

**The Counter-Momentum against Despair: A
Resurgence of Ancient Values in Modernism and the
Southern Renaissance**

by

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Introduction: The Literary Critical Framework

It is necessary to begin this thesis within a certain theoretical groundwork. Human beings, for the past thousands of years, have been right to ascribe meaningfulness to words because they are interlinked with inherent images or representations of persons, places, objects, and ideas in reality. Most human beings have not deceived themselves in this regard. It is true, per the removal of the tendency to dogmatize theory, that words do possess a certain phantasmal quality to them. For example, a writer may describe a character as “long-haired, freckled, and blue-eyed,” but the actual image that the reader is attempting to imagine is not concrete within one’s mind. The only image that the reader possesses is a referential image that points toward the experiences of the reader: the reader is left to imagine this image by grafting it onto one’s various memories of long-haired people, freckled people, and blue-eyed people in various shades and colors of appearance. The reader is then forced to translate that meaningfulness into one’s own level of comprehension. However, through this translation, the image becomes direct and precise to a high degree because it is the precisely-noted qualities, and not every single intrinsic detail, that matter in the formation of the image of such a face within the mind of the reader.

While various types and tiers of learning vary, per various education theories, the fact remains that there is ever a fundamental dynamic of knowledge: the student both hears the voice of the other and responds to that voice through one’s own voice. The student learns from the experiences of other people and then synthesizes that knowledge in the context of one’s own experiences. The modern college student is capable of learning about various other existent prisms of worldviews and ideas. The modern college student is then capable of responding to them. It is not impossible for one to break free of one’s own experiences and worldviews through an inherent suspension of disbelief. Socrates will ever interrogate everything that exists. There is no human being in this world who can dare to rewrite Socrates’ voice in one’s own image, and

this is not a logical fallacy. If we dared to claim that Plato's representation of Socrates was that of a Roman woodworker who was mute and could not speak a word of ancient Greek, then we would, objectively, remain completely incorrect. The question remains as to why many currents of contemporary literary critical thought attempt to overwrite the views of others in favor of their own views.

For the same reason that one should not invent narratives for one's own class of students, transforming them into one's own characters, and then grade them according to one's own aesthetic tastes, one also should not do this unto the writers and poets and critics of the Canon. It is a grotesque, hubristic, and ultimately selfish act of disrespect, to attempt to steal away the voices of other dignified human beings. It is blasphemous sacrilege to do so, particularly, to individuals who cannot vocally defend themselves because their spirits passed onward long ago, while their bodies were returned unto the soil of the Earth. Let each and every literary critic, in attending, thereof, unto this history, take heed, and ask oneself: "Would I want my work to be rewritten by every reader unto the end of Time, even after I am dead?" We, as scholars, must necessarily endeavor to care for the preservation of our scholarship, the voices of the respective authors and poets of the world, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religion, or lack thereof.

Through the exercise of a clear and comprehensive close-reading of multiple texts, the following literary critical framework shall be established: 1. Each text is an amalgamation of the subconscious of the writer, including the writer's past and then-current beliefs, worldviews, rational processes, and forms of experiencing reality. For example, Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* is not an atheistic or nihilistic novel because of Hemingway's intrinsic Roman Catholic beliefs, which would have seeped into his prose even if he had attempted to filter himself

through the act of writing. 2. Each text is a response or reaction to, rather than a product of, a given cultural framework, sequence of material conditions, or an overarching structure of society in its cultural, economic, and political dimensions. The text may respond in a state of agreement, disagreement, or somewhere in between, toward such forces. The text cannot completely embody such forces. If a given text lends itself toward the bourgeoisie, then it does so because the text, and the subconscious of the writer of the text, has implicitly agreed with forces that the Marxist literary critic would ascribe to the bourgeoisie.

The distance between the reader and the writer is important here. If a given text lends itself to a rejection of Marxist theory, then it would be a grave impertinence, and an inherent lack of scholarly insight, for one to then graft one's own perspective onto the text, regardless of how the text, and its writer, might resist that perspective. One's own views, in a comprehensive textual analysis, should -respond- to the text and its writer, while also -recognizing- the views of the writer that have been expressed through the text. 3. The writer has her/his own individual voice. This voice cannot be overwritten by the reader, save by the limitations of the reader's own range of knowledge and experiences, which would reveal itself as the fault of the reader than as the fault of the writer. This is true because the reader should be subjected to certain expectations of knowledge, and the reader can arrive ever closer to the fundamental meaning of the words within a given text by meeting these standards through research. To standardize is not always to hegemonize.

Let the literary critical scholar ask oneself: "Why do we teach Literature, and what is critical thinking?" Well, for one pertinent matter, to think critically is to think beyond oneself, beyond one's own experiences, desires, dreams, longings, and failures. To think critically is to respond, with precision and acuteness of thought, to something that exists outside of and apart

from the individual self. When a reader reads a coherent sequence of words, sentences, paragraphs, and beyond, various images are indeed conjured within the mind of each reader. Reading comprehension is quite possible. We teach and read Literature in order to learn from the stories of other human beings. We should not teach and read Literature in order to read ourselves into everything that we read or to profess ourselves in everything that we teach. Even still, there will ever be a barrier between myself as the reader and the direct thoughts that had circulated within the neural pathways of the brain of Ernest Hemingway the writer. This is the case because no human being can gain transparent and authoritative access to every single thought that occurs within the mind of another human being. One can, however, access that which has been expressed through words throughout a given text. Moreover, those who would dismiss the existence of God have probably not reflected on what the implications of the word, "God," are, and this Thesis shall endeavor to delve into this depth of meaning, in so far as it is present in the selection of texts that shall be treated by this Thesis.

This Thesis is a direct exercise of the literary "theoretical" framework that this Introduction has established. Dante, Shakespeare, Pound, Hemingway, Roberts, and Warren all have voices, their texts are forms of self-expression, and their works are expressions of their experiences, worldviews, and intrinsic knowledge, which contain several intersections. One can still read politics into a text, according to this established framework, but one should also respect the author, and make the fundamental distinction between the author's voice and one's own voice. The author's voice is not dead. The author's voice is constituted by the author's worldview, which is presented by the text.

As such, it is safe to declare that Dante and Shakespeare were real people. It is safe to declare that Dante was a Christian. It is safe to declare that Dante was an epic poet. It is,

however, not safe to declare that Dante remains in complete accordance with *The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* or its equivalent explications on part of Catholic theologians in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Nor is it safe to declare that the modern Catechism reflects every single particular aspect of medieval Catholic theology. Even still, it is possible, with Dante's probable bias against Florence in mind, to declare that Dante -is- still well aware of core Catholic Christian and humanist values. Shakespeare, however, remains an enigma, and readers are doomed to perceive his sonnets and plays only through their own frameworks of knowledge, worldviews, and experiences for this reason. This is because biographical, hard, evidence, concerning Shakespeare's faith, worldview, beliefs, and other subconscious knowledge, is rather scant. All that one can assume, in a comprehensive literary analysis of Shakespeare, is the general Anglican-Elizabethan, and later, Jacobean, atmospheres of his time-period. Whether or not Shakespeare sides with a particular character, however, is left to the reader and/or viewer to decide. With Pound, it is not impossible to declare that his earlier Evangelical Christian impulses remained present within his subconscious to some degree. However, Pound did maneuver more toward pagan Classicism and an overarching resonance of despair throughout his life.

It is the duty of an astute reader, scholar, and critic, to detect these subtleties in a comprehensive literary analysis. Hemingway, contrary to atheistic currents in Hemingwayan scholarship, was a devout Roman Catholic throughout great portions of his life. Roberts was definitively of a Kentuckyian Protestant background. Warren expressed a core personal belief in God, although he seldom attended Church, and this, too, was made manifest throughout his works. The grand majority of these writers have expressed their core values, beliefs, worldviews, and experiences through their texts. The reader may respond within one's own range of knowledge, worldviews, and experiences, but one must also, even still, recognize the inherent

need to recognize the knowledge, worldviews, and experiences of these writers and/or poets, and respect their voices. Dante utilizes his Christianity in response to the overarching framework of despair in epic poetry. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* further reveals the inherent contradiction between Christianity and patriarchal, Euro-centric, conquest, dominance, and oppression, revealing the prime root of all human suffering through Original Sin (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* reveals the inherent conflict between the Christian and Modern-Crony-Capitalist "values," which dispel certain Marxist notions concerning the role of religion in an economic framework. Hemingway's works re-ground the High-Modernist tradition in the need for a recognition of universally-applicable values that oppose despair. Roberts' works reveal how Christianity can relieve the suffering of the oppressed and of the oppressor on the path to salvation. Warren's work reveals how Christianity is the prime solution to various metaphysical quandaries that have been produced by solipsistic and/or deterministic and/or nihilistic currents of thought.

One must separate that which is written on the pages of sacred and doctrinal, Catholic-theological, texts, from the actions of those who claimed, and yet failed, to uphold such values, doctrines, dogmas, and principles. Crusaders, inquisitors, conquistadors, klansmen, oppressors of women and oppressors of people of different ethnicities, and other deviant persons who misused their faith in the name of sin, should no longer be viewed as "spokespeople" for the history and identity of Christianity or of Roman Catholicism's particular expression of Christendom. These false equivalencies must end. It is time, at long last, for our thoughts to return to the Earth. The return to Christian themes in certain High Modernist and Southern Renaissance sources indicates the existence of a literary counter-momentum, which reacts against the pervasive post-World

War I, and broader 20th Century, environment of nihilism and despair (Warren, *America and the Diminished Self* 30).

Chapter I: Dante Reconsidered

Dante's *Divine Comedy* focuses on a key element of Catholic theology: the nature of divine love. While some may contend that the theology is irrelevant in a Post-Modern era, the Post-Modernity of the present time, in fact, manages to indirectly prove the need for the theology. Post-Modernity is also Ancient Pre-Classicism in disguise:

Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus
and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaians,
hurled in their multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls
of heroes, but gave their bodies to be the delicate feasting
of dogs, of all birds... (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 1.1-5)

It is the Poet lamenting the impending doom of the Achaians in despair. It is Thetis lamenting the fate of Achilles on the shores of the sea: "Your birth was bitterness... / Now it has befallen that your life must be brief and bitter / beyond all men's. To bad destiny I bore you in my chambers" (1.414; 417-18). This is the heartlessness of despair, the void of the "Inferno," which has not changed in its nature since Pre-Classical times. This thesis will not claim that Dante had ever read Homer, which would be historically inaccurate. This thesis shall, instead, reveal how Dante responded to despair in general, which was present in the writings of both Virgil and Homer. Dante presents the notion that despair is not the only option. Dante perceives the human longing for divine love, and the fundamental crux: this longing could not have merely functioned as an accident of nature. The essence of this particular form of longing is unique to the human species, and it stems from the ability to make "distinctions, both hidden and quite clear, ..." (Dante, *Paradiso* 19.42). It is not instinctual. It is rational. It is embedded in human consciousness. However, the satisfaction of this longing remains temporal in the post-Fall world. It grasps for that which cannot be attained without the aid of God. Dante's *Commedia* presents an adequate solution to the problem of despair: a vision of epiphanic love that can negate despair because of its fundamental satisfaction of the human need for grace.

In the Homeric World, the gods are either a temporal boon or a palpable threat to human beings in many cases. The Poet speaks: “And the will of Zeus was accomplished...” (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 1.5). They intervene on their own tastes and whims, save that of Zeus, whose will appears to be that of an unchangeable *moira* (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 1.5; Staten 22).

Regardless, the benefits that the competing wills of the gods grant unto human beings are temporal. Achilles receives a conditional form of immortality: wounding him in his heel will kill him (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 1.414; 417-18). His conditional immortality does not matter in light of his impending doom. Odysseus is spared from many calamities on his *nostoi*, but he will ultimately die, even if from old age. No amount of temporal graces can bestow the ultimate grace upon him: immortal identity. As the *psuche* of Achilles proclaims: “I would rather follow the plow as thrall to another / man, one with no land allotted him and not much to live on, / than be a king over all the perished dead” (Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer* 11.489-91). The *psuche* is doomed to flutter around the Underworld without meaning. As such, *The Odyssey* is eclipsed by the realities of the Iliadic World. Despair remains at the core of the Homeric Epic. Virgil also echoes this despair in *The Aeneid*. Aeneas passes through the gate of “false dreams” (Virgil 6.1195). Virgil’s verse is melancholy: Augustus’ victories are eclipsed by the deaths of Dido, Pallas, and Turnus (4.914-16; 10.663-70; 12.1268-71). However, Anchises, “in the deep of a green valley,” receives a positive fate in Elysium (6.898-904).

Arguably, the concept of Elysium is a reply to a fundamentally human urgency (Virgil 6.805-21). This urgency is defined by the Church as the need for Grace: the search for God (Pohle 1). Moreover, the search for piety is inherent in Virgil. Aeneas declares: “...It is not / my own free will that leads to Italy” (Virgil 4.491-92). The fundamental nature of *pietas*, however, is ambiguous. Pious or “loyal” Aeneas struggles to learn the nature of the divine in so far as it

concerns the lives of human beings (1.276-29; 4.446-92). Virgil's verses sing: "These are his words; though sick with heavy cares, / he counterfeits hope in his face; his pain / is held within, hidden..." (1.290-92). Aeneas labors hard throughout his struggles: his human failures have severe costs (4.914-16; 10.663-70; 12.1268-71). Dante enters into the epic tradition in order to provide a solution to the problem: Christianity and its Judaic predecessor. In Homer, one can discern the brutality of a hopeless human existence. This is the essence of the Fall: human beings have lost contact with the natural law, and they have subconsciously abandoned all sensibilities of hope in their natural condition of concupiscence (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). This condemnation results in nothing more than the need for grace: to be saved. The despair that is inherent in the Homeric and Virgilian verses is confronted by Dante.

The reasoning as to why Dante placed so many of the Classical heroes in the "Inferno" is simple: they lived without hope, and they must continue to exist in a state of utter hopelessness (Dante, *Inferno* 3.1-9). And yet, Dante plunges into following: "Consider how much valor has made it worthy / of reverence, beginning with the hour / when Pallas gave his life to give it sway" (Dante, *Paradiso* 6.34-36). Note the emphasis on the term "valor," synonymous with the term "courage," and its importance in this context (6.34). It establishes a value as a universal Truth, which is expressed by the Church. If the Church possesses the fullness of the Truth, then the fullness of the Truth is not dependent on the petty grievances of humankind. To this end, here is a list of such petty grievances: Crusades, economic practice or anti-usury laws, the legalistic forms of gluttony, sloth, wrath, envy, lust, avarice, pride, and the proper measurements of penance through flagellation. The list can still continue as it concerns: extreme starvation and mortification, the wearing of camel hair shirts, how many times one must be whipped for one's sins, how many Hail Mary's should be recited after the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and *et*

cetera ad infinitum. All of these things have one thing in common: Truth.

There is still room for contrasts between virtue and vice: even from within imperfect situations. In *Paradiso*, there is complete peace (33.145). However, there are necessities on Earth: “Then, beneath its wings, / when Lombard tooth bit Holy Church, / Charlemagne, in victory, gave her comfort” (6.94-96). Charlemagne cannot simply stand by and watch the Lombards rape, murder, and plunder his people. At the same time, however, one can observe how: “...’Wretched Cleopatra still weeps because of it. / She, fleeing before its advancing front, / took from the asp her quick and baleful death’ ” (6.76-78). Dante, in this stanza, recognizes how it is important to see that Cleopatra “weeps,” and that, therefore, so the “Lombard tooth” is also tragic, which leads the reader toward the epiphanic vision of divine love (6.76-78; 94-96). Tragedy is the necessary contrast, and without which, comedy would remain indiscernible. One should not enjoy the necessity of defense against one’s foes on a field of battle. One should, ideally, seek for the spiritual good of all, even if it entails the endurance of the tragedies of war, strife, and moral failures on Earth. Christianity does not imply that one must, therefore, dismantle all systems of government, all laws, and all armies. It implies that virtue must be applied to situations that are specifically difficult. The actual applications of Truth, as a result of this, have changed over time. At times, virtues and Truth itself were misapplied and brought into motion in sinful ways.

Hence, there are differences between early Christian practices, Medieval Catholicism, and Modern Catholicism. However, Truth is not the application, but rather, that which is applicable to any of these particular situations: “I can see clearly how, reflected in your mind, / the eternal light that, once beheld, / alone and always kindles love, is shining” (5.7-9). It is this eternal love that constitutes the heart of Truth, which is unchanging as a result. The

concentration camp guard who tosses his victim into the inferno-oven will never, ever, have exercised eternal love in that situation. This is the scythe of Truth, the reality, which defeats moral relativism utterly, because the philosophy of the contingency of values and beliefs cannot constrain the concentration camp guard from performing his vile deed.

A hypothetical individual, who is as of yet unconvinced of the existence of evil, ought to visit Auschwitz or Dachau, gaze upon the ovens, and behold the inferno of death. One would hope that, sociopaths and sadists excluded, one would feel the void of absence that constitutes evil: “I did not die, nor did I stay alive. / ... / what I became, deprived of both” (Dante, *Inferno* 34.25; 27). Sometimes, however, in the history of the Church: Truth was not applied certain situations correctly, and revisions were necessary for this reason. The Spanish Inquisition, the predecessor of the death-camp, is one such example of this. However, as Dante reveals through the words of eternally-condemned Pope Nicholas III: “Beneath my head are crushed the others / who practiced simony before me, / now flattened into fissures in the rock” (Dante, *Inferno* 19.74-75). Hence, the Church had taken several controversial stances throughout its history on subjects including and not limited to “simony” among other matters (19.74-75). Logically, the sins of Church prelates and priests cannot, in the logic of the theology in question, negate the notion of divine love (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.145). These earthly, base, and sinful matters do not constitute the heart of Truth. And now, it is most necessary, to accurately define Truth in an imagistic way.

“Truth” is a difficult subject to contend with in one paragraph, but this paper shall perform at its best. To begin, “Truth” is love. Love is the self-sacrificial mode of being: “Color of love, expression of compassion...” (Dante, “Vita nuova” 642). Love, at its core, in the Christian model, does everything it can for the other person. It sacrifices the self in favor of the other’s needs, as Dante continues to describe it in the mode of courtly love: “it was her great

unselfishness alone; / because the light of her humility / shone through the heavens with such radiance...” (635). Ideally, the needs of every person would be met if every person in the world functioned in this way. Food would be naturally shared and allotted, with quality, no person would be left homeless and starving in a street or anywhere else, no one would be barred from aesthetic pleasure, and no one would suffer unjustly, save from natural causes. All people would, moreover, dwell in a state of peace, caring for the other, allowing other people to care for oneself, creating a utopian vision of existence. There would be no room for racism or class conflicts in this system, nor for wars, and nor for the emotions that lead to war. The “Realism” is Original Sin, the Fall from grace, and the natural turn toward a distorted vision of selfhood (Harent, “Original Sin” 1). In Christian terms, “the self” is the masquerade: it is distinct from the true self, or the ideal self, which is known only by God Himself. The false self is a false identity, a fiction, and it is the overtly narcissistic form of self-consciousness. It is this phantom that led all of the characters of the *Inferno* into the abyss. It is hidden between the lines.

