Chapter II

OPERATIONS WITHOUT AN ANAESTHETIC

Hemingway seems to be intrigued by the enigma that on the one hand his quest for identity goaded him to lead an intense life and on the other his quest could be terminated by death at any time without any prior notice. Unfortunately, he found life a series of operations without an anaesthetic; violence, suffering, and pain were unalterable facts of life for him. This realization alienated this sensitive soul from life around him. The protagonist in "The Gambler, The Nun, and The Radio" asks himself, "Why should the people be operated on without an anaesthetic?" In more or less the same words Professor MacWalsey raises the question: "... why must all the operations in life be performed without an anaesthetic?" (THAN : 175). It is pertinent to recall that Hemingway describes an operation without an anaesthetic in "The Indian Camp," the first story in IOT, and in the thirties we still find him grappling with this riddle of life.
The need for an operation whether in a body or in
life is the acknowledgement of an abnormal state; in other
words, it is not functioning properly. It also implies that
the former state of normalcy or security is shattered.
Illusions and palliatives do make life secure and comfortable
but Frazer knows that "all the opiums of the people" are no
good. There is a constant tension in the life of every seeker:
between regression to a state of security where illusions make
life rosy and comfortable, and a thrust towards the future
where one learns to recognize the realities of life and wrestle
with them according to one's resources physical, moral and
spiritual. Frazer-Hemingway has discarded illusions like
religion, music, economics, patriotism, sexual intercourse,
"the giant-killer," gambling, ambition, "belief in any new
form of government," bread, and education because all these
are "the opium of the people." He believes in "knowledge,"
gained through experience in the course of his encounters with
life, in the relational events which take a man out of himself
to know himself. Hemingway spent all his life seeking an
answer and Marie Morgan gives us the clue to the direction in
which her creator's search took him:

I guess you find out everything in this god-damned life....
You just go dead inside and everything is easy. You just
get dead like most people are most of the time. I guess
that's how it is all right."

(— THAN 1 205)
Admittedly, the typical Hemingway characters are neither "dead inside" nor naively innocent, like Sister Cecilia; they have been trying to "find out everything in this god-damned life" without the aid of any anaesthetic because an anaesthetic or opium is actually a narcotic, certainly not a remedy. It impoverishes the individual who becomes alienated. It is worth tracing the growth of "knowledge" or awareness in the Hemingway hero who came into the world without "shock-absorbers" installed in him (ART: 214). Hemingway has told us the story of his life in retrospect and we can know what was inside him. Gertrude Stein, one of Hemingway's mentors, made a statement in *Paris France* (1940):

> After all everybody, that is, everybody who writes, is interested in living inside themselves in order to tell what is inside themselves.  

Is it coincidental that Nick's father who initiated him into the adult world let him down? Nick had asked his father, "Daddy, can't you give her [the Indian woman] something to make her stop screaming?" And his father had replied, "No. I haven't any anaesthetic." Nick assisted his father in the Caesarean operation as he was asked to, but "he was looking away so as not to see what his father was doing." A little later Nick saw what the screaming had done to the young Indian woman's husband:
The Indian lay with his face toward the wall. His throat had been cut from ear to ear. The blood had flowed down into a pool where his body sagged the bunk. His head rested on his left arm. The open razor lay, edge up, in the blankets.

(— "The Indian Camp")

Nick had witnessed unwittingly the mysteries of birth and death. Although Nick's naive faith in his father as "a great man" and his own innocence were intact yet Dr. Adams knew what he had done to his son: "It was an awful mess to put you through." Nick's life at that stage was imbued with cheerfulfulness and the certitude that "he would never die" but the events of the night had penetrated to the deeper layers of his psyche and were to act like a time-bomb that would explode in the future, and with disastrous consequences. It was the first operation without an anaesthetic. This story and some others in IOT centre round the theme of initiation. They dramatise the Hemingway protagonist's bewilderment with the world in which he has perforce to grow up. It involves a new perception of the world. To adapt oneself to a new and strange world is a painful process. Some of us take to it as fish take to water; while others feel like fish out of water. For the latter, initiation to the dark forces of the world and their own psyche is, usually, a process of alienation also.

The next story in IOT reveals the conditions that prevailed at home: his mother was a "Christian Scientist"
and a bully, and his father a coward. Both the parents sought escape from the realities of life in their respective ways:

Her Bible, her copy of *Science and Health* and her Quarterly were on a table beside her bed in the darkened room. [Underlining mine.]

