingway character praying at its altar. No other scene in the Hemingway canon reveals so clearly the priority of the elemental (Lehan 207). By completing this primitive, natural ritual, Cantwell makes offerings to a being who he hopes will return the favor or make final the step into a new status. It is the elemental, the natural, which the Hemingway soldier seeks as hierophany. This could be Nick Adams fishing at the Two-Hearted River, Frederic Henry regretting not visiting the Abruzzi, Robert Jordan pressing his palm against the forest floor, or Colonel Richard Cantwell enacting a nature ritual at the scene of his war wounding.

In this chapter I have argued that Hemingway’s wartime protagonists strive for nature as hierophany in times of unsettling distress and that they do this with deliberation

\(^{37}\) Jeffrey Meyers cites this quote as being from *The American Mercury* (Aug 1925, xxxviii) in *Hemingway: The Critical Heritage*, but Milton A Cohen, in *Hemingway’s Laboratory: The Paris In Our Time*, notes that no such review by Mencken is to be found there.
and with the knowledge that in contacting nature, they are contacting the divine. I have refined definitions introduced in the previous chapter, and I have presented terms and cited sourced which work to evidence and support my claims. I have further refuted claims by other critics by offering alternate interpretations to critics who point to seemingly blasphemous passages of the oeuvre as evidence of the soldiers’ atheism.

If war is anathema to nature, and nature is the connection to the divine (which is sacred and good), why then do these characters join in wars? The next chapter will further the trajectory of the Hemingway soldier’s religiosity by looking into how war is viewed by these characters and why these characters chose to engage in military action. Precise definitions of their religiosity extends from building their view on war and discussing their motivations to serve as military conscripts. The next chapter will also investigate how these soldiers’ apparent beliefs in the divine fit into Émile Durkheim’s notion that religion is “an eminently collective thing” (Durkheim 44).
CHAPTER 3

RITUAL—INITIATION

Pauline sends her best love. I am strong and healthy as a pig. Dans la vie il faut d’abord durer. [In life, one must first last.] Cant write French. (Hemingway, letter to Archibald MacLeish, 14 March 1931. Qtd in Baker, Selected Letters 338)

Thanks for the letter. Writing is a rough trade et il faut d’abord durer. Never be sore at me if I make a rough joke nor mis-spell. (Hemingway, letter to Arthur Mizener, 11 January 1951. Qtd in Baker, Selected Letters 338)

It seems to me you do not understand politics, Inglés, nor guerilla warfare. In politics and this other the first thing is to continue to exist. Look how he continued to exist last night. (Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls, 284)

The great thing is to last and get your work done and see and hear and learn and understand; and write when there is something that you know; and not before; and not too damned much after. (Hemingway, Death in the Afternoon, 218)

The second way in which Ernest Hemingway’s soldiers experience religious integration is through ritual. Basically, ritual is a system of (or the performance of) rites, and the definition of rite has not changed much since the classical Latin meaning of “a prescribed act or observance in a religious or other solemn ceremony” ("rite"). And rites (as of initiation, purification, and redemption), as Daniel Pals writes\(^1\), are important in coming into contact with the sacred. [... They are] activities which, by their very gestures and procedures, recreate the great origin of all renewals—the creation of the world itself, as it arises out of chaos and is given its form through the powerful commands or mighty struggles of the gods. (Pals 175)

\(^1\) Pals is referring in particular to the thoughts of Mircea Eliade and, specifically, to Eliade’s Patterns in Comparative Religion (1949).
Pals touches on a few concepts other scholars of rites and ritual use in their studies. These scholars generally accept that there are different types of rituals and they have certain stages and defining features. The goal of any ritual is to move the participants from their current emotional state to one higher in perceived esteem. Thus, Latin American countries structure a *quinceañera* celebration to move a fifteen-year-old girl from childhood to womanhood, or, as the United States Conference on Catholic Bishops defines it, “there is the custom of celebrating the passage from childhood to adolescence with a ritual that expresses thanksgiving to God for the gift of life and that asks for a blessing from God for the years ahead” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). The *quinceañera*, like a Catholic mass, is scripted with predictable stages. Arnold Van Gennep, in his 1960 book *The Rites of Passage*, defines the stages. “I propose to call the rites of separation from a previous world, *pre-liminal rites*, those executed during the transitional stage *liminal* (or *threshold*) *rites*, and the ceremonies of incorporation into the new world *post-liminal rites*” (Van Gennep 21). Ernest Hemingway depicts these phases in his war novels, with the re-incorporation stage being specifically integration with the divine. This connection with the omnipotent and immutable signifies a new stage in the soldiers’ lives. Furthermore, rituals seem to have certain features in common, such as a closed community, the absence of rank distinction (except for a directing authority), a rarefied speech, submission to an authority figure, the loss of personal items, a sense of confusion (often expressed as intoxication or one kind or another), and the creation of a community of initiands. I will analyze a few scenes in Hemingway war fiction for these stages and features and discuss the worlds the warrior moves from and to.
Ernest Hemingway wrote the first two quotes in the epigram beginning this chapter in personal correspondence, one of his soldier characters says the third, and a semi-autobiographical narrator states the fourth. These quotes all share a similar sentiment—life is a game. No one can ever win this game, for death takes us all, but we can come close to victory by merely thriving. This notion is part of bullfighting, one of Ernest Hemingway’s passions. Many still hold his book *Death in the Afternoon* (1932) to be the authoritative text on the subject. In a bullfight, the bull never lives. The entire spectacle is a grand ritual, and, in this book, Hemingway equates the ritual of bullfighting to that of a Catholic mass:

As the matadors come in front of the president’s box they bow low and remove their black hats or monteras—the bow is serious or perfunctory depending on their length of service or degree of cynicism. At the start of their careers all are as devoutly ritual as altar boys serving a high mass and some always remain so. (E. Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon* 28)

He also writes that a matador performs “like a priest at benediction” (E. Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon* 221). As with soldiers in war, Hemingway sees the matador as a performer of ritual. If the ritual is performed correctly (as in a soldier doing what is right and dying “cleanly”), then death is cheated, for the matador (or soldier) might or might not be destroyed, but he is not defeated if he works true to his code. He is closer to the divine, on a higher plane of existence. It (killing the bull, blowing the bridge, abandoning the war, revisiting the battlefield) is a necessary sacrament to unite with the divine akin to baptism or receiving the Eucharist. Kristine A. Wilson states this another, similar, way, looking into Ernest Hemingway’s biography: “The bullfight, according to Hemingway and other aficionados, is essentially a tragic ritual meant to give both the matador and, through him, the audience, a feeling of immortality” (Wilson 81-82).
As we learned in the previous chapter of this dissertation, defeat comes only at the hand of the participant. Being destroyed by an adversary (or self-created injury) is something outside of our control, but we can control defeat. Thus, since we cannot win the game, how we play the game is of the utmost importance. This is of significance in our study into Ernest Hemingway’s warrior characters because, as several sociologists and ethnographers\(^2\) have noted, game is akin to ritual, and, in this chapter, I claim that the soldier characters exemplify the passage of ritual as a means to reach the divine. Also, his soldier characters use ritual to integrate with the divine as a means of reconstructing the organized religion they have lost. In a *Hemingway Review* article, Kristine A. Wilson writes,

> [...] the Catholicism in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* can be characterized as an “absent presence”; the novel’s characters mourn the loss of the organized, redemptive power of religious rites. Anselmo’s desire for atonement serves as an example. He also repeatedly reverts to prayer in times of crisis, an action echoed by Joaquin just before he is killed by the Fascist cavalry. (Wilson 88)

In Spain, Carlist (Catholic ultra-conservatives) military manoeuvers, the intermingling of the Church with Nazism and Fascism, and other pressures for a forced nationalism changed how these traditionally-reared warriors felt about Catholicism in their country, and there is no doubt the drive of some Republicans to stop the Nationalist coup was due to a desire to reclaim what they saw as greater religious freedom in a bygone time. Some

\(^2\) To cite but a few, Victor Turner in “Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, and Ritual: An Essay in Comparative Symbology” (1974); Alain Danielou in *Hindu Polytheism* (1964); Stewart Culin in “Games of the North American Indians” (1907); and Émile Durkheim in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912). In his landmark work, Durkheim writes, “It is well known that games and the principal forms of art seem to have been born in religion and that they long maintained their religious character” (Durkheim 385).
rituals in the literature take the form of game, and some are more similar to classic religious rituals, but the final step of all of these rituals is connection with the divine. I here use “rite” as a general religious ceremony and “ritual” more specifically as the actions composing the rite.

Arnold Van Gennep classifies movements of people from one status group to another, or one social division to another, as achieved by differing types of ceremonies. Van Gennep notes the blurring of groupings in modern society and states that “the only clearly marked social division remaining in modern society is that which distinguishes between the secular and the religious worlds—between the profane and the sacred” (Van Gennep 1). As will be shown below, the protagonists in the war novels of Ernest Hemingway (A Farewell to Arms and For Whom the Bell Tolls, in particular) certainly travel a path similar to those of men entering the priesthood, being initiated into religious societies, attending funerals or other situations commonly referred to as rites of passage.3 Note, however, that, as Solon T. Kimball states in the Introduction to The Rites of Passage, “The sacred is not an absolute value but one relative to the situation” (Van Gennep viii). Consequently, he uses “religion” and “sacred” situationally. In both A Farewell to Arms and For Whom the Bell Tolls, the main characters enact a rite of passage in their battle tours. Yet, it is of little interest if they seem to subscribe to any theorist’s prescription unless it means something further, that is, unless it informs a more profound reading of the works or encourages new assessments. A rite of passage and,  

3 Note: Van Gennep stresses that these rites are moved by religion and notes how (regarding the similarity of ceremonies) “In this respect, man’s life resembles nature, from which neither the individual nor the society stands independent” (Van Gennep 3).
more directly, the states of communitas and liminality, involve a strong religious element. Critics do not typically think of the two war novels here as having a strong positive religious element, but the emotional significance afforded by their structures cannot be overlooked. In the course of the novels, the protagonists are primarily men in liminal situations. The frantic pace of warfare greatly foreshortens their rites of passage. It is this anxious atmosphere that drives these protagonists to seek something immutable and omnipotent, the divine. Through the means detailed in this dissertation, these soldiers move to a different, higher state.

The etymology of “emotion” is “to stir up” or “to move.” At the novels end, Robert Jordan and Frederic Henry have (or are) moved into a state they seem quite comfortable with. Robert Jordan feels enlivened as he nears the end of his lengthy liminal phase. He felt lucky to be there. “He was completely integrated now” (FWBT 471). He touched his hand to the pine floor of the hillside and could feel his heart beat against the ground, too. This comfort is another sign of his emotional state. Ernest Hemingway displays liminality and communitas surviving under fire, and he displays this in the two novels by revealing the very worthy reward of religious awakening. Frederic Henry undergoes a similar ritual, but the post-liminal state seems to be one absent of warfare and in unification with Catherine. She says to Henry “You’re my religion,” (AFTA 116), and (previewing Robert Jordan and Maria’s relationship) “There isn’t any me anymore” (AFTA 106). Henry later states to her “we’re the same one. […] I haven’t any life at all anymore” (AFTA 299-300). As Paul Civello concludes,

By ‘dying’ into a spiritual ‘one-ness,’ they transcend, however illusory it may be, the biological trap: they no longer feel accountable to the physical world. Again, it is a religious experience modeled on the Christian paradigm of a spiritual
afterlife, a life that begins with physical death, involves a spiritual merging with the invisible ‘One,’ and ultimately transcends biological and temporal cycles. (Civello 89)

Civello’s interpretation touches the several phases (eg, death as liminal stage) and features (lack of distinction among initiands, ritual involving only a small community) of ritual detailed in this dissertation chapter.

Lieutenant Henry, at the very end of *A Farewell to Arms*, leaves the hospital after Catherine dies in childbirth—this is actually much into his incorporation phase. His religious emotion (which is most exaggerated immediately after the liminality of battle and into the comfort of fleeing into incorporation with Catherine) is more extended than Jordan’s and comes when he realizes he has finally fallen love with Catherine. The wise and respected old Count Greffi, says, while playing billiards with Henry after the battle is over,

“I had always expected to become devout. All my family died very devout. But somehow it does not come.”
“It’s too early.” [says Henry]
“Maybe it is too late. Perhaps I have outlived my religious feeling.”
“My own comes at night.”
“Then too you are in love. Do not forget that is a religious feeling.”
“You believe so?”
“Of course.” (*AFTA* 263)

Frederic Henry seems to be in the threshold phase of a ritual, one the wise old Count Greffi can recognize but about which Henry is ignorant. Henry is certainly driven toward Catherine, but he is unsure what the post-liminal stage will really be other than happiness with her, and Greffi is equating that drive to desire for unity with the divine (religion).

The more Frederic Henry falls in love with Catherine, his senses and feelings turn away from the material world toward the supernatural world. Henry moves from self-centered
enjoyment to self-less love and unification with Catherine. Robert Jordan thinks, late in
*For Whom the Bell Tolls*, of his relationship with Maria, “When I am with Maria I love
her so that I feel, literally, as though I would die, and I never believed in that nor thought
that it could happen” (*FWBT* 166). Likewise, Frederic Henry feels this with Catherine.
These soldiers are parted from their loves, however, through a series of personal and
collective rituals. Through these rituals, they learn that suffering and sacrifice are indeed
an essential part of commitment, and they engage in such with selfless vigor. They
realize their quests. But, again, these characters may engage in their quests in a desultory
manner and feel bewilderment at the achievement of their quests (this is most strongly
the case in the earliest novel under study, *A Farewell to Arms*).

Victor Turner elaborated on the concept of rites of passage. In his book *The
Ritual Process* (1969), he further defines the “liminal” period (Latin “limina” is
“threshold”), the second stage of van Gennep’s three phases of rites of passage.
Although Turner’s focus is primarily on neophytes in puberty rites, his findings hold true
for soldiers in the *avant garde* of fierce battle. He terms people in this second stage
“threshold people.” Their attributes are “necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and
these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate
states and positions in cultural space” (Turner, *The Ritual Process* 95). It is profitable to
study an incident in the war experience of a soldier one night on the Western Front.

One cold evening in December 1916, after a fitful night sleeping in a funkhole
and a day dominated by the rumble of not-so-distant gunfire near Béthune in Northern
France (the British front), Reverend Francis Foster’s life changed. The visiting cleric had
an experience akin to “the Gethsemane in which Christ prayed that He might be relieved
of the necessity for immolating Himself” (Foster 320). Foster’s experience, “in Communion with God,” prepared him to “[discover] the peace that is the fruit of negating the objective self” (ibid.). In other words, Foster finalized a rite of passage, passing from his former cowardly and self-conscious being, entering a threshold stage of transition and disincorporation, and reincorporating into a new advanced state of being. This passage is quoted because it quite succinctly demonstrates several aspects of ritual as it is used in this study; and the setting, characters, and other details of the story-line make it all the more relevant to Hemingway’s war fiction. Foster was huddled in his funkhole when Captain Bill appeared and asked him to go for a walk into the heavily German guarded front line into “no-man’s-land” (the area between opposing battle lines, a deadly strip of destroyed land where, according to one source, 5,845 British soldiers died in one six-month period [Persico 100]).

I wondered whether he had become insane. [. . .] Then, deeply reluctant, I slowly clambered up beside Bill, who now turned to the wire and began to search for one of the usual gaps that was left to make access to no-man’s-land beyond possible. Meanwhile, I waited motionless, my pulses racing and bile in my throat. [. . .] Bill now headed as straight for the clump of blasted trees as the many waterlogged shell holes would allow, I close behind him and feeling that I was dreaming. [. . .] We did not speak. At length Bill threw his cigarette end away. “Ah, well,” he said laconically, “I suppose we’d better be getting back.” He rose to his feet.

The sunset glow was beginning to fade from the western sky. Side by side now, we began to saunter back. Because I was now no longer fearful, elation filled me. But I could not understand what has caused the transformation. It was as though I had become another person altogether or, rather, as though I had entered another life. When at length I clambered after Bill into out familiar trench, I was even regretting that the expedition had ended.