Love does not discriminate. It views all individuals as sisters and brothers: part of the created Whole, which belongs to God (Dante, “Vita nuova” 635-36). It is hardly akin to Agamemnon’s boasting, and it is certainly alien to Achilles in his self-pitying rants (Homer, *The Iliad* 1.352-54; 6.55-60). Finally, the essence of Truth is the nature of unchanging Divine Love, which is immeasurable in its depths: “...everywhere in heaven / is Paradise...” (Dante, “Paradiso” 3.88-89; 33.145). It demands that the individual person should look upon one’s fellow human being, not as a threat, but as another self, and to treat that person in the same way that one would treat oneself. Through giving, one receives. This is not Odysseus charging with Telemachus to slaughter all the suitors in order to plunge them into “dark doom” (Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer* 22.1-330). It is not Aeneas leaving Dido bereft to die, or plunging his sword into the

chest of Turnus in Pallas' name (Virgil 4.914-16; 10.663-70; 12.1268-71). Truth is at the root of why every soul in Hell belongs in that place.

The particular forms of the absence of love are the vices (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). They concern misuse and disrespect. The gluttons, for example, have misused the purposes of food for survival (Dante, *Inferno* 7.24-57). The slothful have misused their potential for serving the Will of God (8.121-26). The wrathful have misused their emotions (8.109-120). The lustful have misused their capacity for earthly love: "More than once that reading made our eyes meet / and drained the color from our faces. / Still, it was a single instant overcame us..." (5.130-32).

Francesca, in particular, betrayed her husband through her misuse of her sexuality (5.121-38). However, in all of these crimes, it is their nature that counts the most: the absence of love. The absence of love led to all of these fates. Food may be enjoyed, but its value must be perceived, and it must not be wasted. Sex -can- produce a good form of ecstasy, if it is performed in the spirit of true love, which does not treat the other person as a mere physical object. Ulysses did not love his wife Penelope: he abandoned her and led all of his crew to their deaths (26.94-96; 139-42). He also deceived an entire city, Troy, to its slaughter (26.58-60).

In all of these supposed "heroic deeds," the absence of love remains. There is no everlasting divine love in the pagan system. There is only human love, which quickly becomes transformed into revenge, which was revealed through Achilles' vengefulness in light of Patroclus' death as well as Aeneas' vengefulness in light of the death of Pallas (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 22.344-54; Virgil 10.663-70; 12.1268-71). Once they enter Hell, it becomes clear that these souls have forfeited their potential for love, and as such, they lose the right to be loved (Dante, *Inferno* 3.1-9). This is why Virgil rebukes Dante's cowardice (3.14-15). The message is clear: "DIVINE POWER MADE ME, / WISDOM SUPREME, AND PRIMAL LOVE..."

“/...ABANDON ALL HOPE, YOU WHO ENTER HERE” (3.5-6; 9). Hell is the absence of the presence of true and divine love within the souls of the eternal sufferers. One should also recognize: “JUSTICE MOVED MY MAKER ON HIGH...” (3.14). This line can be misinterpreted, with the emphasis on the term “moved,” but God, as Infinity, does have the ability to enforce His own rules (3.14). If God was “MOVED,” for Dante, then He “MOVED” himself toward the “JUSTICE” that He, Himself, created, which means that He is ultimately unconstrained in terms of power (3.14). Hell is eternal suffering without reprieve. It was formed by divine love: in a loveless universe, those who were treated unjustly would receive no measure of reprieve whatsoever (3.6). Even still, the Homeric World is still more harsh than the world of Dante.

The Dantean approach toward representing the need for grace is as follows. The characters in the epic as a whole can be defined in four categories: Classical figures and allusions, mythic representations of historical figures, and direct representations of historical figures, as well as individuals who Dante personally knew in real life. The Classical figures came from the epics that preceded Dante, which were, doubtless, from Virgil (Dante, *Inferno* 4.1-144). Dante did not actively read Homer’s actual text, but he most likely knew the stories in a colloquial way. Even so, a modern reader can view Homer from a Dantean perspective. It is not difficult to detect Achilles’ depth of despair in *The Iliad*, which nearly echoes Post-Modernity from a philosophical perspective.

Achilles’ despair is the death of God in its ancient form: the endless waste of ruin. Achilles, and most of the Classical heroes, temporarily suspend this despair in their search for *kleos* or glory. Even still, they perish nonetheless. Shakespeare will later echo this same, unchanging, nature of despair in *Macbeth*:

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
 To the last syllable of recorded time;
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
 Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
 And then is heard no more: it is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing. (Shakespeare 5.5.16-27).

The Shakespeare passage pushes the viewer to the heart of the matter: Macbeth enters into the position of a classically tragic hero, who is doomed toward a nihilistic death, which does not provide relief in any form (5.5.16-27). It is a suffocating notion of death (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 1.1-5). Shakespeare's passage illustrates the type of despair that is fundamentally present in Homer's verse. Dante also reveals this same type of despair. The despairing literally gain that which they deserve: eternal despair and restlessness. In short, they have chosen this fate, and they have not sought a different one. This is a key point in which Dantean critics may contend with this paper.

Now, it is necessary to disseminate the theology of Dante's verses: its greatest achievements and its errors. First of all, Church theology has evolved since Dante's era on the question of righteous pagans and their fate. The Church contends that the Divine Mercy of God may be conferred by God upon any member of His Creation, not because of the person's errors, but because God hath created that individual (Pohle 1). As such, human souls do not have a position in which they might condemn souls to Hell. God alone knows the individuals who condemned themselves. He hath measured fairly with every individual. This is the heart of the faith. Dante, however, breaches these rules in the formulation of his art. He assigns positions to souls in Hell: some of whom Dante knew in real life. Fortunately for those souls, Dante is not God. Even still, the point that Dante emphasizes must not be lost: "the Love that moves the sun

and all the other stars” (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.145). The presence of various Popes and monks in Hell does not matter (Dante, *Inferno* 19.49-120). It is the nature of their sins that matters. It is the reasoning behind why one must repent of these sins.

One must repent of all of these sins because they offend the type of love that God desires for all human beings to possess: the divine, immeasurable love, which forgives all things and seeks the good of the other and including of one’s enemies. Count Ugolino, for example, did not remain strong: he loved the prolongation of his own suffering more than he loved his perished children (33.52-75). He admits: “Then fasting had more power than grief” (33.75). He despaired in his hunger, resultant from his deprivation of food, or “fasting,” and ate of their dead flesh (33.74-75). Granted, this judgment may appear harsh, but one of the core requirements of the Christian discipline is to endure all suffering in the name of love. This is because of the fact of the Crucifixion: God, Himself, endured the worst forms of suffering, innocently, to save the guilty (Harent, “The Virtue of Penance” 1; Pohle 1). God loved human beings far more than human beings ever loved God.

This message was necessary for the following reason: the dangers of history. Pagan religions, as revealed through Homer, did not provide the opportunity for such love (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 1.1-5). Odysseus is incapable of loving or sparing the suitors from their imminent death (Homer, *The Odyssey* 22.1-556). Moreover, as Homer’s poetry sings: “So he [Priam] spoke, and stirred in the other [Achilles] a passion of grieving / ... / ...Achilleus wept now for his own father, now again / for Patroklos...” (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 24.507; 511-12). Achilles did not love Priam, and his kindness to Priam was grafted on his honor as expressed toward the memory of his own father and Patroklos (24.507-16). In short, Achilles has access to a human filial love that cannot be expressed toward strangers. It is a divisive love that dictates who shall

live versus who shall die. Achilles' love for Patroclus negatives the possibility of ever loving Hector, who slew Patroklos (22.401-11). As such, this love is neither immeasurable nor divine. It is limited in its function and range of focus. It perishes in the abyss of despair. Similarly, Odysseus' love for Penelope negates any possibility of loving the suitors (Homer, *The Odyssey* 1-330). The divisiveness of this love reveals itself yet again.

On the other hand, Christianity challenges the disciple to love one's enemies. Of course, Dante placed several of his enemies in the *Inferno*, which is suspect to a point. Once again, Dante, rightly or not, is using his fellow Florentines as examples in a parable of Christian morality, which does not necessarily imply that he personally condemns these individuals (Dante, *Inferno* 6.49-84). After all, Dante the character is not the same person as Dante the poet: save in the *Paradiso* (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.130-45). Dante, as his own character, struggles in his revelations of divine love. It is not a simple or easy process. Dante must journey away from the dictates of human judgment, and maneuver toward the just nature of divine judgment, which contains the inherent primacy of mercy.

Maneuvering toward the *Purgatorio*, the particularity of the responses of the penitent sinners is dependent upon both the individual and universal nature of each sin. While the contrapasso is direct, the indirect focus is on the remedies of divine love toward the particular situation that is in question. Divine love must defeat every weakness, and some form of expiation is necessary in order for this to occur. The forms of expiation all have this in common: they involve a form of redemptive suffering that provides a form of *moira* in exchange for the unjustly-acquired pleasures (Staten 22). This is one of the inclinations of *The Iliad* toward a larger system: Achilles' honor is wronged in some way by Agamemnon (Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 1.351-56). However, there remains a grave confusion as to the nature of honor. As such,

women are treated as if they were tri-pods (1.111-15). Pleasure is not immoral in and of itself.

However, the nature of the pleasure matters as well as the nature of its acquisition. For example, sadistic pleasure, or pleasures gained through the infliction of pain on others, is a form of immorally-gained pleasure.

The pleasure that Agamemnon steals from Achilles, by stealing Briseis, is still a form of immorally-gained pleasure because it does not respect Briseis' humanity (1.184-87). Dante writes: "...There is no greater sorrow / than to recall our time of joy / in wretchedness..." (Dante, *Inferno* 5.121-23). Paolo and Francesca falter due to this similar issue: their "wretchedness" did not respect their humanity, and this is true despite their temporary "joy," which, of course, not even Briseis received in Homer (Dante, *Inferno* 5.121-38; Homer, *The Iliad of Homer* 1.184-87). It is necessary to provide applications of this principle: earthly pleasure, or power, is not always moral, and it is not always acquired through moral means, which results in "wretchedness," and this applies to political as well as sexual dynamics (Dante, *Inferno* 5.121-38). Dante was a forerunner of Machiavelli in so far as how he noticed the high propensity of principalities toward morally dubious, if not outrageous, forms of behavior (Machiavelli 55). Dante saw this amongst the Florentines and other medieval powers (Dante, *Inferno* 6.49-84). He saw this unfold in the war between the Guelphs and the Ghibbelines, and later between the White and Black Guelphs, who engaged in the polar opposite of divine love, and all of this was enacted in the name of religious semantics. The absurdity of the situation is apparent here: divine love became replaced by a ridiculous crusade over whether or not the Pope should hold temporal authority over that of other principalities (6.49-84).

The characters of the *Purgatorio*, however, are not eternally condemned, because they have all assented toward the divine grace and love of God (Harent, "Original Sin" 1; "The Virtue

of Penance” 1). Dante writes: “Then it was clear to me that everywhere in heaven / is Paradise, even if the grace of the highest Good / does not rain down in equal measure” (Dante, *Paradiso* 3.88-90). They are maneuvering toward Paradise, and in Paradise, all are content with the positions in which God has assigned them: since they are all simultaneously with God in the purest bond of divine love (3.88-90). They enter into the sacred sphere of salvation. Dante’s point, for every soul, is his line concerning the unjustly excommunicated souls who were the victims of ecclesial corruption: “By such a curse as theirs [The Church] none is so lost / that the eternal Love cannot return / as long as hope maintains a thread of green” (Dante, *Purgatorio* 3.133-35). The greenness of hope, the freshness of creation, the desire to hope for every soul: this exists at the heart of what a Christian ought to believe. One should hope that no one will be condemned in the fires of Hell, or rather, to recognize the fact that no person should ever desire the eternal condemnation of another soul. Rather, one must endure, patiently through suffering, to hope for the salvation of all people.

Dante the character is condemning of those he finds in Hell, and he condemns many of the actions of the Church as well as the Florentines (Dante, *Inferno* 7.24-57; 19.49-120). However, he maneuvers beyond condemnation. This movement does not involve tolerance, which is a misused word in the contemporary world. Tolerance implies the moral neutrality of another’s actions, which are never morally neutral in Dante’s view. They are either good or evil. If the actions are good, then they are good, and one need not merely “tolerate” them. If they are evil, then they must not be tolerated, but rather, shunned and condemned. It is the sins, however, that should be shunned and condemned and not the individuals who commit the sins. This includes oneself. To condemn oneself due to one’s sins is to despair.

Repentance demands a form of sorrow that is combined with hope (Harent, “The Virtue

of Penance” 1). This form of hope requires trust: God will grant the gift of grace unto the penitent soul. The soul must not despair of the salvation of oneself or of others. God may condemn the Pope, but Dante should not condemn him. Dante should, however, condemn the Pope’s unjust actions: “I would resort to even harsher words / because your avarice afflicts the world, ...” (Dante, *Inferno* 19.103-04). If Dante the Poet implies that each soul he has placed in Hell should, in reality, be there, then he is presuming to know only that which God alone can know: whether or not those souls are penitent for their sins. He is then playing the role of God, but unlike Dante the character, the author of this paper shall neither judge nor condemn Dante the Poet, even if he was implying such points. For divine love redeems, and grace forgives (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.145). If human beings were robots without feeling, then human beings would not be capable of love. Love requires not only the existence of feelings, and the ability to discern, or reason, but it also requires the contrast between itself and its antithesis: despair. The absence of love enables one to discover what love truly is in and of itself. It is a deadly contrast that has consequences, but it is also a practical and necessary contrast. The world revolves on pleasure and pain. If there was no such thing as pain, then pleasure would become undiscernable, and as such, it would be unrecognizable, and, therefore, unperceivable. As such, pleasure would not exist.

Dante essentially reveals the practical nature of the rise and fall of beings who had begun their existence in a state of goodness. The Fall is the core assumption upon which the *Commedia* rests. To know goodness, one must fall, discern evil, and then repent of one’s fallenness, in order to rise through the gift of grace (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; Pohle 1). It is the practical reality of acquisition and deprivation. A person who fasts will appreciate a hearty meal more than a person who eats hearty meals as an established norm. Deprivation reveals the value of things: a drop of

water, a single fruit, and many other similar examples. Awe and wonder are lost through boredom. Dante is simply fearful in the forest at the beginning of his work (Dante, *Inferno* 1.19-21). By the time he passes through the “Inferno,” Dante begins to see the purposefulness of the ordering of the universe, as both the character and the poet, when he writes: “...then we came forth, to see again the stars” (34.139). Dante truly appreciates the orderliness of the heavens, which he did not notice, in his fear, before he followed Virgil (1.19-21).

As Dante gradually ascends through the *Purgatorio*, he appreciates Grace in ever-lengthening quantities. Dante writes: “...your legs shall be so mastered by good will, / not only will they feel no effort going up, / but they will take delight in being urged to” (Dante, *Purgatorio* 12.124-26). The purgation of sin ultimately results in the shedding of the burden of one’s offenses as one progressed further toward divine love. By the time Dante reaches the earthly paradise, he repents of his own sins: “The nettle of remorse so stung me then” (31.85). This is the necessary contrast between the shedding of despair, which is painful in its nature, and the rise of hope. Dante continues: “From those most holy waters / I came away remade, as are new plants / renewed with new-sprung leaves, / pure and prepared to rise up to the stars” (33.142-45). Despair cannot grant this ecstasy. However, one cannot claim that, therefore, the ecstasy does not exist, due to one’s lack of experience of such an ecstasy.

One must first recognize, challenge, and eliminate despair, before one can begin to hope to comprehend that which Dante is attempting to portray within his *Commedia*. As he rises throughout the *Paradiso*, Dante progresses toward, and ultimately beholds: “the Love that moves the sun and all the other stars” (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.145). He beholds the truth and majesty of God in awe, joy, and wonder, and he attains the greatest revelation: that love is Truth whereas despair is the falsehood (33.145). Dante further reveals: “the years of grief of the beautiful bride,

/ she who was won with the lance and the nails” (32.128-29). The despair that should have arrived from the Cross is negated by the sudden reversal of despair into divine love and salvation. To feel this ecstasy and comprehend this paradox: “you must gain your grace through prayer” (32.147). Dante beholds the mystery of the Cross and the true glory of God. Despite the errors of human beings, the heart of the faith is separate from those errors. It reverses them. The “beautiful bridge” was not lost “with the lance and the nails” (32.128-29). The deepest act of human treachery became the greatest act of salvation.

It is necessary, however, to separate the true theology from the false theology. The true theology of Catholic Christendom was established throughout this paper and up to this point. Now, however, it is necessary to discern the differences. Obviously, the modern Catholic Church no longer possesses an antiquated medieval view of the physical world. It is important to understand that the Church has grown in its understandings of how the Truth should be applied to the world throughout the ages. It is the applications of Truth that change: “when we could see a mountain, distant, / dark and dim. In my sight it seemed / higher than any I had ever seen” (Dante, *Inferno* 26.133-35). Purgatory is no longer a physical mountain in the eyes of the Church (Hanna 1). However, the Truth of divine love did not, and still does not, logically depend on the physicality of Mt. Purgatory, and nor does it depend on the notion that Hell exists below the Earth’s crust (Dante, *Inferno* 26.133-35; 34.108). It is evident that the Church has accepted modern scientific reasoning. However, the Church’s representation of Truth remains a logically valid point.

God is Infinite, and Infinity is the core characteristic of God that is often overlooked by Post-Modern critics of religion as well as certain quantum-physicists (Barolini 201-02; Zimmermann 1). Barolini declares: “Dante’s methods for not betraying reality thus include a

conceptual realism that attempts to faithfully render in time and space a condition outside of time and space” (Barolini 207). The fact remains: Infinity is the only logical answer to the question of the nature of that which constitutes existence. As stated in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, the view of the Church is thus: “Like the concepts of quantity, limit, boundary, the term *infinity* applies primarily to space and time, but not exclusively... In a derived meaning it may be applied to every kind of perfection: wisdom, beauty, power, the fullness of being itself” (Zimmermann 1). The universe must logically exist within yet another larger term-less type of space, which must also exist within yet another larger term-less type of space ad infinitum. Similarly, there must be something smaller than atomic particles, and even smaller than these, and so on and so forth ad infinitum. It is the only logical explanation for space and its existence, and this is not a logical fallacy (Zimmermann 1). There is no absolute largeness or absolute smallness: there is only Infinity. On one dimensional level, from the perspective of an ant, human beings are larger than the Greek conception of the gods. From God’s perspective, human beings are smaller than the amoeba. It is the logical ordering of space.

