In the nineteenth century the problem was that God is dead; in the twentieth century the problem is that man is dead. In the nineteenth century inhumanity meant cruelty; in the twentieth century it means schizoid self-alienation. The danger of the past was that men became slaves. The danger of the future is that men may become robots. True enough robots do not rebel. But given man’s nature, robots cannot live and remain sane, they become "golems", they will destroy their world and themselves because they cannot stand any longer the boredom of a meaningless life.

- Erich Fromm.
Chapter I

THE MEANING OF SEARCH FOR IDENTITY

If one were to examine American literature with a view to tracing some major themes that have inspired it, "search for identity" would certainly be one of them. Undoubtedly, it is a universal theme and it was articulated by Socrates as early as the Greek civilization but it seems to have a peculiar fascination for the American imagination; and Hemingway was no exception. His works seem to be concerned primarily with the desire to know who he was; and various critics have perceived Hemingway's quest for self in his works.

Maxwell Geismar has, for example, described Hemingway's works as "a solitary excursion of the psyche into the enigmas and shadows of life," and has compared him to "the Shakespeare of King Lear or Timon of Athens, or the Ibsen of the later plays, a Kafka, Proust, James Joyce and in particular perhaps the Russian Dostoevsky." Malcolm Cowley traces Hemingway's kinship with "a wholly different group of novelists, let us say with Poe and Hawthorne and Melville: the haunted and nocturnal writers, the men who dealt in images that were symbols of an inner world." And according to Wagenknecht, "Hemingway has
the sensitive Modern's interest ... in the problem of meaning and values of human life." Moritz has gone to the extent of saying that perhaps, Hemingway is

locked into his own myth and anxiety of the self, he looks into the lonely, alienated self rather than to society with its complex, shifting human relationships, and, like the ancient mariner, tells essentially the same story—permutations of his most deeply felt experience projected and transformed into fictional characters. ... Faulkner's subject is the American South, Hemingway's is himself.... Hemingway so intensified his theme that out of the self he made everyman in our time.

What emerges out of this sampling representing a quarter-of-a-century Hemingway criticism is that Hemingway is a modern; that his subject is his own psyche; and that his quest is for an understanding of himself and the vehicle for his quest is the encounters of his fictional characters with life.

Although many critics have commented on this quest in Hemingway yet no full-length study has been made of this problem. That Hemingway was aware of his mission in life is obvious from his Nobel Prize acceptance speech:

Writing at its best is a lonely life.... For he [the writer] does his work alone, and if he is a good enough writer, he must face eternity or the lack of it each day. For a true writer, each book should be a new beginning where he tries again for something that is beyond attainment. He should always try for something that has never been done or that others have tried and failed.... It is because we have had such great writers in the past that a writer is driven past where he can go, out to where no one can help him.
The speech reveals some remarkable dimensions of his personality and art: writing, for Hemingway, was a sort of spiritual groping; he was a lonely writer and as such his attempt to transcend the human barriers is a strange mixture of the superhuman and the quixotic; his self-reliance to "face eternity or the lack of it each day" and then to survive with this awareness within him would require rich spiritual resources. In his insistence on "truth" in writing one can discover a sort of spiritual self-examination, an honesty and integrity which would not let him bluff the reading public or himself. His writing was for him a sort of means of saving his soul. Besides seeking truth in writing, as the redeemed Harry does in "The Snows," his characters seek other values in life that would make life a worthwhile experience. There is a growing awareness among Hemingway scholars of his search for values (courage, the most obvious and the most commonly commented upon being only one of them). Wyrick remarks:

Throughout the works of Hemingway, there is an evident search toward a workable philosophy of life. Born in a materialistic and pragmatic world, his first reaction was one of violent rebellion. He denounced his native land—in a continuous search for values that would make life a rewarding experience.5

James B. Colvert, while agreeing with Wyrick's view that Hemingway's search was for "values that would make life a rewarding experience," states that the aspects of life which Hemingway chose to delineate subsume the mundane life. The
most characteristic feature of the twentieth century life are violence, war, crime, a feeling of nothingness and the related problem of existence. It is in these areas, according to Colvert, that Hemingway forged and tested his values; and if they are valid for these extreme situations they will be valid for everyday life as well. Bryant N. Wyatt claims that Hemingway is after the bare fact, the fundamental, not the fact clouded with bogus emotionalism conditioned by something from without -- eg., convention or religious training -- which dictates illusional responses.