For other such rites, see William James’ *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, especially the “The Divided Self” chapter.
Waving a hand to me, Bill set off back to his headquarters. Before following in his wake, the sergeant saluted me smartly, giving me a prodigious wink the while. And when I was alone with the sentry again, I knew that during the last half hour I had undergone the most momentous experience of my life. (Foster 313-314)

The specific elements of ritual will be discussed shortly, but let us look at Foster’s narrative. While in “no-man’s-land,” “Captain Bill” becomes “Bill”; Foster’s pulses are racing; then he feels as if he were dreaming. After the incident, Foster and Bill return “side by side now”; Foster feels as if he were a different person or in another life; and, safe in the funkhole, he regrets that the expedition is over. The loss of rank designations (identity unification), anxiety, blurring of reality and fantasy, status equality, incorporation into a new social status, and regret are archetypes of ritual. Later in the narrative, Foster writes,

The habit [of irrational fear] had been conquered on the occasion [of the foray with Captain Bill . . .] the genesis of change in myself occurring when I became aware that he and I were sharing a common peril and that though I had met him only thirty-six hours earlier, I already esteemed him and regarded him as my friend. It was this thought that put an end to anxiety on my own behalf and hence began the process of extinguishing the love I bore my objectified self. (Foster 319)

Hemingway plays out this realization in many of his soldier characters, too, although perhaps not as explicitly explicated in the fictional narration. Five weeks later, Foster ventures out alone (deliberately avoiding writing “with himself”) into “no-man’s-land” to test himself. He is still unafraid and notes,

I knew that the reason why I was completely unafraid was that as a result of having destroyed my imaginary objective self, I had become fully integrated, which is to say that I had gained integrity, and that in future I should invariably live—and live fully—in the present time, leaving the future to take care of itself. (Foster 320, emphasis added)
It is not known if Foster was familiar with *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, but this italicized phrase reads incredibly much like the narrator of Hemingway’s novel, which notes of Robert Jordan, “He was completely integrated now” (*FWBT* 471). This was a ritual that brought Foster from chaos to order, with the order being in a state closer to the divine.

We can also look for the features in Foster’s account of his ritual that appear often in other rituals. The participants form a closed community; it was only Captain Bill and Foster. Rank designation is erased during the ritual, and their speech was unlike the usual banter of soldiers in the trenches (Bill and Foster did not speak, something Foster made note of). Foster submits to Bill’s authority willingly, clambering after him to enter one of the most dangerous places on earth. Foster loses his anxiety over being situated on the front line, and he experiences a dream-like state. Finally, his ordeal brings on strong camaraderie (or communitas). At the completion of the ritual, Foster felt as though he “had entered another life” (Foster 314). Again, these features are not parts of all rituals, but they occur in many scenes in which a person or group makes the move from pre-liminality, to liminality, to post-liminality.

Before continuing, we need to discern what makes a ritual a religious ritual rather than merely a habitual activity. Walter Burkert, in a chapter entitled “The Problem of Ritual Killing,” finds two main distinguishing factors that denote religious ritual as opposed to non-religious ritual. He begins by stating the problem and positing one solution:

The importance of ritual for religion has been observed and discussed ever since Robertson Smith [1846-1894]. This is not to say that religion is to be reduced to ritual, only that ritual seems to provide a substructure that is essential and that is not to be derived from “higher” aspects such as myth or theology. A
purely “cognitive theory of religion” must be a failure. There seems to be no religion without ritual.

This leaves the question of the differentia specifica: what is it that makes ritual religious ritual. The simplest answer seems to be that it is the intervention of language and verbalized concepts, including names, to denote “superior beings.” (Burkert 153)

After citing Plato’s narrator Dion, Burkert concludes that the second attribute of religious ritual is

an intricate yet somehow integrated complexity that leads to a postulation of “sense,” and supreme, almost compulsive seriousness, at least with certain participants or at certain phases of the proceedings. [...] A tentative conclusion could be: rituals are communicative forms of behavior combining innate elements with imprinting and learning; they are transmitted through the generations in the context of successful strategies of interaction. Religious rituals are highly integrated and complex forms that, with the character of absolute seriousness, shape and replicate societal groups and thus perpetuate themselves. (Burkert 155, 158)

Later in his chapter, Walter Burkert adds to his definition of ritual the need for it to be limited to a closed community. To summarize Burkert, religious ritual (as opposed to “ritual” denoting quotidian routine) is a serious activity enacted within a closed community learned from predecessors that speaks to, or of, superior beings. We will see attributes that are more precise shortly, but let us turn once again to Robert Jordan’s swan song on the hillside in the Guadarrama. He is all seriousness as the pain of his shattered leg increases, and over the course of three very full days he has developed a very strong bond with the band of guerrillas whom he just sent to safety. Jordan has a monologue directed to his deceased grandfather, from whom he learned the personal traits necessary to be a good soldier.

Finally, Jordan also addresses God several times, seeking knowledge and divine aid. Again, I will shortly detail the specific elements that render this scene a ritual, but I
claim that this is a clear example of the second way Ernest Hemingway’s warrior characters connect with the divine—through ritual. Émile Durkheim finds that “Religious phenomena fall into two basic categories: beliefs and rites”; we could restate these categories as thinking and doing (Durkheim 34). Durkheim states that the rite must have an object and that the participant in the rite expresses the object in belief. The object (the desired post-liminal status) of the rites or rituals is integration with the divine. This can occur in a magnificent cathedral as well as on a muddy battlefield in a chaos of barbed wire and smoke.

The character of Francis Foster and the Hemingway warrior are, admittedly, quite different. The former was an Anglican priest who sought out education and indoctrination into an organized faith, and the latter seems to eschew organized religion (while maintaining in the belief behind the dogma and liturgy). Walter Burkert, in analyzing ritual, noted his belief that “we should not presuppose that people perform religious acts because they believe, but rather that they believe because they have learned to perform religious acts” (Burkert 156). This memorable statement is similar to an important principle in Catholicism: *Lex orandi lex credenda* [the law of praying is the law of believing]. Foster and the Hemingway soldier seem to enact these adages similarly. In these instances (Foster in no-man’s-land, Frederic Henry leaving the hospital, Robert Jordan on the hillside, Colonel Cantwell revisiting the battlefield) the desired post-liminal status seems to be integration with the divine. This is opposed to enacting ritual as thanksgiving from pre-established belief. The conclusion of the ritual is a kind of order from chaos, a synergism in which one seeking integration with the divine cooperates with the divine to reach that status.
Foster’s notion of wartime ritual resulting in an elevated status appears in Hemingway’s war fiction and functions in a manner similar to Foster’s non-fictional retelling of his incident in no-man’s-land. In his essay “Hemingway and Our ‘Essential Worldliness,’” John Killinger summarizes the “Hemingway formula”:

Take a good man and put him in a hard situation, preferably one involving suffering or violence or death. If he is really good, if he is capable of integrity, he will suddenly begin to see life in its bolder, truer outlines, and any false values will he has acquired from a conventional rearing will start to drop away. […] He will, in a word, become the individual, the true man, the hero. (Killinger 43)

Despite a few flaws in Killinger’s article, his rather glib summary is apt in this discussion. Killinger’s use of “capable of integrity” certainly intends the concept as it is used in this study; that is, having the ability to shed the self-created persona and unite with another world.

Victor Turner states that, in times of liminality, the neophytes “have no status, property, insignia, secular clothing indicating rank or role, position in a kinship system—in short, nothing that may distinguish them from their fellow neophytes or initiands” (Turner, The Ritual Process 95). No one survives long enough to become accustomed to shelling and incoming machine gun fire; therefore, all soldiers are neophytes when it comes to actual battle. Passini and the Tenente differ in many respects—rank, nationality, personality, mannerisms—but, in this liminal state, they become equals and, furthermore, equals in calling on Christian divinity for help and salvation. “Secular

5 Such as the statement that Hemingway was “impatient with writers who are willing to write lies, or to talk about things they have not experienced” (36) and carelessly applying story lines to Hemingway’s biography (plots of “Indian Camp” and “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife” [38]).
distinctions of rank and status disappear or are homogenized” (Turner, The Ritual Process 95).

Further implications of the unity of the group (or “closed community,” as Walter Burkert states it) may be drawn by contrasting their unity with the disunity of the Nationalists and other foes of the Loyalists. The “skirts” and “robe” of the priest are outstanding in comparison to the uniformed mob. Also, a Loyalist peasant speculates about what the other Nationalist foes holed up in the City Hall might look like. “‘There may be giants and dwarfs,’ the first peasant said. ‘There may be Negroes and rare beasts from Africa” (FWBT 115). The meaning of the similar appearance of the Loyalists either on the hillside or during the ayuntamiento, is no different from ordinands undergoing holy orders; they are dressed alike (stole and chasuble), they speak a rarefied language, they lose something of their old life, and the goal is incorporation into the new, higher order.

Insignia on uniforms a clearly signify military rank under normal circumstances, and proper protocol between soldiers of different rank is strictly observed. However, in times of heavy fighting (a liminal stage akin to Francis Foster in no-man’s-land) the delineations of rank, race, or religion fade and all the combatants become soldiers trying to stay alive and make it through the ritual of battle. David Kennedy reiterates this concept in his analysis of retrospectives written by soldiers who served on the front: “Most of these records began with induction and ended with discharge, neatly delineating the time spent in uniform as a peculiar interval, a moment stolen from ordinary life and forever after sealed off in the memory as a bundle of images that sharply contrasted with ‘normal’ experience” (Kennedy 205). For example, in one (of several similar) scenes in
A Farewell to Arms, rank designations are used in both spoken dialogue and in the tags written by Hemingway. Here, soldiers are sitting in a dugout sharing a communal meal.6

“Savoia,” said the major.
“About the soup, major,” I said. He did not hear me. I repeated it. [. . .]
“Start in to eat, Tenente.”
“No,” I said. Put it on the floor. We’ll all eat.” (AFTA 52-53)

The soldiers sit together, but those of lower rank still wait for their leader to commence, giving them permission to eat. However, minutes later, when a big trench mortar shell blasts the dugout the narrator, called “Tenente” [Lieutenant], and four other ambulance drivers of lower rank are sheltered in, all emblematic distinctions disappear. Passini, his legs amputated by the blast, screams a self-administered extreme unction:

“‘Oh mama mia, mama Mia,’ then, ‘Dio te salve, Maria. Dio te salve, Maria’” (AFTA 55). Frederic Henry, too, after failing to save Passini’s life, calls for divine assistance: “I wiped my hand on my shirt and another floating light came very slowly down and I looked at my leg and was very afraid. Oh, God, I said, get me out of here” (AFTA 55-56). The remaining soldiers of lower rank, Gordini and Manera, carry Lieutenant Henry to safety. No one mentions military rank again until the relative health of all survivors is assured and the immediate threat of further injury has passed. Then, and only then, does Gordini refer to his superior again as “Tenente.”

This loss of rank designation appears in For Whom the Bell Tolls too, but

Hemingway uses it in that novel for a different reason. Hemingway designates soldiers

6 This particular scene is studied by Jennifer A. Haytock in “Hemingway’s Soldiers and Their Pregnant Women: Domestic Ritual in World War I” (The Hemingway Review Spring 2000: 57-72). Haytock also terms the scene a ritual and notes, “Frederic here dispenses with military hierarchy” (Haytock 65).
from General Golz to the lowest gypsy as “comrade” or “comrada” following the Communist lead of egalitarian titles. Robert Jordan gets upset when Pilar calls him “Don Roberto,” a term denoting someone of elevated regard, and Augustín notes the use of Señor and Señora instead of Comrade as an example of the Spanish government’s move to the political right.  

During one week in mid-July of 1936, Loyalists exhumed the bodies of nuns, priests, and other clergy and displayed them publicly in order to disprove their holiness. By exhibiting their corruption (the physical extending into the moral), their sanctity is proved erroneous, according to perceived Loyalist thought. The Loyalists burned churches, and religious icons were decapitated, clowned with, and dressed in military uniforms. In effect, however, the dress of these statues (and the dressing of milicianos in religious vestments) reinforced the situation of the participants as being part of their certain group—Spanish Loyalists. As the Lincoln quote above implies, activists replaced dress of distinction with dress of unity; “Red was for socialism, black for anarchism” (Craig and Egan 257). Women donned milicana caps in lieu of gender-based attire,

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7 “Maria giggled and the woman [Pilar] shook her head sadly. ‘How well you begin and how it ends, Don Roberto.’ ‘Don’t call me Don Roberto.’ ‘It is a joke. Here we say Don Pablo for a joke. As we say the Señorita Maria for a joke.’ ‘I don’t joke that way,’ Robert Jordan said. ‘Camarada to me is what all should be called with seriousness in this war. In the joking commences a rottenness’” (FWBT 65-66). Augustín later says, “They say the government moves further to the right each day. That in the Republic they no longer say Comrade but Señor and Señorita. [. . .] (FWBT 285). George Orwell also mentions this alteration of salutatory titles in his Homage to Catalonia (1938).
“¡Salud!” was the unifying greeting, and the clenched-fist salute became a sign of brotherhood (Lincoln 105).

This we see in Pilar’s tale, and a study of this ritual scene (with brief mention of others in Hemingway’s war fiction) reveals a bond connecting the works to religion. The hideous scene of the Loyalists forcing local Nationalist shopkeepers, fascists, and clergy through a gantlet of Loyalists torturers and eventually over a three hundred-foot cliff denotes many themes like those of that horrific week in 1936, and many elements of ritual are evident. As in the collective obscenity spree of 1936, participants in the community of Loyalists in Pilar’s tale were concerned with proper dress.

And on this day most of the men in the double line across the plaza wore the clothes in which they worked in the fields, having come to town hurriedly, but some, not knowing how one should dress for the first day of a movement, wore their clothes for Sundays or holidays, and these, seeing that the others, including those who had attacked the barracks, wore their oldest clothes, were ashamed of being wrongly dressed. (Hemingway, FWBT 106)

What is the proper dress for the first day of a movement? The answer is this: Wear whatever everyone else is wearing. In the middle, or liminal, stage of ritual, participants are homogenized; distinctions of their outward appearance are diminished. The stripping of preliminal and postliminal attributes is a recurrent theme in ritual. Men are stripped of their unique dress and are made to look alike; women, too, are homogenized, homogenized, homogenized.

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8 George Orwell also notes this societal change in his 1938 memoir Homage to Catalonia.

9 Interestingly, the “Roll of Honor” memorial tablet erected at the Oak Park church Hemingway attended while growing up, this idea of the homogeneity of men in combat is furthered: “The names upon the Tablet are in alphabetical order, without designation of rank, or distinction between the living and the dead” (Item EHPP-OM03-035, Hemingway Collection, JFK Library, Boston).
even so far as to blend in with the community of men (as with the Loyalist women in Spain wearing military caps and changing their skirts for pants). Also, Pilar discards the three-cornered patent leather hat of a killed guardia civil she was wearing after the crowd of fellow revolutionaries is gathered. “These attributes of sexlessness and anonymity are highly characteristic of liminality” (Turner 102).

In another such scene in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Robert Jordan, a displaced American, befriends antifascist Spanish guerrillas. At the climax of what Turner would term his liminal phase, Jordan is seriously wounded, lying on the forest floor waiting for fascist troops to enter his field of vision and, in all probability, then kill him. Although he is alone, Jordan unites with comrades via memories and mental images he cannot stop from entering his mind. Speaking to himself, he muses about past and present comrades, both inferior and superior in rank, in a casual, familiar tone. Hemingway does not mention rank designation. There, lying in pine needles, he bears no insignia to distinguish him from the guerrillas he just helped escape. He wears the same kind of rope-soled shoes the guerrillas wear. Moreover, he, too, calls upon divine assistance, although with different results. Similarly, think of Pilar’s tale in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the fictionalized account of the 1936 Leftist reaction to the Right’s pronunciamento (an intimidating brief show of armed force) in Morocco and the major population centers in Spain. Historically, this was a case of what religious historian Bruce Lincoln terms “rituals of collective obscenity” (Lincoln 116). Throughout Spain, the Nationalist showing of force failed, and Spain’s societal rules seemed to change overnight.
The rules and habits of centuries dissolved, and a sweeping transformation in the conduct of human relations was accomplished. Suits and neckties disappeared, and overalls became the preferred dress. Women took to the streets and catcalls were forgotten. Waiters stared customers in the eye and spoke to them as equals.

(Lincoln 105)

Hemingway’s much-anthologized short story “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place,” written in 1933 seems to anticipate this revolutionary change and reflect Lincoln’s quote. It is clear to see how the older waiter could represent the old ways of Spanish custom, and the young waiter represents the new. As noted in the preceding chapter, the story, one of Hemingway’s favorites (C. Baker, Ernest Hemingway: The Writer as Artist 123) introduces Hemingway’s readers to his “nada” concept with the old waiter parroting “The Lord’s Prayer” by inserting “nada” (Spanish “nothing”) in place of every noun in the prayer. While many read this as a blanket denunciation of Christianity, some may read this as merely an alternate kind of Christianity. The old waiter recited the blasphemous prayer as part of his realization “of the world where a clean and pleasant café can be a haven against the nothingness that is everywhere” (Reynolds, Hemingway: The 1930’s 106). The old waiter finds “religion” in his relationship with the café and its habitués, an idea discussed in the preceding chapter.

It is also noteworthy that the soldiers’ speech is different while under attack than it is in moments outside of the ritual of warfare. Arnold van Gennep, in his discussion on the use of veils during religious rituals, states, “During most of the ceremonies [. . .], and especially during the transition periods, a special language is employed which in some cases includes an entire vocabulary unknown or unusual in the society as a whole” (van Gennep 169). In both war novels, the protagonists shift to a hybrid language during the intense liminal stage, one that is part native speech (although it has been proven that their
audience is not able to understand the foreign language), part local pidgin, and part profanity (although it is not used as nearly as extensively outside the character’s thoughts in times of peace).