("The Doctor And the Doctor's Wife")

Her ignorance is fully brought out by her pseudo-Christian comment on Dick Boulton's refusal to chop the logs: "I can't believe that anyone could do a thing of that sort intentionally."

Dr. Adams too sought refuge from the intolerable atmosphere at home in the cool woods, squirrel hunting in the company of his son. Nick's delayed response finds expression in Robert Jordan's words:

I'll never forget how sick it made me the first time I knew he his father was a coward. Go on, say it in English. Coward.... He was just a coward and that was the worst luck any man could have. Because if he wasn't a coward he would have stood up to that woman and not let her bully him.

("FWBT : 320")

Nick's "sickness" is because of his alienation from his parents.

He obviously loved his father:

His father came back to him in the fall of the year, or in the early spring when there had been jacksnipe on the prairie, or when he saw shocks of corn, or when he saw a lake, or if he ever saw a horse and buggy, or when he saw, or heard, wild geese, or in a duck blind.... His father was with him, suddenly, in deserted orchards and in new-ploughed fields, in thickets, on small hills, or when going through dead grass, whenever splitting wood or
hauling water, by grist-mills, cider mills and dams and always with open fires.... After he was fifteen he had shared nothing with him.

(— "Fathers and Sons")

He must have shared his father's annoyance and impotent rage when his mother burnt his collection of "stone axes and stone skinning knives and tools for making arrow-heads and pieces of pottery and many arrow heads" ("Now I Lay Me").

It is obvious that there was a clash in the boy's mind between a desire to love his parents (which is natural enough) and the urge to hate them for what he had discovered them to be; the situation was as if he had opened the wrong door and found them naked. Here, clearly, is "a situation in which the social norms regulating individual conduct have been broken down or are no longer effective as rules for behavior." It is a form of alienation that transcends the narrowly defined Freudian term, Oedipus complex.

With his disillusionment with life at home Nick began to establish ties with the outside world, especially friends and girls. He lost his virginity with Trudy or Prudie and the experience was highly gratifying and integrating. He tells us, "She did first what no one has ever done better" ("Fathers and Sons"). Nick had "felt hollow and happy inside himself to be teased about Prudence Mitchell" ("Ten Indians"). There is no
means of knowing whether Dr. Adams' report that "she was in
the woods with Frank Washburn ... and they were having quite
a time" is a fact or a device to break off the liaison because
"you can't mix oil and water," as Bill argued in "The Three-Day
Blow." Nick was overwhelmed by his loss:

Nick said nothing. The liquor had died out of him and
left him alone.... He wasn't drunk. It was all gone.
All he knew was that he had once had Marjorie and he had
lost her. She was gone and he had sent her away. That
was all that mattered.

(-- "The Three-Day Blow")

Nick had acted out of "bad faith"; on Bill's instigation he had
sent Marjorie away. It was a betrayal of the bond of love when
he had told her insincerely that love wasn't "fun any more"
("The End of Something"). Bill, a creature of convention,
had let Nick down by indirectly advising him not to let his
emotions get involved in a casual affair with a girl of a
lower class.

In his wanderings away from home Nick had met with
no better fate. He was knocked off a running train by a
brakeman and he had lighted "on his hands and knees beside the
track." His pants were torn, his hands and legs were scratched
and his one eye was blue. Nick made up his mind: "They would
never suck him in that way again"; in other words, he was not
going to trust anyone. Learning that Nick had "never been
crazy" Bugs proclaimed, as it were prophetically, "He's got a lot coming to him." No sooner had he felt at home than he was threatened with violence again. Nick was so dazed with what he saw and learnt in that encounter that he had gone quite some distance when "he found he had a ham sandwich in his hand..." ("The Battler").

The atmosphere in "The Killers" is so charged with violence and a sense of impending doom that his own powerlessness and his failure to grasp "the why" of the situation further accentuate Nick's alienation from the world in which he is perforce growing up. Nick's growing awareness of "motiveless malignity" of the world alienates him from his world. He has seen evil at work and there is no plausible explanation for its existence. Evil does not alter a person's countenance as the husband in "The Sea Change" felt but it causes havoc with a person's psyche. What Hemingway has chosen to tell us of Nick's childhood and adolescence is a sad commentary on the human condition in our time.