The implication in this line of argument is that if the author confronts experience honestly and lets only those values that have stood the test of the extreme situations survive in his hierarchy his life will be meaningful, and it will give him a sense of self-realization. Since World War I search for identity has become an acute universal problem (in America at least) in the philosophical sense rather than a personal problem in the psychological sense of deviance and identity crisis. It is symptomatic of the fact that the Western social systems have deprived people of "psychological payoffs," the lack of which is expressed by such terms as alienation, meaninglessness, etc., etc. People generally turn to themselves in this quest because collective behaviour is neither expressive nor practical. Orrin E. Klapp has argued:
Identity, as I see it, is a symbolic matter—a meaning attached to a person, or which he is able to attach to himself, with the help of responses of others, as explained by the well-known theory of George H. Mead. Disturb these responses, disturb these meanings, and you disturb the man. A society fails to supply adequate identity when symbols are disturbed to the extent that they no longer give reliable reference points (in such things as status symbols, place symbols, style models, cultic mystiques) by which people can locate themselves socially, realize themselves sentimentally, and declare (to self and others) who they are.

Individual values which have been confirmed by experience are such psychological pay-offs; and the artist, who deals with symbols, is in a most fortunate situation if his quest is his identity, as Hemingway's was. In other words, psychologically satisfying values give meaning to life and man feels a sense of identity. Values with Hemingway were not sacrosanct; with experience—the interaction of the individual with different aspects of life—some values became more precious and other went down in his hierarchy. So, we see that Hemingway's personal values are manifested in the experiences and reflections of his fictional characters. Everett W. Knight has remarked: "There is a philosophy inherent in all literature. We must have a certain number of unassailable convictions before anything can be said at all." As a matter of fact, in every modern author's work there is an attempt to fight against the process of dehumanization (going on all around us), an attempt to be human, to realize himself by asserting his humanness. The Western man is more action oriented. One cannot realize oneself in one go; one has to be open to experience throughout one's life. Search for identity, therefore, becomes a project,
a process that lasts as long as there is life and one is fully born only at the moment of one's death. There is no contradiction in this view and the other that a man is what he does. A lover is a lover only in the act of loving as a writer is a writer to the extent he has written. In other words, a writer is judged by what he has achieved.

An author like every other individual is fundamentally "a being inter-related with his world" and if he is to seek his identity he must enter into meaningful relationships with the world of which his writings are the witness. Commenting on Martin Buber's views on art Maurice Friedman remarks:

It [art] is the realm of "the between" that has become form—the witness of the relation between the human substance and the substance of things. The great nude sculptures of the ages cannot be understood "either from the givenness of the human body or from the will to expression of an inner state, but solely from the relational event which takes place between two entities which have gone apart from one another."

In art, therefore, the artist lays bare the various relationships he has entered into and how meaningful they have been to him. As no human being can be static and still be human, we can understand him "as we see what he is moving towards, what he is becoming." To realize one's potentialities is to be human; to let them lie dormant is to be sub-human. We do not know what our potentialities are unless we have tried to actualize them. Hemingway confirms this view in "The Snows," the most
autobiographical of his stories:

What was his talent anyway? It was a talent all right but instead of using it, he had traded on it. It was never what he had done but always what he could do. And he had chosen to make his living with something else instead of a pen or pencil. [Underlining mine.]

The various relationships he establishes determine his choices; and his choices determine his being. So a man unfolds his potentialities as he goes along and enters into various relationships. "My sense of being is not my capacity to see the outside world, to size up, to assess reality; it is rather my capacity to see myself as a being in the world, to know myself as the being who can do these things." The uniqueness of a person lies in his capacity to see and explore the vast range of human possibilities in any situation and experience a sense of power as an agent. Freedom, from preconceived notions as well as openness to new experiences, therefore, becomes a priori condition for self-realization. For this very reason courage becomes the supreme virtue in Hemingway because without courage—moral as well as physical—there can be no genuine freedom. Macomber "lives" barely for an hour but it is a happy life because he frees himself from fear. Despite wealth, health, sports, a beautiful wife, as the story implies, he was not happy because he was not a man, a free man, a real man.

Similarly, Robert Jordan knows, when his nerve is crushed, that he has to die: "Still it is plain what sustains him at the end is what sustains every other Hemingway hero: an insistence
on his freedom, an insistence that though he is defeated he
shall be defeated on his own terms. A courageous bull-fighter
can experience immortality and give the spectators a similar
feeling because his courage has freed him from fear and he can
perform in the bull-ring as he likes.