For example, seconds after the climactic blowing of the bridge in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Robert Jordan forgets the reserve he usually finds a vital tool. Pilar, a guerrilla comrade tells him, “Thou art to cover Pablo” (*FWBT* 447) (meaning to shelter the advancing Pablo by distracting the enemy with gunfire). To which Jordan replies, “The hell with Pablo. Let him cover himself with *mierda*” (ibid.). Then Pilar is heard “shouting up some obscenity to her [Maria] that she could not understand” (*FWBT* 449). However, Maria must have heard the obscenity in a certain respect because she knew that Pilar was offending someone and causing useless risks. Then Maria prays. This is not merely the language of epithets and undirected profanity; it is the rarefied language of comrades undergoing a rite of passage. Similarly, in the preliminal stage of preparing the blowing of the bridge, Pablo explains his thoughts on when it should be done. The narrator notes, “He was not talking in the pidgin Spanish now […] (*FWBT* 151, and noted again on page 167). Such connections to the work of van Gennep and Turner are not merely to add war to the list of rites of passage or to imply that they had the work of Ernest Hemingway in mind as they penned their works. Rather, linking the works to the theories is fruitful for the additional connection of religion, which both van Gennep and Turner believe is a large part of rites of passage (as vehicle and outcome).

Victor Turner also states, “Other characteristics are submissiveness and silence. Not only the chief in the rites under discussion, but also neophytes in many *rites de passage* have to submit to an authority that is nothing less than that of the total
community” (Turner, The Ritual Process 103). In Pilar’s tale, the chief is the reticent Pablo, the organizer who dictates through physical gestures (e.g. tapping the priest on the shoulder with a shotgun, shaking his head, tossing the key for a guard to unlock the *ayuntamiento* door and let the rioters in to kill the internees, and smiling the order to unlock the door). Pablo’s actions run parallel with Turner’s thesis in that the mob drives Pablo; he acted as a representative of the community. The purpose of defining the incidents in Pilar’s tale as a ritual run deeper than merely categorizing this nightmarish vignette in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Its connection (or lack of a connection) to religious ritual enables us to analyze the characters more fully. The typical resolution of a rite does not absolutely hold for Pilar’s tale. Thus, her tale skews the religious significance from the norm, but this misalignment is consistent with Modernistic conceptions of religion. As will be shown shortly, the scene in Pilar’s tale is closer to religious ritual than to magic (the dichotomy is a theme James Frazier discussed in *The Golden Bough*), but the result is truncated, leaving some of the initiates just short of the final stage of ritual—reincorporation.

Both Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* and Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* lose something in their liminal period. The lieutenant loses a Saint Anthony medallion given to him by the nurse he falls in love with—a symbol distinguishing him from other soldiers. Jordan loses his leather-covered flask of absinthe, which, from the fourth chapter on, is termed a “rarefied” drink by his compatriots. Jordan makes the
mixing of absinthe and water a ritual he must complete in just a certain way.10 Again, Turner addresses the loss of property as something that levels neophytes in the liminal phase—his theories on liminality give credence to the suggestion that Ernest Hemingway’s protagonists in these two war novels went through rites of passage. Saint Thomas Aquinas would perhaps read this scene where Jordan loses his hip flask after sending away Maria and the others as an entrance into a religious state through an act of charity. In *Summa Theologica*11 (circa 1267), Aquinas writes:

I answer that, [. . .] the religious state is a spiritual exercising for the attainment of the perfection of charity. This is accomplished through the removal of the obstacles to perfect charity by religious observances; and these obstacles are those things which attach man’s affections to earthly things. [. . .] Consequently, it is right that not only those who are practised in the observance of the commandments should enter religion in order to attain to yet greater perfection, but also those who are not practised, in order the more easily to avoid sin and attain to perfection. (Aquinas Vol. 2, 688)

The charitable act is Jordan sacrificing his life for the popular cause; even if this is seen as a charitable act to only himself (which it is not), the perception of self-sacrifice for a greater good is the ultimate in charitable acts. Readers can view these lost objects as

10 Robert Gajdusek has interesting thoughts on the mixing of water and absinthe. He writes, Jordan tells those about him that traditionally when one drinks absinthe, one adds the water to the spirits, adulterating them to a ‘milky’ whiteness. [. . .] See *FWBT* 51 But Jordan reverses the usual direction, pouring out half of the water before he adds the absinthe drop by drop, in so doing spiritualizing the milk, masculinizing—in the metaphor basis of the story—the feminine” (R. E. Gajdusek, How to Drink Absinthe).

11 Italian Hemingway scholar Luca Gandolfini noted, “One of the 33 possible titles Hemingway wrote for ‘A farewell to the arms’ [sic, translated from the Italian] was, as for a naturalistic essay, ‘Of wounds and other causes’” (e-mail to the author, 23 March 2000). Another source for the proposed title is Aquinas. The titles of the vast majority of the sections in *Summa Theologica* begin “Of. . .,” as in “Of the Cause of Love,” or “Of Moral Virtue In Relation To the Passions.”
amulets the men use as a kind of protection. Losing them does not distress them, however, because they find a greater protection in their post-liminal states.

The goal or reward of enduring the trial of these rites of passage is emotional and not necessarily intellectual. Frederic Henry values the medals given him for his bravery in combat very little, but he highly values every step he makes on his way to his goal of spiritual awakening. At the beginning of the novel, Henry blasphemes and seems to have no faith in God whatsoever. The following is a dialogue between Henry and the priest:

“You understand but you do not love God.”
“No.” [says Henry]
“You do not love Him at all?” he asked.
“I am afraid of Him in the night sometimes.”
“You should love Him.”
“I don’t love much.” (AFTA 72)

Later Henry finally sees the significance of wearing the Saint Anthony medallion. He notes that the medallion is a religious symbol when discussing marriage with Catherine, and we learn that it was lost when he was wounded. Henry states that he lost “him,” personifying the item he formerly thought of as a mere relic of someone else’s religion. Also, he preaches to his comrade Rinaldi about the importance of realizing sacred objects and clarifies Rinaldi’s mixed-up interpretation of the Adam and Eve story. He also demonstrates additional knowledge of saints (AFTA 169). “‘I might become very devout,’ I [Henry] said. ‘Anyway, I will pray for you’” (AFTA 263).

He fervently prays for the salvation of Catherine, who is hemorrhaging badly during childbirth. At the novel’s end, he is alone but with a new spirituality, or at least he has achieved a higher level of religious understanding than at the beginning of the novel. This incorporation into a higher spiritual status, taken in a larger context, is not to
conclude that the incident changes Frederic Henry into a devout Christian, however. As Henry walks back to his hotel, he is harboring many of the feelings of futility and loneliness he felt throughout the storyline, but at the end, he is more deliberately attuned to things beyond human control. Frederic Henry can now begin to form an image of the divine where before he either did not seem to think much on such matters or could not begin to conceive of a higher being. We can find a similar pattern in For Whom the Bell Tolls also. The ending to this novel is, admittedly, quite open to alternate interpretation. Gerry Brenner, whose interpretation of the end of this novel is opposite mine, writes, “Readers who must salvage something positive from the novel, who nurse the illusion that the novel affirms selfless love, will, of course, opt for Frederic’s growth or “initiation” and the therapeutic motive behind his storytelling. Like any great novel, this one bears both that reading and mine” (Brenner 243).

Following the trajectory of most rites, the rite incorporates members of the victorious movement into a new status at the ritual’s end. Pablo does indicate such the night of the takeover, but Pilar remains in a kind of limbo, prevented from completion by “shame and a sense of wrongdoing, and I had a great feeling of oppression and of bad to come” (FWBT 127). Pablo states that he liked what happened. He liked all of it.

“All of it, except the priest.” [said Pablo]
“You didn’t like it about the priest?” because I [Pilar] knew he hated priests even worse than he hated fascists.
“He was a disillusionment to me,” Pablo said sadly.
So many people were singing that we had to almost shout to hear one another.
“Why?”
“He died very badly,” Pablo said. [. . .]
“I thought you hated priests.”
“Yes,” said Pablo and cut some more bread. “But a Spanish priest. A Spanish priest should die very well.” [. . .]
“Now,” I said. “I suppose you will lose your faith,”
“You do not understand, Pilar,” he said. “He was a Spanish priest.” [...] “It is true, Pilar, I am a finished man this night.” (FWBT 127-128)

Pilar, too, omits the post-victory celebration of the revelers surrounding them in the cafe. Her premonition is realized when fascists retake the town three days later, and the potency Pablo felt as mob leader wears off, leaving “the ruin that now is Pablo” (FWBT 99).

The mobs apparent drunkenness or intoxication in Pilar’s tale further implicates this event as religious ritual. Here, the terms drunk or intoxicated are not actually interchangeable. When speaking of the horrific events at the ayuntamiento, Pilar states that some of the participants were drunk from drinking wine; these were the bad Loyalists, the ones who were equal to the fascist foes (“It would have been better for the town if they would have thrown over [off the cliff] twenty or thirty of the drunkards...” [FWBT 126]). All were acting as though in a state of intoxication, however. This kind of drunkenness is quite out of the ordinary, profane life and is frightening to Pilar. She says, “in Spain drunkenness, when produced by other elements than wine, is a thing of great ugliness and the people do things that they would not have done. Is it not so in your country, Inglés?” (FWBT 116). Robert Jordan then tells of a similar story. When he was seven years old, he witnessed a lynch mob hang a man from a lamppost and later burn him.12 Jordan did not see the burning, but “since I have had experiences which demonstrate that drunkenness is the same in my country. It is ugly and brutal” (FWBT 117). This non-alcoholic form of drunkenness is an important key to establishing the

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12 Carlos Baker traced this story to an actual incident witnessed by Ernest Hemingway’s sister Marcelline in Baker, “Hemingway’s Empirical Imagination” (105-106).
religious nature of the ritual performed at the *ayuntamiento*, on the street corner where a lynch mob hanged the man, and on the battlefield of Hemingway’s war fiction.

Hemingway’s treatment of religion in these rituals works in varying degrees of religiosity, from the anti-clerical stance of the Loyalists to the soldiers absolutely depending on divine interaction.

As Alfred North Whitehead states, “It has been said of Spinoza, that he was drunk with God. It is equally true that Wordsworth was drunk with nature” (Whitehead, “Nature as Organism” 403). These are but a few triggers of a kind of intoxication induced by “other elements” namely the pressures created in the liminal phase of ritual. Think of Karl Marx loosely equating religion with opium usage in *Contributions to the Critique of Hegel’s “Philosophy of Right.”* Émile Durkheim, in his famous book *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, writes,

> It is quite true that religious life cannot attain any degree of intensity and not carry with it a psychic exaltation that is connected to delirium. It is for this reason that men of extraordinary sensitive religious consciousness—prophets, founders of religions, great saints—often show symptoms of an excitability that is extreme and even pathological: These physiological defects predisposed them to great religious roles. The ritual use of intoxicating liquors is to be understood in the same way. The reason is certainly not that ardent faith is necessarily the fruit of drunkenness and mental disorders. [. . .]

> We know what the flag is for the soldier, but in itself it is only a bit of cloth. [. . .] collective representations often impute to the things to which they refer properties that do not exist in them in any form or to any degree whatsoever. From the most commonplace object, they can make a sacred and very powerful thing. (Durkheim 228-229)

The map is not the territory, but, to the soldier, the flag means much more than its physical attributes. Would he hold such esteem for the flag were it not for his indoctrination into the corps? Maybe, but, in common practice, probably not. An
interesting dynamic exists between the individual and society regarding ritual and religion. For example, Robert Jordan is a sole actor in his ritual of, ultimately, crossing the threshold into death. Yet, in his last moments on the hillside or at other moments through *For Whom the Bell Tolls* as he enacts more minor rituals to change status, he relies on spirituality based in part on biblical scripture, and the ritual runs parallel to those in a Catholic mass. After all, “No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; [. . .] Any Mans death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee” (Donne 87).

These words were written in “Meditation 17” by John Donne in his *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* (1624), after Donne’s ordination and as dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral in London and, more specifically, when Donne was dying of an undetermined kind of fever. A few lines above this famous quote by Donne is another of his thoughts on unification with God. “The Bell doth toll for him that thinkes it doth; and though it intermit againe, yet from that minute, that that occasion wrought upon him, hee is united to God” (Donne 86-87). The tolling of the bell, as Donne states earlier, “saies to me, Thou must die” (Donne 86). But, according to Donne, the bell only tolls for him who thinks it does; if one thinks it is time to die, then it is time to die. This concept empowers the individual over the divine in a certain sense, but the sensation of such a time may still be ultimately conceived by God.¹³ Donne also writes that the bell (or sense of death)

¹³ As Donne writes, regarding the bell, “[. . .] that it might bee ours, as wel as his [God’s]” (86). Donne, in *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions*, did not capitalize pronouns signifying God.
may stop ("intermit"), and life goes on. However, from the time the bell starts, the person who has thought of hearing the bell is united to God.

An example of the individual enacting a ritual as if he were among a congregation can be found in the pre-liminal stage when Robert Jordan is planning to blow the bridge, out-of-season snow threatens to ruin Robert Jordan’s plans of blowing the bridge and the Nationalists offensive. Jordan muses, “…why did it have to snow now? That’s too bloody much. […] But to snow! Now in this month. Cut it out, he said to himself. Cut it out and take it. It’s that cup, you know. How did it go about that cup?” (FWBT 181). Hemingway scholar Patrick Cheney posits the cup Jordan is trying to recall is from the biblical book of Matthew, in which Jesus accepts his fate of crucifixion. “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done” (Matt 26:42). Jesus knows he is going to die and looks to God for help, as does Jordan. Mirroring a few lines earlier in the book of Matthew, in which Jesus serves his apostles a cup of his blood (Matt 26: 27-29), Jordan then asks his comrade soldiers for a cup of wine as if they were receiving the Eucharist during Catholic mass. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann discuss this individual/congregation mélange in their book The Social Construction of Reality. Discussing ritual in crisis situations, Berger and Luckmann note

While the individual may improvise reality-maintaining procedures in the face of crisis, the society itself sets up specific procedures for situations recognized as involving the risk of a breakdown in reality. Included in these predefined situations are certain marginal situations, of which death is by far the most important. Crises in reality, however, may occur in a considerably wider number of cases than are posited by marginal situations. They may be either collective or individual, depending upon the character of the challenge to the socially defined reality. (P. L. Berger 175-76)
The character of Robert Jordan’s’ ritual challenge to socially defined reality is situated somewhere between collective and individual. It is collective in that Jordan seems to be calling on knowledge acquired as part of a congregation or other formal religious group, acting as a congregant or member fighting for group goals; and it is individual in that Jordan is a sole agent working out individual misfortunes. His view on the nature of reality have been radically shifted in the 72-hours since he climbed into the Guadarrama and met Maria, and his perspectives on several large issues (such as the degree to which *la causa* is important with the recent introduction of love into his life) has altered drastically. The post-liminal stage will be one of calm after the crisis (or crises).

Victor Turner states “liminality is frequently linked to death, to being in the womb [. . .] to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon” (Turner, *The Ritual Process* 95). Robert Jordan is certainly close to death, and his position in the wilderness is of utmost importance. It is in nature, once again, that Jordan places his faith. In many ways, he is a “real” man in the sense of maturity, courage, and masculinity. But he is also a case of arrested development when it comes to spiritual confidence and security. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* ends with Jordan on the threshold of entering into a relationship with the divine; he is ending his liminal phase and entering what Arnold van Gennep refers to as the consummation phase, the phase of reaggregation or reincorporation.

Many readers have no doubt wondered why these fictional Americans chose to fight in wars that do not seem to affect them (historically, nearly 3000 Americans volunteered to fight Fascism in Spain in the 1930s [Roberts]). Both protagonists mentioned above have wistful reveries about home and fond memories about where they came from, and they both view their time in military service as a temporary period lasting
only until their goal is completed. Robert Jordan muses, “He had something else to do after this war. He fought now in this war because it had started in a country that he loved and he believed in the Republic and that if it were destroyed life would be unbearable for all those people who believed in it. He was under Communist discipline for the duration of the war” (FWBT 163). He knows his current position is a temporary state and that, after the ritual is completed, he will be in an elevated state. A typical sentiment of this paradoxical thought can be found in any number of war letters and diaries, such as this excerpt from a letter an enlisted American wrote back home to his family from Jarama, Spain during the Spanish Civil War:

It seemed as though all hell broke loose [. . .] While in the trenches, I spend much time thinking of you. I get a lonesome feeling, thinking of a nice soft bed, a chicken dinner, and the evening talks with you [. . .] But I’m 100 percent satisfied. There is no place in the world I’d chose to be in now than in the trenches. Not that I like war—I hate it, a thousand times more than ever. It’s brutal, cruel, beastly, ugly—it’s worse than hell . . . . (Fisher 47)

Still, as is suggested even more clearly in For Whom the Bell Tolls, these men are seeking a filling out of their spiritual state; recalling the maxim Lex orandi lex credenda, they are enacting military rituals to achieve integration with the divine. As is the case with boys in puberty rites throughout the world, Frederic Henry and Robert Jordan express anxiety about their forthcoming initiation but are very willing to undergo it. Thus, an understanding of Victor Turner’s theories of liminality augments rites of passage as character motivations in these two novels.