It is important, however, to reveal the distinction between the terms “infinity” and “infinite-being” (Zimmermann 1). According to *The Catholic Encyclopedia*: “‘All-being’, however, implies that there is no reality outside of itself, that beyond it there is nothing good, pure, and beautiful. The infinite is equivalent to all other things put together; it is the greatest and most beautiful; but besides it, other things both beautiful and good may exist” (Zimmermann 1). Something that is Infinite must necessarily both contain and lack boundaries because it is capable of all things, the author of all logic, and, therefore, Infinity can change the rules. However, this does not suggest a pantheic view of God, because, precisely, “From outside Himself, God cannot be limited, because, being uncreated, He is absolutely independent of external causes and

conditions” (Zimmermann 1). Infinity, in order to be infinitely capable, must possess consciousness, or at least, the components that consciousness consists of. Human beings cannot truly fathom the essence of Infinity because human beings are finite in and of themselves.

Infinity is not -one- thing that exists in and of itself. It is both One and many, singular and plural, and it allows for finite cycles to exist outside of itself. However, to reduce Infinity to being nothing more than the mere opposite of finity is to essentially claim that Infinity is finite in its inherent meaning. The term, however, is not finite, because it is far more than a “term”: it is a force, it is Essence, and being a force of Essence, it becomes everything. It can be capable of all things, and yet incapable of absence, for all of the finite rules of human logic can be defied by Infinity. Infinity is essentially definable by both the paradoxical and the normal. It is the resolution of all binaries.

This paper must suggest that the following principles are mythic and incapable of existence: randomness, chance or luck or fortune, and nothingness (Zimmermann 1). There is no such thing as nothingness. Human beings cannot truly grasp what it means to exist without boundaries because human beings are content within a world that fundamentally is composed of boundaries. The paradoxes are endless because Infinity is endless. The main contention may be thus: that God cannot be imperfect, and, therefore, He would be thus incapable of something, and thus, not Infinite, and thus, a contradiction (Zimmermann 1). However, this is, actually, further proof of the Infinity of God, because God would, being thus Infinite, inherently possess the ability to be forever perfect.

This mini-dissertation on Infinity may appear to be nothing more than further Scholastic hair-splitting, but, in actuality, if imperfection is re-defined as the absence of perfection, and Infinity, without boundaries, is ever present, then there is no logical contradiction here

(Zimmermann 1). Thus, Infinity can exist in two, nay, three places at once, as well as everywhere, because it is Infinite: "...to Mary / when the Son of God elected to take on / the burden of our flesh" (Dante, *Paradiso* 32.113-14). Infinity -can- allow itself a mortal birth through a Virgin, dwell on Earth for 33 years, and suffer Crucifixion, dwelling at one in both states of infinity and finity (32.113-32). Human beings cannot truly fathom how this could occur because humans' finite brains are attuned to a logic that is both earthly, and consequently, finite. The current lines of reasoning in this paper can lead the human reader as far as one can press forward in the contemplation of the Infinite, which is to suggest that this paper is barely scratching the smallest par-sec of the surface of Infinity. Dante, however, determined that God was able to bring Himself into a more comprehensive form as directed toward human beings at the same time that He is Infinite. It is the comprehensive form of God, Who alone embodies Infinity, that Dante reveals in his epic (Dante, *Paradiso* 32.113-32; Zimmermann 1).

Literature can present a form of subconscious logic, in this case, because it allows for one to approach the immeasurable depths of theology through an imaginative and more comfortable method. It can be suspected that a reader would prefer to read Dante's work than she or he would prefer to reread the above three paragraphs. Even so, there is still merit in these verses. Dante's contemplation involves a form of deep pleasure: the freedom to not fear death, even in the face of the *Inferno*, in a state of penitent love, the acceptance of divine grace, in the ultimate boon knowledge: that God will save one's soul. It is the act of distrusting God, or the omission of belief, that leads to the refusal to repent, which can only result in despair because of its denial of grace. Dante writes: "...they did not worship God aright. / ... / For such defects,... / we are lost... / that without hope we live in longing" (Dante, *Inferno* 4.38; 40-42). The souls in Limbo did not quite consciously sin with evil intentions, and this is due to the nature of Dante's epic as a form

of parabolic storytelling (4.31-42). Neither the reader nor Dante the Poet can know what happened to those souls before the Will of God turns toward one's own soul at the moment of death. Dante is concerned more with the soul of the reader than he is with the souls of Plato and Aristotle. In this regard, the *Commedia* is an extension of Dante the Poet's recognition of divine love and his desire for God to transmit divine love toward the reader through the text.

Dante's text presents the inherent need, desire, and hope, for redemption. Robert Penn Warren stated in his *Brother to Dragons*:

The recognition of complicity is the beginning of innocence. / The recognition of necessity is the beginning of freedom. / The recognition of the direction of fulfillment is the death / of the self.
/ And the death of the self is the beginning of selfhood. / All else is surrogate of hope and destitution of spirit (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15).

Therefore, to condemn European individuals and civilization alone is unsatisfactory. There were still acts of war and fear, and courage and grace, in all of the civilizations and nations of the world. To recognize "complicity" is to recognize the following truth: that all human beings have thought, expressed, or performed hatred, and that, therefore, one can cease to be hateful (214-15). This unfolds in a paradox of epiphanic love: hatred is replaced by love.

Once one recognizes "complicity," this knowledge releases the soul from the inclination to condemn other people, because it recognizes one's own self-guilt, and that to condemn the other is to condemn oneself (214-15). This reveals the true "necessity" to reject despair, which implies the ability to make choices, something that does not exist in a Post-Modern framework of meaninglessness (214-15). It is "the beginning of freedom," in which one chooses "the direction of fulfillment," choosing to find the true self, causing "the death of the" false "self, which is "the beginning of selfhood" (214-15). Thus, the paradox unfolds: "the recognition of complicity" releases the oppressed from the shackles of judgment (214-15). It releases the guilty from the

inferno of despair. It brings light and hope to the enslaved person, the murdered body, and while at the same time, it redeems the slaver, the murderer, and all perpetrators. It brings true equality, true diversity, unified in the truest love: “the Love that moves the sun and all the other stars” (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.145). Dante’s *The Divine Comedy* presents an adequate solution to the problem of despair: a vision of epiphanic love that can negate despair because of its fundamental satisfaction of the human need for grace.

Chapter II: Shakespeare's *The Tempest*: A Resolution between Two Opposing Interpretations

Studies that concern Shakespeare's *The Tempest* inevitably invoke two rival interpretations of the play: the Traditional and the Post-Colonial. These interpretations both emphasize rival aspects of the play in support of their respective theses. The play, however, lends itself to both in such a way that these interpretations are not necessarily paradoxical once they are juxtaposed with each other. Both theological morality and colonialism are inherently present within the dynamics that the play presents: the colonizer and the colonized, the sorcerer and the bewitched, and the master and his slave / servant as well as the dynamic of the sovereign versus the sovereign's subjects. These dynamics ultimately, however, converge in the battle of interpretations: benevolence versus tyranny, morality versus hypocrisy, and divine sovereignty versus political power-playing. These polarities are ultimately describing the same dynamic: Grace versus Original Sin. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* inherently hinges upon Prospero's remission of sins because his colonial tendencies are ultimately the expression of the consequences of Original Sin, which necessitate a movement toward an embrace of love and reconciliation through penitence.

The notion of Original Sin, according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, requires a certain delineation. The first is that of sanctifying Grace: "Sanctifying grace therefore enters into the moral order, not as an act that passes but as a permanent tendency which exists even when the subject who possesses it does not act; it is a turning towards God, *conversio ad Deum*" (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). Thus, sanctifying grace is a condition, or a status, or a position in which the soul exists. It is a state of being in which the soul turns toward its Creator, in acceptance of the Creator, and with the desire to be with the Creator. Conversely, Original Sin becomes the following: "Consequently the privation of this grace, even without any other act, would be a

stain, a moral deformity, a turning away from God, *aversio a Deo*, and this character is not found in any other effect of the fault of Adam. This privation, therefore, is the hereditary stain” (1). In other words, Original Sin is the absence of sanctifying grace, and it is also a state of being. It is a state of fallenness, which requires a certain view of the individual and society: “It is this law of solidarity, admitted by common sentiment, which attributes to children a part of the shame resulting from the father's crime” (1). The “law of solidarity” refers to the notion that all of humankind emerged from one pair of ancestors, which committed a voluntary act in defiance of God’s Will, which resulted in a loss of sanctifying grace (1). In other words, the fundamental condition of their souls changed, and this change was then inherited by all of their children (1). It is an inherited state of being. It is not a voluntary condition (1). While concupiscence, or a natural inclination to sin, is a direct consequence of Original Sin, it is not omitted or destroyed by the Anglo-Catholic Sacrament of Baptism (1). However, the next question is as to whether or not the Elizabethan Anglicans of Shakespeare’s time shared this notion of Original Sin.

Tillyard’s account of the “Great Chain of Being” also discusses the subject of Original Sin in light of Shakespeare’s era. His account will prove useful for this reason. *The Tempest* was produced during a time in which Shakespeare, according to McDonald, worked within the King’s Men theatrical company, which was directly patronized by King James I, and the King was also the Head of the Church of England (McDonald 20-21; 317). Shakespeare and his players can be assumed to have possessed intelligence to the extent that they would not have desired to challenge the denomination of the King that the King himself controlled. As such, here is a facet of the Anglican view of Original Sin in the Elizabethan-Jacobian Period, according to Tillyard: “By the Fall man was alienated from his true self. If he is to regain true self-knowledge he must do it through contemplating the works of nature of which he is part” (Tillyard 28). Thus,

the Fall inherently refers to a state of alienation. Tillyard further describes how paramount the notion of Original Sin was to the Elizabethans of Shakespeare's time, as well as during the Middle Ages, and of its presence within *Genesis* as well as within the writings of St. Paul (26; 29).

Tillyard cites sources up to and including Milton, Shakespeare, and Spencer (26-28). This foundational Christian belief was even present in the writings of Sidney (30). If one considers the vast differences between these dramatists and poets, from Puritanism to Catholicism to High Anglicanism, one will recognize that the Catholic notion of Original Sin was largely maintained and upheld by these new Protestant denominations of Christendom (Harent, "Original Sin" 1; Tillyard 26-30). This is because the writings of St. Paul from the *New Testament* were interpreted by these denominations in similar ways (Harent, "Original Sin" 1; Tillyard 26-27). To distinguish these denominations as forces that are presenting separate notions of Original Sin is a moot point. Other notions of Original Sin, such as the Pelagian and Manichaeic versions, are irrelevant to the framework of the commonly-shared worldview of the time period in which Shakespeare composed his plays (Harent, "Original Sin" 1; Tillyard 26-30).

The Anglican notion of Original Sin, moreover, is also aptly demonstrated in the 1559 edition of *The Book of Common Prayer*, which functioned as the basis for Elizabethan Anglican theology throughout the duration of the following one hundred years (Wohlens 1). Shakespeare, as such, would have possessed a certain familiarity with the concept. This is true because Original Sin is foundational to Anglo-Catholic dogma. According to the aforementioned edition of *The Book of Common Prayer*, concerning the Rite of Baptism: "...all men are conceived and born in sin, ..." ("The Ministration of Baptism" 3). This is the same definition that was established in Tillyard and the Catholic Encyclopedia (Harent, "Original Sin" 1; Tillyard 26-30).

It is a notion that is shared by both Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Ministration of Baptism” 3). As such, it is not irresponsible to assume that it is possible to read Shakespeare in this light.

With this commonly-shared notion of Original Sin established, it is now possible to engage directly with the text of *The Tempest* in light of the traditional interpretation of the play. Granted, there are certain elements of both Traditional and Post-Colonial interpretations that should be discarded. To begin with the Traditional interpretation of the play, Lawrence E. Bowling contends with the play in light of “The Great Chain of Being,” which is a metaphysical construct of a metaphysical, spiritual, and natural order that is disrupted and restored by the actions of Prospero (Bowling 208). Once order is restored, Prospero: “As duke of Milan, he will henceforth strive ever to be the best ruler and the best human being that he can. All the links in the chain of order have now been completely and correctly restored; ...” (208). It is a delightful interpretation of the play at first glance. However, Caliban is viewed by Bowling to be sub-human, and Prospero apparently errs in attempting to elevate him to the level of a human being (204). Bowling claims that Prospero disrupted the natural order of all things in this way. Prospero is also claimed to be responsible for the disruption of the natural order through his placement of his younger brother in charge of his own duties while Prospero refrained from the responsibilities of ruling over Milan as a Duke (204-206). Thus, Prospero is held to have committed sins, but these sins are dubious in and of themselves. While it is true that Caliban represents the lower tier of “The Great Chain of Being” to some degree, he is also a clearly developed character, and he cannot be claimed to be necessarily sub-human (204; 207).

Returning to Tillyard, “The Great Chain of Being” was a Renaissance Era concept that was widely held to be valid in Shakespeare’s time. Tillyard describes the tiered ordering of the

universe with many specific examples, but the general framework of the Chain is at stake in regard to the thesis of this paper (Tillyard 45-70). There are arguably two “Great Chains of Being,” which are anachronistically fused into one “Great Chain of Being” in an Elizabethan context. Thus, according to Tillyard, God is at the pinnacle of the Chain, followed by hierarchies of angels and other such divine beings, human beings, and the elements of nature along with flora and fauna (45; 54-55; 58-59). It concludes with the fallen angels at the bottom within their respective divisions and tiers (69-70). Humanity, because of Original Sin, is closer to the natural rather than to the divine (26-30; 55). Similarly, in regard to the elements: fire and air are at the pinnacle, and earth and water are at the bottom of the Chain (69-70). Moreover, Bowling argues that Caliban is associated with earth and water in the context of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* (Bowling 204; 207-08). Ariel is then associated with fire and air (207-08). The disordering of the Chain then exists both through the subjection of Ariel to a human, the divine to a lesser power, and also through the raising of Caliban to the status of a human, or from a lesser to a greater power (204-08). The problem is that this elevation may have been intentional on part of Shakespeare and his players, and, moreover, the play might even critique the concept of the perception of Caliban as a sub-human being (204-08).

The “Great Chain of Being” is also anachronistic to the concept of Original Sin (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; Tillyard 26-30). Technically, human beings are necessarily on par with the devil and his demons in a state of fallenness, which is a state of being that exists below the elements of nature (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Ministration of Baptism” 3). As such, the Elizabethan concept of the “Great Chain of Being” is necessarily a hubristic conception when juxtaposed with High Anglican and Catholic doctrines (Tillyard 26-30). The placement of God and His Angels above humanity is correct (54-55). However, the presumption of the rest is

dependent upon a misinterpretation of *Genesis*. This is the second “Great Chain of Being,” which simply consists of: God, His Angels, the fundamental holiness of His Creation, the fallen state of human souls, and then the ultimate fallen state of the devil and his fallen angels (Tillyard 26-30; 54-55; 69-70). Humanity was set to conquer the natural world prior to the Fall, which is a truth regarding *Genesis* that was noted by Tillyard (26-30). After the Fall, however, the ordering had reversed, and humankind had entered into a horrific state of being (Harent 1). Humanity became afflicted with concupiscence and death, which were consequences of the Fall (1). As such, humanity could no longer seek to dominate the natural world as immortal souls with glorified bodies that exist in a state of sanctifying grace (1). The Fall reversed the natural and human tiers of the “Great Chain of Being,” and the Elizabethan metaphysical construct is contradictory when juxtaposed with an Elizabethan view of Original Sin (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Ministration of Baptism” 3; Tillyard 26-30). This contradiction is a logical fallacy, and it is necessarily recognized as such throughout Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*.

Before any reconciliation between opposing interpretations can occur, the Post-Colonial interpretation of the play must be consulted as well. *The Tempest* was composed prior to England’s forays and subsequent colonization efforts in the Americas (McDonald 21). The basis of this Post-Colonial interpretation depends on the actions of the Spaniards in Central America (Bartolomé de las casas 127-28). Bartolomé de las casas was a Catholic brother of the Dominican Order who critiqued the actions of the Spaniards (127). He did not partake in the section of the “Great Chain of Being” that places “savages” beneath “normal” human beings (Bartolomé de las casas 127; Tillyard 54-55). Here is the primary concern. Bartolomé states: “...the violence, oppression, the despotism, the killing, the plunder, the depopulation, the outrages, the agonies and the calamities we have described were at their height throughout the

New World wherever Christians have set foot” (Bartolomé de las casas 127). The Spaniards proceeded to massacre and enslave the native populations that they had discovered in the Americas (127-28). Then Bartolomé describes the aforementioned scenario as “a chaos worthy of Lucifer [the devil] himself” (129). This scenario is beginning to sound far more savage and with the Europeans playing the roles of savages. Then Bartolomé states: “...they have got into the habit of killing them slowly through hard labor and the imposition of other intolerable and totally unmerited vexations” (129). This new scenario echoes Prospero’s treatment of Caliban in *The Tempest*: “Fetch in our wood...” (Shakespeare 1.2.313-19; 315). The precise problem with the behavior of Prospero and the Spaniards is precisely the fact that such behavior is equally savage when juxtaposed to the European notions of “savagery” or “barbarity,” or simply “the killing” and “the plunder” (Bartolomé de las casas 127-130; Shakespeare 1.2.313-19). Bartolomé reveals this clearly throughout his critique of the actions of the Spaniards when he discusses the ignorance of humanity in the wake of the Crucifixion, which is also the ignorance of Original Sin and its consequences and of the need for salvation through sanctifying grace (Bartolomé de las casas 127-130; Harent, “Original Sin” 1).

The correlation between Bartolomé’s account and an interpretation of *The Tempest* occurs in regard to Prospero’s debasement of Caliban (Shakespeare 1.2.368-74). Caliban claims: “This Island’s mine. By Sycorax my mother. Which thou didst take from me” (Shakespeare 1.2.334-35). Caliban is then interpreted as a Native American who has unjustly suffered a loss of sovereignty over his realm (Brown 287; Takaki 183). Prospero becomes a maniacal European usurper, who justifies his usurpation on the basis of his own loss of power. Prospero becomes an antagonist, who is villainous in his usage of magic in order to control all things (Shakespeare 3.3.83-93).

According to the Post-Colonial interpretation of *The Tempest*, Prospero is a usurper who ultimately relinquishes his power, which leads scholars such as Deborah Willis to conclude that the play is fundamentally anti-colonial, or a warning to the English to not repeat the crimes of the Spaniards (Bartolomé de las casas 127-28; Willis 328). As Willis notes: "Antonio's constitutional evil helps to confirm the moral legitimacy of Prospero's rule, much as the savage is used to confirm the 'civilized' and 'godly' character of colonial authority" (Willis 328). Thus, both "constitutional evil" and "savagery" are set against moral legitimacy and "civilized authority," which the play reveals to be not quite as "civilized" or morally legitimate as they appear to be (328). There are correlations between these accounts and the desires of Stephano and Trinculo to haul Caliban to England for death and exhibition: "Only here can the colonizing process be viewed as nakedly avaricious, profiteering, perhaps even pointless (the expense of effort to no end rather than a proper teleological civil investment)" (Brown 287; Shakespeare 2.2.27-32). The particularly British colonial activities that are yet to arrive in global history are chillingly forecasted by the play. Caliban is indeed cast as a "savage," not only due to physical distortions, but also due to his desire to rape Miranda (Loomba 390; Shakespeare 1.2.352-54; 354-65; 2.2.62-67; Thompson 406). The Post-Colonial interpretation of the play certainly repaints *The Tempest* in a negative light. As Kastan clearly articulates: "No longer is *The Tempest* a play of social reconciliation and moral renewal, of benevolent artistry and providential design; it now appears as a telling document of the first phase of European imperialism, implicated in the will-to-power of the Jacobean court..." (Kastan in *The Tempest* 335). Thus, the play becomes interpreted as a prelude to the rampant colonialism of the Americas by England.