Hemingway wrote in "A Natural History of the Dead"
that men are born like animals and they die like animals. But
man is certainly more than an animal; what distinguishes him
in the animal world is his capacity to break away from the
"blue-print" of his instincts and the ability to enter into
meaningful relationships with the environment to satisfy his
existential needs. Erich Fromm calls man an animal that
produces. Art, which is a creative activity by any standards,
is characteristically a human function in which the artist's
potentialities become manifest, in a symbolic form, of course.
Ernst Cassirer calls poetry as "self knowledge and self criticism."
Elucidating his point he adds:

It does not mean appraisal or blame, justification or
condemnation, but a new and deeper understanding, a
reinterpretation of the poet's life. The process is
not restricted to poetry; it is possible in every other
medium of artistic expression.

Simon de Beauvoir forcefully puts forward the claim of the novel
as the most perfect medium for the artist to reveal his existence:

If the description of essence belongs to philosophy proper,
the novel allows us to evoke in its complete, singular,
temporal reality the original uprush of existence.
So, in the case of a novelist, like Hemingway, who refused to allow a faith, theory, or philosophy to impose a pattern on his quest, every short story or novel becomes a kind of step in the evolution of his identity. "In the self-correcting method of science, ideals and generalizations and values in Hemingway are subject to the test of experience and can be modified, corrected." Since the dichotomy between art and life is not only outmoded but false, according to Camus, it will not be out of place here to assert that it is feasible to trace the evolution of an artist's identity in his works, particularly if having lived in a critical time like ours he has resisted the overwhelming nada and set out, metaphorically speaking, in search of meaning in and of life. Moreover, Hemingway has used literature for cathartic purposes and thus got rid of many things that alienated him from himself and the world:

If he [Nick] wrote it he could get rid of it. He had gotten rid of many things by writing.

(-- "Fathers and Sons")

Or,

My father died in 1928—shot himself.... There is a paragraph in For Whom the Bell Tolls that ... well ... took me twenty years to face his suicide and put it down and catharize it.\^17

And it is also a well-known fact that Hemingway used to call his portable Corona number three his psycho-analyst. These confessional statements gain in significance when we examine
them in the light of another confessional statement by Hemingway that he writes about himself in his novels because he knows himself best.  

In his writings he has translated the possibility of his self into reality, or at least he tried to. He chose to be a writer rather than a journalist because he had the courage to be what he wanted to become. In this manner he created opportunities to unfold his potentialities and to seek his identity. That he was in search of his identity and that he used literature as a means for this quest have been observed by many a critic. Wyatt, for example, states:

Perhaps the outstanding thematic concern evidenced in the writings of Hemingway is one allied to the Socratic dictum "know thyself," for if any one obsession may be inferred from the pattern of his works, it is the constant striving for self realization. It is upon examining his literary output in toto, upon considering all the separate and recurring elements as one panorama, that we perceive their synthesized and harmonious junctions and that the broad montage takes definite and unified shape.... He writes what he knows, and what he has lived. Pre-eminently his writings relate to the stages of author's life, and the boundaries between fact and fiction merge so closely at times as to often make the latter seem little more than reportage.  

The present study aims at examining Hemingway's literary works in toto in order to trace their general contours, the various stages in the evolution of Hemingway's identity and to examine how far he succeeds in his quest for self.
It can hardly be over-emphasized that Hemingway was extremely sensitive. His over-exposure to pain and suffering in life alienated him from the world in which he lived. Malcolm Cowley remarks:

In no other writer of our time can you find such a profusion of corpses: dead women in the rain; dead soldiers bloated in their uniforms and surrounded by torn papers; sunk liners full of bodies floating past the closed portholes. In no other writer can you find so many suffering animals: mules with their forelegs broken drowning in shallow waters off the quay at Smyrna; gored horses in the bull ring; wounded hyenas first snapping at their own entrails and then eating them with relish. And morally wounded people who also devour themselves: punch-drunk boxers, soldiers with battle fatigue, veterans crazy with 'the old rale,' lesbians, nymphomaniacs, bull-fighters who have lost their nerve, men who lie awake all night while their brains go racing 'like a flywheel with the weight gone'--here are visions as terrifying as those of 'The Pit and the Pendulum,' even though most of them are copied from life; here are night-mares at noonday, accurately described, pictured without blur, but having the nature of obsessions or hypnagogic visions between sleep and waking.