Frederic Henry, for example, volunteers for the American Red Cross (as did Ernest Hemingway). There are moments in the novel when, approaching a ritual, Henry expresses fear and anxiety, yet he dives into the ritual with the apparent knowledge that,
at its conclusion in the post-liminal state, he will be on a spiritually higher plane.

Consider the scene in which Frederic Henry and Piani, an ambulance driver under Henry’s command, join hordes of other soldiers in the famous retreat at Caporetto. They decide that Piani has better call Lieutenant Henry by his name rather than by his rank. A little while later, he removes the cloth stars from his uniform. He also thinks that he lost his ambulances and his men; furthermore, he thinks that, back home in the States, they will hear that he died “from wounds and other causes”(AFTA 232). Arnold van Gennep would read this as the pre-liminal stage of separation from his old rank and routine. Other soldiers around them refuse to say what brigade they are from; they are all as one. Immediately before he is up for the deadly carabiniere kangaroo court, Henry jumps into the Tagliamento River to flee the carabiniere and, in an allegorical sense, to cross into a new life in a higher status. He grabs a timber to stay afloat. Van Gennep would read this as the liminal stage of the ritual, with the river a boundary physically and metaphorically separating war from peace.

Anger was washed away in the river along with any obligation. Although that ceased when the carabiniere put hands on my collar. I would like to have had the uniform off although I did not care much about the outward forms. I had taken off the stars, but that was for convenience. It was no point of honor. I was not against them. I was through. [...] That life was over. (AFTA 232).

Thus, Frederic Henry completed his ritual of moving from base soldier to civilian. He had plans to reunite with Catherine and enter a post-liminal life of higher spiritual status. And that is the conclusion of Book Four of the novel.

14 Hemingway considered “Of Wounds and Other Causes” at a title for what was titled A Farewell to Arms (M. J. Bruccoli).
Victor Turner would read Frederic Henry’s flee from war via the Tagliamento River as the fulfillment of his quest. Turner writes that ritual is “designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors’ goals and interests” (Turner, “Symbols in African Ritual” 1100). Henry’s goal was to leave the war and its banality to enter the higher state of love with Catherine. His love for Catherine moved him from a desire to be in the war to a desire to get out, and crossing the river moved him from wanting to get out to a life away from war with Catherine. These, according to Turner, are “life-crisis rituals.” These rituals bring religious belief to action; ritual is inspired by religious belief. Another concept Turner defines and discusses in The Ritual Process, and which Hemingway exemplified in his war novels, is “communitas.” An aspect of liminal phenomena, writes Turner, is “the blend they offer of lowliness and sacredness, of homogeneity and comradeship” (Turner, The Ritual Process 96). These seemingly contradictory elements work together to show or to produce “some recognition (in symbol if not always in language) of a generalized social bond that has ceased to be and has simultaneously yet to be fragmented into a multiplicity of structural ties” (Turner, The Ritual Process 96). Turner defines two models for such phenomena:

The first is of society as a structured, differentiated, and often hierarchical system of politico-legal-economic positions with many types of evaluation, separating men in terms of “more” and “less.” The second, which emerges recognizably in the liminal period, is of society as an unstructured or rudimentarily structured and relatively undifferentiated comitatus. (Turner, The Ritual Process 96)

This is the basis for his idea of communitas—a focus more on the sacred side of a group of people united in a liminal phase with a universal human bond. Soldiers in war would use the term “camaraderie,” but their term functions the same as does communitas. In
short, as Turner states, “the high [read ‘sacred,’ ‘religious’] could not be high unless the low [read ‘profane,’ ‘banal’] existed” (Turner, *The Ritual Process* 97). As is mentioned earlier, these two war novels contain much that is anything but sacred; Frederic Henry and Robert Jordan place eros love in a more prominent position than Christian agape, with fornication, profanity, and a kind of *droit naturel* (natural right) praised above Christian edicts. Yet these characters pass from the liminal phase into van Gennep’s final phase of transition. Hemingway manages to represent clearly liminality and communitas in these novels, as no status exists during the liminal phase, and the characters end in a higher spiritual status.

There is some disagreement as to Hemingway’s first published work.

Hemingway himself writes, “The first one I wrote was ‘Up in Michigan,’” but he most likely intended that title to be the first in *The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway* (CSS 3). Other sources cite “My Old Man.” However, his short-short story “in our time” (two pages long) appears to be his first story published as an adult (Kiernan 157).

Nonetheless, it is a war story beginning thusly:

Everybody was drunk. The whole battery was drunk along the road in the dark. We were going to the Champagne. The lieutenant kept riding his horse out into the fields and saying to him, “I’m drunk I tell you, mon vieux. Oh I am so soused.” We went along the road all night in the dark and the adjutant kept riding up alongside my kitchen and saying, “You must put it out. It is dangerous. It will be observed.” We were fifty kilometers from the front but the adjutant worried about the fire in my kitchen. It was funny going along that road. That was when I was a kitchen corporal. (CSS 65)

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15 I mention this because the provenance of “in our time” may confuse the reader who refers solely to the parenthetical citations. Originally, it was a work of 18 vignettes, or “interchapters,” to which Hemingway added 14 short stories (1925 edition). A 1930 edition has one more story added.
Here, it may be inferred that the battery was intoxicated by liquor, but the fact that this collective intoxication made the journey to the front “funny” (which is further contrasted by the forthcoming events in the story—a woman in labor during an evacuation, shooting German soldiers like clay pigeons, grisly executions) plays along with the inebriation derived from the unity brought about by mutually entering a dangerous, trying situation.

The second paragraph of “in our time” mentions yet another kind of drunkenness, that of a gored matador—”the bull rammed him wham against the barrera and the horn came and he lay in the sand; and then got up like crazy drunk and tried to slug the men carrying him away. . .” (CSS 121). But “in our time” is too short to explicate and possibly link with religious ritual for our purposes.

Humor as a means of collective numbing (intoxication) among the ranks and the simultaneous homogeneity and comradeship it creates (“communitas” to Victor Turner) was common in times of war. Hemingway read the novels of Ian Hay (pseudonym of John Hay Beith) (Reynolds, Hemingway’s Reading 136), whose classic novel The First Hundred Thousand (1915) “gives a cheerful half-fictionalized account of a unit of Kitchener’s Army [rapidly trained farm recruits], emphasizing the comedies of training and the brave, resourceful way the boys are playing the game and encountering the absurdities of army life with spirit and humor” (Fussell 28). Marion Hargrove wrote similarly about World War II in See Here, Private Hargrove (1942). War has often been called ironic, especially the war Frederic Henry enlisted to fight in. The basis of almost all humor is irony, the startling appearance of the unexpected. Thus, war humor is not entirely astonishing, but such humor as either a means of anesthetizing soldiers or a result of their collective bonding is relevant to this study. Furthermore, in many instances, the
contrast of humor or comedy and the tragedy being experienced makes one more aware of the tragedy. Just before the bloody “Big Push” at the Somme on July 1, 1916, Sir Douglas Haig wrote to his wife, “I feel that every step in my plan has been taken with the Divine help” (Fussell 29). Haig’s divinely-inspired plan at the Somme would later be termed “The Great Fuck-Up”; of the 110,000 British who attacked, 60,000 were killed or wounded, with over 20,000 trapped in no-man’s-land, destined to a long, horrific death (Fussell 12-13). That is a tragic kind of irony many soldiers cope with through humor to build communitas. It is a tool for survival. Humor in times of tragedy, however, does not equate to acceptance; it can be the expression of anger.

The main feature of communitas is that is an embodiment of the concept of the universal phase of liminality. War diaries, to varying degrees, are paeans for the comrades with whom the diarists served. Soldiers thank their fellow neophytes for aiding them in battle, but they also thank them for their assistance through the trial period and toward the goal of emotional elevation. The protagonists’ close comrades also experience such changes. Communitas creates a communal identification that is not based on structure but on emotion. Émile Durkheim illustrates this concept by referring to a chariot wheel. “The spokes of the wheel and the nave […] to which they are attached would be useless […] but for the hole, the gap, the emptiness at the center […] which is nevertheless indispensable to the functioning of the wheel” (LaCapra, Émile Durkheim: Sociologist and Philosopher 118; Turner 127). The “élan vital” Durkheim finds in communitas bolsters his concept of religion as a social possession, but the society here is a small group of men in a foxhole or a band of guerrillas in a mountain cave.
Émile Durkheim elaborated on another connection to nature mentioned by both Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner. While Durkheim rejected naturism and animism because they “either ignored the sacred or reduced it to a groundless illusion” (LaCapra, *Émile Durkheim: Sociologist and Philosopher* 257), he states that communitas sheds the neophyte’s pretense and affords him an existence, however ephemeral, that “fills consciousness and clears it almost completely of egoistic and vulgar preoccupations. This ideal tends to become one with reality; this why men have the impression that the time is at hand when it will become reality and when the kingdom of God will be realized on earth” (LaCapra, *Émile Durkheim: Sociologist and Philosopher* 209). Hemingway’s war protagonists are neophytes to the war experience, but they have served in intense combat situations. The scenes Hemingway chose to develop most fully are those that detail the newfound realization about which Durkheim theorizes above.

Communitas figures primarily in the liminal phase, where neophytes are all an equal status. They are led by a supreme political authority (e.g. generals, abbots, the Pope), share a communal identity (e.g. soldier, communicant), and emotional growth is foregrounded (discipline, faith, a state nearer that of Christ). This is the case with soldiers as well as with monks (Turner cites the Western Christian Rule of St. Benedict to illustrate his point), children in cultural puberty rites, cult members, and even the hippies of the 1960’s. Not all societal groups feature liminality or communitas, however. Turner suggests that comrades in such rites of passage need to be willing participants. Members of a communitas grouping seem to view their transition phase as an investment of sorts, where a return on their hardship is expected. This further helps explain why these soldiers would actually want to fight in these bloody wars, why monks would actually
welcome their harsh self-imposed lifestyle, or why the children in many African tribal societies long for the day of their adolescent circumcision.

The one scene from Hemingway’s war fiction most noted as a “ritual” or “rite” by Hemingway scholars is that of Colonel Cantwell in *Across the River and Into the Trees*. Recall Sheldon Norman Grebstein’s usage of “journey” to describe the passage of the Hemingway protagonists in the novels. Grebstein writes,

In *Across the River and Into the Trees* also [in addition to *AFTA*, *FWBT*, and other novels] employs a variation of the journey design, with Venice as the destination or culmination of Colonel Cantwell’s experience, and again the tragic departure. Indeed, the voyage both physical and mental back to a crucial place and the attempt to recall and surmount a traumatic time is the foundation for the entire novel. (Grebstein 32)

Again, the protagonists’ journey or quest in this study is seen as one moving outward rather than the inward movement Grebstein finds, and the voyage is spiritual as much as physical and mental. Despite these amendments to Grebstein’s words, Cantwell’s ritual is certainly the personal capstone of his post-traumatic life (with his movement toward being a nicer person the more social culmination). Cantwell returns to the exact spot where “he had determined, by triangulation, that he had been badly wounded thirty years before” (*ARIT* 18). There he defecates. “‘Now I’ll complete the monument,’ he said to no one but the dead,” and he carefully digs a neat hole into which he inserts a ten thousand lira note, which is not high value currency (*ARIT* 18).

It’s fine now, he thought. It has merde, money, blood. […] It’s a wonderful monument. It has everything. Fertility, money, blood and iron. Sounds like a nation. Where fertility, money, blood, and iron is, there is the fatherland. We need coal, though. We ought to get some coal. (*ARIT* 19)

This scene is highly significant, for it, early in the novel, sets the tone of a man who knows he is dying completing a ritual in preparation for his death (he even considers
asking old friends if he could be interred on their land). Colonel Cantwell returns to Venice with “a great need to be there” because he has come to terms with his mortality and needs to bury the past (ARIT 20). The narrator tells the reader that Cantwell’s first big hit caused the then-lieutenant to lose his sense of immortality. “Well, in a way, that is quite a lot to lose,” Cantwell thinks (ARIT 33). Cantwell, now faced again with mortality, but in a way less avoidable or controllable than in war, enacts the ritual in order to make amends with the land. He feels as though he owes the land these things because he received much from his experiences there; he defines himself by what happened thirty years ago and has much difficulty living in present realities.

Furthermore, as historian Dominick LaCapra states in his book Writing History, Writing Trauma (2001), “Trauma is a disruptive experience that disarticulates the self and creates holes in existence; it has belated effects that are controlled only with difficulty and perhaps never fully mastered” (LaCapra, Writing History, Writing Trauma 41). So these Hemingway wartime characters seeking out and undergoing rituals are doing so, in part, for reintegration. During a traumatic event such as receiving the blast of an artillery shell, the self (or soul) detaches from the soldier much in the manner Hemingway wrote that he felt his soul escape like a silk handkerchief pulled through the hand and tossed into the air. Hemingway (and some of his wounded characters) cannot let themselves go to sleep at night for fear of losing their soul permanently, which, to them, signals death. That is why integration with the divine is so very important to them; reintegration ensures life.

In his 1962 book Pseudonyms of Christ in the Modern Novel, Edwin M. Moseley returns time and again to Ernest Hemingway’s novels in Moseley’s discussion of many
other writers (mainly Modernists such as D.H. Lawrence, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Camus.

In contrasting Erich Maria Remarque’s *All Quiet on the Western Front* with

Hemingway’s work, Moseley writes,

> In this sense [the use of paradox] it [*All Quiet*] is strikingly different from the number of war novels that are basically stories of the development of youth from naïve commitment to experienced detachment. Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms*, a great novel on many levels, is an example of the initiation story in which the innocent in the modern world learns that he is vulnerable to hurt by an indifferent universe and that the length of his survival depends on deliberate protection against vulnerability. To be sure, Hemingway’s characters are always questing love, a home, religion, order, but they do not find them because they are unwilling to admit that suffering and sacrifice are essential to achieved commitment. (Moseley 92-93)

Moseley, later in his book, refines this comment by stating that the Hemingway protagonist (especially the war protagonist) ultimately faces a choice of survival or sacrifice, with the ramifications of each being nihilistic prolongation of isolation or martyrdom and closer connection with Christ respectively. To state patently that

Hemingway’s characters do not find that which they quest is an oversimplification; it is often the case that these characters, after desultorily\(^\text{16}\) passing through a ritual, find themselves in a position where they opt for sacrifice and thus conclude their religious quest. Further discussing this notion, Moseley writes, “They [Hemingway’s young protagonists] can go through all of the ritualistic forms, but their very feelings and senses

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\(^{16}\) Can one engage in an odyssey in a desultory manner? In the context of this chapter on ritual, yes. In the archetypal odyssey, Odysseus achieves knowledge not on his return to Ithaca, which is his goal, but in overcoming trials while traveling there. Furthermore, to push the odyssey theme in Hemingway’s works, one would be on a more equitable path in comparing the format James Joyce took in *Ulysses*—that of focusing on the various episodes rather than on the false climax of reaching Ithaca (Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom are destined to exile by their environment).
tell them that they are not ready for the tragic adventure, which is the drama of religion” (Moseley 5). Again, this is not a hermetic conclusion, and, in fact, it is the passing of rituals that readies the characters for religious adventure.

William James wrote, “And although the favor of the God, as forfeited or gained, is still an essential feature of the story, and theology plays a vital part therein, yet the acts to which this sort of religion prompts are personal not ritual acts, the individual transacts the business by himself alone [. . .]” (James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* 30). Thus, the ritual begins with individual’s relation to what that person considers divine. Wayne Proudfoot elaborates this concept in his 1985 book *Religious Experience*. In faulting James for his limited definition of perception, Proudfoot makes the point that manifestations of religion may be suggested as well as being tacitly discovered or borne. The Hemingway war protagonist was not unreserved about his religiosity; we have to study the meanings behind the words for interpretation, and ritual as means for integration with the divine is one theme revealed.