Now, it is tempting to desire to choose between the two presented interpretations of *The Tempest*. Along the lines of logic established by the traditional interpretation, Shakespeare most

likely would not have opposed England's immediate interests in a play that both may have been presented and, at the same time, was definitively patronized by King James I of England (McDonald 216). Moreover, along the lines of logic established by the Post-Colonial interpretation, the play is a daring attempt to uphold the moral primacy of the English over the wretched behavior of the Spaniards, and it is a true critique of Euro-centrism (Bartolomé de las casas 128-30; Willis 328). If the play was a grand narrative against colonialism, then this line of logic certainly did not persuade the King of England and his successors. If the play was a grand and hubristic endorsement of the "Great Chain of Being," then it would have even celebrated the actions of the English in Ireland and Jamestown, Virginia (Brown 269-71; 276-77; Tillyard 45-70). The play would appear to be set between these opposing forces, which both did not produce any measurable practical change to civil policies in any case. Even so, the play certainly presents an underlying moral. The question remains as to what this key lesson might be.

At this point, it is possible to turn toward the text and to examine the fundamental dynamics of the two interpretations once they are set in juxtaposition to each other. The key is to recognize the fact that the play is not necessarily endorsing Caliban's subjection. Caliban states: "...And then I loved thee / And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle, / The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place and fertile" (Shakespeare 1.2.339-41). Caliban speaks to the audience as a character who was originally kind and civil to Prospero, and it was Prospero who then attempted to assert himself in a savage way over the authority of Caliban (Shakespeare 1.2.335-41; 2.2.153-57; Willis 328). This is the case because of the anachronistic fallacy that is inherent in "The Great Chain of Being" (Tillyard 26-30; 54-55; 69-70).

Prospero assumes himself to be higher than Caliban, and this is the precise problem that the play grapples with (Shakespeare 1.2.368-74). Prospero declares: "If thou neglect'st or dost

unwillingly / What I command, I'll rack thee with old cramps, / Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar..." (1.2.371-73). He coerces Caliban through the threat of the infliction of physical harm. Moreover, Prospero also assumes himself to be in a position that is superior to that of Ariel, which is a clear sign of the sin of hubris (1.2.292; 294; 295-97). He declares: "...mine art / ... / ...let thee out"(1.2. 292; 294). Hence, Prospero ascribes hubristic feelings toward his Art, and then he threatens to return Ariel to his original state of imprisonment in a tree for yet another twelve years (1.2.295-97). He assumes a higher position and coerces his supernatural servant (1.2.292-97). When Miranda and Ferdinand are betrothed, Prospero declares: "...Fair encounter / Of two most rare affections! Heavens rain grace / On that which breeds between 'em!" (3.1.74-76). Thus, Prospero discovers true love, he then discerns the depths into which he has fallen, and then he begins to discover the epiphanic vision of life that he may yet possess (3.1.74-76).

Concerning Gonzalo's reaction to Ariel's appearance, Ariel reveals a depth of penitence that begins to maneuver Prospero in the direction of his own necessary penitence for his sins and for his complicity in Original Sin. The term "penitence" can be generally understood as a state of humility in which the individual soul feels sorrowful for one's sins and desires to refrain from sinful behavior (Harent, "The Virtue of Penance" 1). Ariel states: "His tears run down his beard like winter's drops... / That if now you beheld them your affections / Would become tender" (Shakespeare 3.3.53-82; 5.1.16; 18-19). Gonzalo perceives the possibility of sanctifying grace in penitence for his complicity in Original Sin, which is the only rational reason as to why Gonzalo would be weeping in these circumstances (Harent, "The Virtue of Penance" 1). Ariel declares: "You are three men of sin, whom Destiny... / That hath to instrument this lower world..." (3.3.53-54). Thus, Gonzalo was not personally implicated in Ariel's chastisement of Alfonso,

Antonio, and Sebastian (3.3.53-82; 5.1.16; 18-19). This further legitimizes the overarching presence of Original Sin and concupiscence, which must be overcome through penitence, or “heart’s sorrow / And a clear life ensuing” (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Virtue of Penance” 1; Shakespeare 3.3.81-82). Then Prospero declares: “... The rarer action is / In virtue than in vengeance” (5.1.27-28). Prospero begins to maneuver himself further toward the concept of sanctifying grace and a notion of penitence (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Virtue of Penance” 1; Shakespeare 5.1.20-32). Prospero begins to realize how he has, in fact, catered to concupiscence in the guise of his Art, and he then begins to enter into the necessary motions of the work of penance on the path toward sanctifying grace (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Virtue of Penance” 1; Shakespeare 5.1.33-57; Tillyard 26-30). To be redeemed is for the being of one’s soul to be restored, by God Himself, back toward a state of sanctifying grace, which is a state that can only be fully achieved through death (Harent, “Original Sin” 1). It is safe to utilize the term “sanctifying grace” because this is something that High Anglicans, as well as Catholics, held to be a truth of their Christian faith through their synonymic descriptions of the movement toward God (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; Tillyard 26-30). Tillyard recognized this through his astute examination of the poetry of Spencer, Sydney, and Shakespeare (Tillyard 26-30). Prospero clearly journeys through these aforementioned states of being (Shakespeare 5.1.33-57).

Prospero ultimately repents in recognition of his sins, which include his European hubristic and colonial activities, his constant over-reaching and control over Miranda and Ariel, and his manipulation of the stranded nobles (Shakespeare 1.2. 184-86; 294-97; 368-74; 3.3.53-82; 5.1.20-32; Willis 328). He will state: “...I’ll break my staff, / Bury it certain fathoms in the earth, / And deeper than did ever plummet sound / I’ll drown my book” (Shakespeare 5.1.54-57). Prospero clearly enters into a penitent state of being (Harent, “The Virtue of Penance” 1).

However, one may interrogate his language regarding Caliban toward Alfonso. Prospero states: “...and this demidevil, ... / For he’s a bastard one... had plotted with them...” (Shakespeare 5.1.272-73). The term “bastard,” according to Graff and Phelan’s astute gloss, means “counterfeit” (Shakespeare 5.1.272; Graff and Phelan 273). Of course, as is generally known, the term “counterfeit” implies a certain lie or fiction (Graff and Phelan 273). Prospero, as such, can be interpreted to be referring to Caliban as a fake “demidevil” (Shakespeare 5.1.272). This would then imply that Prospero has recognized Caliban’s humanity while protecting Shakespeare and his players from public and royal scrutiny through the usage of ethnocentric language at the same time (McDonald 20-21; 317; Shakespeare 5.1.267-73). Prospero’s reference to Caliban as a “deceiver” that he had “pardoned” is a meta-cognitive signature of Shakespeare’s deception toward his audiences, who should be “pardoned,” and it points toward the deceptive nature of Caliban’s appearance (Shakespeare 2.2.62-7; “Epilogue” 5.1.7). Caliban was, in fact, presented as a character who is clearly capable of cognition through his poetic and fluent usage of Prospero’s language (1.2.334-35). Prospero states: “...This thing of darkness I / Acknowledge mine” (5.1.275-76). He is symbolically referred toward his treatment of Caliban as his mark of darkness or complicity in both his personal sins and the Original Sin of all of humankind (Harent, “Original Sin” 1). As such, Prospero’s penitence is legitimate, and there is further evidence to this point.

Despite Bowling’s assumption, Prospero will not return to rule in Milan (Bowling 208). Rather, Prospero, in rejecting his magic and his charms, will return to Milan: “where / Every third thought shall be my grave” (Shakespeare 5.1.310-11). He forgave Antonio of his murderous political tendencies, which Prospero himself had set into motion by bestowing power upon his younger brother (1.2.120-32; 5.1.128-34). Prospero will accept death, but God will grant a state

of sanctifying grace unto his soul, and he will be restored unto God (5.1.310-11). Prospero pleads with the audience of humanity, exhorting them to prayer, and aptly exposes both the reality of Original Sin and the need for salvation in one key couplet: “As you from crimes would pardoned be, / Let your indulgence set me free” (“Epilogue” 5.1.19-20). Prospero has redirected his soul toward God’s Will and the reality of sanctifying grace, he will overcome the Fall, and this is revealed through the communal expiation and reconciliation that is present at the conclusion of the play (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Virtue of Penance” 1; Shakespeare “Epilogue” 5.1.1-20). Prospero has truly ascended toward the heavens, and he has also revealed the motions through which all humanity may ascend as well. He has sundered the ethnocentricity of the Renaissance notion of “The Great Chain of Being,” and he has re-centered its focus upon the complicity and the potential for the salvation of all of humanity through love and reconciliation, which both stem from penance (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Virtue of Penance” 1; Tillyard 26-30).

In conclusion, Prospero reminds the audience of the mutual guilt of all human beings in the sin of Adam, and then, in a two-fold stroke, reveals how this state can be overcome (Harent, “Original Sin” 1). The audience is directly asked to forgive Prospero of his sins, so that the audience members may be, in turn, forgiven of their sins, and this is accomplished through applause (Shakespeare “Epilogue” 5.1.19-20). Thus, the play concludes, and the debate has reached a point of resolution. Prospero’s sins are those of the hubristic and ethno-centric European colonizer as well as that of a magician (Bartolomé de las casas 127-130; Willis 328). Even still, he repents of these sins at the conclusion of the play, and critics on both sides of the debate should not over-emphasize their positions to the extent that they are blind to the moral heart of the play and of the need for forgiveness as well as for the ability to forgive (Shakespeare

“Epilogue 5.1.1-20). This is a far more constructive interpretation of the play because this combined interpretation seeks to find solutions to the problems that have already received their representation in the debate.

One could stand and assert the wickedness of colonialism ad infinitum without presenting any valid solutions and while accomplishing little good (Bartolomé de las casas 127-130; Willis 328). Similarly, one could stand and assert the primacy of the English in “The Great Chain of Being” and manage to accomplish works of little, if any, measure of value (Bowling 204-08; Tillyard 26-30; 45-70). The unification of these seemingly opposite interpretations, however, reveals practical emotional or spiritual appeals that can, regardless of one’s religion, allow for the emergence of a more holistic and respectful attitude toward one’s fellow human beings. This, in turn, should yield practical results that do not include further acts of violence (Bartolomé de las casas 127-130). Thus, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* inherently hinges upon Prospero's remission of sins because his colonial tendencies are ultimately the expression of the consequences of Original Sin, which necessitate a movement toward an embrace of love and reconciliation through penitence.

Chapter III: "Caliban Casts out Ariel"- Imagism, Pound, and *The Tempest*

Chapter written for Mary de Rachewiltz and "The Great Ezra"

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* formulate an imagistic message when they are set in juxtaposition to each other. While Shakespeare focuses on how humanity ought to behave, Pound utilizes Shakespeare's archetypes in order to contrast this with how humanity actually behaves. Pound laments the failure of humanity to learn the values that were taught through Shakespeare's archetypal characters: Prospero, Ariel, and Caliban. Each character represents a core aspect of the human soul (Phillips 157). The era in which Ezra Pound composed his earlier works such as *Mauberley*, the era of World War I, is the era that the character of Mauberley challenges. Pound communicates this challenge imagistically through the following lines: "Christ follows Dionysus, / Phallic and ambrosial, / Made way for macerations; / Caliban casts out Ariel" (Pound, *Mauberley* 112). The reader or listener of the poem is immediately drawn to a confluence of images: the image of the Messiah, followed by the image of the Greek god of fertility, which are followed by the image of the unification of carnal and spiritual pleasures. These are in turn followed by the contrast, presented by the "macerations" of the Modern Period, and then by the ultimate Image that encapsulates the entirety of the poem (112). Ariel, the representative of the imaginative, creative, artistic, graceful, and ultimately spiritual portion of the soul, is "cast out" by Caliban, who functions as the embodiment of the misuse of the flesh, plotting, vengefulness, and political savagery (Phillips 157; Pound, *Mauberley* 112). Pound imagistically utilizes Shakespeare's archetypes because they convey the entire meaning of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, which fundamentally laments the evils of the Modern in contrast to the universal values that the character of Mauberley associates with the past.

Imagism will be treated as a form of succinct expression that conveys a magnitude of meaning. It is essential to analyze the lines quoted in the above-paragraph in this context: "Christ follows Dionysus..." (Pound, *Mauberley* 112). One might question the meaning of the word "follows" and whether or not it is synonymous with a "coming after," or alternatively, the phrase: "to be influenced by" (112). The ancient religions of the pagans fell into obscurity upon the rise of medieval Christendom in the West. And Christ has followed Dionysus into obscurity in the wake of the Modern (112). It is the "macerations" of the Modern, or Caliban, that replace both classical and Christian artistic sensibilities of quality and value, or Ariel, and this is the central message of *Mauberley* that extends throughout the poem (112).

The "macerations" of the Modern are expressed throughout the second section of the poem (111-12). They invoke the demands of "the age":

The age demanded an image
Of its accelerated grimace,
Something for the modern stage,
Not, at any rate, an Attic grace;

Not, not certainly, the obscure reveries
Of the inward gaze;
Better mendacities
Than the classics in paraphrase!

The "age demanded" chiefly a mould in plaster,
Made with no loss of time,
A prose kinema, not, not assuredly, alabaster
Or the "sculpture" of rhyme. (111)

In other words, Modern Western Civilization no longer relies upon skill or talent or the artisan's craft in order to communicate, and it rather shuns "the inward gaze" and "an Attic grace" in favor of "a mould in plaster" and "the classics in paraphrase" (111). Pound is noting the contrast between modern advertising and the artistry of the ancients, which both perform similar functions (111). The former requires a base minimum of cheapness for Pound, and the latter

requires great technique, skill, precision, and talent (111). The embodiment of the Modern world is that of cheapness, a palpable lack of standards, moral relativism, *promiscurie*, an absence of the importance of religion in the public sphere, an absence of value, which is all nothing more than a world of nausea and despair. This despair is ultimately fed by the debasement, cheapening, and ruination of the physical world. The same criteria applies to the spiritual world through its modern-academic debasement to the level of a mere notion instead of its formerly-perceived ancient and medieval position as a palpable and experiential reality. This is not to suggest that this currently-framed time period is any different than all of the previous time-periods combined. *Mauberley's* point is that some form of standards, artistic and moral, were far more publically embraced in previous generations and far less in the modern world. To comprehend this contrast, it is important to juxtapose *Mauberley* with the *Canto VII*.

Pound's *Canto VII* and *Mauberley* contain consistent points of view when one closely reads them in juxtaposition to each other. In the *Canto VII*, the emphasis should be placed on the line "to-day against the past," which echoes *Mauberley's* lament of the "tawdry cheapness" that "shall outlast our days," leading to the following stanzas (Pound, *Canto VII* 141; *Mauberley* 112):

...O voi che siete in piccioletta barca,
 Dido choked up with sobs, for her Sicheus
 Lies heavy in my arms, dead weight
 Drowning, with tears, new Eros,

And the life goes on, mooning upon bare hills;
 Flame leaps from the hand, the rain is listless,
 Yet drinks the thirst from our lips,
 solid as echo,
 Passion to breed a form in shimmer of rain-blur;
 But Eros drowned, drowned, heavy-half dead with tears
 For dead Sicheus.

Life to make mock of motion:

For the husks, before me, move,
 The words rattle: shells given out by shells...
 (Pound, *Canto VII* 141)

On the surface, this sequence of stanzas would appear to state that the classics are dead and without value, and that they are nothing more than "words" that "rattle" and "shells," which would imply a bare emptiness (141). However, if one reads closely, one can conclude the following- this is a reference to the fifth section of *Mauberley*:

There died a myriad,
 And of the best, among them,
 For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
 For a botched civilization,

 Charm, smiling at the good mouth,
 Quick eyes gone under earth's lid,

 For two gross of broken statues,
 For a few thousand battered books.
 (Pound, *Mauberley* 113)

In other words, the line "shells given out by shells," in actuality, refers to the rounds of machine-gun fire that mowed down the lives of millions of soldiers during World War I, who had received "the classics in paraphrase" as war propaganda (Pound, *Canto VII* 141; *Mauberley* 111; 113). The "husks" are the dead soldiers, and in an earlier stanza of the *Canto VII*, the "Mountains of the sea gave birth to troops," which speaks to the massiveness of the death-toll of the war (Pound, *Canto VII* 141). Pound repudiated "The Great War" and the "tawdry cheapness" that produced it, and his mourning for the dead was expressed through Dido and Eros weeping over "a dead Sicheus," and all for "a botched civilization" (Pound, *Canto VII* 141; *Mauberley* 112-113). However, it is important to reveal the values that the "botched civilization" is rejecting, and this is where Shakespeare's *The Tempest* becomes relevant along with his archetypal characters: Prospero, Caliban, and Ariel.

The characters of Prospero, Caliban, and Ariel reveal a Christian notion of Art that is hidden between the lines of *The Tempest*. This point is supported by scholar James Phillips when he states:

The rational soul, it will be recalled, was thought by Shakespeare's contemporaries to consist of two powers, the reason or wit, and the will, both of which are sustained by the vegetative soul and served by the sensitive... Also, as we have seen, his constant struggle to keep Caliban and Ariel under his control is consistent with the struggle which the rational soul has had since the Fall to keep the lower faculties in check. (Phillips 157)

Thus, the characters of Prospero, Caliban, and Ariel represent a trinitarian soul of the human person when they are juxtaposed to each other in their fundamental characterizations (157). In Phillips' terms, the soul struggles between self-control and self-absorption, the will to power, and the will to sacrifice oneself (157). The soul struggles between the vain beauty of desire in and of itself and the true beauty of selfless love (157). The central meaning of the play is expressed through the following sections of Prospero's soliloquies:

...I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book...

...And my ending is despair,
Unless I be relieved by prayer,
Which pierces so that it assaults
Mercy itself, and frees all faults.
As you from crimes would pardoned be,
Let your indulgence set me free.
(Shakespeare 5.1.54-57; "Epilogue" 15-20)

Prospero submits in humility and enters into a spiritual state of being in which he partakes in a sacramental of communal expiation and reconciliation as he pleads with the audience to pray for him at the play's conclusion (Shakespeare 5.1.54-57; Epilogue 15-20). Pound's *Mauberley* also

indirectly endorses the inherent value of such sacramental communion, and it endorses the notion of the values (Pound, *Mauberley* 111).