In the nineteenth century it had become obvious to most thinking men that alienation was man's existential fate and that he must be reborn in an alien world. Kierkegaard had suggested a return to Christianity before it became formalized or institutionalized, while Nietzsche advocated a return to the early Greeks "before Christianity or science had put its blight upon the healthiness of man's instincts." This intellectual crisis became a public
crisis after the First World War because quite a few illusions by which men lived had been thrown on the dungheap. As a consequence the problems of meaninglessness and nothingness loomed large on the spiritual horizon of man. Atkins suggests that there are three ways of reacting to this problem: to accept that life is insupportable; to ask for the minimum from life to avoid any risk of being frustrated; and to attempt "to restore or rebuild, or to be reborn in theological and psychoanalytical terms. Hemingway has worked through to this position." But as Buber has suggested rebirth is possible only in relationships which are healthy and conducive to future growth. Earl Rovit also discerns in Hemingway the "need to relate his isolated self to all that was not-self."  

Hemingway's major concern has been with the fullness of life up to the moment of death—Dasein in Heidegger's terminology—and what he has to become he can do so only in this world. Renata, who is a Catholic, tells Cantwell, "I will love you ... as long as either of us is alive and after"; and the colonel answers, "I don't think you can love very much after you, yourself are dead" (ART : 101). Hemingway seems to be fully committed to exploring the wealth of his potentialities so long as life lasts. His concern is with the future toward which man continually projects himself:  

So far, about morals, I know only that what is moral is what you feel good after not instantaneously and what is immoral is what you feel bad after....  

("DITA : 8")
"After," here, implies that the future growth of an individual is a function of his values; and to make this growth possible one has to make genuine and responsible choices in all encounters with life. When a certain choice blocks the future growth of a person he feels alienated from himself. "The emptier, the more simplified, and more constricted the world design to which an existence has committed itself, the sooner will anxiety appear and the more severe will it be." If alienation results from one's failure to develop potentialities, happiness should be the concomitant of intense, spontaneous and productive activity which allows one to unfold one's potentialities. Pain and sorrow, naturally, are not the opposite of happiness because the former are our existential lot, and so is death. Incidentally, when one's potentialities are idle, or dormant, the likely emotions are of boredom and depression. Boredom disappears as soon as one finds meaning in a situation. A.J. Ungersma quotes from a tape-recorded lecture given by Viktor E. Frankl in Vienna in the winter session of 1958-59 in support of his theory that "Will to Meaning" is the supreme motivating force in man:

When we speak of meaning, this is not intended in a general way but in a personal and concrete way, such as the attainment of vocational fulfillment, innermost wishes and values, a sense of personal mission which cannot be fulfilled by anyone else but only by one's own personality in a most exclusive way. There is a life task awaiting everybody, which is to be actualized by him alone.... the primary concern of man is to invest as much meaning in life and to realize as many values as possible.
If life has meaning for a person he has identity. Similarly, Karen Horney contends that by his very nature man strives towards self-realization and that his values emerge as he strives.

In *The Sane Society*, Erich Fromm defines a happy and mentally healthy person as

the productive and unalienated person; who relates himself to the world lovelingly, and who uses his reason to grasp reality objectively; who experiences himself as a unique individual identity, and at the same time feels one with his fellow men; who is not subjected to irrational authority and accepts willingly the rational authority of conscience and reason; who is in the process of being born as long as he is alive and considers the gift of life the most precious chance.... The striving for mental health, for happiness, harmony, love, productiveness, is inherent in every human being who is not born as a mental or moral idiot.26

If work, productive work to be precise, can give man a sense of happiness and identity, Hemingway confirms this belief time and again in his works:

All along people were going to work. It felt pleasant to be going to work.

(-- *TSAR* : 31)

Or,

To work was the only thing, it was the one thing that always made you feel good....

(-- *CHA* : 65)

Again,

I'm lonely when I'm not working. I have to think too hard [while working] to ever be lonely.

(-- *ART* : 82)

His belief in work was as firm in old age as in his early life:
Work could cure almost anything, I believed then, and I believe now.

(— AMP : 23)

And,

already I missed not working and I felt the death loneliness that comes at the end of every day that is wasted in your life.