According to experts in the field—the sociologists and anthropologists cited in this chapter—ritual can take the formality of a Latin mass or can occur seemingly organically and spontaneously (although it can share characteristics with previously experienced formal communal rituals). In proceeding through the pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal stages, the soldiers in Ernest Hemingway’s fiction exhibit a closed community, the absence of rank distinction (except for a directing authority), a rarefied speech, submission to an authority figure, the loss of personal items, a sense of confusion (often expressed as intoxication or one kind or another), and the creation of a community of initiands. In this chapter I have provided examples of these rituals and connected the
ritual to integration with the divine both through the definition of ritual and through the calming post-liminal results of the rituals.
CHAPTER 4
CHRISTIAN MANLINESS—DIVINE MANHOOD

“Then you think it will go on and on? Nothing will ever happen?”
“I don’t know. I only think the Austrians will not stop when they have
won a victory. It is in defeat that we become Christian.”
“The Austrians are Christians—except for the Bosnians.”
“I don’t mean technically Christian. I mean like Our Lord.”
He said nothing.
"We are all gentler now because we are beaten. How would Our Lord
have been if Peter had rescued him in the Garden?"
"He would have been just the same."
"I don't think so," I said. (AFTA 178)

The last of the three ways in which Ernest Hemingway’s soldiers experience
religious integration is by living a life of Christian Manliness. Two key facets of
Christian Manliness are expressing the “manly” courage to uphold sacred Christian
values and living/witnessing the manliness of Jesus Christ. These two labors are akin to
“bearing the cross,” which is living a life burdened by the necessity of actions that are
uncomfortable but which the soldier character must do. Living a life true to the code
(which is supporting what he believes is the Christian right) can lead to the divine and
ultimately provides strength and peace that overcomes the temporary discomfort. In the
early part of the twentieth century, there were two main organized groups espousing
Christian manliness. While harboring many similar beliefs and goals, these groups
differed greatly. Members of the Freethought movement believed, “Men could realize
authentic manhood only by rejecting Christianity” (Kirkley 81). Conversely, the Men
and Religion Forward Movement “sought to persuade men that they could only realize
their full manhood by becoming Christians” (Kirkley 82). The comity between these
seemingly disparate missions is found in that, for the most part (and to varying degrees),
while man cannot exist without society (physically or religiously), man does not
necessarily need organized religion or to be part of a congregation, per se. Again, while
these movements had faltering “membership” throughout their short lives¹, the role
manliness plays in Christian spirituality has been of interest to the theologian and soldier
alike for a very long time. Certainly, in times of war, manliness is defined and tested.²

Both the Freethought movement and the Men and Religion Forward Movement
were factions of the Social Gospel, a movement pioneered by Walter Rauschenbusch in
the 1880s and detailed in his 1917 book *A Theology for the Social Gospel*. This
movement, considered a largely American phenomenon³, placed its focus on “the
kingdom of God” aspect of Christianity and sought to improve social morality by
viewing Christians as members of a brotherhood. Paraphrasing Rauschenbusch’s words,

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¹ In her essay “Is it Manly to be Christian?” Evelyn A. Kirkley argues that the Men’s
Studies in Religion Group of the American Academy of Religion carries much of the
sentiment of Freethinkers (Freethinkers still maintain a loose following), and the quarter-
million members of Promise Keepers carry the legacy of the Men and Religion Forward
Movement in the year 2018 (Kirkley 80, 85).

² Michael Reynolds found, “‘Yellow-streaked slacker’ was the phrase much in vogue by
the end of the war [WWI] for those able-bodied men who somehow avoided the front
lines” (Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway* 23).

³ The equivalent movement in England, beginning in the late 1880s, is commonly
referred to as Social Christianity. Social Christianity in America has come to signify a
loose religiosity that was critical of the importance of churches (*cf. Paul Phillips’
“Introduction”).
Janet Forsythe Fishburn writes, “Social Gospel evangelism was ‘as ellipse with two focuses’: the individual and the social order” (Fishburn 6). As evidenced in the words of William Barton⁴ earlier in this study, “The social gospel was a theology written by men for men” (Fishburn 32). In this new era of exponential industrial development, urban population growth, and lessening manual occupations, the manly roles of the autocratic father, the rugged naturalist, and the courageous warrior were considered endangered by proponents of the Social Gospel. The emotionalism of former theological leaders such as Charles Spurgeon, Dwight Moody, and Ira Sankey was filtered out by the later Social Gospel, with the persuasion and manly orientation of this older generation becoming ever more the focus (Philips 120). The ethos of Raschenbusch and other turn-of-the-century Social Gospel leaders (Francis G. Peabody, Harold Frederic, and William Newton Clarke) is evident in the literary products of the era produced by Ernest Hemingway. As William James writes, “a sanguine and ‘muscular’ attitude, which to our forefathers would have seemed purely heathen, has become in their [the twentieth century “liberal” preachers] eyes an ideal element of Christian character” (James, The Varieties of Religious Experience 89).

As we have seen throughout this dissertation, chaotic times call for reevaluation and reconfiguration of spiritual infrastructure; to the warrior, thoughts of manliness and religiosity would run hand in hand. Popular military icon Theodore Roosevelt stated in The Strenuous Life (1889), “A coward who will take a blow without returning it is a

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⁴ A sizable body of Social Gospel activists were, like Barton, Congregational ministers (eg, Washington Gladden, Lyman Abbott, and Josiah Strong).
contemptible creature” (Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life* 161), yet Jesus Christ stated in The Gospel According to Matthew, “But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also” (KJV, Matt. 5:39). The soldier’s commanding officer drills on methods of killing, but the soldier’s family and clerical teachers preach on the evils of killing. A real man fights and kills in battle, and a coward turns the other cheek and is killed. Christian manliness rectifies these disparities by reading scripture and religion in a context relevant to the soldier abroad and civilian at home alike.

In the decade of Ernest Hemingway’s birth, the terms “manliness” and “masculinity” carried connotations differing somewhat from those of today. In that era, when Victorian virtues were slowly giving way to new ideals, “manliness” was the preferred term to denote the qualities of an admirable moral dimension. The 1890 *Century Dictionary* defines “manly” as, “Possessing the proper characteristics of a man; independent in spirit or bearing; strong, brave, large-minded, etc. […] Pertaining to or becoming a man; not boyish or womanish; marked by or manifesting the quality of manhood; suitable for a man” ("Manly"). “Masculinity” referred more to physical or biographical details rather than cultural traits, and this latter term could pertain to savages as well as civilized men. In the early years of the twentieth century, however, “manliness” and “masculinity” formed a hybrid, where the physical and moral were intertwined, as in the concepts of male virility (being both physical and moral), power (being both muscular and status-oriented), and aggressive (by bulk and persuasion) ("Manly"). “Christian Manliness” is an apt title for this chapter because, regarding manliness/masculinity, the Hemingway characters in this study express more of the
earlier notion of “manliness” than the later “masculine.” Physical masculinity is certainly present in these works, but as it relates to the religious experience, manliness is the more correct term. The kind of characteristics discussed here are less physical and more moral. Consider, for example the highly esteemed Count Greffi in *A Farewell to Arms*, who offers Frederic Henry sage advice on religion and love. Hemingway scholar Robert Gajdusek terms Greffi “an avatar of male integrity” (R. E. Gajdusek, “*A Farewell to Arms*: The Psychodynamics of Integrity” 28).

Christian manliness, as it works in this study, has two facets: a bearing of a certain comport and morality derived from religious ideology, and religiosity founded in the teachings of Jesus Christ. This first facet is difficult to articulate because of the varying definitions of key terms, but Joseph Waldmeir, in his 1957 essay “Confiteor Hominen: Ernest Hemingway’s Religion of Man” clarifies this concept. He claims that *The Old Man and the Sea* (published in 1952) must be read as a sort of allegorical commentary by the author on all his previous work, by means of which it may be established that the religious overtones of *The Old Man and the Sea* are not peculiar to that book among Hemingway’s works, and that Hemingway has finally taken the decisive step in elevating what might be called his philosophy of Manhood to the level of a religion (Waldmeir 351).

I claim that this limited reading of *The Old Man and the Sea* is not absolutely correct; this novel is but another in which manliness is elevated as a virtue, but it is more explicit in its religious metaphor and imagery. Yet I cite Waldmeir to introduce this first aspect of Christian manliness in Hemingway’s war fiction. Manly is he who is true to biblical covenants as he sees them and in the context that such fidelity is prudent. These qualifiers may be read as escape clauses to take away some of the commitment required of a believer, but, to Hemingway’s war protagonists, this is the only way to read anything
in life. “Hemingway has formulated as rigid a set of rules for living and for the attainment of Manhood as can be found in any religion,” continues Waldmeir (353). The biblical exegesis of Hemingway’s war characters is, by an experientially created necessity, based on action and practicality; yet, the mystery and faith of more traditional Christian thought remains. To conclude a definition of this first aspect of Christian manliness in Hemingway’s war fiction, Waldmeir writes, “Hemingway has always had a deep respect for Christians—provided they live like Christians. [. . .] Hemingway did not turn religious to write The Old Man and the Sea. He has always been religious, though his religion is not of the orthodox, organized variety” (353, 356). Ernest Hemingway appears to have had little tolerance for people who wore the outward appearance of deep conviction without committing themselves to the movement or cause. He made note of men who did not join in military operations when he thought they should have, soldiers who he believed performed less than courageously, and people outside the areas of religion or war who did not give their complete effort to their pursuits. In his 1926 poem “To a Tragic Poetess,” Hemingway even berates Dorothy Parker for failing at her suicide attempts. Also, during mundane lunch conversation with journalist Edward Stafford prior to which Mr. Stafford interviewed Hemingway about his craft, the discussion turned to the work of other writers. Mr. Stafford set down the

\[5\] Despite this fact, Hemingway did maintain, at least in his fiction, a certain amount of humanity. Consider the story “Under the Ridge,” where a soldier shoots himself in the hand to avoid combat. He recovers and works in a hospital only to be shot in the back of the head by members of the International Brigade. The executed soldier is written with sympathy, and, the fierce focus on the Cause of the International Brigades notwithstanding, it is important to note that Robert Jordan, in FWBT, does not join the International Brigades but rather fights with the band of gypsies.
conversation for *Writer’s Digest* magazine. “My wife proposed and defended Graham Greene,” Mr. Stafford writes, “whom Papa good naturedly thought was ‘a jerk’ because he ‘traded on his religion’ and was a convert. It was bad enough, he thought, for a woman to be converted, but for a man, it was unforgivable” (Stafford 170). I believe that Hemingway was not opposed to Greene’s conversion to Catholicism in 1926, as Hemingway too converted (also, an Italian priest reportedly baptized him in 1918 after Hemingway’s wounding in Italy). Hemingway’s comment was made somewhat in jest, but, as Hemingway scholar William Thomas Hill notes, “there may be some irony in Hemingway's comment, but probably not. My guess would be that Hemingway objected to Greene's tendency to use Catholic themes throughout his work (esp., *Brighton Rock, The Power and the Glory, The Heart of the Matter, The End of the Affair*)” (Hill).

Hemingway also used Catholic themes profusely throughout his work, but, in contrast to what he might have thought of Greene, Hemingway also attended mass quite regularly and was more true to the faith.

This third aspect of Hemingway’s Christian manliness, that of living as a likeness of Jesus Christ, is typically studied by Hemingway scholars on the level of the crucifixion, but analyzing the perceived manly virtues of Christ as they are enacted by Hemingway’s characters is equally apt. We see this *imitation Christi*, for example, in St. Paul’s interpretation of Jesus’ teachings: “Do not repay injury with injury; study your behaviour in the world’s sight as well as in God’s. Keep peace with all men, where it is possible, for your part. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved; allow retribution to run its course; so we read in scripture, Vengeance is for me, I will repay, says the Lord” (Paul
12:17-19). The Hemingway soldier is fighting for social, not personal reasons. In the oeuvre under study here, it is manly to share this characteristic with Jesus Christ. As another example, Thomas Hughes’ *The Manliness of Christ* is just one of numerous Victorian books focused on Christ as exemplar of manliness (Vance 26 and Kathleen Verduin’s essay). In his introduction, Hughes defines the connection between manliness and Christianity. “The conscience of every man recognizes courage as the foundation of manliness, and manliness as the perfection of human character, and if Christianity runs counter to conscience in this matter, or indeed in any other, Christianity will go to the wall” (Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ* 5). Hemingway and his characters certainly value courage very highly. Discussing the Christocentric works of e.e. cummings, Sherwood Anderson, and Frank Harris, Kathleen Verduin is quite correct when she writes, “In their tacit acceptance of Christ’s masculinity and deep personal isolation, and in their imaginative entry into the physical immediacy of Christ’s pain, these writers

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6 Consider an excerpt from Hemingway’s 1937 letter to Harry Sylvester: “The Spanish war is a bad war, and nobody is right. [However,] my sympathies are always for exploited working people against absentee landlords […]” (C. Baker, *Ernest Hemingay: Selected Letters, 1917–1961* 456).

7 I must note one exception. In *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway compares renderings of Christ’s crucifixion by El Greco, Goya, and Velazquez. He writes that “of the three only Greco believed in Our Lord” (203). He furthermore labels El Greco *un maricón* (a sissy, with connotations to effeminacy and homosexuality). Thus, the one believer of the bunch is not manly. However, the chapter concludes, “Viva El Greco El Rey de los Maricônes” [Long Live El Greco the King of the Sissies] (205). The notion of it not being manly to believe in Christ cannot be inferred from this light-hearted scene (which appears in the middle of a humorous story).

8 “King Jesus”; *Winesburg, Ohio*; and “The King of the Jews” respectively.
reflect the popular religious tradition I have described. Hemingway’s absorption of the
tradition, however, was clearly deeper and more lasting” (31). Verduin also writes that
William Barton, minister at the First Congregational Church was “friendly with Thomas
Hughes” (Verduin 29).

To pull another book from a shelf of Ernest Hemingway’s personal Key West
library, Thomas à Kempis’ *L’ Imitation de Jesus Christ* (more commonly titled *Imitatio
Christi* or *The Imitation of Christ*) begins,

“He that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light
of life,” says that Christ, who declares Himself “the light of the world.” The true
importance and design of which words is doubtless to instruct us that the way to
be truly enlightened, and to deliver ourselves from a blindness of heart, is to make
His holy life the object of our imitation, and to form our dispositions and actions
upon the perfect model of that bright example. (Kempis 1)

We cannot know the degree to which Hemingway took Kempis’ rendering of John 8:12
to heart, but it is certain that the image of Christ young Hemingway was shown growing
up in Oak Park was the manly Christ. As Reverend William Barton notes in a sermon he
delivered in 1918 and sent to Hemingway regarding the apparent after-effects of World
War I, “We shall have a new conception of the value of the physical well-being of our
people as measured by the tests that constitute a man a good soldier, and we shall gain a

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9 “The Light of the World” is also the title of a Hemingway short story involving banal
prostitutes and a homosexual cook. In *Hemingway: The Inward Terrain*, Richard B.
Hovey writes, “‘The Light of the World,’ of course, is part of the account of Jesus’
compassionate treatment of the woman taken into adultery. So, reminded of what Jesus
had to say about love and charity, we are made aware, through this sordidness and
degradation, of what in the modern world has happened to both Eros and Agape. [. . .]
What is central is that love is inextricable from disease, pain, violence, and death” (19-
20).
new impression of what this means in terms of spiritual manhood” (Barton, The Price of Peace: A Sermon 9).

Barton’s words speak of the sentiment popular across America during the Great War. A new, modern era had begun, and Americans had to reconstitute former in order to support this new age. At the core of Barton’s matrix for twentieth century spirituality was Christian manliness. “Whatever the issue, no matter how controversial, Rev. Barton took it to his pulpit with manly, straightforward rhetoric,” as Michael Reynolds encapsulates this ethos (Reynolds, The Young Hemingway 12). Reynolds, in his thoroughly researched biography of Hemingway, finds a solid connection between the religious thoughts of William Barton and the war sentiments of Theodore Roosevelt.10

The sum of these ideals was, as Reynolds writes, “Young Hemingway and other Oak Park youths were only a few years away from their own proving ground [compared to the brave dead of the Titanic disaster] to which they would carry the maxim of Roosevelt and Barton: let no man prove a coward in the face of death” (Reynolds, The Young Hemingway 11). This spiritual manhood preached by Barton is two-fold. First, a man must be a good father figure, and, second, he must derive strength from a worship of Christ (which, in turn, strengthens the image of Christ to be worshipped). Archived at the First United Church in Oak Park, Illinois (now the First United Church) are several of Barton’s sermons on the importance of a firm and admirable father who exemplifies Christ’s traits that are more paternal. Barton’s rhetoric and sentiment are closely tied

10 See Suzanne Clark’s “Roosevelt and Hemingway: Natural History, Manliness, and the Rhetoric of the Strenuous Life” (Fleming, Hemingway and the Natural World 55-67) for more.
with the preachings of the Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911 to 1912 (when young Ernest Hemingway was twelve or thirteen years old).