Pound's verse upholds the values of Christianity in juxtaposition to the sensibilities of Art, and both are set in contrast to the lack of respect for the values in the modern world. Pound's personal views toward Christianity are controversial, but Pound's *Mauberley* endorses religious, and specifically Christian, values. Pound writes: "All things are a flowing, / Sage Heracleitus says; / But a tawdry cheapness / Shall outlast our days" (112). Time appears to have negative effects, and the modern world is Calibanistic through its continued embrace of political savagery as an established norm (112). Pound's following stanza reveals this problem even further: "Even the Christian beauty / Defects—after Samothrace; / We see To Kalon [the beautiful] / Decreed in the marketplace" (Pound, *Mauberley* 112; Sieburth 301). Thus, even the beauty of Christian virtue has suffered the fate of the classical standards of Art (Pound, *Mauberley* 112). This interpretation is further supported by the following stanza: "Faun's flesh is not to us, / Nor the saint's vision. / We have the press for wafer; / Franchise for circumcision" (112). Pound's verse implies that many people ceased to attend Church on Sundays and instead utilized "the press" as a form of social communion (112). Therefore, religious Truth and its implicit moral virtues, or the values, are aligned with Art, and these are in turn rejected through the abandonment of the public perception of the importance of religion and Art in Post-Industrial Revolution society (111-112). In more succinct and imagistic words, "Caliban casts out Ariel" (112). However, not all hope is lost, and humanity can regain a sense of the universal values.

The values are there to be found, and Modern Western Civilization has not killed them. It has disregarded them, and it has slain many innocent lives through this blatant disregard and apparent amnesia. Regardless, the values can be regained, as Dr. Nickel reveals:

In the end both Pound's and Hemingway's writing often discovers, through a dark night, the healing possibility of love. For both writers, as it was for Dante, it is a certain love, learned and attained through the atonement of writing, that reveals the paradiso. The images together that strike light, turning the moment of darkness through love into hierophany is where it coheres---when, as Pound writes, we "affirm the gold thread in the pattern" (*Cantos* 817) of Torcello, of the Last Judgment, and of the world before us. Thus, even in darkness, like Villon or Pound under the gallows, Cantwell dying, Baudelaire pointing his accusation at the reader, or Hemingway dealing with his own post-war terror, we must, as Pound writes, "confess wrong without losing rightness" (817). It is only then that we may have charity... And with exactitude and poetry, the luminous details will crystallize, and we may sing hymns with Hemingway and Pound through the dark night about "A little love, like a rushlight / to lead back [to] splendour." (Pound, *Cantos* 541; 817; Nickel 68)

As the above-passage reveals, *The Cantos* are indeed Pound's answer to the central problem that was expressed throughout *Mauberley*. The "charity" that Dr. Nickel refers to is further expressed by Pound in his *Canto LXXXI* (81): "What thou lovest well remains, / the rest is dross / What thou lov'st well shall not be reft from thee / What thou lov'st well is thy true heritage..." (Pound, *Canto LXXXI* 225). It is a state of being in which Art flourishes with skill, in which the Caliban of savagery and sin is thrust down beneath the rod of Prospero's reason, and in which Ariel loves and serves his master (Phillips 157). However, one must press beyond Phillips' presentation of the Renaissance notion of the trinitarian soul (157).

Charity is a state of being in which the rational Prospero himself bows down, and sets Ariel free out of love, entering into an epiphanic ritual of communal expiation and reconciliation (Shakespeare 5.1.54-57; Epilogue 15-20). One can attain this state of being by rejecting the character of *Mauberley*'s mere repudiation of the ills of the Modern, and by embracing a recognition and reclamation of the values (Pound, *Mauberley* 111; 113). The entire purpose of

this, of Mauberley's lament, Prospero's repentance, and the rediscovery of the values, is to reach one final recognition, as Robert Penn Warren would urge: one must "try... / To love so well the world that we may believe, in the end, in God" (Warren, "The Masts at Dawn" 116). When one reaches this recognition, sinfulness can be recognized and rejected, and virtue upheld and embraced, through the practicing of the values and the epiphanic and sacramental rituals, and Sacraments, of redemption. Finally, the one who sins is not bereft of hope, so long as one will break his staff and drown his book, as long as she will pray and plead, receiving the mercy that "frees all faults," revealing the hierophany of love, the paradiso, reminding the world: "As you from crimes would pardoned be, let your indulgence set me free" (Nickel 68; Shakespeare 5.1.54-57; "Epilogue" 5-20). Then Ariel will "cast out" the sinfulness of Caliban, walking beside Prospero, and neither will require a staff or a magic book in order to display the true Art: charity (Pound, *Mauberley* 112; Nickel 68; Shakespeare 5.1.54-57; "Epilogue" 5-20).

In conclusion, it is important to note that Pound was not utilizing Caliban as the critique of an ethnicity (Pound, *Mauberley* 112). Rather, Caliban was simply utilized in order to demonstrate the opposite of Ariel, cheapness as the opposite of Art, lowness as the opposite of highness, and sinfulness as the opposite of virtue (112). *Mauberley* contains imagistic resonances, and it should be understood in the overarching context of Pound's own development as a poet, a writer, and a human being. The entirety of *Mauberley*, a fundamental critique and repudiation of the cheapness, mass-production, and ultimately, mass-mechanized executions of the Modern, which is original sin in disguise, was expressed through Pound's line: "Caliban casts out Ariel" (112). This reveals the depth of Pound's imagistic verse primarily because his entire *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* can be expressed through those four words and their stylistic power (*Mauberley* 112).

An additional implication is that contemporary society is not immune to criticism. Human society has not advanced far in moral terms since World War I, which was replaced by the current wars and conflicts that are the result of the same original sin and stain of cheapness throughout the world. However, one must not merely repudiate the current-ills, which were always contemporary, when the Ancient was the Modern, when the first sin was committed, and when a palpable vortex of evil disturbed and ruined the world. The values must be reclaimed along with a certain faith in God in order to confront the evils that slither through the human heart, to reject sin, and to seek to journey on the narrow path of redemption, through a myriad of Sacraments and epiphanic and sacramental rituals of renewal and Grace (Hemingway 67-68; Warren, "The Masts at Dawn" 116). True Art can point the reader, the viewer, the listener, the audience, and ultimately the soul, toward redemption, demonstrating how the values extend to aesthetic principles of artistry, including Imagism. Thus, Pound imagistically utilizes Shakespeare's archetypes because they convey the entire meaning of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, which fundamentally laments the evils of the Modern in contrast to the universal values that the character of Mauberley associates with the past.

Chapter IV: The Christian Dimensions of Hemingway's *Islands in the Stream*

While it is impossible to treat the entire Hemingway canon in this thesis, it is possible to treat several key examples. This thesis has proven the following, thus far: A- That the theology of Catholic Christianity remains logically valid, even in the face of modern science and various literary-critical schools of thought, B- That Christianity cannot be reduced solely to the actions, and often, insidious deeds, of some “Christian” people, and C- That the theology, when applied correctly, can serve as a valid antidote to its insidious antithesis, which led to the rise of world wars and persistent nuclear threats. The absence of grace, the absence of seeking to recognize our human condition, and a general nausea, fatigue, and spiritual malaise, has necessarily resulted in the genocidal behavior of ideologically-driven powers. Hatred and blind ideology abounds in the absence of love, and what may yet appear to be love, at times, may truly constitute nothing more than hatred and blind ideology in disguise. For example, a Hitler youth who “loves” his “master race” is really exercising the ideology in which he has been indoctrinated. True love is not equitable with a desire to kill in the name of a perceived notion of racial, ethnic, gender, political, economic, social, and/or cultural superiority. True self-sacrifice does not involve unjust discrimination.

Now, Hemingway has often been misconstrued, even by the most well-intended, and excellent, of theorists. Cleanth Brooks, in his *The Hidden God Studies in Hemingway, Faulkner, Yeats, Eliot, and Warren*, portrays Hemingway's prose as if it was both atheistic and yet hearkening to a certain Code of Conduct that is extra-Christian. Brooks writes: “Hemingway is a writer who, through most of his mature life, seems to have had no religious commitment... The Hemingway Hero, as I have said, is doomed to defeat, but he insists on being defeated on his own terms... This insistence upon a code of honor is made by the man of action...” (Brooks 6; 10-

11). Brooks is correct on the matter of the Code, which, for Christians, is the Universal Law of God. Brooks continues: “For Hemingway at his best depicts brilliantly the struggle of man to be a human being in a world which increasingly seeks to reduce him to a mechanism, a mere thing”

(6). Truth, despite Brooks’ insistence that Hemingway’s “code of honor” is not presented by Hemingway as the Christian conception of Truth, is liberatory, protective, and preserving, as opposed to patriarchal, oppressive, and domineering (11). Of course, Truth has certainly been violated by patriarchal, hubristic, and deadly actions on the part of human beings (Harent, “Original Sin” 1).

Moreover, Brooks is incorrect when he discusses Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*. Jake’s affirmation of the existence of God was not stated “dryly,” because, per Stoneback’s correction, the central implication was, precisely, that Jake did have God and that Brett did not (Brooks 21; Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway’s The Sun Also Rises* 291-92). Brooks is correct in revealing Hemingway’s portrayal of extra-religious, complicated, characters, but he is incorrect when he bears all of this to an extreme, although, bereft of the context of secularizing Hemingway, the following statement is certainly true: “Even men and women who do not have God must try to make up for him in some sense, quixotic as that gesture will seem, and, in ultimate terms at least, desperate as that gesture must be” (21). Brooks’ intentions are to secularize the Christian ethos so that it may be received by a non-Christian audience, and vice versa: the Christian audience is invited to comprehend Christian aspects of works that are normally regarded as secular literature (21; 128). This is most important. Brooks continues: “But the Christian will do well to recognize his God though hidden by the incognito which He sometimes assumes. Jake’s courage is such an incognito and manifests the divine reality, though of course not fully and not in specifically religious terms” (21). Brooks is correct regarding how

God can assume Himself as the “incognito,” but he is taking things way too far when he attempts to overly-secularize Jake (21). Once again, Jake Barnes, and Hemingway, are Roman Catholic, and they have God, as God, and not as an “incognito” (Brooks 21; Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises* 291-92).

It might prove even more apt to challenge and eliminate the negative associations that are colloquially implied when individuals hear the term “Christian.” One might think of a Grand Inquisitor, or a vicious crusader charging through streets of blood, or Klansmen gathering around flaming crosses at nightfall on lonely hill-tops, or Conquistadors charging through Tenochtitlan, or Florentine political figures and corrupt clergymen warring with each other over territory, and the list could continue-onward for pages and pages. Human beings have performed these deeds. It was not God. And it was not Orthodoxy in and of itself. Once again, human beings have performed these deeds. It was not the mystics in their monasteries or in the deserts or on the mountain-tops. Human behavior remained the same, despite Christianity, and it remained in the depths of its fallen condition (Harent, “Original Sin” 1). Christianity is not reducible to the greed of generals and kings. One may replace the kings with modern prime ministers or presidents or other politicians. And there are always generals. And, most of all: there are always soldiers. God, however, is irreplaceable. To view the concept of God as nothing more than some bearded, bombastic, bully in the clouds, is to misunderstand the word “Infinity” as the sign of the ultimate nature of God (Zimmermann 1).

Now, Hemingway was writing in the midst of the chaotic 20th century, and he is not an atheistic writer, as some have attempted to portray him. He is responding to the reoccurrence of despair that has been revealed through Pound. He is doing so through his key Roman Catholic pilgrimage resonances, his references to a universal code of values, and through various religious

notions, including the exercise of grace under pressure and the dark night of the soul. This section of the thesis shall treat the following relevant texts: *Islands in the Stream* and *The Sun Also Rises*. A different approach shall be undertaken with *The Sun Also Rises*, as revered Hemingway scholar and Society President H.R. Stoneback has, throughout his *Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises*, definitively produced his explication of Hemingway's usage of Pilgrimage. Similarly, *The Old Man and the Sea* has received similarly definitive treatment, and in the interests of space, it shall be noted only where it is relevant.

Hemingway's *Islands in the Stream* is an essential work for Hemingwayan scholarship. Both works were published posthumously. *Islands in the Stream* is thematically similar to short stories such as *Black Ass at the Crossroads* and novels such as *The Old Man and the Sea*. Thomas Hudson is a painter who lives on one of the islands off of Cuba, and he fondly remembers the Paris years (*Islands in the Stream* 13). He remembers Paris and Africa, which signifies how his sense of place has never truly vanished (13). Thomas Hudson is both similar and dissimilar to Hemingway in several ways. There is fiction, but there is also reality, because, according to our literary critical framework, the text emanates from that which the writer knows, which emerges from the interior depths of the writer's subconscious. Hemingway had visited both France and Africa. He is writing from what he knows despite the fictitious backgrounds and personalities of his characters. In other words, Hemingway's characters are almost entirely comprised of fiction, but the circumstances and settings in which they find themselves were actually experienced by Ernest Hemingway himself in some way. It is important to note, because the following two texts were written in the latter part of Hemingway's life, that Hemingway's subconscious was not oriented toward despair. He could not have committed suicide from a position of atheistic nihilism or despair. Hemingway's *Islands in the Stream* demonstrates the

presence of his soul and the values within himself during his final years of life because of their imagistic and spiritual luminosity.

Islands in the Stream begins with the luminous imagery of Cuba. Hemingway writes: “The house was built on the highest part of the narrow tongue of land between the harbor and the open sea. It had lasted through three hurricanes and it was built solid as a ship” (Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* 9). This hearkens the reader to the imagery of the Church. The Church is generally understood through the metaphor of the Rock. It is a solid and firm foundation. St. Peter was a fisherman, who fished the Sea of Galilee, and Thomas Hudson is a fisherman as well, joining Santiago from *The Old Man and the Sea*, Nick Adams from *In Our Time* and several short stories, and Jake Barnes from *The Sun Also Rises*, who all share in the tradition (9). St. Peter, however, is herein treated in this thesis as an historic figure, rather than as a mere character, in respect to the existence of many Early Christians, who were, in fact, persecuted by the Roman Empire, and who did, in fact, exist before the time of Constantine the Great.

St. Peter was the Founder of the Church under the direction of Jesus Christ, Who is the Son of God within the Christian theological framework. The Church provides layers of protection:

It was a safe and fine place to bathe in the day but it was no place to swim at night. At night the sharks came in close to the beach, hunting in the edge of the Stream and from the upper porch of the house on quiet nights you could hear the splashing of the fish they hunted and if you went down to the beach you could see the phosphorescent wakes they made in the water. At night the sharks had no fear and everything else feared them. But in the day they stayed out away from the clear white sand and if they did come in you could see their shadows a long way away. (9-10)

Thus, the physical and metaphysical home of Thomas Hudson is a place of safety (9-10). This house functions as a double-reference. On one level, it is a literal house off the coast of Cuba, and on another, it uses the imagery of the Rock that is the Church, St. Peter's Vessel, which stands tall against the stormy seas of sin. The sharks can be reread as representations of the devil and his demons. Thomas Hudson's presence in this landscape leads us to a key notion: the virtue of courage. It is also, likely, not an accident that Thomas is named after both the tradition of St. Thomases, such as St. Thomas the Apostle, who had doubted the Resurrection, and St. Thomas Aquinas, one of the most famed Scholastic theologians.

This matter is currently difficult to discern, unless there is a letter of Hemingway's that discusses this in light of this novel, but one thing is certain: Hemingway never throws-around Christian names without some measure of purpose or reason for it. Hemingway, as one of Pound's chief student-Imagists, would never write something purposelessly. Through New Critical close-reading, it is possible to derive the following: Thomas, from Hemingway's Catholic subconscious, is most assuredly a Saint, and -the St. Thomas- in question would necessarily have -something- to do with ship-imagery, Church imagery, and the imagery of fishermen. The closest to this is St. Thomas the Apostle, one of the Twelve, who is considered to be one of the Fathers of the Church. The other key resonance is that of the Christian Captain, Henry Hudson, who sought the Northwest Passage in America, in an act of courage on his ship, the *Half-Moon*. It is no coincidence that Thomas Hudson, an artist like Hemingway, although of a different medium, who is surrounded by the imagery of the Church, or St. Thomas, is also familiar with facing the unknown at sea, as a fisherman, and as a courageous sailor like Henry Hudson. Now, as to why the name, Hudson, appears in Cuba, is mysterious, but there is ever a rhyme to reason in Hemingway's prose, and Hemingway did not name this character as Thomas

Columbus. But, regardless, the resonances are there, for a purpose, and the emphasis in this novel is placed on courage, grace under pressure, and a form of strength that is emergent from love among other important values.

To be courageous is to avoid folly. To avoid folly is to be wise. To be wise, one must perceive oneself as if a fool. To do this, one must possess humility. One cannot state the word 'humility' and at the same time possess it. One must forsake one's pride. One must, therefore, abandon vanity. To abandon vanity, one must surrender oneself to God. Hemingway writes:

Sometimes the summers were too hot when the wind dropped in August or when the trade winds sometimes failed in June and July. Hurricanes, too, might come in September and October and even in early November and there could be freak tropical storms any time from June on. But the true hurricane months have fine weather when there are no storms. (10)

In addition to functioning as a lesson on tropical weather-patterns, this passage has another important level of resonance contained within it. One must depend completely on God and His Will despite the "freak tropical storms" of sin and death (10).

Through the process of seeking God and His Grace, one will be able to detect, and may then choose, to avoid evil. Hemingway writes:

Thomas Hudson had studied tropical storms for many years and he could tell from the sky when there was a tropical disturbance long before his barometer showed its presence. He knew how to plot storms and the precautions that should be taken against them. He knew too what it was to live through a hurricane with the other people of the island and the bond that the hurricane made between all people who had been through it. He also knew that hurricanes could be so bad that nothing could live through them. He always thought, though, that if there was ever one that bad he would like to be there for it and go with the house if she went. (10)

Thus, one is able to detect evil. Moreover, this passage reveals the luminous dedication and loyalty that the soul owes unto God: to "go with the house if she went" (10). It is the dedication that one requires in order to bear the cross.

The other important emphasis is on the "bond" that is formed between the surviving inhabitants of the islands, which is akin to Robert Penn Warren's "The recognition of complicity" that is "the beginning of innocence" (Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* 10; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214). In the above-passage, the emphasis should be placed on the word "if" (Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* 10). Hemingway writes:

The house felt almost as much like a ship as a house. Placed there to ride out storms, it was built into the island as though it were a part of it; but you saw the sea from all the windows and there was good cross ventilation so that you slept cool on the hottest nights... Soon after you saw the dark blue of casuarina trees above the line of the sea, you would see the white bulk of the house... He always thought of the house as *her* exactly as he would have thought of a ship. In the winter, when the northers blew and it was really cold, the house was warm and comfortable because it had the only fireplace on the island. It was a big open fireplace and Thomas Hudson burned driftwood in it. (10-11)

This passage is luminous and powerful. The phrase "the house as *her*" not only conjures forth St. Peter the Fisherman, but also the Church as the Bride of Christ (10-11). The fire is that of God's Love, which preserves and perpetuates the Church despite all evil (10-11). It might be tempting to view the "cross ventilation" as spiritual imagery, but the trouble, here, is that this is a description of practical air-flow in a house (10-11). If there was a deeper connection between the "cross ventilation" and the "burned driftwood," then the perceived resonance becomes more plausible. However, other than the presence of these things in the same passage, it would, most

likely, prove difficult to establish such a correlation. But, the “burned driftwood” is important, and this shall be explored in greater detail through the imagery of the fireplace (10-11).