(— AMP : 122)

And when a piece of work is undertaken of one's own volition and to which one is committed and which actualizes one's potentialities it gives one a sort of ecstasy not different from fulfilment:

the faena .... takes a man out of himself and makes him feel immortal while it is proceeding ... that gives him an ecstasy that is while momentary, as profound as any religious ecstasy....

(— DITA : 196)

This ecstasy can be experienced in action, for Hemingway seems to ask how can a man say "what use any part of his body will bear until he tries it" ( DITA : 14)? Commenting on Hemingway's choice of being a literary artist, Rovit says that literature was "his weapon against an alien universe--the means by which he struggled for a piece of immortality."²⁷

"Work is certainly an important means of relating oneself to the world but there are other means as well. At the most elementary level our sense organs are the channels that convey to us: the reality of the world around us. In Hemingway the enjoyment of the senses has been raised to the
level of a cult; what the senses report good is good. According to Klapp,

An ego-deprived person [a deviant in search of a new identity] turns to a kick outside the accepted order when he cannot find a *summus bonus* [any value high enough to be taken as the centre and purpose of life] within. The kick is for the deviant what conversion is for the cultist—his centering and salvation. An identity deprived person takes kicks more seriously than does someone who is satisfied with his identity—what to the latter is merely fun is to the former his big moment.28

Hemingway occasionally sought refuge from the big buzzing confusion of society in the heart of nature, as he sought the enjoyment of the senses for its own sake. These two related experiences contributed to the evolution of his identity to a great extent.

Fromm's concept of productive orientation is not confined to work alone because in the realm of feeling it "is expressed in love, which is the experience of union with another person, with all men, and with nature, under condition of retaining one's sense of integrity and independence."29 Love, distinct from sex, though not necessary for survival, "endows living with a meaning and a purpose."30 Productive love is not confined to an individual of the opposite sex; it embraces all mankind.

If I love, I care ... that is, I am actively concerned with the other person's growth and happiness; I am not a spectator. I am responsible, that is, I respond to his needs, to those he can express and more so to those he cannot or does not express. I respect him, that is [.]
I look at him as he is, objectively and not distorted by my wishes and fears. I know him, I have penetrated through his surface to the core of his being and related myself to him from my core, from the center, as against the periphery, of my being.

Productive love when directed toward equals may be called brotherly love.31

So it becomes almost a categorical imperative for man, who seeks to realize his identity, to enter into "I-Thou" relationship with all men and be actively concerned with their welfare. If the relationship is narrowly defined (such as belonging to a clan, party, Church or nation), or is of a symbiotic nature (wherein the individual loses his identity) it leads to the impoverishment of the individual. Karl Jaspers goes to the extent of saying: "What a person is, he achieves through the cause he makes his own." In the human world, therefore, man's relations must develop with another individual of the opposite sex, and with all mankind if his existence is going to be meaningful. The state, as a political entity, is not interested in its members' developing these relations because the more atomized the individual the easier the control the state can exercise on them. "For society and sociology socialization ['I-Thou' relations] invariably means depersonalization, the yielding up of man's absolute individuality...."32

Similarly, Anselm Strauss asserts that sociology gives us no help in understanding interpersonal relations for the sociologist "tends to be interested in social interaction rather than
what is ordinarily called interpersonal interaction.*
perhaps, the same reason Hemingway's fiction nowhere deals with buying-and-selling or various other activities that form the network of social fabric as a major theme because they cause or enhance alienation rather than end or reduce it.

Productive orientation also recognizes another world with which the individual has to establish meaningful relationship and that is the individual's inner world. For a fuller understanding of the identity of a person, especially an author, one would like to know the nature of his relationships between his "self" and his moral conscience, aesthetic conscience and religious conscience. 34 In other words, man formulates and then pursues moral, aesthetic and religious values in order to define himself because solipsism is psychological suicide; man has to have a certain commitment to values to prevent the psyche from disintegrating. "Unless he [the outsider] can evolve a set of values that will correspond to his own higher intensity of purpose, he may as well throw himself under a bus, for he will always be an outcast and misfit." 35

The famous Hemingway code is basically an attempt to find some moral anchor in a meaningless universe and it reflects Hemingway's pre-occupation with morality and the problem of conduct. In "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" what is implicit is that order and light are supplied by man. Cleanth Brooks says:
What little meaning there is in the world is imposed upon that world by man. Once we realize this, we shall have no difficulty in understanding why Hemingway appeals so powerfully to the French Existentialists. Indeed I shall assign to Hemingway the same role that Professor Tillich assigns to the Existentialists: like the Christian, the Existentialist protests against the dehumanization of man and asserts almost desperately man's dignity as a being capable of moral choice.36