As has been noted, Ernest Hemingway’s life spanned two very different time periods and sensibilities—the Victorian era and the modern era. Sentiments of the former period and the workings of the latter period are evident in his life, as we have seen, and in his war fiction. The ideal of manliness and masculinity, in Victorian Western Europe and America, was that of a Christian manliness, where boys and men wore the spirit of Christianity as they wore the spirit of sport and, later, of militarism. Perhaps “chivalry” is a more precise term, as it implies the character of a gentlemanly knight. It also connotes horsemanship. It was Robert S. Surtees, an author read by Hemingway (Reynolds, Hemingway’s Reading, 190), who wrote that the hunt (and, effectively, any wits- and strength-matching contest) is “the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt, and only five-and-twenty per cent. of its danger” (Surtees 94). Horseracing is the archetypal sport demonstrating chivalry, a highly desirable trait before the early 1900’s but a quality largely thought superfluous after the Great War.

The connection of sport to war is only part of the equation Hemingway worked in, however; Christianity was a requisite attribute or dynamic filling out the viatica for a manly journey through life. As I note earlier in this dissertation, the role legendary rancher, president, and hero Theodore Roosevelt played on Hemingway is strong. Michael Reynolds writes, “Although he did not single-handedly start the physical fitness

11 Interestingly, Siegfried Sassoon, noted huntsman, World War I poet, and novelist, wrote the introduction to Handley Cross. Hemingway also titled a humorous poem “The Sport of Kings” (1923).
crave which swept the nation early in this century, Teddy Roosevelt certainly epitomized it” (Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway* 25). Through Roosevelt, men were shown the banality of idleness and the righteousness of physical competition. And it is difficult to conjure any organized group that capitalized on this more than the YMCA. The Young Men’s Christian Association, during the early part of the twentieth century, was fashioned much like the Agassiz club—the core of the program was the spiritual growth of young men. This concept played to a captive audience in Oak Park, Illinois (especially during World War I, when boys at home, stoked by Roosevelt’s fiery rhetoric, strongly felt a desire to become active, strong, and manifestly manly to compensate for their lack of military duty). Christianity and athleticism ran close, with community leaders such as Reverend Barton supporting high-school athletics (c.f. Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway* 12) and the nation at large supporting the mission of the YMCA. Clara Barton’s American Red Cross, too, struck an amiable chord in providing for the war effort while promoting Christian ideals. On the front, however, popular sentiment was different. Generally, soldiers felt the two organizations benefited donors at home more than them on the front lines because of the dearth of those amenities the organizations were supposed to provide.

Reynolds notes this soured sentiment and one further notion. “The Y.M.C.A. had further alienated many of the troops by its muscular, scrub-faced proselytizing in a war that may have seemed a religious cause back home, but not at the front” (Reynolds, *The Young Hemingway* 22). Again and again the dislocation felt by wars’ absurdities were hard to fit with the mono-causality of dogmatic organizations such as the Y.M.C.A. or
Bible-based religion. In the trenches, universals lost their footing and new connotations replaced antiquated ones. War fiction, in general, shows how a soldier reformulates ethics and morality to suit the context, without a loss of integrity. Roosevelt exemplifies this concept in his story “The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon,” in which Alvin York as memorialized. York was drafted in 1917 despite his anti-war sentiments. He had only used a gun for sport, and, “He did not believe in war. He felt that the New Testament definitely stood against the killing of man by man. ‘For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword’” (Roosevelt, "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon" 279). His pacifist thoughts change, however, when battle begins and York ends up killing twenty German soldiers. Roosevelt writes, regarding York’s use of a gun during heavy battle, “This time, however, he was not shooting for sport but ‘battling for the Lord’” (Roosevelt, “The Sword” 283). Then York returns to his native Tennessee when his term expires. “Though his twelve months in the army had broadened him, his character was still as strong and unshaken as the rock of his own hills” (Roosevelt, "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon" 287). War presents unique situations and exceptions that are not to be found in normal, peaceful life. Situations present themselves that cause characters to briefly alter or defer their principles, which harkens to Hemingway’s statement that a good soldier must live in the exact present moment. This does not completely exclude all forethought. Rather, these occasional sidesteps act as progress on an obstacle-ridden path

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12 Having stated this, in *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway implies that the YMCA focused its efforts more on instilling a fear of contracting venereal diseases than on building and maintaining religious belief, the latter being what their energies should focus on (Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon* 103).
toward a goal much as the soldiers in Wilfred Owen’s World War I poem “Dulce Et Decorum Est”:

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through the sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest began to trudge. [. . .]

Recalling Ernest Hemingway’s story “A Natural History of the Dead” (discussed in the “Nature” chapter of this dissertation), Gerry Brenner touches on this idea of situational ethics. “This switch of perspectives [narrative perspectives between the characters of the doctor and the artillery officer] facilitates what I think if Hemingway’s point: it is stupid, when confronted with dying or dead human beings, to expect only one perspective, one feeling, one solution of how to respond humanely” (Brenner 75). Thus, Christian manliness allows for lapses out of Christian ideals (as in the doctor in “A Natural History of the Dead” throwing iodine in the artillery officer’s face in order to prevent him from euthanizing a dying soldier) so long as long-term or permanent morality is preserved. The doctor acts with malice when he temporarily blinds the officer, but the doctor maintains his humane (Hippocratic) oath (“My business is to care for the wounded, not to kill them” [CSS 341]). The doctor’s ethics clash with those of

\footnote{An artificial religious reading to Owen’s poem is not intended, but the process of the soldiers toward their goals is similar, especially in the few tales of truncated completion or unification as with Harold Krebs in Hemingway’s “Soldier’s Home” (Owen’s soldier finds Horace’s maxim “Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori” false as Krebs finds his mother’s biblical clichés false). The first sentence of Hemingway’s story “Under the Ridge” has a style, tone, and rhythm much like Owen’s poem: “In the heat of the day with the dust blowing we came back dry-mouthed, nose-clogged and heavy-loaded, down out of the battle to the long ridge above the river where the Spanish troops lay in reserve” (manuscript date circa 1938).}
the artillery officer, whose idea of humanity is completely alleviating the gravely wounded soldier’s suffering by shooting him. “I will shoot the poor fellow,’ the artillery officer said. ‘I am a humane man. I will not let him suffer” (CSS 340).

Despite the conflicting ideals of these men, we may view them both to be Christians. The Bible has many contradictions, yet early Evangelists compiled it to form the statement of Christianity. Soldiers like Alvin York are plentiful in Hemingway’s war fiction—men forced to act despite conflicting necessities. While the inevitable decision, taken out of its context, may seem unchristian (á la Frederic Henry killing the seditious soldier), true Christian manliness involves making these occasional decisions in the best interest of the Christian ideal. During the great Caporetto retreat, Lieutenant Henry asks help from two sergeants in the Italian army, who refuse and begin leaving the area. Henry shot one of them, and Bonello killed the other one because to disobey the orders of a superior is a subversive act. A manly attribute is making the right decision at the right time, and in this scene, Frederic Henry is acting in the interest of the side of the war in which he believes. Hemingway spins this a unique way, however, by writing explicitly that both competing sides may be right. Hemingway’s soldiers very seldom harbor serious hatred for their counterparts across No Man’s Land. The wavering narrative perspective Gerry Brenner notes in “A Natural History of the Dead” is an excellent illustration of this; neither the doctor nor the artillery officer is portrayed as more evil or

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14 It is interesting to compare different versions of the retelling of Spain’s Second Republic and the Spanish Civil War. Authors use alternately putsch, sedition, insurgent, or rebellion in describing the actions of both the left and right during the 1930’s, ascribing to these parties attendant connotations.
sympathetic than the other. In a summary of the conflict of the Great War, Roland H. Bainton writes,

> It [the division of Germany from the world of the West] consisted in this: the West, meaning especially England, the United States, and France, retained the tradition of natural law, whereas in Germany it was supplanted by the Romantic movement. The ancient theory of natural law, as we have observed, rested upon the assumption that a principle of rationality pervaded the cosmos, immanent in the world and man, implanting in his heart the principles of a morality intelligible to and binding upon all. The Romantic movement denied the possibility of a universal morality, claiming instead that men are not equally endowed with reason and with energy. (Bainton 206)

Certainly, natural law versus romanticism, in itself, does not adequately sum up the central conflict of World War I, but it does speak for a difference of thought evident in Hemingway’s fiction about World War I. Hemingway’s WWI protagonist straddled these ethics, exhibiting both a belief in universal rationality and sentiments of individual ethics. Reinhold Niebuhr called this a “double focus” in *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) and states that people must reconcile both their inner lives and the necessities of their social life. These two foci work in tandem; the social life must strive for justice, and “The individual must strive to realise his life by losing and finding himself in something greater than himself” (Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* 257).

Frederic Henry, Robert Jordan, Nick Adams, and other soldiers in Hemingway’s war fiction work toward just that. They work toward finding themselves in their inner lives to lose their selves in unification with the divine while striving for justice in their
social spheres. The struggle for social justice is fought in manly contest on battlefields (recall Robert Jordan stating that he is an anti-fascist rather than a Communist), but the individual soldier knows he must shed his formed, external person to unite with that spirit greater than himself. Recall Frederic Henry’s words to the priest:

“I don’t know [what will happen in this war]. I only think the Austrians will not stop when they have won a victory. It is in defeat that we become Christian.”

“The Austrians are Christians—except for the Bosnians.”

“I don’t mean technically Christian. I mean like Our Lord.” (AFTA 178)

This is the Christian manliness exhibited in Hemingway’s war fiction. Henry and the priest both wish all fighting would just cease, but they also know that social justice must be won (cf. AFTA 178-179).

Hemingway’s feelings toward the Y.M.C.A., religion (as was exhibited to him in Oak Park), and war alike were neither completely revolutionary nor completely conservative. He found some good in them and some bad; this self-styling ran to his fiction too, with avant- and neo-classicism running side by side. Again citing Michael Reynolds, “It is little wonder that Hemingway, along with other Red Cross men, began to invent a different war life for himself (Reynolds, The Young Hemingway 23). The recipe for his invention was to extract the essence of the above ingredients, sift through practical

15 In FWBT, Robert Jordan has many internal monologues where he commands himself to abolish selfish worries and concentrate on the larger good. Also in FWBT, Augustin says, “I suffer for others,” and Jordan replies, “As all good men should” (FWBT 289).

16 In a hand-written annotation to George Henry Borrow’s book The Bible in Spain, Hemingway wrote, Borrow “has the mind of a YMCA gym instructor” (Reynolds, Hemingway’s Reading 101). Despite this derogatory comment, Hemingway’s friend and mentor Sherwood Anderson claims to have read Borrow’s books over 20 times (Reynolds, The Young Hemingway 184).
experience, and present aesthetically. Thus, manliness ran deeper than hair on the chest or dexterity in wooing; the manly ideal was about the play, competition, morality, and ferocity of undertakings such as sport. The Duke of Wellington supposedly remarked that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton. There is disagreement about the authenticity of this quote (see Vance 13), but there is no doubt sport and war have strong connections, with the common denominator being manliness. It is interesting that, in recounting his first meeting with Hemingway (1924), Ford Madox Ford said Hemingway had “rather the aspect of an Eton-Oxford husky-ish young captain from an English midland regiment” (Baker, Ernest Hemingway: The Writer as Artist 21).

Ford’s quote may concern Hemingway’s dress and physical appearance, but equating him with an English, Eton-educated soldier (from the Surrey-born Ford) adds credence to Hemingway’s relation to English schooling and the attendant virtues.

In Hemingway’s notes collected at the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library in Boston there is a one-page fragment of an untitled war story Hemingway never completed. It is, for the most part, a highly ironic and cynical dialogue between

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17 Hemingway told biographer and novelist Herbert S. Gorman that Hemingway based the character Braddock, in The Sun Also Rises, in great part on Ford Madox Ford (Gorman’s 1926 New York World article that notes this is excerpted in Jeffrey Meyers’ Ernest Hemingway: The Critical Heritage [New York: Routledge, 1982]).

18 And Norman Vance finds that Ford was “fascinated by the incompatibility of time-honored styles or behaviors with the atmosphere and circumstances of modern life. He had personal ties with the Victorian manly Christians” (Vance 204).

19 The fragment may be notes for the short story “Black Ass at the Cross Roads,” written as a complete story between World War II and 1961.
Tommy and Red, two soldiers. The idea of war as sport is a major theme in the story. “Tommy yawned and stretched. ‘Never call the Austrians the opposition Red. It isn’t polite. Kindly refer to them in the future as the Visiting Team’” (Hemingway “Red Smith lay on a cot . . .”). Similarly, the field notes that Hemingway made into the story “Old Man at the Bridge” depict war as sport. The fighting described is the battle at Navalcarnero, Spain, and he wrote the notes telegram-style:

They lay almost in the positions of the backfield of an American football team set to receive the kickoff stop Villanueva del Pardillo was the right halfback stop Villanueva de la Canada the quarterback and Quijorna left halfback stop all the villages were heavily fortified all were captured but the play was not run off smoothly stop the timing was wrong. (Hemingway, “[Spanish Civil War]”)

War as sport carries more than just ironic weight; the metaphor extends into areas of rivalry, dominance, conquest, and religion. Major Maskin, Divisional Psychiatrist of the 4th Army Division stated, of Ernest Hemingway’s service in World War II, “I thought he was silly with this machismo thing. I can remember saying to him that if I had his talent and lovely home in Cuba, what the hell would I be doing in this mud? […] You see, he was playing soldier” (qtd. in Whiting ix). In short, in an interesting essay on Hemingway’s changing style of dress entitled “The Fashion of Machismo,” Marilyn

20 While Hemingway wrote most of his telegram-style fragments and notes on actual telegraph forms, this one was not. Perhaps he used the telegram style as discipline to perfect extracting the maximum effect from an economy of words. Carlos Baker thought, “It was possibly associated with his liking for the language of cables, which had entranced him since his newspaper days. But he seems to have adopted it as a mode of utterance both in speech and in letters because he thought it down to earth, laconic, and manly” (Baker, Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters xi). Hemingway also occasionally wrote letters with three spaces between the words. Friend William Steward writes, “As is fairly well known, Ernest did this to slow himself down and emphasize the importance of each word” (Seward 32).
Elkins (paraphrasing from Ruth Rubinstein’s *Dress Codes: Meanings and Messages in American Culture*) notes, “the American masculine ideal stems from two sources. One is simple physical strength and the other is agility; both are connected with the idea that the male role entails competition and physical strength in the service of some higher ideal” (Elkins 103). Certainly part of this higher ideal is humanitarian service (erasing Fascism so that people can live a freer life), but, returning specifically to the realm of the Hemingway war protagonist, this humanitarian gesture extends into religiosity.

To this point, Thomas Hughes’ 1857 novel *Tom Brown’s School-Days* and its sequel (*Tom Brown at Oxford* [1861]) set the standard for the genre of fiction about life in an English boarding school popular in the second half of the nineteenth century. I cite Hughes’ *Tom Brown* books for their similarity to Hemingway’s war novels, with Hughes’ sport motif substituted in Hemingway’s novels with warfare. The *Tom Brown* books were very successful and influential; within twelve years of publication, there were at least 14 editions and 35 reprints of *Tom Brown’s School-Days*, and three editions and eleven reprints of *Tom Brown at Oxford* (Vance 230). As Norman Vance states in his book *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought*, “Morality, sport, social concern, co-operation and aggressive patriotism are the major ingredients of the Tom Brown novels” (143). In *Tom Brown’s School-Days*, the heroism, strength, and manliness of Alfred the Great and the brave soldiers in the Crimean war are set as models the boys strove to emulate. This *bildungsroman* (or *künstlerroman*—fiction dealing with the formative years of an artist, as in the short story “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”) works as a template for some of
Hemingway’s war fiction, such as *A Farewell to Arms*, “Soldier’s Home,” and “Now I Lay Me.”