When the United States decided to play her role in the war theatre of Europe, the older people, according to Hoffman, joined in to defend France, the younger generation, in the absence of a clear-cut motive, to have a taste of danger, or to escape the life of boredom and monotony at home. In response to Catherine's question why he had joined in the war, Frederic's
frank answer was: "I don't know.... There isn't always an explanation for everything" (AFTA : 18). Leo Gurko drives the point home:

One is forced to conclude that his [Frederic Henry's] action is really motiveless, or at any rate without formal motive. It is a private response to a world that makes no great sense. Since the universe is planless, individual conduct might just as well be. Since the cosmos does not appear well thought out or carefully reasoned, whether an individual does one thing or another makes no great difference, and in any case his reason for pursuing one line of conduct rather than another need not be rationalized, planned, or even definable.... The military ambulance corps makes as much sense in the eye of history as the study of architecture.7

Among the first few jobs assigned to Nick Hemingway in the war theatre of Europe was to collect the corpses and pieces thereof scattered over the compound of an ammunition factory near Milan. While discussing the disaster the dangerous enthusiasts agreed 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.

(— "A Natural History Of The Dead")

Besides the shock and horror, what is significant is the realization that in war the distinction between "men" and "things" vanishes. Later, the sight of "taut and globular" faces of the dead and their bloated bodies made him wonder
whether these were the same men who had been created by God in
His own image. The war had made Mungo Park and Bishop Stanley
look like hypocrites and their faith a projection of wishful
thinking. For the young American the illusions of his divine
origin and his immortality had been shattered. And what man
had done to man had given the sensitive soul a feeling of
nausea.

Nick and his young compatriots shed many a cherished
illusion as they became aware of the destruction, obscenity and
stupidity of war. Their school history books had not taught
them that dead bodies in war were surrounded by an immense
quantity of paper consisting of "mass prayer books, group
photographs... in ranked and ruddy cheerfulness ... propaganda
postcards ... smutty postcards ... the small photographs of
village girls ... the occasional pictures of children, and the
letters" ("A Way You'll Never Be") -- the debris of a wrecked
world. The war had robbed death of all dignity. Among the
survivors there was a painful realization that the elders had
played "a dirty trick" on them. Woodrow Wilson had proclaimed
that America had joined the war "to vindicate the principles of
peace and justice," to make all nations "at last free," and to
defend "the cause of human liberty." Hemingway differed with
the Wilsonian rhetoric of the sacred causes because experiential
reality was different:
I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice ... now for a long time ... I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity.... Abstract words such as glory, honour, courage or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the number of roads, the names of rivers, the number of regiments, and the dates.

(--- APTA : 143-144)

The statement underscores not only the split between Wilson's generation and "the lost generation" but also the latter's disillusionment with abstractions, things that were not experienced by the senses. It may be spiritual poverty--another abstraction--but it is honest, though brutal and naked. Commenting on the passage William Barrett remarks:

The generation of the First World War could hardly be expected to view Western culture as sacrosanct, since they perceived--and rightly--that it was bound up with the civilization that had ended in that ghastly butchery. Better then to reject the trappings of that culture, even art itself, if that would leave one a little more honest in one's nakedness. To discover one's own spiritual poverty is to achieve a positive conquest by the spirit.9

It is obvious that either Hemingway had anticipated the emergence of "the absurd" as a basic reality of life, or the French Existentialists were influenced by the honesty of vision presented in APTA. The degree of shock and subsequent alienation of the Hemingway protagonist may be gauged from the gulf that separates reality from expectation:
I can remember just thinking that we were the home team and the Austrians were the visiting team.  

The unreality of participation in war on the part of the Hemingway protagonist is convincingly brought out by Frederic Henry: "I knew I would not be killed. Not in this war. It did not have anything to do with me. It seemed no more dangerous to me myself than war in the movies" ([AFTA] : 33). The war for him was just a show on a "silly front." Then, as if what he had seen were not enough, he got hit; whether in the leg or the spine, it did not matter. The feeling of immortality--"he would never die" ("The Indian Camp")--was replaced by the fear that

if I ever shut my eyes in the dark and let myself go, my soul would go out of my body. I had been that way for a long time, ever since I had been blown up at night and felt it go out of me and go off and then come back.  

(-- "Now I lay Me")

In Colonel Cantwell's reminiscences of the First World War the first big wound occupies an important place:

No one of his other wounds had ever done to him what the first big one did. I suppose it is just the loss of immortality, he thought. Well, in a way, that is quite a lot to lose.  

(-- ART : 28-29)

The Italian major, Paca, thought that Nick's skull should have been trepanned to relieve the pressure on his brain but the doctors had let him absorb the shock, with the
result that Nick was "certified as nutty." The dream of "a low house painted yellow ... and a low stable and a canal" had become a nightmare for Nick and he would wake "soaking wet, more frightened than he had ever been in a bombardment..." ("A Way You'll Never Be").