The fireplace, at the center of the house, places fire at the center of Thomas Hudson's life, and more importantly, at the central apex of the spiritual landscape (10-11). The wetness of its surroundings, the Gulf Stream and its depths, and the threat of horrific storms all circulate around the white house on the hill and within the fireplace at the center of the house (10-11).

Hemingway writes:

He had a big pile of driftwood stacked against the south wall of the house. It was whitened by the sun and sand-scouted by the wind and he would become fond of different pieces so that he would hate to burn them. But there was always more driftwood on the beach after the big storms and he found it was fun to burn even the pieces he was fond of. He knew the sea would sculpt more, and on a cold night he would sit in the big chair in front of the fire, reading by the lamp that stood on the heavy plank table and look up while he was reading to hear the northwester blowing outside and the crashing of the surf and watch the great, bleached pieces of driftwood burning. (11)

This passage refers to a complete epiphanic dependency on God and His Love. This resonance of the surrendering of the driftwood reveals the radical holiness of Creation (11). The driftwood represents the various gifts that God bestows upon His children and creatures. They are good; they are "whitened by the sun" (11). However, the material gifts are also dangerous if the soul should come to prefer them instead of God and His Love, which constitutes idolatry. The important of the driftwood concerns, principally, the finite cycle of life that ceases to be finite at the moment of death. The purgation of fire, the burning of the Cross-resonance of driftwood, results in a certain cycle of gathering, possessing, and sacrificing, which continues perpetually. The burning of the driftwood becomes a sacramental ritual in addition to its natural function of

the production of warmth for survival (11). This is the principle intersection between spiritual and material conditions, and reality cannot be merely reduced to the material, or to the spiritual and metaphysical, because both systems of existence are part of the same, overarching existence, that is constituted by both simultaneously.

The act of surrendering the driftwood to the fire of God's Love allows God's Love to prevail and reign over all things (11). Hemingway writes:

Sometimes he would put the lamp out and lie on the rug on the floor and watch the edges of color that the sea salt and the sand in the wood made in the flame as they burned. On the floor his eyes were even with the line of the burning wood and he could see the line of the flame when it left the wood and it made him both sad and happy. All wood that burned affected him in this way. But burning driftwood did something to him that he could not define. He thought that it was probably wrong to burn it when he was so fond of it; but he felt no guilt about it. (11)

The burning of the driftwood causes Thomas Hudson to feel "both sad and happy... He thought that it was probably wrong to burn it when he was so fond of it..." (Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* 11). This passage actively reveals the tension between the soul and concupiscence, and the tension that exists between dependency on God, the fulfillment of His Will alone, and the tendency to try to depend on material possessions without Him (11). Hence, "...he felt no guilt about it" because the driftwood was burned in a ritual of sacramental love in the same way in which Santiago's hunt for the marlin throughout *The Old Man and the Sea* constitutes the same type of ritual (Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* 11; *The Old Man and the Sea* 75). Santiago states to the reader: "'The fish is my friend too,' ...'...but I must kill him'" (Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea* 75). It is the process of a sacramental ritual of sacrifice of that which is loved, and the sacrifice is necessitated, for example, by Thomas Hudson's need for warmth, or

the Cuban people's need for food (Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* 11; *The Old Man and the Sea* 75). However, this is not mindless fanaticism. It is controlled, and it inherently involves, and invokes respect for that which is killed, or destroyed by, virtue of necessity. This leads to the principle of Grace under pressure.

In *Islands in the Stream*, in the center of the house, in addition to the Love of God, there is also Grace under pressure (11-12). Hemingway writes: "On the floor he could feel the pounding of the surf the way he remembered feeling the firing of heavy guns when he had lain on the earth close by some battery a long time ago when he had been a boy" (11-12). Thus, Thomas Hudson recalls the days of World War I (11-12). However, "the pounding of the surf" is also the pressure exerted by the world, in the context of its metaphoric expression of the universality of sin, and its worldliness, or temptations to sin, upon one's soul (11-12). It is the pressure that is exerted by concupiscence and Original Sin upon one's soul (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). It is the pressure that is exerted by the senses and pleasure without thoughtfulness, homage, gratitude, or reverence to God. It is the pressure that is exerted by evil, vice, and wickedness. It is the pressure that is exerted by fear, terror, and hardship. All of these things must be endured in order for the soul, and more importantly, for God to prevail.

The central theme of *Islands in the Stream* is revealed early within the text through the imagery of light and darkness. In fact, the first forty or so pages can be said to have condensed the entire point of the text within its beginning section (Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* 28). Moreover, the following passage can be said to have condensed the entire novel and its first section into one paragraph:

It was dark now and there was a breeze blowing so that there were no mosquitoes nor sand flies and the boats had all come in, hoisting their outriggers as they came up the channel, and now were lying tied up in the slips of the three docks that

projected out from the beach into the harbor. The tide was running out fast and the lights of the boats shone on the water that showed green in the light and moved so fast it sucked at the piling of the docks and swirled at the stern of the big cruiser they were on. Alongside in the water where the light was reflected off the planking of the cruiser toward the unpainted piling of the dock where old motorcar and truck tires were tied as fenders, making dark rings against the darkness under the rock, garfish, attracted by the light, held themselves against the current. Thin and long, shining as green as the water, only their tails moving, they were not feeding, nor playing; only holding themselves there in fascination of the light. (28)

This luminous paragraph reveals the following. Firstly, it reveals that Hemingway is still at the peak of his career despite the plane crashes and the downward slope of his mental and physical health. He clearly has a soul and his knowledge of the values is clearly intact at the time of the composition of this novel. Secondly, it reveals the luminous and epiphanic religious central image of the novel. This is not the first time in which Hemingway focuses on the theme of holding oneself "against the current" (28). Even so, this version of the theme has been placed authentically into the Cuban landscape (28). The novel is condensed, in this passage, in terms of its underlying thesis, which does not include every instance of symbolic resonance or event of plot. There is the drowning darkness of World War II, the deepening shadows of death, the U-boat hunt among the islands, the sharks that threaten Thomas Hudson's family, and, yet, all the protagonists become the fish who are holding "themselves against the current" throughout the novel (28). The "current" of despair, which is intrusive and prodigious, is resisted, through Grace under pressure, by the likes of Thomas Hudson, who endures the temptation to despair (28).

The resonance of Grace under pressure is placed in such a way, in this section of the novel, that the imagery of spiritual light versus darkness is invoked. Hemingway writes:

"Whole thing sounds unwholesome," Johnny drank.
 "Only saving aspect is you still take a drink. You boys gone in for religion? Has Tom Seen The Light?"

"Tom?" Roger asked.

"Relations with the Deity about the same," Thomas Hudson said.

"Cordial?"

"We are tolerant," Thomas Hudson said. "Practice any faith you wish. Got a ball field up the island where you can practice."

"I'll give the Deity a fast one high and inside if he crowds the plate," Roger said.

"Roger," said Johnny reproachfully. "It's after dark. Didn't you see twilight fall and dusk set in and darkness come? And you a writer. Never a good idea to speak slightly of the Deity after dark. He's liable to be right behind you with his bat poised."

"I'll bet he'd crowd the plate, too," Roger said. "I've seen him crowding it lately."

"Yes sir," Johnny said. "And he'd step into your fast one and knock your brains out. I've seen him hit."

"Yes., I guess you have," Roger agreed. "So has Tom and so have I. But I'd still try and get my fast ball by him."

"Let's cut out the theological discussion," Johnny said.

"And get something to eat." (32-33)

Thus, God is present despite the ill-humored jokes of humankind. (32-33) Moreover, Johnny poignantly reveals the ways in which physical light, or the absence of light, both imply the existence of both spiritual light and its absence. There is the baseball imagery, but it feeds into the idea of spiritual and physical darkness as a sign of negativity within the soul, which, of course, results in dire consequences. In this case, spiritual darkness is heavily present in the scene (32-33). Hemingway has revealed his prowess yet again. The resonances of faith that are embodied in *Islands in the Stream* could continue for well over a hundred pages. These resonances may receive expansion in a later work. For the purposes of this thesis, it is necessary to transition to *The Sun Also Rises*.

Chapter V: “Below the River was Smooth and Black”: Parallel Themes of Spiritual Light and Darkness in Ernest Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* and Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables* (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 83:13-14)

Ernest Hemingway’s Roman Catholic beliefs serve to define his novels in their inalienable purpose: to reveal a new and vibrant way of looking at the world that is paradoxically both contemporary and ancient. As noted thus far, throughout the Dante, Shakespeare, and earlier Hemingway chapters of this Thesis, there is a palpable form of inclusivity within the Catholic faith because redemption exists despite the nature of one’s sins and concupiscence (Harent, “Original Sin” 1). Therefore, any soul can convert and partake in the Sacraments and sacramental rituals of redemption. Christianity does indeed contain some form of judgment, but it also contains something else that is unique: an inclusive accessibility to salvation through the path of redemption. Therefore, the only unforgiveable sin is the rejection of the path of redemption. Despair is final and unending, and it results in the eternal death of the soul. Both Ernest Hemingway and Victor Hugo demonstrate these contrasting themes throughout their shared spiritual resonances that are contained within their imagery of light and darkness. The physical presence or absence of light becomes the reflection of the spiritual presence or absence of Grace within the soul of the character around which a particular scene is centered. According to Brasch and Sigman, it is clear that Hemingway possessed one copy of Hugo’s *Notre Dame de Paris* (Brasch and Sigman 181). It is unclear as to whether or not Hemingway had read *Les Misérables*. Ernest Hemingway rejects despair in *The Sun Also Rises* through his imagery of spiritual light and darkness that were similarly established through the prose of Victor Hugo in *Les Misérables*.

The River Seine is a key location in the first half of Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*. On page 48, Hemingway writes of how Jake was: “Crossing the Seine...” (Hemingway, *The Sun*

Also Rises 48). The importance of the Seine in literature, and in this particular section of the famed Parisian river, stretches back to Victor Hugo. As Dr. Stoneback reveals, Jake Barnes, in Hemingway, crosses the Pont de la Concorde, after having passed over the Misery Valley on Pont Notre Dame after gazing at the empty barges, which have passed through the Misery Valley successfully (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 24-27, 48; Hugo 1105; Stoneback 82). In *Les Miserables*, Javert premeditates his suicide in the same location (Hugo 1105). Meanwhile, in *The Sun Also Rises*, Brett desires to learn more about the Roman Catholic faith in her desire to imitate Jake, but she remains influenced by the shadows of spiritual darkness to some degree at the novel's conclusion (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 249-251). Robert Cohn remains in the darkness of despair (198). It is Jake who crosses the right bridges, who journeys toward spiritual progress, and it is Jake who quests directly toward salvation on the path of redemption (48). It is necessary to further explore these key resonances of spiritual light versus darkness.

Hemingway, through Jake, reveals the depth of life, love, and trust in God that the truly devout Catholic must attain, which is a hallmark of the path of redemption. As Jake states to the reader on page 48 of *The Sun Also Rises*: “The river looked nice. It was always pleasant crossing bridges in Paris” (48). It is crucial to note that Jake does not fear the Seine because he has attained the necessary spiritual qualities upon which to seek the salvation of his own soul, which are obtained through a grace that he could never earn or attain by himself without his submission to the Will of God. Jake is on his Pilgrimage toward Grace. The resonance of free will emerges through the character of one’s own behavior. This fundamentally invokes the choice as to whether or not one will seek God, which is the ultimate decision that determines whether or not one will receive the gift of grace. Jake lives in a state of grace, which becomes contrasted with its antithesis, as noted on pages 82-83: “The river was dark...” (82-83). Here the imagery of

darkness first emerges, representing the choice of the Christian hero, simultaneously representing the desire for nothing that a Christian ought to experience. There is also the inherent contrast between *Paradiso* and *Inferno*. On page 83, Hemingway continues to describe Jake as he gazes at aspects of the scene that are: "...all bright with lights..." (83). The imagery of the contrast between light and darkness is present within the beautiful Parisian night-scene, which inherently possesses spiritual undertones. There is always a form of light-imagery when Jake Barnes is near at hand.

The fundamental form of imagery that reflects spiritual darkness is the precise usage of darkness in and of itself as a description of the landscape. On page 83 of *The Sun Also Rises*, Jake describes another aspect of the scene: "Standing on the bridge the island looked dark...the houses were high against the sky...and the trees were shadows" (83). It is at this point that Victor Hugo exposes the true imagery behind Hemingway's latter-written scene through his own reflection of the landscape as reflective of the interior spiritual condition of the soul of Javert, on page 1114 of *Les Miserables*:

The darkness was complete. It was the sepulchral moment which follows midnight. A ceiling of clouds concealed the stars. The sky was only an ominous depth. The houses in the city no longer showed a single light; nobody was passing; all he could see of the streets and the quais was deserted; Notre Dame and the towers of the Palais de Justice seemed like features of the night. A lamp reddened the curb of the quai (Hugo 1114).

Javert is standing in the darkness of disbelief, confusion, and despair, while Jake and Bill are looking at a similar scene (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 83; Hugo 1114). For Jake and Bill, however, the darkness only represents a contrast in terms of the fundamental decision that their souls must make, as well as the spiritual condition in which the soul recognizes and repents of its fundamental concupiscence (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). Every soul faces the choice between

spiritual light and darkness, good and evil, and Jake is not exempt from this rule.

The key point to consider is the fact that Jake is a devout Catholic who ultimately rejects evil, and as such, he is associated with light in both of its spiritual and physical forms. This not, therefore, imply, that other religions do not reject evil. It rather implies that Catholic, the original Greek term for “universal,” implies that these struggles must, therefore, be experienced by all religions. The struggle between hope and despair, as revealed in the Dante Chapter, even existed in the time of Homer. The small amount of light that is present in Javert’s scene, however, is a hellish light that can only announce the opening of the mouth of the *Inferno* within the Misery Valley, which is juxtaposed with the darkness in Hugo’s symbolic landscape (Hugo 1114; Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway’s The Sun Also Rises* 82). On page 1114, Hugo’s usage of the “reddened... curb of the quai” reveals the fundamental crisis of the soul that despairs: a gaping mouth of eternal death in the fires of the *Inferno*, and it is the redness of the lamp that reflects this spiritual condition (1114). Jake, however, sees something different as he gazes toward Notre Dame (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 83). Hemingway continues on page 83: “...and looked up the river to the lights of the big bridges” (83). Jake is presumably gazing at bright lights of a color that is not even close to red (83). The disposition of Jake’s soul is that of the movement towards salvation, and, as such, he rejects spiritual darkness (83). Hemingway continues: “Below the water was smooth and black” (83). The water may be black, but it is also smooth, and this is a crucial difference between Hemingway and Hugo, as further revealed on page 1114 of *Les*

Miserables:

Javert bent his head and looked. All was black. He could distinguish nothing... a gleam appeared in dim serpentine contortions, the water having this power, in the most complete night, of taking light, nobody knows whence... The gleam vanished, and all became indistinct. Immensity seemed open there. What was beneath was not water; it was

chasm. The wall of the quai... seemed like an escarpment of the infinite. (Hugo 1114)

Victor Hugo's passage is one of the most detailed literary representations of spiritual darkness, and its suicidal side-effects, which can be literal in terms of the body and of the soul (1114). The "gleam" can be interpreted as the opportunity to repent and be saved (1114). The "escarpment of the infinite" reflects the uncertainty, the fear, the terror, and the narcissism of despair (1114). It doubles of the troubling, sublime, and worldview-shattering realization on part of a non-believer, which occurs when the non-believer recognizes "the infinite" as the term that inherently defines the fundamental nature of existence (1114). It need not be troubling, however, and Jake Barnes certainly does not allow this revelation to trouble him (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 83). The usage of the imagery of light has been established as a metaphysical contrast to spiritual darkness in the fundamental condition of the human soul, but it is necessary to further reveal how the imagery of darkness reflects despair.

While Jake travels through Spain with the interior condition of a pilgrim, both Robert Cohn and Brett Ashley are trapped within an entirely opposite condition, which the reader can determine with ease. On page 186 of *The Sun Also Rises*, Brett comments to Jake about Cohn: "I hate his damned suffering" (186). Brett is essentially revealing the nature of Cohn's spiritual condition, which is unchanging throughout the novel (186). If Cohn had died in this condition, he would have found himself in the same eternal death as Javert (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 286; Hugo 1114). However, Brett is also struggling with spiritual darkness. On the same page, Brett and Jake walk "...away from the crowd and the lights..." (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 186). Immediately, the language of spiritual darkness reappears. However, it is now Brett who dominates the scene. As Hemingway further describes, "The street was dark and wet..." (186). Even the description of the street is similar to that of the River Seine in earlier chapters, and the

themes become even further apparent as the scene progresses.

The imagery of stone fortifications and other such constructions of human civilization should recall the stone bridges and the quais of Paris to the mind of the reader. Jake and Brett walk "...to the fortifications..." (186). Hemingway continues his description through Jake on page 186: "We passed wine-shops with light coming out from their doors onto the black, wet street, and sudden bursts of music" (186). The light coming out from the doors is yet another Christian reminder of the doorway of the human heart upon which Christ knocks, and it also reveals the doorway to salvation through which the soul longs to enter. The black and wet street is allegorical to the same symbolic landscape of spiritual darkness as present in the Paris scenes at night involving the River Seine (186). Jake asks Brett, "Want to go in?" (186). Jake is clearly embodying the Christian hero once again, who seeks the salvation of any who wander in the darkness, as the Light of God surrounds him while he recognizes his own spiritual deficiencies and strives against the darkness within himself (Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises* 132).

The inevitable consequences of moral choices are continually revealed throughout the imagery of the Pamplona sequence. Brett emphatically answers Jake: "No" (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 186). Brett is clearly choosing spiritual darkness (67-69). Jake and Brett walk "...across the wet grass..." which places the emphasis on wetness as synonymous with darkness (186). Hemingway further describes the scene: "Across the plain it was dark... Below us were the dark pits..." (186). The abyss opens beneath Brett as it did beneath Javert, and Jake stands near at hand, a reminder of the light of Christ despite the darkness (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 186; Hugo 1114). Hemingway continues further: "Behind were the trees and the shadow of the cathedral, and the town silhouetted against the moon" (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 186).

The landscape then mirrors the Javert scene, but it does so with the Cathedral of Pamplona standing in place of Notre Dame (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 186; Hugo 1114).

Hemingway continues further: “I feel like hell’, Brett said” (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 186). Now the spiritual state of Brett’s soul is exposed in the text itself. Hemingway further describes the scene: “The long lines of trees were dark in the moonlight” (186). Thus, the spiritual darkness theme continues through the imagery.