While the connection of religion to the masculinities of sport may seem remote, there is a direct link—one evident in Hemingway’s war fiction. Thomas Hughes also authored *The Manliness of Christ*, and Hemingway owned a copy of *Tom Brown’s School-Days* (1958 edition. Reynolds, *Hemingway’s Reading* 139). The maturation of Tom Brown manifests itself in a manner similar to that of Hemingway’s war protagonists. Vance writes,

> As Tom gradually rises through the school it becomes clear that sporting manliness and the ethic of pluck and hardihood can be extended into a more adult and a more specifically Christian ethic (146). […] Pluck and hardihood and the spirit of fellowship and co-operation in the school-house and in team games are caught up into a vision of dauntless and everlasting service of the Lord on either side of the river of death. (149)

Or, as the narrator of *Tom Brown’s School-Days* states it,

> And Tom was becoming a new boy though with frequent tumbles in the dirt and perpetual hard battle with himself, and was daily growing in manfulness and thoughtfulness, as every high-couraged and well-principled boy must, when he finds himself for the first time consciously at grips with self and the devil. (Hughes 227)

We see this progression from sporting manliness to Christian manliness in characters such as Robert Jordan, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. At the beginning of the novel, Hemingway denotes Jordan’s youthful appearance and attitude often, most starkly when compared to General Golz and Golz’s pale, wrinkled, and scarred face. Pilar calls Jordan

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21 One further note of the prevalence of masculinity in Thomas Hughes’ writing, Emma Elizabeth Brown edited a collection of his writings and titled it simply *True Manliness* (1880).
“this boy coming for the bridges,” and Jordan is not named until after many dialogue tags have identified him solely as “the young man” (FWBT 93). Furthermore, Jordan speaks of battle in terms Hughes would use in writing about Rugby football and back-swording:

He [Jordan] would not think himself into any defeatism. The first thing was to win the war. If we did not win the war everything was lost. But he noticed, and listened to, and remembered everything. He was serving in a war and he gave absolute loyalty and as complete performance as he could give while he was serving. (FWBT 136)

Jordan was not without self-serving thoughts, however, such as killing Pablo, the lazy, drunkard gypsy, in order to fulfill la causa. Similarly, Jordan’s initial attraction to Maria was erotic, sexual satiation (as described in the “Love” chapter, above) rather than an attraction of selfless assistance. Jordan does work toward a common goal, but he fails to realize the importance of nurturing relationships beyond a basic esprit de corps; he does not care if those he is associated with live for each other but is concerned about getting his job done with the necessary help of others. Poet Sir Henry Newbolt states the correlation between sportsmanship (here, cricket) and soldiership nicely in his poem “Vitaï Lampada”:

There’s a breathless hush in the Close to-night—
    Ten to make and the match to win—
    A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
    An hour to play and the last man in.
And it’s not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
    Or the selfish hope of a season’s fame,
    But his Captain’s hand on his shoulder smote—
“Play up! play up! and play the game!” (Newbolt 131)

Newbolt was a lifetime friend of Sir Douglas Haig, commander of the British forces. Newbolt later wrote, “When I looked into Douglas Haig I saw what is really great—perfect acceptance, which means perfect faith” (qtd. in Fussell 26). Paul Fussell
writes, “This version of Haig brings him close to the absolute ideal of what Patrick Howarth has termed *homo newboltiensis*, or “Newbolt Man”: honorable, stoic, brave, loyal, courteous—and unaesthetic, unironic, unintellectual and devoid of wit” (ibid.). These are, for the most part, the ideals of Christian manliness; ideas evident in Hemingway’s war fiction, given voice by Hemingway’s carefully crafted characters. Frederic Henry, Robert Jordan, Colonel Cantwell, and numerous protagonists in Hemingway’s war fiction could be classified as *homo newboltiensis* for the characteristics Mr. Patrick Howarth found in Sir Henry Newbolt.

These characteristics are exactly the sentiments exhibited by the young character Arthur in *Tom Brown’s School-Days*. After being invited from his world of womanliness and feebleness into the masculine world of tree-climbing and cricket at Rugby, Arthur grows to exemplify Hughes’ vision that, “Sturdy manliness leads on to and in a sense becomes a metaphor for unflinching moral resolution” (Vance 146). Arthur kneels to say his prayers in the godless dormitory, and he embraces the moral significance of his servitude under his dedicated Christian father. Thus, Hughes makes the connection from sport to Christian manliness; Arthur matures to realize the higher ideal of fellowship and service to the Lord. As Hughes writes, Arthur is introduced to the beautiful idea “of what this old world would be if people would live for God and each other, instead of themselves” (Hughes, *Tom Brown’s School-Days* 215). Arnold’s acts catapult the young Tom Brown into this more profound, adult world, and the death of Dr. Thomas Arnold (a hero-worshipped preacher at Rugby and strong backer of moral maturity via a kind of manliness based on self-reliance [Vance 71]) arouses Tom Brown from selfish sorrow into an agapic selfless religious love. This “offers [Tom] a hint to the adult Christian
who must express his love of Christ by sharing it with all men, who are his brothers in Christ” (Vance 151).

Robert Jordan similarly comes to this realization. At the end of For Whom the Bell Tolls, he says to Maria, “You must not be selfish, rabbit. You must do your duty now” (FWBT 462). Along and awaiting the fascist troops, Jordan muses,

It does no good to think about Maria. Try to believe what you told her. That is the best. And who says it is not true? Not you. You don’t say it, any more than you would say the things did not happen that happened. Stay with what you believe now. Don’t get cynical. The time is too short and you have just sent her away. Each one does what he can. You can do nothing for yourself but perhaps you can do something for another. (FWBT 466)

While the ephemeral and vacillatory nature of Robert Jordan’s faith tempers the religious tone of this monologue, his thoughts of selfless hope are strengthened three pages later:

“It’s wonderful they’ve got away. I don’t mind this at all now they are away. It is sort of the way I said. It is really much that way. Look how different it would be if they were all scattered out across that hill where that gray horse is” (FWBT 469). Jordan is realizing the role of the individual in society—that individuality is crucial, but so is working toward a common goal.

Returning to the masculinity of sport, Viscount Alfred Northcliffe, one-time editor of The Times (London, England), wrote, in Lord Northcliffe’s War Book (1917),

Our soldiers [British soldiers, opposed to German soldiers] are individual. They embark on little individual enterprises. The German, though a good soldier when advancing with numbers under strict discipline, is not so clever at these devices. He was never taught them before the war, and his whole training from childhood upwards has been to obey, and to obey in numbers. He [the German soldier] has not played individual games. Football, which develops individuality, has only been introduced into Germany in comparatively recent times. (Northcliffe 86)
Northcliffe also quotes Sir Douglas Haig as saying, “War is a young man’s game” (166).

The conceptions of the masculine, sporting attitude of Thomas Hughes, Viscount Northcliffe, Sir Douglas Haig, Sir Henry Newbolt, and Robert Jordan all lead to this idea of integration into a community of team mates.

In an essay titled “Confiteor Hominem: Ernest Hemingway’s Religion of Man” (Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters, 1957), Joseph Waldmeir finds,

In *Death in the Afternoon*, when he [Hemingway] wants to describe the unmanliness of a ‘cowardly bullfighter’ girding himself for action, Hemingway places him in church. [. . .] A man must depend upon himself alone in order to assert his manhood, and the assertion of his manhood, in the face of insuperable obstacles, is the complete end and justification of his existence for a Hemingway hero. [. . .] The difference between Hemingway’s religion of man and formal religion is simply—yet profoundly—that in the former the elevation does not extend beyond the limits of this world, and in the latter, Christianity for example, the ultimate elevation is totally otherworldly. (Waldmeir 352, 354)

Regarding Ernest Hemingway’s war fiction, Dr. Waldmeir is partially correct, but his conclusions need clarification. First, I must note that his essay mainly concerns *The Old Man and the Sea*, a work certainly relevant to studying religion in Hemingway’s works but outside the scope of this study limited to his war fiction. Second, the only other instance of Hemingway using a church setting to imply a character’s unmanliness could be images of the injured Nick Adams leaning against a church unable to move, but the unmanliness of Nick’s immobility is overcome by other manly qualities in the scene (such as being a soldier armed with a “separate peace” stronger than the armament other
soldiers carry). Third, I agree that a very important goal of the Hemingway hero is a state of honest manhood, but I disagree that these characters must depend upon themselves alone in order to reach this phase; in fact, it is the goal of this paper to demonstrate how these heroic figures must unite with an other in order to reach their ultimate goal of religious integration. Part of realizing this integration involves constantly striving toward and maintaining a Christ-like manliness.

To cite another instance of a literature critic noting the dynamics of religion, war, and sport, in his 1970 dissertation, Jon Nelson writes,

during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, for example, war was seen as a holy game which did not strip a man of his manhood but established it. A belief that war can be fought in this manner was never absent from Hemingway’s thinking. [...] The problem is that wars in the twentieth century are not fought in this fashion. (J. E. Nelson 84)

This distinction between modern warfare capable of being fought as a holy game in which a soldier’s manliness can be proven and warfare actually fought with “graceless brutality that can only give spiritual and moral defeat to both winners and losers” (J. E. Nelson 84) is vital to understanding religious spirituality in Hemingway’s war fiction. Much of Hemingway’s war fiction makes note of a person or animal dying cleanly or dying badly. “It is not that one dies but how one dies that is important” (Waldmeir 355). In “The Gambler, The Nun, and The Radio,” Sister Cecilia worries that Cayetano “could die just like a dog” (CSS 359), and, later in the story, Nick says that he’ll scalp Eddie

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22 *Tertium quid* may be a more appropriate term than “hero” as these characters do not strive for the classic ideals of heroism but, at least on outward appearances, work on a more median level, between the sacred and the profane. The Hemingway hero is a third element (working among war and religion) that is a combination of the two elements, with the ratio of the elements imprecise.
Gilby if he tries to sleep with Dorothy. Trudy begs him not to, saying, “That’s dirty” (CSS 373). These are ways of dying badly. Dying cleanly, to Hemingway’s soldiers, means being put out of one’s misery if suffering a grave wound (as in “A Natural History of the Dead”—the artillery officer asks the doctor to give a man with a shattered skull an overdose of morphine, but the doctor refuses), it could mean dying naturally (which one cannot do in war\textsuperscript{23}), or it could mean dying without disclosing fear (as in “Today is Friday\textsuperscript{24},” when the “1\textsuperscript{st} Soldier” notes the bravery the soon-to-be-crucified Christ showed when he was raised on the cross). Hemingway squelches this exposure of fear in For Whom the Bell Tolls when Robert Jordan worries about getting in “any sort of mixed-up state” (FWBT 470) which would keep him from completing his ultimate act of fending off fascist forces while Maria and the other gypsies escape.

An early poem Hemingway titled “Champs d’Honneur” addresses dying in battle:

\begin{quote}
 Soldiers never do die well; 
 Crosses mark the places, 
 Wooden crosses where they fell; 
 Stuck above their faces. 
 Soldiers pitch and cough and twitch; 
 All the world roars red and black, 
 Soldiers smother in a ditch; 
 Choking through the whole attack. (CP 27)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{23} Angel Capellán discusses death in Hemingway’s fiction regarding Spain at length in Hemingway and the Hispanic World (1977). Capellán writes, “Thus, the death of the bull in the bull ring is not an act contra-naturam, as man’s death at war is, but a ritualized celebration of a primitive act that was originally practiced for man’s survival” (Capellán 170). Death in war being an unnatural death is a concept the Hemingway soldier would agree with (think of Anselmo and his reluctance at killing the enemy in FWBT).

\textsuperscript{24} Hemingway originally titled this story both “One More for the Nazarene” and “The Seed of the Church” (Young, The Hemingway Manuscripts: An Inventory 55).
War is unnatural, and the fighting is seldom fair. War takes away the dignity of death because of the randomness of death and the detachment the trauma of war brings. Thus, the manly and brave, weak and cowardly are slain alike. What distinguishes dying cleanly from dying badly is, in essence, if the soldier maintains his manliness. Sam Cardinella’s death was not clean. Hemingway depicts his hanging in interchapter XV of *In Our Time*. In this short scene, two priests had to carry Cardinella to the gallows before the county jail.

While they were strapping his legs together two guards held him up and the two priests were whispering to him. “Be a man, my son,” said one priest. When they came toward him with the cap to go over his head Sam Cardinella lost control of his sphincter muscles. The guards who had been holding him up dropped him. They were both disgusted. (*IOT* 193)

The prisoners brought in to watch the execution surely found Cardinella’s lack of control less than manly. Furthermore, Hemingway mentions that three of those to be hanged were “negroes” who were very scared and were, thus, without manliness. Sam Cardinella was a white man, also very scared. Hemingway writes that one of the guards is wearing a derby hat. These details are significant with regard to manliness because this makes the jailers seem more manly (in this case, cultured or sophisticated) and the prisoners (those condemned to death) less manly. Gail Bederman provides an excellent

25 Quotes are from *IOT* rather than from *CSS* here because the latter has certain editorial changes that are less descriptive and more detracting (e.g. *IOT* --“[...] Sam Cardinella was left there sitting strapped tight with the rope around his neck,, the younger of the two priests [...]” *CSS* omits “with the rope around his neck”).

26 Refer to Hemingway’s poem “To Will Davies” for the emotional effect of condemned to be hanged reversed in a manner strikingly similar to Cardinella’s.

When the *New York Times* reported the Memphis lynching which started Ida B. Wells on her career as an antilynching activist, it contrasted the “quick and quiet” demeanor of the white men in the lynch mob with the unmanly emotion of the “shivering negroes” who were murdered. (Bederman 51)

Contrast this with the image of Napoleon’s soldiers executing Spanish citizens in Francisco Goya’s famous painting *The Third of May 1808* (1814, Museo Nacional del Prado). Goya does not contrast the line of executioners with trembling condemned prisoners but paints praying clergy and a defiant commoner who wears a bright white shirt, which is the focus on the large painting. In fact, close inspection of the painting reveals what appears to be stigmata on the hand of this central figure, alluding to the crucified Christ. His pose is that of Christ on the cross. This, to the Hemingway soldier, would be dying cleanly, manly, and like Christ. Also, the priest’s advice to “be a man” harkens to Biblical notions of manliness. I Corinthians 16:13 states, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (*King James Version*). So one of the priests, acting with much decorum, is glossing the New Testament while other prisoners,

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27 In *Southern Horrors* (1892), Wells wrote, “Men who stand high in the esteem of the public for Christian character, for moral and physical courage, for devotion to the principles of equal and exact justice to all, and for great sagacity, stand as cowards who fear to open their mouths before this great outrage” (Bederman 59).

28 Hemingway owned several Goya sketches, and biographer Jeffrey Myers writes, “Goya remained Hemingway’s key to Spanish culture” (J. Myers, *Hemingway and Goya* 669). The epigram to Chapter 1 excerpts a quote in which Hemingway wrote that he had seen many paintings in the Prado.

29 In Latin, the verse is, “Vigilate, state in fide, viriliter agite, robusti estote.” “Viriliter agite,” translated literally, is closer to “act manfully” than “quit you like men.”

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forcibly restrained (in their cells) are also watching as Sam Cardinella loses control of bodily functions as needs to be held up (also, before he is brought to the gallows, Cardinella spends two hours lying flat on his cot with a blanket wrapped around his head). This establishes much sympathy in the reader, with the reader sensing that Cardinella’s dying is not clean at all.

This runs parallel to Hemingway scholar Robert Gajdusek’s idea that, “He [Ernest Hemingway] knew from childhood on that the only way towards respectable manhood was compassionate empathetic deep projection into the other” (Gajdusek, Re: Why Do Firemen Wear Red Suspenders?). In other words, the narrator in interchapter XV (a very brief war scene) (as well as characters in other of Hemingway’s war stories and novels) is also depicted as manly by virtue of his connection with “the other” (a comrade or foe in some capacity). The next chapter of this dissertation furthers this idea, as camaraderie is an important facet of rituals. Returning to scriptural references of “being a man,” I Samuel 4:9 is a verse similar to that from I Corinthians quoted above: “Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight” (KJV). 30 These two verses, spanning Old and New Testaments, describe an image of the Christian man as being one who fights when he needs to fight and sets the rules to how he will play the game.

30 This passage is also alluded to in Tom Brown’s School-Days, in which the author writes, “Quit yourselves like men then; speak up, and strike out if necessary for whatsoever is true, and manly, and lovely, and of good report…” (Hughes, Tom Brown's School-Days 142).
On Sunday, October 13, 1918, Reverend Barton delivered a sermon entitled “The Price of Peace,” in which he states, “our nation is engaged in a holy crusade” (Barton, *The Price of Peace* 2). Barton sent Hemingway a printed copy of this sermon, and the two corresponded occasionally. In building to his point of the more profound price of this divine mission, Barton notes two main outcomes of the Great War for America in his sermon. The first is a greater amount of American tolerance, especially concerning minority comrades. Second, he notes, “We shall have a new conception of the value of the physical well-being of our people as measured by the tests that constitute a man a good soldier, and we shall gain a new impression of what this means in terms of *spiritual manhood*” (Barton, *The Price of Peace* 9, italics added). Reverend Barton also exhibits this Christian manliness later in his 1927 book *The Women Lincoln Loved*, a follow-up to his *The Life of Abraham Lincoln* (1925). In the introduction to *The Women Lincoln Loved*, Barton writes,

> If any man lived, moved and had his being in a world of men, that man was Abraham Lincoln. His active life was spent principally in the court-room, the law-office, the tavern, the corner grocery and on the stump. The motives that mainly determined his choices were legal and political, and they were definitely masculine. (i)

Hemingway admired this masculinity, and the war protagonists of his fiction exemplify this admiration.