What the combatants had lost in the war was more than their immortality; it was their identity because they had been prevented by the war from being what they intended to be. Nick wanted to play football again after the war but his "knee did not bend and the leg dropped straight from the knee to the ankle without a calf," the major who had been "the greatest fencer in Italy," before the war, had "a little hand like a baby's," and of the three other boys who came to the hospital for machine therapy "one ... was to be a lawyer, and one was to be a painter, and one had intended to be a soldier," and now they could not be. They had been cured of the empty slogans, including patriotism: "... there was always the war, but ... we were not going to it any more." And to make sure that the point was not missed Hemingway added; "I found that the most patriotic people in Italy were the cafe girls," who, of course, had never experienced war ("In Another Country").

Philip Young has argued, "... it is the pattern of trauma that he told us about, which looks like the best key to this
personality, and which affords the best single psychological insight into his work, but what the facts prove is that at best it is a partial truth. It is believed that Hemingway's work is a revelation of his growing awareness of the human predicament, which may be called alienation, and his attempt to seek de-alienation and a sense of identity. There is a growing awareness in Hemingway's work that life is meaningless and whatever meaning life may have is to be imposed on it by man himself.

The opening chapters of AFTA are a classic example of a description of the locale and conditions prevailing near the front by an observer, one who was not really participating in whatever was happening there. Frederic Henry's role and contribution were peripheral and he became aware of this situation on his return from leave:

I had imagined that the condition of the cars... the smooth functioning of the business of removing wounded and sick ... depended to a considerable extent on myself. Evidently it did not matter whether I was there or not.

(— AFTA : 16)

The realization that he was not indispensable, even where he was solely responsible, made him conscious of his non-utility but the Italian Red Cross unit gave him a sense of belonging, even though he was an American. His ties with the mechanics and fellow officers and the priest gave him a sense of identity; so he stayed on. He had wanted to go to Abruzzi but he had not gone there because he explained, "wistfully how we did not do
the things we wanted to do; we never did such things" (AFTA : 14).

"We" is only a stylistic device because in a single sentence he switches over from "I" to "we". To say I did not do the things I wanted to do would have meant too much responsibility on the part of "I". It is better to be lost in the anonymity of the collective pronoun "we". To escape from the responsibility of being an individual in his own right, with a name and friendly ties with the priest who belonged there, he had gone to the anonymity of cafes in "the centres of culture and civilization" and brothels where in the morning he did not know who he was with the previous night.

When Frederic was wounded, he did not regard his wound as a consequence of the war; "that was an accident" (AFTA : 59). Until he actually jumped into the Tagliamento there was no reference to "a separate peace." Only Catherine Barkley was conscious of the existence of a hostile order around them:

We mustn't [quarrel]. Because there's only us two and in the world there's all the rest of them. If anything comes between us we're gone and then they have us.

(— AFTA : 110)

If "trauma" had been Frederic's undoing he would have escaped from Milan in the company of Catherine, as he did later; instead, he returned to his Red Cross unit. On his return from the hospital he was overwhelmed by what the war had done to the major, Rinaldi,
and the priest. During the retreat the orders he carried out were to take the hospital equipment in the cars and leave the wounded to their fate (AFTA: 146). In other words, in the eyes of the war-lords things were more valuable than human beings. It was a world in which human values had become topsy-turvy.

During the retreat his sense of normlessness was accentuated by the sight of the suffering humanity on the march. After the loss of the cars, he lost his mechanics one by one: Aymo was shot dead by the Italians, perhaps out of fear, Bonello deserted him to be taken prisoner, and at the bridge on the Tagliamento he parted company with Piani. The climax was reached when he was grabbed by one of the "airplanes" who had mistaken him for "a German in Italian uniform" (AFTA: 175).

Formerly, the Italian army had given him an identity and he felt secure in that; he had felt an obligation toward them. On the bridge the battle police had not only disowned him but also charged him with being a spy. If he had been assured of a fair trial and justice he would have stayed on, perhaps. A summary trial and the subsequent punishment meted out to the colonel by the young and inexperienced soldiers convinced him that he did not belong there. His loss of identity—a sense of not belonging—forced on him "a separate peace." Implicit in this one single act were all the earlier
realizations that he did not belong there and that war was a dehumanizing process. Riding in the freight car on his way to Milan—where he had left the pregnant Catherine to fend for herself—he reflected:

You were out of it now. You had no more obligation.... Anger was washed away in the river along with any obligation.... I was not against them. I was through. I wished them all the luck.... But it was not my show any more.