The symbolic landscape continues with the spiritual darkness theme, but now, the light of the moon and other lights remind the reader of Jake’s presence (186). Hemingway writes on page 186: “There were the lights...” (186). Jake slowly begins to dominate the scene as the theme of light gains momentum. They turn and start “...climbing the mountain” (186). The mountain is reminiscent of the Via Dolorosa, particularly the climbing of Golgotha, with the light signifying the Way of the Cross. Hemingway writes: “Up on top of the mountain we saw the lights of the fort...” (186). Once again, the theme of spiritual light implies escape from the spiritual darkness that now oppresses Brett. Hemingway continues: “Below to the left was the river. It was high from the rain, and black and smooth. Trees were dark along the banks. Brett stared straight ahead. Suddenly she shivered” (186-87). The spiritual darkness theme is complete, but then Brett and Jake decide to return to Pedro Romero. Brett states the following to Jake, concerning her affair with Romero: “I don’t say it’s right. It is right though for me” (188). Brett exposes her moral relativism, and the reason as to why she is still in darkness, as she still cannot access the count’s values from pages 66-68, which do not change (66-68). Naturally, as Brett states this, she and Jake are walking “...in the park in the dark...” (188). Darkness continues to pervade the scene, which is the consequence of Brett’s moral relativism, because

darkness implies a vagueness, an ambiguity, or an absence of certainty, and Jake knows that he must be certain of the universality of the values and of the inherent need for God.

Spiritual darkness is revealed in one final key instance in the aftermath of Robert Cohn's attack on Pedro Romero (197). On page 197, Hemingway writes: "The door was shut..." (197). Jake ascends the stairs to see Robert, after Robert had hit him earlier, and Jake was coaxed into going to see him by Mike (197). The door being shut is an objective correlative to the state of Robert's soul because he has blinded himself to the light of grace. He prefers the darkness, and as such, he suffers from its consequences. Hemingway writes: "There was no light in the room... Cohn was lying, face down... in the dark" (197). This darkness echoes a more physical form of spiritual death from *Les Misérables*. On page 1114, Victor Hugo writes:

Javert remained for some minutes motionless, gazing into that opening of darkness; he contemplated the invisible with a fixedness which resembled attention. The water gurgled. Suddenly he took off his hat and laid it on the edge of the quai. A moment afterwards, a tall and black form... a phantom, appeared standing on the parapet, bent towards the Seine, then sprang up, and fell straight into the darkness; there was a dull splash; and the shadow alone was in the secret of the convulsions of that obscure form which had disappeared under the water (Hugo 1114).

And although Robert Cohn is lying on a bed, his soul has fallen into the abyss of spiritual darkness, to the point that he begs for forgiveness, and yet when it is given, he cannot accept it (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 26-27). Both Javert and Robert Cohn made their own psychotic spiritual leaps into despair and landed in the same place. Lunch was over and Robert Cohn landed in hell (47). It is left to the reader to decide whether or not he will ever climb out again. Even so, the true importance and value of the Catholic faith exists within the contrast that despair entails: Divine Grace.

Hemingway writes of the character of the condition of spiritual light when he describes

Jake Barnes' behavior in the Cathedral of Pamplona. As Jake confesses on page 103 of *The Sun Also Rises*: "I was a little ashamed, and regretted that I was such a rotten Catholic, but realized there was nothing I could do about it..." (103). Jake recognizes the darkness that remains inside himself because of his capacity to sin, but he also recognizes the saving nature of repentance and expiation (103). Victor Hugo writes on page 96 of *Les Miserables*:

Jean Valjean wept long... While he wept, the light grew brighter and brighter in his mind--- an extraordinary light, a light at once transporting and terrible. His past life, his first offence... his last action, this theft of forty sous from a child, a crime meaner and more monstrous that it came after the bishop's pardon, all this returned and appeared to him, clearly, but in a light that he had never seen before. He beheld his life, and it seemed to him horrible; his soul, and it seemed to him frightful. There was, however, a softened light upon that life and upon that soul. It seemed to him that he was looking upon Satan by the light of Paradise.

How long did he weep thus? What did he do after weeping? Where did he go? Nobody ever knew. It is known simply that, on that very night, the stage-driver... saw, as he passed through the bishop's street, a man in the attitude of prayer, kneel upon the pavement in the shadow, before the door of Monseigneur Bienvenu (Hugo 96).

Such is the required disposition of a follower of Christ in a state of penitence, whether physically, or spiritually, or both. On page 1221, it results in the following in the words of Jean Valjean: "...There is scarcely anything else in the world but that: to love one another... I see a light... I die happy" (1221). Without a notion of evil, there can be no grace, and grace is a core necessity for a death that is truly "happy," and it requires the recognition of the existence of a Higher Power, Who is Infinity, Who is known as God (1221). And Victor Hugo concludes the passage on page 1222: "The night was starless and very dark. Without doubt, in the gloom some mighty angel was standing, with outstretched wings, awaiting the soul" (1222). In other words, one can either despair at the thought of death in a starless night or seek the angel. The same Light that came to redeem and lead the soul of Valjean on the path to salvation, is present throughout

Hemingway's prose, redeeming Jake as he journeys from Paris to Bayonne, to Roncevaux, to Pamplona, and to San Sebastian on the Pilgrimage of Santiago de Compostela (Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises* 134-39). Thus, Ernest Hemingway rejects despair in *The Sun Also Rises* through his imagery of spiritual light and darkness that were similarly established through the prose of Victor Hugo in *Les Miserables*.

Hemingway, as such, has rejected the despair that was incurred by the savage, European, violence of World War I. He has rejected the cruelty that is also opposed by a multiplicity of ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. The false equivalency of the abuse of various Crusader-Lords, the Thirty Years War, the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions, the Puritans and Conquistadors in the Americas, with the central principles and values of Christendom, is unsustainable. The utterances of that which amount to heresy, blasphemy, and betrayal, can no longer be equivocated with orthodoxy. At times, the heresy "became" the "orthodoxy," which displaced the true orthodoxy as a result. I refer to the likes of Pope Alexander VI and Pope Julian II and Pope Clement VII, who hailed from the Borgia and Medici Houses, whose actions amounted to a terrible form of organized crime. These actions, in turn, resulted in the Protestant Reformation, which was also exploited by princes, principalities, and other Early Modern political powers, resulting in the continuation of the perpetuation of the myth that has developed into the current false equivalency.

This false equivalency has distanced the minds of many people, homosexual and heterosexual, African American and Latino, Baptist and Methodist, Catholic and Protestant and Atheist, Modernist and Post-Modernist and Trans-Modernist, away from Christianity, as this false equivalency continually unifies and divides great swaths of the contemporary world. True Orthodoxy is the Divine Love that Dante discerned, the Grace that Prospero finally found, the

Grace that should have liberated, rather than enslaved, Caliban, the Virtue embodied in Ariel, and the redemptive force that redeemed Thomas Hudson, Pedro Romero, and Jake Barnes. True Orthodoxy is antithetical to the heresy, the cruelty, and the blasphemy, that has been perpetuated by many whom have dared to refer to themselves as “Christians,” and all of which have frightened and terrified many souls onto the dark and dusty road to Hell, dragging themselves with them.

For hatred remains antithetical to love and peace and redemption, and many who have been frightened away, have not lost their complicity in the evils of the world. This is where High Modernism has reached its apex. This is where the Southern Renaissance can reveal to us, particularly, how “the recognition of complicity is the beginning of innocence” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). This revelation will approach us “like a wailing horn, the beating falling into the midst of a continuous rising and sinking note” (Roberts 239). Thus, having rejected despair with Hemingway, we may now approach further points of intersection, in which the metaphysical blends within the material, and the material within the metaphysical, through the Southern Renaissance, and we shall begin with Elizabeth Madox Roberts.

Chapter VI: The Rocks that are a'Growin': Resonances of Place and the Landscape in *The Time of Man*: The Radical Holiness of Creation: Roberts' Symbolic Landscape.

Transitioning from Hemingway to Roberts, it is important to note that two distinct literary traditions are welded together within the 20th Century: The High Modernism of Pound and Hemingway and the Southern Renaissance of Roberts and Warren. Roberts is the often-unacknowledged root of the Southern Renaissance Tradition, and this is why Roberts shall be considered instead of Faulkner. Faulkner rightly deserves respect, but he must, regrettably, be treated elsewhere due to the constraints of this Thesis. Roberts' approach to literary composition is similar to that of Hemingway in that: A- both writers rely on the precise utilization of language in order to paint precise images, and B- both writers are intensely drawn to the mysteries of the Catholic Church, although, among the two, Hemingway was a practicing Catholic rather than a practicing Protestant Christian. Warren, as it shall be revealed again later in this Thesis, was intensively influenced by both Hemingway and Roberts. Warren, although he is primarily regarded as a Southern Renaissance, Kentucky writer, is, in actuality, presenting the embodiment of a synthesis or ever-deepening synergy of High Modernism and the Southern Renaissance. Roberts presents a deracinated South, a land of struggling families of tenant farmers, who strive to find God in the midst of the physical and spiritual chaos that surrounds them (Stoneback, "In a Station of the Modern..." 67-68). As such, the chief Christian elements of a selected portion of Roberts' prose shall be examined, as it unfolds through her Imagism, and then this synthesis shall be explored throughout Warren.

Roberts presents a resonance of nature, the earth as a Garden, which reveals the notion that human beings must tend the Garden, which is the Earth. There is a specific relationship between the landscape and the human beings who inhabit it. It is, in a sense, a hermeneutic cycle. The human beings influence the landscape, which changes due to their presence within it, and

the landscape in turn influences the human beings who inhabit it. This cycle is unending. The humans change the Place, and the Place changes the humans. Roberts presents a unifying sense of Place and the landscape, a cycle of permanence and change, because her characters tend the Garden of the radical holiness of Creation, despite the Fall of humanity through Original Sin (Harent, "Original Sin" 1).

The life of the tenant farmer is bound with the Place of Kentucky. As Dr. Stoneback astutely notes:

This writer's identification with region and sense of place was profound, and it included approval of various agrarian movements that sought to resist the overwhelming influence of the abstract nation-state, the industrialist Cult of the Machine that threatened deracination and the destruction of folk life (Stoneback, "In a Station of the Modern..." 67-68).

The "industrialist Cult of the Machine" is the enemy of the tenant farmers, which threatens their way of life, which is precisely a way of living within instead of against the landscape (67-68).

Humanity does not dominate the Earth in this cycle. Humanity rather moves with the earth and becomes part of the earth and sustains the earth and is sustained by the earth, and humanity also possesses agency, and each individual possesses an immortal soul. This is not a New Age-style theory of the relationship between humanity and nature. This concept does not include some form of a spirit of the world or a "Mother Nature." Rather, it is of a realistic view of this relationship, which stands in opposition to the fallacies of Transcendentalism.

In Roberts' prose, Nature is not painted as an Edenic Paradise that is free from pain and death. Rather, there is an acute sense of God that is communicated throughout the novel, and this sense exists in a way that is juxtaposed with the realities of life. It is not an idealistic escape from the real. It is an affirmation of the real, and a triumph over the harshness of the real. Even the language of Roberts' prose is rooted in the principle of exactitude. From a literary-composition

standpoint, Dr. Stoneback notes: “Think of Roberts' imagery, of Ellen Chesser's "white clover of thought," of her numinous feeding of turkey chicks, of all the imagery of stone, of precisely observed birds and beasts, and you are thinking of Pound's version of Imagism” (Stoneback, “In a Station of the Modern...” (104-105). The imagistic qualities of Roberts’ prose transfigure it into an aesthetically poetic status. All good prose must ultimately exist as poetry. Roberts writes:

The rocks were dark with mould and moss, for this was a virgin hill. It was a mild March day, cool and clear, with winds worrying the hillside brush and leaping off across the farms in a great rush or beating gently now and then at Ellen's garments. Henry nailed at the frame while she worked with the stones (Roberts 86).

In terms of its imagistic qualities, the reader will astutely note the darkness of the “mould” and the “moss” on the “rocks,” the coolness and clarity of the “winds,” and Ellen feeling her garments moving with the wind. Ellen is not lost in some solipsistic fantasy.

Ellen is there in the Place, and she lives, works, and breathes within the Place. She works “with the stones,” she is with them, she is present, handling them, and she is experiencing them, and they are touched by her, and the Place is becoming different because of her movement of the stones (86). This is not to suggest that the stones inherently possess feelings or consciousness. Obviously, they do not. The human being, who dwells within and partakes in the Place, must be conscious of this relationship between causes and effects and antecedents and consequents, or one may simply state it as the relationship between one’s own actions and their consequences. As the Place changes Ellen, she is changing the Place, in accordance with the established hermeneutic cycle. The stones are “a’growin,’” as Henry asks her, “Don’t you know that rocks grow?” (86-89). The rocks metaphysically grow because she has touched them, she has handled them, and she has moved them. The rocks are not conscious save in one regard: they, also, were created by God. And as the currents of the awareness and recognition of the radical holiness of

Creation stem from the rocks and into Ellen, the spiritual soul of Ellen touches the rocks, in a dialogue between the spiritual nature of the individual soul and her recognition and awareness of the radical holiness of Creation itself.

Creation, in and of itself, is not divine, but it was created and sustained by divinity itself.

It is the Earth as God's Body. Roberts continues:

"No plow iron ever cut this-here hill afore, not in the whole time of man," Henry said. "The time of man," as a saying, fell over and over in Ellen's mind. The strange men that lived here before our men, a strange race doing things in strange ways, and other men before them, and before again. Strange feet walking on a hillside for some purpose she could never think. Wondering and wondering she laid stones on her altar" (87).

There is the notion of the Earth as Altar, and as later Catholic imagery in the novel implies, the Creator becomes the Altar of Sacrifice, the Creator had created the Altar of Sacrifice, and the Creator sacrificed Himself on His Altar, in order to save that which He created. Ellen's dialogue with the stones, their association with the Place, and the Place as Creation, is bound-up in the term "altar" (87). It is an inherently religious scene, which also lends itself to a notion of communion.

There is "the time of man" itself, the sense that the Place brings the soul into a state of communion with not only Creation, but with all the souls that had once inhabited the landscape in the cycle (87). If one truly understands the resonances of Place as they exist for both Faulkner and Hemingway, the landscape in which one is rooted, versus the landscape in which one is conscious, one will find that they are part of the same principle. For the particular Place, the rooted Place, one must live, grow, and come to know the Place. This is the sense of Place as it is known within Roberts' prose. When Ellen is literally uprooted, she finds a new Place, and then settles herself within it (237-38). This approaches Hemingway's sense of Place, the sense that is

acquired by the pilgrim, the traveler, which is a different sense of Place, in certain ways, from that of the rooted farmer. When one enters into a Cathedral in France, such as Notre Dame, and receives Holy Communion, and recites one's prayers alongside the French, one is entering into a state of communion with all of France. Moreover, one is entering into a state of communion with all of humankind, because all things are part of one Creation, and one is entering into communion with both past and future generations, within the context of a particular Place.

Ellen Chesser dwells within a rooted sense of Place. She and Henry have entered into a state of communion with not only all of humankind, as part of the same Creation, which is the same Earth, but they have also communed with "the strange men who lived here before our men" (87). As such, the cycle is maintained, the created in relation to the Creator through Creation, with the overarching sense that the plights of the tenant farmer are not devoid of meaning, and that they, themselves, as human beings, are not devoid or bereft of dignity. Roberts epitomizes the correlation between the landscape and Christianity when she writes of St. Lucy country:

The tower was of stone like the stone of the hills, an eight-sided tower with eight high indentures in its crown topped by eight stone crosses. The tower would be St. Lucy, for "Beyond St. Lucy" had been the legend by which she had walked all day through the roads and lanes. She would live, she reflected, somewhere down within that rugged stretch of land. She would sink down into the land, turning through the hills as the road went; she would go into the place (237-38).

The Church literally rises out of "the stone of the hills" (237-38). It belongs to the Place. It is of the Place. And then the Place entered into a certain synergy with the Church, and more importantly, with its universal, Infinite Creator, who dwells within the Church. Within the Church, the Catholic faithful will receive the Eucharist, the ultimate act of Communion for a Catholic, which is the physical unification between the created and the Creator within one's Place.

For Roberts, these resonances of mysticism and communion are not separate from the landscape. They sing of the radical holiness of Creation. The lynch-mob at the end of the novel have severed themselves from these core, Christian, resonances, through their sins and refusal to repent (388). Ellen remains faithful as she protects her husband, Jasper, by courageously, with grace under pressure, throwing herself between him and the whips (388-89). The famed novelist and poet Robert Penn Warren writes of the pattern of *The Time of Man* as presented in Roberts' *Journal* in his famed essay entitled "Elizabeth Madox Roberts: Life is from Within":

Thus the abstract pattern is fleshed out with the story of Ellen, but the story itself is fleshed out by her consciousness. What lies at the center of consciousness is a sense of wonder... there is a sense of life as ritual even in the common duties, as an enactment that numenously embodies the relation of the self to its setting in nature, in the human community, and in time (Warren, "Elizabeth Madox Roberts: Life is from Within" 7-9).

Thus, the cycle between the human impact on the landscape and the impact of the landscape on humanity is established through a sense of sacramental ritual. Roberts continues:

Off to the north stood St. Lucy, the abbey house and the church, and the bell in the tower rang often during the day and the night. In still weather the notes came slowly and sweetly across the hills, beating on the stones and clods, each blow distinct, belonging to itself; but in high winds they came like a wailing horn, the beating falling into the midst of a continuous rising and sinking note (239).

The "wailing horn" refers to a key resonance that Dr. Stoneback discusses, in relation to Hemingway, in his *Reading Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises*. This resonance evokes the memory of that "exemplary Christian knight" named Roland and his famous last stand in the pass of Roncevaux in the Pyrenees mountain-range between France and Spain (Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises* 190-196). This famous battle constitutes an expression of ecclesiastical courage and sacrifice, which nullified the sin of pride in a final act of

redemption (190-196). Ellen will seek redemption within her new Place (Roberts 239). However, there is more than Roland in this passage.

In the most recently referenced passage, there is the sense of a unified Creation, a sense that the world of St. Lucy is also part of the same Creation as the world of Roland in the Pyrenees (Roberts 239; Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises* 190-196). Even so, the uniqueness of each Place possesses inherently unique qualities. No rock is truly the same as any other rock. Each rock exists in and of itself as each landscape exists in and of itself. However, each rock and every landscape are also part of the majestic whole of the Earth. If one turns to *Ecclesiastes*, which Hemingway utilized as his true epigraph for his *The Sun Also Rises*, one will recognize this principle:

One generation passeth away, and another generation
cometh; but the earth abideth forever . . . The sun also
arise, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place
where he arose . . . The wind goeth toward the south, and
turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually,
and the wind returneth again according to his circuits . . . All
the rivers run unto the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the
place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.
(qtd. in Hemingway, "The Epigraph")

This is the paradox. The rivers flow through particular places, with resonances of Place, be they through Paris or Pamplona, and yet, they flow into the sea that covers the breadth of the Earth. It is the paradox of the correctness of both resonances of Place, of the Southern Renaissance that Roberts embodies and formulates in her prose, and it is also true of the Parisian-Renaissance-High-Modernism of Hemingway. Finally, for both writers, the resonance of Place cannot be severed from the Christian religion.