As stated earlier, Hemingway’s boyhood hero was the man’s man of his time, Theodore Roosevelt.31 Gail Bederman writes, “Theodore Roosevelt is often invoked as

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31 Hemingway’s idolization was tempered somewhat as he aged, however. His 1922 poem hints at the idea that the legend of the manly, republican Roosevelt began after
turn-of-the-century America’s prime example of a new and strenuous manhood” (Bederman 213). Another scholar writes, “Like many Americans of the period, Hemingway emulated the president whom he so much admired—both in his boyish exploits in the great outdoors and in his preference for casual clothing” (Elkins 96). Michael Reynolds writes, “In those days of Hemingway’s youth, Roosevelt was in the very air he breathed” (M. S. Reynolds, The Young Hemingway 28). Hemingway owned a copy of Roosevelt’s African Game Trails (1910), and photographs of Roosevelt in that book look very much like Hemingway when he was on safari in Africa. The similarities go beyond adventurism and dress, however; both men harbored similar respect for manliness and scripture. Hemingway’s association with the King James Bible has been noted. Roosevelt, writing in African Game Trails places “Bible. Apocrypha. Borrow . . . Bible in Spain” as the first entries on his rather extensive “Pigskin Library” list (the sixty pounds of books he took on every hinting trip) (Roosevelt, African Game Trails: An Account of the African Wanderings of an American Hunter-Naturalist 512).

They were for use, not ornament. I almost always had some volume with me, either in my saddle-pocket or in the cartridge-bag which one of my gun-bearers carried to hold odds and ends. Often my reading would be done while resting under a tree at noon, perhaps beside the carcass of a beast I had killed, or else while waiting for camp to be pitched; [. . .]. In consequence, the books were stained with blood, sweat, gun oil, dust, and ashes; [. . .]. (Roosevelt 515)

The supreme Rough Rider, war hero, and President of the United States reading a blood, sweat, and gun oil-stained Bible while he leans against the carcass of a hippopotamus he recently killed could be a poster advertisement for Christian Manliness. In fact, Janet Roosevelt’s death--“And all the legends that he started in his life/Live on and prosper./Unhampered now by his existence.” (Hemingway, Complete Poems 45).
Forsythe Fishburn believes, “He [Theodore Roosevelt] had the restless energy of his age, but he directed it into the cause of righteousness. His vigor exemplified the ideal of manly righteousness. Theodore Roosevelt could not be accused of ‘effeminacy.’ He was the ideal Christian gentleman” (Fishburn 107).

William James, whom Hemingway’s mentor Gertrude Stein held as her mentor in Paris, concurred with Roosevelt’s apparent notion that a true man should be a combination of Victorian gentlemanliness and Christian manliness—that is, a true military man. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, James notes the conflict that frequently arises when a man strives to be both a Victorian gentleman and Christian exemplar. Discussing this notion in *Varieties*, Janet Forsythe Fishburn writes, “This dichotomy suggested that the moral Christian man was less successful—and therefore less manly—than the Victorian gentleman as a man of the world” (Fishburn 32). Indeed, precepts for Victorian gentlemanliness (as James terms it, the “knight type”) and Christian morality (the “saint type”) were not always in communion throughout society, but, as William James writes, the two seem to come together in war.

A certain kind of man, it is imagined, must be the best man absolutely and apart from the utility of his function, apart from economical considerations. The saint’s type, and the knight’s or gentleman’s type, have always been rival claimants of this absolute ideality; and in the field of military religious orders both types were in a manner blended. (James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* 365)

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32 As stated earlier, it is unknown if Hemingway took William James’ psychological theories to heart, but, as Harry Levin writes, “If psychological theories could be proved by works of fiction, Hemingway would lend his authority to the long contested formula of William James, which equated emotion to bodily sensation” (Levin 162).
Serious pause should be given before terming the war duties of Hemingway’s military characters as that of religious military orders, but James’ conception of a certain kind of military man, one fusing Victorian gentlemanliness and Christian saintliness, holds for the fiction under this study, too. This harkens back to the question of why Hemingway’s military characters were in military positions to begin with and if their situation there is to get something out of the experience or if it is the next logical step in their lives. Here too, an “either. . .or” duality is not the best way to proceed; one should consider these positions with “both. . .and” thinking. The military protagonists both went to war to right wrongs and fight for the sake of others, and they went to war because it was a natural step in their lives. As their creator felt so too did Hemingway’s military protagonists not necessarily enjoy war, and often they could be characterized as pacifists. While their military career can be seen as a rite of passage, it must also be seen as an unfortunate way justice must be achieved. Hemingway biographer Michael Reynolds writes of Ernest Hemingway’s motivation for fighting in the Great War by comparing this earlier war to World War II: “Ernest had been to a European war in 1918 when he believed that the world could be made safe for democracy; he still [in 1943] had shrapnel in his legs and a rebuilt right kneecap to remind him of that war and the death he almost brought there” (M. S. Reynolds, Hemingway: The Final Years 83).³³

³³ In response to the question, “Why do H’s [Hemingway’s] soldiers go to war?” Hemingway Society member Robert Gajdusek replied with a four-point list: “[Robert] Jordan is a special case, and I’d say that the ‘citizen’ label fits him well. As for the regular soldiers in ‘regular’ wars, to me it has always felt plausible that H’s soldiers have the same motives as soldiers in general. Depending on the time period and country, they either 1) got drafted, or 2) volunteered because they fell for the propaganda, or 3) joined in peacetime because they fell for the propaganda, or 4) joined in peacetime because their
James’ thoughts on the justification of war were different from those of Theodore Roosevelt, Stephen Crane, and others who held military experience to be a (if not the) true ritual moving a boy into manhood.\textsuperscript{34} James saw the “moral equivalent of war” to be more of a test of manliness than Roosevelt’s enthusiastic militarism. In a 1906 lecture (first published 1910) entitled “The Moral Equivalent of War,” James writes that war supports manliness, and, although he writes as a pacifist, he worries that any absence of war would erode this manliness which men have come to take as not mere social role-play but as genetic verisimilitude. He longs for a moral equivalent of war, such as conscripted labor “or some other just as effective for preserving manliness of type” (James, “The Moral Equivalent of War” 14). This is not to wholly equate Ernest Hemingway’s apparent thoughts on war to those of William James. From his interactions with European intellectuals and artists upon first going to Paris to the ethos of his soldiers, Hemingway is unlike many modernists in that he seems to have brought to Europe a core idea of what it means to truly be a person of veracity and trueness to himself, and he shoots through much of that intellectualism with a simplicity many read as primitivism or anti-intellectualism. Much modern literature deconstructs the truth and

career choices were limited for financial or whatever other reasons.” To this list, Luca Gandolfini added, “5) Volunteered because they believed that there are things worth fighting for, or 6) Volunteered because they did not fall for someone else’s propaganda” (Gandolfini “Why do H’s soldiers go to war?”). Item number five demonstrates the complimentary workings of group integration and personal integrity nicely.

\textsuperscript{34} As articulated by Roosevelt in \textit{The Strenuous Life} (1902) and Crane in \textit{The Red Badge of Courage} (1895).
vital importance of living true to one’s code; Hemingway carried this to Paris and imbued this truth in his warrior characters.
CONCLUSION

This is a study of religiosity in Ernest Hemingway’s war fiction in terms of how his soldier characters connect to the divine. The key to understand this connection is in refining how the characters express the utility of this connection and how these features fit into larger structural ideals. Their experiences connect them with something profound and immutable for the purposes of comfort and redemption. The purpose of the biographical chapter in this dissertation was to point to the deep connection Hemingway seems to have had with his soldier characters. The inclusion of phenomenological aspects (how both the author and his characters actually experience religiosity, à la Rudolph Otto and Mircea Eliade) may seem to stray away from the more sociological approaches (macro-level structuralism à la Émile Durkheim and Victor Turner) also detailed in this dissertation. While the premises of Durkheim and Turner are certainly relevant to this study and they are not disunited from the micro-level experience of Hemingway and his characters, Hemingway’s depictions of his soldier’s transformative experiences (via nature, ritual, or embodying Christian manliness) speak to the apparent empathy the author carried for his soldiers.

The development of religiosity in the life of Ernest Hemingway is an interesting one, but perhaps it is also a rather typical one. He grew up in a suburb of Chicago that, from his birth until after he left for Europe, was a stronghold of Christianity. While Reverend Barton and others at the two Congregational churches he attended gave hermeneutical sermons every Sunday, Hemingway’s mother enforced the notion of God
as friend and worked hard to keep him close to organized religion, and his father taught of a more punitive God. From a very early age, Clarence, Ernest’s father taught of a direct link between nature and the divine. The movement of a trout in a stream and the perfection of a crinoid fossil are signs of God. While both of parents insisted on time among the church’s congregation, religion at home seems to have ameliorated the esoteric nature of words from the pulpit. Testimony from his sister Marcelline, friends throughout his maturity, and from Hemingway himself strongly imply that he appreciated the Bible as literature. Certain books of the King James Version have a poetic sensibility, and the themes speak as strongly to the attentive in his time as they must have hundreds of years ago. Despite some rather acerbic poems denouncing useless Christian dogma, Hemingway and his soldier characters have a strong grasp on this larger message of scripture. Interestingly, Hemingway’s brief time in Italy and his wounding there seemed to have both heightened his disdain for dogma (religious, military, or otherwise) as well as his interest in Christianity, especially Catholicism. Much first-hand information exists to evidence that he attended Catholic mass frequently, made a religious pilgrimage or two, and adhered to those larger messages of scripture such as doing what is right although it is uncomfortable and difficult.

Ernest Hemingway was a lifelong outdoorsman. Again, the Agassiz teachings must have sparked this interest in young Ernest. He loved summer vacations in the relative wilds of Walloon Lake, Michigan; there he was away from humanity and in a drastically more natural setting. There, too, he learned of the destruction industry can inflict on nature, with logging in his father’s generation to blame for driving out wildlife, ruining pristine trout streams, and altering the very landform of the area. He refines this
notion of mechanization destroying nature in his works on war and in other stories as well. He seemed to have focused this impression in his mature years on war as annihilating nature. Maybe war in this regard is but a spur of modern life in the West, but, nonetheless, the marching of soldiers, the caravans of military machines, and exploding projectiles ruin the fair face of nature—a nature crucial to a healthy spirit, the soldier characters express. There is a way for these soldiers to reconnect to nature, however, when they need that connection the most (while under fire, while fearing the worst for a loved one, or while awaiting death by the enemy), and that connection to nature—that integration with the divine—can be accomplished by seeking a connection to nature. Ernest Hemingway portrays this connection by writing that Robert Jordan places his hands on a tree and the earth to steady his troubled spirit, or that Nick Adams leaves the war for the restorative powers of the Big Two Hearted River. And Hemingway gave us other examples of his soldier characters, in times of conflict, turning to nature for its steadying, divine power.

One can imagine even the mighty Ernest Hemingway—the man who would challenge anyone present to fistfight on the docks of Havana Port—as a child being impressed by church rituals in the two Congregationalist church the Hemingway family attended in Oak Park, Illinois. While that faith in America during his youth did not hold

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1 I am certainly not the first Hemingway scholar to see a very close connection with khaki-clad Nick Adams setting down his military backpack to enter the river with the Civil War soldier in Winslow Homer’s famous painting The Veteran in a New Field (1865) setting down his soldier’s jacket and canteen to enter a wheat field. Both characters saw active service and “harvested” the enemy; now they are in natural settings harvesting the fruits of nature.
the most flash sacraments, they were still time out of the ordinary. He experienced many other rituals, too, such as the annual pilgrimage to Walloon Lake. They would make the long drive, his mother would direct unpacking operations, and, finally, Ernest would be allowed to fish or explore. The only summer trip be was absent from in his youth was the one which occurred close to when he was seriously wounded by a trench mortar shell in Fossalta, Italy. Soon after arriving at a triage station, an Italian priest baptized the patient in grave condition. He experienced other Catholic sacrament when he converted to the Faith and wed his second wife, Pauline. These are, in varying degrees, rituals of initiation (or rites of passage), and all rituals have certain stages and features, and ritual plays an important part in Hemingway’s war fiction. The final stage of a ritual in incorporation into a new being (I hesitate to use the term “persona” because that implies “mask,” and the post-liminal initiant bears this new self rather than merely expression a change to others). Not all rituals in the oeuvre are rites of passage, but they key rituals are because the post-liminal stage of these rituals is integration with the divine. The Hemingway soldier character seems to be bound² to the divine always, but, in times of conflict, that bind is loosened; a ritual done well can reestablish the bind. The Catholic faith he entered into through ritual probably had rituals that are more elaborate—imagine the teenaged Ernest Hemingway experiencing the incense haziness created by a swinging censer in the vastness of Chartres. While this writer and his fictive soldiers might have experienced and learned these rituals among a congregation, at times they re-enacted

² This term is used deliberately to invoke the biblical verses of Matthew 18:18, one of the central texts of Congregationalism: “I promise you, all that you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and all that you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (The Bible).
them individually. A soliloquy in which they address an “offstage” other usually accompanies their individual rituals. This is one of the key means for the warriors in crises to reconnect with the divine.

Embodying the virtues of Jesus as means of integration with the divine is less a study of the phenomenology of religion and more a structural-functional study. Frederic Henry, Robert Jordan, Nick Adams, and other soldiers in Hemingway’s war fiction fight (or do not fight) in order to “take up the cross” and make the world more fair for all people. This might require acts from killing two fleeing Italian soldiers to providing safety for two unknown girls during a huge retreat to delaying oncoming enemy soldiers by giving one’s life. They strive to uphold the code they see as the rules for having the right (el derecho) to live and die cleanly. For, as Thomas à Kempis writes in *The Imitation of Christ* (c. 1400),

> In the cross is salvation, in the cross is life, in the cross is protection from enemies, in the cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness, in the cross is strength of mind, in the cross is joy of spirit, in the cross is highest virtue, in the cross is perfect holiness. There is no salvation of soul nor hope of everlasting life but in the cross. (à Kempis)

Bearing a cross is living a life burdened by the necessity of actions that are uncomfortable but which the soldier character must do. Living a life true to the code (which is supporting what he believes is the Christian right) can lead to the divine and ultimately provides strength and peace that overcomes the temporary discomfort.

The trifold means toward divinity in this literary oeuvre are interconnected: integrating with the divine through nature can have elements of ritual (Nick Adams setting up camp at the Big Two Hearted River) as well as Christian manliness (Robert Jordan contacting nature to fulfill his manly duty). These tropes form a varying nexus,
with the central point being that connection with a higher being, which is an amalgamation of the divinity of Ernest Hemingway’s early life and his mature years. And this belief extends to his soldier protagonists. The taxonomy of the author’s religion is beyond the scope of this study, but, despite his parents and paternal grandfather being Congregationalist and his maternal grandfather being Episcopalian, much evidence exists to classify the mature Ernest Hemingway a Catholic. This seems to be the classification of his warrior characters, too, as, to varying degrees, they display knowledge of saints, sacraments, and dogma unique to that faith. Again, they depict a faith based on congregational worship, but they express their worship (at least in the literature under study) personally and usually alone. It is as if the concept of mass spirituality was tempered with Alfred North Whitehead’s adage that religion is what one does with his aloneness. And this notion parallels the historical departure the West seemed to take during Hemingway’s life away from a conventional Victorian ethos to a modern one of iconoclastic individuality. Recall Robert Jordan’s sardonic thought that the guerrilla Anselmo was a Christian, which Jordan finds is something rare in Catholic countries. Jordan is a Christian Catholic. He is less concerned with fumbling with rosaries and mumbling rote prayers; he knows about these things but finds true faith on personal grounds without filters imposed by distant popes or priests.

Friedrich Nietzsche noted that Shakespeare’s character Othello, early in the eponymous play, exhibits traits of an Apollonian nature and, by play’s end, seems more
Dionysian. As readers learn more about the Hemingway soldiers and deepen their empathy for them, the soldiers seem to follow Othello’s trajectory. These fictive soldiers move from lives governed by rules (characteristics of the Dionysian) to one based on faith and ritual (Apollonian). The rounded characters are not isolated or bent on defying death but rather part of an (absent) communal whole fighting to be part of nature. This is not to imply that the warriors are pantheistic, as they express no inclination toward that direction and mention God and/or Jesus by name. This thread of discussion could easily lead into Immanuel Kant, human nature, and the sublime, but that is a pathway for another study. I discuss Apollonian and Dionysian natures in this study to help demonstrate that, as the reader rounds them out in the texts, Hemingway shows these characters to define new beliefs without totally abandoning their earlier beliefs. Consider Hemingway’s definition of God to F. Scott Fitzgerald (Chapter 1 epigram), which begins “My God painted many wonderful pictures and wrote some very good books and fought Napoleon’s rear-guard in the retreat from Moskova ….” The god of Hemingway and his soldier characters is a personal god not entirely separate from Him in the Old Testament.

The Hemingway soldier fights a private war and seeks the divine privately. Generals and priests are behind the soldiers’ motivations, having laid the foundation of societal or religious duty, but the soldiers mold the foundation for practical use in their worlds.

3 Similar to the thyrsus, noted earlier, used to denote the completion of ancient Greek rituals, Dionysus carries a staff topped with a pinecone.
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