(— AFTA : 181)

Catherine's love had made his life meaningful and he had felt a sense of belonging to her, he felt some obligation toward her; therefore, thither must he wend his way. The cold efficiency and inhumanity of the battle police had threatened his existence, and if he had surrendered his freedom to act all the latent potentialities, including the power to love Catherine, would have remained unexploited. In the face of death—the ultimate horror—life had asserted itself in all its splendour. This, perhaps, explains why Frederic had been reformed out of war.

Similarly, Catherine's power to love flowered in all its beauty after the death of her fiancé. She, before his death, was bound by convention and in her ignorance she had denied him "the other thing." She was full of regret:

He could have had anything he wanted if I had known.... I know all about it now. But then he wanted to go to war and I didn't know.

(— AFTA : 19)
She had matured fast as a result of this unfortunate and tragic experience. As soon as her chance to make amends came she made no mistake about it. War had cured her of her pre-war taboos and revealed the hollowness of pre-war values. When she met Frederic she was in no better state than "nutty" Nick. Only when the blinkers of illusion had fallen from the eyes of Catherine and Henry could they love genuinely and exist authentically. According to Atkins,

When the moral collapse came after the first war it was Hemingway who salvaged a few values out of the wreckage.... The greatness of Farewell to Arms [sic] lies in its dramatisation of the conflict between struggling values and chaos.12

What had happened at Fossalta was just one event in a series of operations without an anaesthetic which had started in Upper Michigan and which continued long after the war. Jackson Jerald Benson's comments strongly refute the trauma theory of Philip Young:

The trauma that formulated the young writer's views of life and writing was not the sudden, single event of being seriously wounded in war, as Philip Young has suggested, but rather a gradual budding awareness of the sharp contrasts between the narrow view of what life was supposed to be, as apprehended in a particularly narrow Middlewestern small town, and what life really was, as apprehended on the large scale by a man whose vocation both trained him and gave him the opportunity to see well.13

Hemingway's "separate peace" at one level of cognition meant that he was reformed out of the war and at another level of interpretation it implied his rejection of the society whose
norms and mores had proved themselves inadequate for an individual who intended to lead a happy and meaningful life. It was a personal interpretation of the separate peace that America had signed by refusing to play in the international league. Hoffman has cogently summed up the position in these words:

The elders had made fools of themselves, had involved the young in murderous folly; how could they respect them? Nothing they would do in the future could be one tenth as absurd as what their elders had done. Why, then, should they consider themselves responsible for the post-war world? They felt their only responsibility was to themselves.14

Hemingway was painfully conscious of the loss of values and the task of reorganizing his life after the war. The task for the war veterans was all the more difficult because having "done the one thing, the only thing for a man to do, easily and naturally, when they might have done something else" and having felt happy they were nauseated by the realization that the people at home had learnt nothing from the great human debacle and that they were willing to continue to live as if nothing had happened. Krebs had no intention of intruding into the complicated pattern of life at home—"he wanted to live along without consequences,"—nor had he any mind to be "a credit to the community." He was so completely alienated from his family and the society of which the family was a symbol that he shocked his mother by his confession: "I don't love anybody." Of course, it would have been hypocritical to pray to God to
whose Kingdom he did not belong ("Soldier's Home").

The atheism which Krebs had developed presented a sharp contrast to his pre-war background for Hemingway tells us, "Krebs went to the war from a Methodist college in Kansas." Protestantism in the Anglo-Saxon countries had already placed the burden of man's salvation squarely on his shoulders. Although, originally, the emphasis was on moral effort yet the hard existence the immigrants had led in America had forced them to view success in one's profession or business as the index of their being redeemed. Even when life had become comfortable, they out of habit had continued to sacrifice pleasure and love for "things" and technical progress. Having lost faith in God, Krebs, naturally, could not contribute to the Protestant ethic of his mother that "God has some work for everyone to do.... There can be no idle hands in His Kingdom.... You are going to have to settle down to work.... All work is honourable...." ("Soldier's Home").

From this state of anomie—Durkheim's term—there are a number of escapes: a return to Catholicism, a life of the senses, withdrawal from society, rebellion against the status quo which may take many forms, and a retreat into the self. Hemingway seems to reject a life of the senses because the nameless soldier in "A Very Short Story" had "contracted gonorrhoea from a sales girl in a Loop department store while riding in a taxicab
through Lincoln Park." Nor had the Italian major ever married Luz.