The code may not be rational or intelligent as, for example, it is clear in Cayetano's choice to remain silent but he believes in something, stands for something, and thus his life has meaning ("The Gambler, the Nun and the Radio"). "Every time a value is born, existence takes on a new meaning; every time one dies some part of that meaning passes away."37 Values, even if they are man-made and are elemental like courage or love, distinguish man from things and in the pursuit of these values man asserts his manhood.

In his quest for a happy life man has been so preoccupied with the things of this world that he has sacrificed another world at the altar of materialism. He has cut himself off from that dimension of human experience which the mystics call ecstasy, and the religiously committed, like Gabriel Marcel and Paul Tillich, faith. If religion is defined as something which is man's deepest and ultimate concern then every sane man has a religion; and if art is the witness of the various relationships that the artist establishes to experience a sense of identity it should be possible to trace the artist's
deepest concern in his art. That Hemingway was aware of this dimension of human experience is apparent from the advice the Italian major gives Nick:

If he [man] is to lose everything, he should not place himself in a position to lose that.... He should find things that he cannot lose. 

(— "In Another Country")

It is undeniable that the meaning of the sacrament of repentance, and the meaning of crucifixion are recurrent themes in Hemingway. Although Hemingway chose to confine himself mostly to the secular world yet it would lack discrimination not to see a spiritual dimension in his honesty and devotion to truth in portraying the condition of man. Cleanth Brooks writes:

Even men and women who do not have God must try to make up for him [sic] in some sense, quixotic as that gesture will seem and in ultimate terms at least, desperate as that gesture must be. The Christian will feel that it is ultimately desperate in man that man can never find anything that will prove a substitute for God. But the Christian will do well to recognize his God though hidden by the incognito and manifests the divine reality, though not fully and not in specifically religious terms.37

H.B. Bates goes to the extent of saying that Hemingway brought a Catholic mind to his preoccupation with death which is his only theme.38 It is believed that Hemingway is essentially a religious writer. As a matter of fact, quest for identity is a religious quest.

To search for one's identity one needs must have strong shoulders, metaphorically speaking, because the majority
of people seek escape from freedom, though freedom is a proiri condition for the search to begin. It is a lonely voyage and "a writer is driven far out past where he can go; out where no one can help him"; and it is not surprising at all that many a soul is lost in this wilderness. The most important thing is to make the attempt by entering into a dialogue, by bridging the distance, and if the relationships are positive self-realization should come. Self-realization is a by-product of this effort; or, may-be, here the distinction between ends and means vanishes. In the nature of the Hemingway hero's relationships, perhaps lies the identity of the author, which is a "progress towards a farther stage of being, realised by a free choice. "

A person, who like Hemingway is engaged in a quest for identity, would naturally be concerned with the problem of death because it can cut off all other possibilities in life. Death is, of course, the end of life but if it becomes such an obsession that it paralyses man and he cannot unfold his potentialities, then it is an unhealthy fear. If death is regarded as an event in the future, then man is holding it at a distance outside himself and it amounts to an evasion of the facts of life. But to regard it as an event that can happen at any time gives the concept of death a different complexion:
it can liberate man from the petty cares of life and enable him to lead an authentic existence, to devote himself to projects that are significantly his own. Therefore, the contemplation of death is closely linked with the quest for identity which is synonymous with intense and meaningful living. Critics, like Philip Young, who have emphasized Hemingway's death wish, are wide of the mark because they have ignored this perspective in Hemingway.

Colin Wilson tells us; "There is a margin of the human mind that can be stimulated by pain or inconvenience, but which is indifferent to pleasure." A spiritual or emotional upheaval shakes man out of the accepted mores and ways of thought and his latent potentialities come into play, say, when he is beyond the "indifference threshold" (Colin Wilson's phrase). Christianity robs man of his awareness of death because it promises a life beyond the grave and, therefore, life being continuous, death loses its significance. Similarly, a person who has embraced the creed of Moscow (or Rome) has denied the existence of death and agreed to lead an unauthentic existence.