We are shown Nick in "Big Two-Hearted River" nursing his damaged psyche back to health by fishing trout, away from the burned-over country and Seney. "He did not want to rush his sensations any," for "the thrill [of losing a big trout] had been too much. He felt, vaguely, a little sick, as though it would be better to sit down." As he was intent on consolidating his sense of achievement "he did not want to go down the stream any further today," into the swamp where "fishing was a tragic adventure." The psyche was not strong enough to go into the swamp of the American civilization from which Nick had retreated temporarily to regain his sense of balance, but eventually he would enter the swamp. His psychic "illness" was his bewilderment with the chaotic world in which there were no guide lines for conduct and, therefore, he had suffered a radical loss of freedom. His problem was more acute than being "nutty" merely; it was how to live in life from which all the familiar landmarks had been obliterated.

One of the central themes in the postwar literature is the alienation of the modern man who has only "a technical communication" with his world and whose spiritual poverty needs no emphasis. It is in this context that Jake Barnes' problem
of learning to live in this world acquires a significance far more than what it appears to be on the surface. His existence is problematic because he can surrender himself neither to the Church, even though a Catholic, as the people did in the Middle Ages, nor to the State that had subjected him to the fraud called the First World War. Jake, as a modern hero, is a rare phenomenon because of his consciousness of normlessness in and meaninglessness of life and his differentness from others in a curious, though tragic, way. He is a true modern in search of himself, as defined by Jung as one who "has come to the very edge of the world, leaving behind him all that has been discarded and outgrown and acknowledging that he stands before a void out of which all things must grow." His emasculation is as powerful a symbol of his alienation as "Old Man At The Bridge" is of the tragedy of the Spanish Civil War.

The events in Paris and Pamplona and the way Brett had exploited his love had chilled his enthusiasm for a life with Brett. We are told, "I had been having Brett for a friend. I had not been thinking about her side of it. I had been getting something for nothing. That only delayed the presentation of bill" (TSAR : 114). When the bill came he felt utterly helpless: "There was much wine, an ignored tension, and a feeling of things coming that you could not prevent happening" (TSAR : 113). Brett had not only overruled his advice but also exploited his friend-
ship; naturally he felt alienated. In another context Clark has defined alienation as "the degree to which one feels powerless to achieve the role he has determined to be rightfully his in specific situations," but it applies to Jake's situation admirably. Normal love had been denied to him and yet in response to a summons from Brett he confirmed that he was reaching Madrid and added "LOVE" to the telegram. He knew what he had done.

That was it. Send a girl with one man. Introduce her to another to go off with him. Now go and bring her back. And sign the wire with love. That was it all right.

(--- TSAR : 183)

He had pimped for Brett and thus sowed the seeds of his unhappiness. Unauthentic existence leads to a guilty conscience; therefore, he had to get drunk in Madrid. Brett confirms that drink is no solution for unauthentic existence; "I can't just stay tight all the time" (TSAR : 141), And Mike is no exception for he adds:

I think I'll stay rather drunk. This is awfully amusing, but it's not too pleasant. It's not too pleasant for me.

(--- TSAR : 156)

In a state of alienation, born of unauthentic existence, religion—particularly in its conventional forms—is at best an opium of the people and its efficacy is of doubtful value. Jake reflects:
... as all the time I was kneeling with my forehead on the wood in front of me, and was thinking of myself praying, I was a little ashamed, and regretted that I was such a rotten Catholic, but realized there was nothing I could do about it, at least for a while, and may be never, but that anyway it was a grand religion, and I only wished I felt religious....

(— TSAR : 76)

It is certain that in this desolate land man has survived God.

Brett is more forthright:

I've never gotten anything I prayed for.... Maybe it works for some people, though.

(— TSAR : 160)

Scepticism seems to have become a philosophy of life for the postwar generation, obviously "lost." Jake's final vision is also sardonically stated: "Isn't it pretty to think so" (TSAR : 189), that Jake could live happily with Brett?

Stallman points out that everything in the novel is "rotten," perhaps, due to the rotten morality of the times but more than the rottenness, the lack of knowledge what is normal is eating into the minds of this generation. Attention has often been focused on Brett's promiscuity, her male attire and free talk, on the acceptance of homosexuality and prostitution as almost normal, but worse still is the inability of the expatriates to define a positive moral action like Brett's sending away Romero in positive terms; it is described in negative terms: "not to be a bitch." However, what the novel projects is a group of people who are learning to live in the
world with all the problems of life increased and intensified.

That it is a limited vision of the world is emphasized by "the choice of the first person narrative with its inherent singularity and confinement" in the first two novels by the author. This technique is not repeated in his later works, and is, perhaps, a reflection of his partial de-alienation. The locales of the early novels and short stories are cafes, restaurants, hotels, railway platforms which are a pointer to the impermanency in the life of the protagonists.

No matter how familiar the protagonist may be with the place, he is not expected to settle there. The characters "use" countries, hotels, cafes and houses, but there is never a real act of possession. The reader waits for the next move.

There is an overwhelming sense of loss, breakdown, fragmentation, dissolution, disintegration, even nothingness which culminates in "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place." We know that the old waiter belongs to the disillusioned and dispossessed of the earth because he affirms:

I'm one of those who like to stay at the cafe.... With all those who do not want to go to bed. With all those who need a light for the night.

And he goes on to explain why he cannot sleep:

It was not fear or dread. It was a nothing that he knew too well. It was all a nothing and a man was nothing too.

Hemingway was an artist who recorded experience without any philosophical bias; therefore, there is no reason to doubt
his vision of nada, the supreme form of alienation. "He knew it was all nada." Only a few people learnt this truth while the majority "lived in it and never felt it." Unless one strived for "a certain cleanness and order," imposed some order on life through art, through knowledge gained as a result of experience, through establishing ties with nature, fellow men, and cosmos and thus gained a realization of the self as the master of one's powers, one would be tempted to agree with the old waiter's verdict: "Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee." 24

That the Hemingway hero has been trying to cope with this vision of nothingness and horrors is clear from what Philip tells Dorothy: "I've had them so long I'd miss them if they went away" (TFC: 65). He need not have any anxiety on that score for life had other horrors in store for him: his father's suicide, 25 for example. There is an indirect reference to this incident in "Homage to Switzerland," while in "Fathers and Sons" Nick's psychic wound is too fresh to be talked about, and in FWBT, the issue is faced squarely. "He had died," Nick tells us, "in a trap that he had helped only a little to set, and they had all betrayed him in their various ways before he died" ("Fathers and Sons"). Obviously, there is a guilty feeling of betrayal and by writing about it he would catharsize it, though later. The lurid details of the tragedy "had not blurred
in his mind, and all the rest of it was clear, including the responsibilities."

That the Hemingway hero had not been fully reconciled to the indignity of his father's suicide is clear from what Robert Jordan tells the guerrillas outside Pablo's cave, while talking about his father's death: "Should we talk about something else?" (FWBT 1,66). Why is there such a dire need for him to identify himself with his grandfather and not his father? The answer is there for anybody to read; he was ashamed of his father:

Then, as he thought, he realized that if there was any such thing as ever meeting in the other world, both he and his grandfather would be acutely embarrassed by the presence of his father. Anyone has a right to do it, he thought.... Sure, I understand it, but. Yes, but. You have to be awfully occupied with yourself to do a thing like that.... Maybe he sent me that little I have through the one that misused the gun.... I could have learned from him what the other one never had to teach me.... And maybe the good juice only came through straight again after passing through that one. [Underlining mine.]

(-- FWBT 1 319-320)

There is a big gulf between the values of the old gang and the so-called "lost generation"; it is this gulf that alienates the Hemingway protagonist from his family, and the culture which has been inherited by him and which causes such human tragedies as World War I. It is a culture which flourished on the negro labour, cut-throat rivalry in business and unscrupulous laws of the economic jungle. Nick-Robert-Hemingway's
father's suicide is not an isolated example for

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

(-- THAN : 187)

From other accounts as well we learn that with the Depression in the late twenties the American dream had become a nightmare. Protestantism in America with its emphasis on worldly success had given birth to capitalism which gave man the freedom to exploit others. "His was the chance of success, his was the risk to lose and to be one of those killed or wounded in the fierce economic battle in which each one fought against everybody else." In any system of economy in which profit becomes the motive force, man becomes estranged from his powers: survival takes precedence over the characteristically human functions and values. Human life becomes fragmented: work is separated from play, home from the workshop or business office, childhood from adolescence, week from the week-end. Men come together for specific purposes and then go their separate ways, with no real interest in each other as persons. This is the worst form of alienation wherein man's self is divided. "In a society that requires of man only that he perform competently
his own particular social function, man becomes identified with
this function, and the rest of his being is allowed to subsist
as best as it can--usually to be dropped below the surface of con-
sciousness and forgotten." 28 It is this culture that is de-
nounced by the Hemingway protagonist and in his opinion only a
total act of renunciation, at least for some time, is necessary
for a proper appraisal and perspective:

Our people went to America because that was the place to
go to then. It had been a good country and we had made
a mess of it and I would go, now, somewhere else as we had
always gone. You could always come back. Let the others
come to America who did not know that they had come too
late. Our people had seen it at its best and fought for
it when it was well worth fighting for. Now I would go
somewhere else. We always went in the old days and there
were still good places to go.