Therefore, it is most essential for an authentic existence to be aware of death, the supreme nada, so that life asserts itself in all its glory. Ramakrishna Paramhansa received his vision when he was about to plunge a sword in himself; Graham Greene felt that "life contained an infinite number of possibilities"
while playing Russian roulette with his brother's revolver on Berkhamsted Common; and Sartre felt most free under the constant threat of death during the German occupation of France. It is this life beyond the "indifference threshold" that is being explored by Hemingway. Bourjaily confirms this in *The Unnatural Enemy*:

Death, not codes, was Hemingway's subject; it was a country he knew how to hunt and from which he brought back the greatest trophies which are his major works. 41

Life does not have a supra-human purpose; whatever purpose it does have is man-made. In Hemingway there is a recognition that death is the ultimate reality and that death gives meaning to life and therefore one must face life stoically as one must face death stoically—not resigned to it but facing it boldly and thereby living with dignity. "Man may lack a positive purpose," says Colin Wilson, "but at least his will can be intensified by contemplating that which he objects to more than anything else--his own death. This alternative is certainly effective--Hemingway derives his whole strength from it, and his best work conveys an intense feeling of naked existence." 42

That life asserts itself in all its splendour when confronted with death is obvious from Hemingway's account of the marlin's death:

He Santiago felt the iron go in and he leaned on it and drove it further and pushed all his weight after it.
Then the fish came alive, with his death in him, and rose high out of the water showing all his great length and width and his power and his beauty.

(— Toms 84)

And Santiago demonstrates in action what a man can do and what a man can endure when he feels something break in him and there is a coppery taste in his mouth.

Hemingway tells us why he had gone to Spain in the early twenties; he "was trying to learn to write, commencing with the simplest things, and one of the simplest things of all and the most fundamental is violent death.... and if these very simple things were to be made permanent ... it could not be done with any shutting of the eyes" (DITA 6-7). His major theme all his life has been what makes a man live and what makes death-in-life. Two of the arenas where he found his answer were the bull-ring and the war theatre, "because you are over-sensitized because of the shortness of time" (FWBT 360). Paradoxically, the bull-fighter experiences immortality while confronting death:

Now the essence of the greatest emotional appeal of bull fighting is the feeling of immortality that the bull-fighter feels in the middle of a great faena and that he gives to the spectators. He is performing a work of art and he is playing with death, bringing it closer, closer, closer to himself, a death that you know is in the horns.... He gives the feeling of his immortality, and as you watch it, it becomes yours.43

(— DITA 202)

Hemingway regards war as an education for a writer;

"it was just something quite irreplaceable" (GHA 64), because
men live a more authentic existence the closer they are to the battle line. They learn to shed the trivialities of existence and their physical, emotional and intellectual resources come into play. War calls for the clearest thinking and judgement, the best, in fact, in man. For the same reason, perhaps, there is nowhere in Hemingway a harsh word about the enemy, who also functions at his best in the theatre of war.

Stephens points out, "He saw men stretch their powers and adapt [themselves] as often as terrain, weapons or comrades changed."\textsuperscript{44}

This reverence for the enemy refutes Cooperman's assertion that "Hemingway's preoccupation with death is something far removed from existential confrontation."\textsuperscript{45} Hemingway's attitude toward death underwent a change from hatred (in \textit{AFA}) to acceptance (in the late thirties) because it is not only a threat to existence but also a challenge that helps an individual to bring out his best; it defines and refines life's values. In his dying moments Robert Jordan affirms, "The world is a fine place," and the Battle Police on the bridge teach Frederic Henry the meaning of life. Webster argues that death is a subtle antagonist in Hemingway's works but the acceptance of death as an end does not destroy the protagonist's zest for life; on the contrary, his keen desire to drain out all that life has to offer before the inevitable end is the manifestation of life in the face of death.\textsuperscript{46} In 1954, when Hemingway read his
obituary notices he commented that those who had emphasized "his life-long quest for death" had failed to distinguish between "a quest for death and a quest for intense life in the presence of death." Stephens adds: "He thought that was a proper answer too for the academicians who saw his work as an expression of a death wish." 47

Jake (or Nick) as an early protagonist, set out after the war, as he says, "to know ... how to live in it [the world]." His concern is with life and not death. "Perhaps as you went along you did learn something," adds Jake and he "did not care what it was all about," so long as he could live well, significantly and meaningfully. "Maybe if you found out how to live in it you learned from that what it was all about" (TSAR : 114).