(-- GHA : 236-37)

A certain degree of alienation as a psychological state
is normal with every human being but an alienated person is "one
who has been estranged from, made unfriendly toward, his society
and the culture it carries." 29 The Hemingway protagonist
manifests an acute state of alienation in his denunciation of
the American culture. His desire to go elsewhere reflects his
disenchantment with his native culture on the one hand, and on
the other the hope that somewhere in the world there exists a
community which might give him a sense of belonging and help
him to find the meaning of his existence. It is worth noting
that beneath the tough-guy manners--the stiff upper-lip,
couldn't-care-less attitude toward everything in life--there
lurks a yearning for affection, love, friendship, kindliness, in fact, all that he felt denied in his native culture. He had "made a separate peace" because war made little sense; now he had condemned the whole of Western civilization to the depths of the Gulf Stream for the same reason. The gap between the expectations of an individual—and for that matter of a nation too—and what life has to offer is too big for sensitive minds, like Hemingway's, to bridge. Having lost their former bearings they wander over the face of the earth looking for a community where they might belong, and for security which Helen in "The Snows" sought and which, Colonel Cantwell tells us, "does not exist any more" (ART: 224).

Commenting on Hemingway's alienation and search for identity Jacob Sloan has argued that writers who are members of minority groups—Jews, Catholics, Negroes—are "more aware than other writers of the feeling of estrangement, of differentness, of alienation from the majority of their countrymen. And it is also more personally imperative for them to establish their own identity, as exceptions to the general rule of the larger society they live in." He places Hemingway in a minority group as a "lapsed"—"non-practising"—Catholic. It is interesting to note that Sloan considers the need for identity imperative only for the minority group writers, the majority, drawing their identity from a sense of conformity, the security of numbers.
He goes on to argue:

If 9 out of 10 persons in the country are white, and that one person is black the black man is the one who will feel out of place.\textsuperscript{31}

It sounds illogical, to me at least, that Hemingway became converted to the Catholic faith first and then began to look for "what is special, unique, about him and his differentness, his condition."\textsuperscript{32} Sloan hints at another direction—"The unexamined life is not worth living"—but this philosophical dimension is not explored by Sloan. If Hemingway did belong to a minority group, it is a group that has always counted in human history, the enlightened outsiders.

All his life Hemingway swore, as it were, by his art, and his duty, as he perceived it, was "to tell the truth as he had personally learned it."\textsuperscript{33} One of his major themes has been the presence of "mental and physical pain" in the lives of the people, and "what a beating people take from life."\textsuperscript{34} A retreat from war and a retreat from society are two steps in the same process of alienation because war is only an outward manifestation of the troubled conditions within society. If Hemingway was a citizen of the world, as Carlos Baker has asserted, and if we accept the natural corollary that the whole world is one society, then anywhere he went he would not get peace. "You could always come back," Hemingway had predicted; therefore, the causes which had embarrassed him beckoned him once again. They
became valuable enough for him to lay down his life; in other words he chose to renounce his isolation.

Even if there are no ultimate truths within man's reach it does not mean that one should surrender to solipsism. "Such a view constitutes psychological suicide, for it literally removes the possibility for reliable contacts between self and the outside world.... It follows, therefore, that some kind of commitment to reality is inevitable, or at least psychologically necessary." Search for values--and thus one's identity--is a natural and necessary part of being. Benson states:

All things that are good are temporary; all things that threaten destruction and death are permanent. Knowing these things it is the Hemingway's protagonist's lot to fight anyway. He may not win. But he will fight.

"If people bring so much courage to this world the world has to kill them to break them so of course it kills them. The world breaks every one and afterwards many are strong at the broken places" (AFTA : 193), wrote Hemingway, a long time ago. The picture of the world that he has projected in his works is neither pretty, nor secure, nor comfortable but it is the only world for man to live in; hence he becomes committed to struggle or involvement. The broken places will become strong again.

The causes for Hemingway's sense of alienation were highly complex: they were personal, social, and even archetypal,
but undeterred he began his quest for values and meaning in life. The awareness of human suffering and death instead of hindering him acted as incentives because his quest could become the means of transcending them. The very acknowledgement of the existence of alienation in his life constituted a major step toward solving it. In isolation there lay no solution to his problem; in involvement there was definite hope.