There is no sense of Creation without a palpably real belief in a Creator. There is no sense of a communion between a Place. and an individual soul, without a Creator to to commune

with, as His Creation. Finally, if there are abstract correlations between a person who does not believe in God and a landscape, or for example, an atheistic farmer, then it still cannot be denied that there is an unrecognized connection that exists regardless of one's absence of beliefs. In short, even for the non-believer, the connection between one's self and one's Place still exists. However, without the terminology of religion, the language of the soul, it could prove difficult to describe this connection with accuracy. One does not need to believe in a God to know one's Place or to commune with one's Place. However, in order to elevate that communion to a level of ritual, an epiphanic ecstasy in which the soul recognizes the presence and power of its Creator through Creation, one must necessarily believe in God. This is something that only the believer can receive in its totality. This is present throughout Roberts, through St. Lucy country, and Ellen's rocks that are "a'growin' (Roberts 86-88). Thus, Roberts presents a unifying sense of Place and the landscape, a cycle of permanence and change, because her characters tend the Garden of the radical holiness of Creation despite the Fall of humanity and Original Sin (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). Roberts has presented us with a grand narrative in which a tenant farming woman has managed to express unfathomable depths of identity through grace. This spiritual progression shall lead us into the criticism, poetry, and prose, of Robert Penn Warren, who synthesized High Modernism and the Southern Renaissance in an epiphanic synergy, the results of which shall be explored in the next several chapters of this Thesis.

Chapter VII: Warren's Criticism: Of Life, Yearning and Earning the Knowledge of the Past

It is important to begin with Warren's faith, which is a contentious issue. Stoneback, in his famed "Strange Caterwauling..." Essay regarding the work of Elizabeth Madox Roberts and Robert Penn Warren, writes: "Yet it was a Boone-song that drew a great and genial black snake to rise like the *deus loci* to meet me at the same point in the trail every morning... as I went singing down to the creek that ran through my clearing... I now know... that my strange caterwauling was an incarnational song of joy in the beingness of the world's body" (Stoneback, *Strange Caterwauling...* 74). Stoneback derived this notion, ultimately, from Warren. Warren, in his essay entitled *America and the Diminished Self in Democracy and Poetry*, aptly surmises the central problem, which this thesis has been contending with since its inception: "And when we come to the writers after the Second World War, we find the old theme compounded by the sense of the human being set against a maimed and even sadistic society, and find more and more a general spirit of protest, despair, aimlessness, violence, and amoral transactions at all levels" (Warren, *America and the Diminished Self* 30). Warren responds to this problem in his poem, entitled *The Masts at Dawn*, when he writes: "We must try... / To love so well the world that we may believe, in the end, in God" (Warren, *The Masts at Dawn* 116). This statement is actually presenting a Christian principle that is not universally agreed-upon by Christians, many of whom, in Puritanical sects with Manichaeian roots, oppose the notion of the radical holiness of the Earth. The notion of the "Earth as God's Body" is, however, grounded in *The Book of Ecclesiastes*, as previously revealed on page 82 of this thesis, through the invocation of Hemingway's Epigraph in *The Sun Also Rises* (qtd. in Hemingway, "The Epigraph").

The notion that "the sun also ariseth" does not, however, imply that the Earth is somehow divine or infinite, as most Christians accept the notion of the "end-times" or Last Judgment (qtd.

in Hemingway, “The Epigraph”). It does, however, and partly paradoxically, imply that the Divine is present in the Earth. In short: the Earth and the Divine work together, simultaneously, although they are quite different in terms of their nature. The Earth is finite. The Divine is infinite. However, the infinite Divinity can be found working in, of, and through the Earth. If the Earth, or physical world, was completely evil, then the entire Roman Catholic Church is contradicting itself through the celebration of the Sacraments, and Protestant traditions that view physical abundance as a form of blessedness are also contradicting themselves, if this is the case. Hemingway, Warren, and Stoneback do not suggest that the Earth is Divine-Divine or heavenly in and of itself. They do suggest, however, that the Earth has a heavenly or Divine origin, and that the Divine continues to work with humanity in physical, as well as metaphysical or spiritual, ways.

Brooks’ representation of Warren, in light of the aforementioned revelations concerning Warren’s personal beliefs, becomes partly problematic. Brooks writes: “But it would be impossible to reduce [Warren’s ‘highly unified and consistent body of work’], without distorting simplifications, to some thesis about human life...Dedication to his art, then, would not necessarily bring the artist to Christianity” (Brooks 98-99). Warren is, however, more Christian than Brooks is giving him credit for, and Warren did “reduce” his work, “without distorting simplifications, to some thesis about human life” through his own professed, universal, recognitions from *Brother to Dragons*: “The recognition of complicity is the beginning of innocence...” (Brooks 98; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Brooks’ discussion of Warren’s *Brother to Dragons* is important because it contextualizes the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Brooks writes: “[*Brother to Dragons*] is about Thomas Jefferson, or rather about Jefferson’s nephews... the two young men, Lilburn and Isham, murdered one of their

slaves...,” and Lilburn was shot by Isham in an attempt on both their parts to evade arrest, and Isham died at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 (Brooks 99-100). The emphasis should be placed on the historical accuracy of Warren’s representations of President Jefferson’s nephews, and, even more precisely, it is also important to emphasize the fact that Jefferson is presented as a flawed human being- “a Jefferson embittered and cynical, even though only temporarily”- rather than as a demigod (100). Warren is despised for emphasizing this. After all, it would be as if a Christian novelist turned Socrates from a pagan-Athenian skeptical thinker into a Catholic Bishop. But, it is still crucial for any thinker, non-Christian or Christian, to consider the notion that our flaws, as the human race, are responsible for the contradictions in our lives (Harent, “Original Sin” 1).

The soul is drawn between two poles, grace and vice, and vice is the instrument of fragmentation. Only God can reassemble the fragments together, and keep them whole, which is the antidote for the abyss. Ultimately, Warren’s revelation of his belief in God in *The Masts at Dawn* refutes Brooks’ claim that “Warren himself poses his problems in non-Christian terms” (Brooks 125; Warren, *The Masts at Dawn* 116). It is necessary, moreover, to establish the fact that Warren’s notions of “complicity,” “innocence,” “the direction of fulfillment,” “the death of the self,” and “the beginning of selfhood,” are not merely bound to the Jeffersonian – Enlightenment context of *Brother to Dragons* (Brooks 98-100; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). They are present throughout Warren’s works, even if they were not articulated in the same way, because of the inner essence of their meaning. The human being who despairs is denying one’s “complicity,” and, therefore, denying oneself of innocence, because despair does not liberate, and it penetrates throughout the breadth of life, and at all turns, despair must be resisted and denied (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Warren’s recognitions are the antidote for

both despair and for the metaphysical quandaries of Jeffersonian – Enlightenment thought (Brooks 99-100; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). With Warren's religious beliefs established, this thesis shall transition to a discussion of Warren's discernment of the nature of poetry.

Warren's literary critical canon is astronomically vast in terms of its levels of meaning. His chief concerns involve form, pure versus impure poetry, the nature and necessity for historical knowledge, contacts and contracts with and within the self, and on the nature of why human beings read poetry and fiction. Warren has also, in a two-pronged assault, not only contended with the nature of literature, but also with that of the fundamental fabric of reality itself, in several of its intricacies. This may appear to be a fallacy, but Warren managed to succeed in this seemingly insurmountable task. His master performance of critical language ushers-in a new approach to academic writing. His rhetoric is overwhelming in its depths of meaningful comprehension. Warren's critical approaches have revealed the nature of reality: the need for recognitions of the self, the past, the present, and the future, as interlinked in the majestic whole of the fabric of existence, which humanity is destroying through its denial of these recognitions.

In his section entitled "Pure and Impure Poetry," Warren begins by contending with the nature of poetry in and of itself. Warren first contends: "Poetry wants to be pure, but poems do not... many of the elements, taken in themselves, may actually seem to contradict... or be neutral toward the achieving of that end" (Warren, "Pure and Impure Poetry" 4). The purists essentially seek to eject everything that poetry fundamentally consists of: from meter and form to conflicts and ideas (21). No single theory of poetry rejects all of this. However, it rejects certain aspects to varying degrees. Warren places Imagism amongst the purists, but correctly reveals

how Imagism also permits for the emergence of ideas and conflicts in poetry to some degree (16-17). After all, poetry consists of both conflicts and ideas, which are inherently present due to the usage of words for the purposes of expression (20-21). Warren recognizes the fact that poetry is not composed in a vacuum or timeless void. Poetry emerges within the poet's mind. Warren points readers into a precise direction: toward a rejection of the Post-Barthesian denial of the primacy of the author.

Literature, as Warren reminds his readers, consists of two components: the thoughts and feelings of the characters and the expression of the mindset of the poet or writer (Warren, "Why Do We Read Fiction?" 57-58). There are the characters' voices and the voice of the poet or writer. A Structuralist such as Barthes, and many of his philosophical descendents, would deny this (Barthes 3-4). His representation consists of what Chesterton would refer to as a form of "poisonous humility" (Chesterton 235):

The truth is that there is a real humility typical of our time; but it so happens that it is practically a more poisonous humility than the wildest prostrations of the ascetic. The old humility was a spur that prevented a man from stopping; not a nail in his boot that prevented him from going on. For the old humility made a man doubtful about his efforts, which might make him work harder. But the new humility makes a man doubtful about his aims, which will make him stop working altogether. (235)

It is the version of "humility" that denies the actual drop of knowledge that human beings actually possess: the ability to express signification through words, which leads to the ability for one to understand the logical need for the existence of a Higher Power (235). Barthes is equally guilty of this perverted form of humility through his notion of the death of the "Text," and, therefore, authorship (Barthes 3-4; Chesterton 235). Warren fundamentally disagrees with Barthes (Barthes 3-4).

For Warren, words are a source of expression (Warren, "Why Do We Read Fiction?" 55; 60-61). To proclaim the death of words is to proclaim the nonexistence of not only the soul, but also of reality, and the means through which to comprehend it. It is a retreat into the chaotic ether of abstraction, an abstraction that demands the absence of communication and the absence of meaning, which, therefore, is also Nihilism in disguise, which is nothing more than Atheism, if not its Agnostic derivation. The cosmic, eternal war, has ever been between truth and denial of the truth, between goodness and wretchedness, and between redemption and despair. From this respect, "Post-Modernism" existed even in the days of Homer. It is the moaning of grief-stricken soldiers, who have misled themselves to believe that the gods only exist to reign plights and terrors upon them (Homer, *The Odyssey* 9.579-81). It is the ultimate retreat into self-pity and all of its associated vices (Warren, "Why Do We Read Fiction?" 60-61).

For Warren, self-pity must be abandoned in favor of something greater (60-61). Self-pity cannot supply the demand that it pretends to satisfy. It is the demand for recourse, protection, and for security and safety. One might justly question as to which of these principles are satisfied by a metaphysical-as-well-as-materialistic framework that contains despair as its fundamental root-principle. Despair cannot be packaged and sold in a marketplace. Despair may function as a reaction or response to a marketplace. Despair is the absence of one's capability of feeling any form of true, immeasurably-sustained, love and satisfaction. Despair, in short, is the absence of hope. It is existence beyond the first gates of the *Inferno*, and Dante cannot dare to remain there (Dante, *Inferno* 4.38; 40-42).

Warren re-instills hope through the exactitude of the recognition of the meaningfulness of human language. The existence of misinterpretation implies that there is something that can be interpreted correctly. Otherwise, an "interpretation" cannot exist, and, therefore, neither thought,

nor expression, which renders language into nothing more than a stream of meaningless symbols, which then deconstructs the human ability to think and/or speak in the first place. It attempts to force everyone to become nothing more than metaphysically deaf and mute and incapable of mutual comprehension. However, the fact of the existence of the ability of human beings to comprehend each other, through language, must be considered in any linguistic theory. This equally applies to literary criticism. Warren reveals a central human longing: to search for and comprehend the meaningfulness of existence (Warren, "Why Do We Read Fiction?" 55-56). This is why literature exists. Warren states: "Fiction gives us an image of life----sometimes of a life we actually have and like to dwell on, but often and poignantly of one we have had and do not have now, or one we have never had and can never have" (56-57). Literature is precisely a mirror.

When one stares into the mirror, one views an abstraction, a reverse-representation, an inversion of the world that does not actually exist beyond the optical illusion of its existence through the reflection of the glass of the mirror. Hence, if once places two mirrors on opposite sides of a hallway, then the appearance of a hallway, stretching infinitely in either direction, will become visible in both mirrors, beyond the mirror image of the viewer. The person whose image is cast by the mirror, however, exists in reality. To deny the existence of the person, or to state that the mirror is depicting nothing more than a complete illusion, is to plunge into solipsism. Solipsism is nothing more than the individual's assent, and descent, into despair (60-61). It is the ultimate rejection.

Human beings do not, however, read literature in order to ground their despair. They read because they long for something else, something more, and most importantly of all, something greater. To read is to seek the boon knowledge. The act of reading is experiential and, therefore,

not passive. It is a journey of the mind. It is a movement from within the sphere of one's interiority. Literature uplifts the interior mind into a larger, exterior, mirror image of the world, and the world, in varying aspects and different degrees, is represented by each text in varying different ways. The world exists, like the viewer in front of a mirror, and, therefore, a true, precise, reflection is produced, both in the mirror and within the text. It is a nuanced approach, a distanced view, a view that provides the reader with external safety (57). It is the ability to envision how another person might feel: through "role-taking" (58-59). Warren states: "...it is only by role-taking that the child comes to know, to know 'inwardly' in the only way that finally counts, that other people really exist and are, in fact, persons with needs, hopes, fears, and even rights," and that it "continues this long discipline in human sympathy" (59). Warren implies that this ability does not cease to exist at the end of childhood. It is the ability to seek, to know, and to love other people. It is Christendom in practice. This is all preceded by the notion that one fundamentally seeks partake in the act of learning.

The reader who only reads because she or he is forced to read, such as a college First-Year student, and who, for the purposes of this example, has no interest in fiction, will deprive oneself of a luminous and numinous experience. The experience is numinous in its depths and ranges of meaningfulness. It is luminous in the respect that it can shed light on a multiplicity of aspects of life, living, and experience, that the student, as a living, breathing individual, may not have encountered before. The student who seeks to learn, however, will begin to solve the puzzle of the text. The text is a puzzle that can be solved. The text is the rhetoric that can be explicated. The text is the record that must remain. The text is the voice that cannot be silenced. The text is the song that must be sung. This is not a steady stream of assertions, but rather, the incarnation of the vision. One may ask as to what else could possibly define Literature and the reasoning as to

why it is an essential form of study.

The movement of grace, the currents of piety, the rituals through which redemption might yet be obtained: these all matter intrinsically to Warren's approaches to criticism. They matter through the voice, the sounding touch of the precisely chosen-word, the expression of an idea, which requires the rejection of the Puritanically "purist" movements through poetry (Warren, "Pure and Impure Poetry" 16-17). Meter may yet possess the means of signification. The expression of the image, with precision, is also necessary (16-17). The intrinsic motions of history require contemplation. This requires acceptance of the cyclical nature of history, stemming from the recognitions, from the reality of Original Sin as it is defined by the *Catholic Encyclopedia*: the fall from grace (Harent, "Original Sin" 1; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 270-71). This is not something that can be limited to one specific religion.

If the notion of Original Sin could be limited in its scope of applicability, then the Roman Catholic claim of universality, which is hidden beneath the surface of its meaning, would become invalid (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). Even Stoicism attempted to contend with this problem of human misery, the infliction of pain without recourse, and the motions of madness and cruelty. Individuals who would attempt to argue the contrary would need to contend with the reality of the Holocaust and the advent of nuclear weapons: of unspeakable horror, terror, and evil. The sociopathic framework of performing the basest forms of evil in the name of "doing one's job" can, quite often, prove to be the most horrifying form of evil, because of its absence of any form of value. Such persons, who would deny the existence of evil, would also need to consider the fundamental nature of political backstabbing, assassinations and murder, starving populations of serfs and slaves, slaves laboring under harsh conditions, without restitution, and it does not end here. One would also need to consider the gladiator pits of the ancients, the

hopeless soldiers on the battlefields of Troy and Persia, the majestically cruel “Great” conquerors, who are only called “The Great,” because they had committed the mass-slaughter of entire populations, with greater efficiency, and the list continues. One would further need to consider the lies and intrigue, hidden, woven plots, that cast many people into captivity, for crimes they did not commit, and all of which deprived many of the ultimate, boon gift: of life itself. Returning to Warren’s specifically Christian context, there is no redemption without the Cross (Harent, “Original Sin”; “The Virtue of Penance” 1).

Warren then applies this knowledge to the arc of human history. He correctly reveals the inherent problems in the modern American sense of consciousness: the forgetfulness of history, the endless lurching toward an abstract notion of success, and the technological advances that have resulted in what Dr. Stoneback calls “deracination and the abstract nation-state” (Stoneback, “In a Station of the Modern...” 67-68). It is the pride and vanity of American nationalism, which many have misunderstood as patriotism. Warren states: “...they also felt themselves to be a Chosen People, who, unlike the Jews, could never sin in God’s sight” (Warren, “The Use of the Past” 32). It is the notion that Americans are fundamentally just and that, therefore, God supports America in all things. This hubristic notion has existed in multiple contexts: from Jefferson’s misapprehension of the human condition to the conditions of the Civil War (32-34).

Here is the boon that made Roland famous: eternal knowledge and the willingness to suffer for that knowledge (Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises* 190-196). All mortal souls are equally “complicit” in, of, and with, everything (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214). We participate in the same fundamental impulses and motions, regardless of how minor they might appear, in both virtue and in vice. There is no escape from participation in the

overarching whole in all its horror and beauty: the life and death of the human race. Warren does not believe that humanity can fail to repeat history, or to create new errors that history has not yet experienced (Warren, "The Use of the Past" 50-52). Warren does believe, however, and rightly so, that human beings can discern the mystery of identity, discovering their true selves, their capacities, and their individual movements, all of which are rooted within the need for their redemption. One can find the recognitions through a conscious awareness of the past, of the passage of time, and the presence of death (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 270-71; "The Use of the Past" 50-52). One can obtain the greatest knowledge through one's meditations on history, one's place in the world, and one's identity. All of this can come through reading fiction (Warren, "Why Do We Read Fiction?" 58-59). Through learning all of this, one may begin to write true poetry. One may discern the greatest boon. One may find the truest knowledge: Earth is not the end of human existence, and death is naught but a conversion, a new beginning, which depends on everything that happened within one's life, and more perspicaciously, on that which concerns one's thoughts, words, and actions. Through the mirror of fiction, one might yet comprehend something, regarding the reality that stands in front of it, from whence the reflection came. One may yet attain the glory of the boon knowledge: that God exists.

Thus, Warren's critical approaches have revealed the nature of reality: the need for recognitions of the self, the past, the present, and the future, as interlinked in the majestic whole of the fabric of existence, which humanity is destroying through its denial of these necessities. This denial often emanates from a corruptive and terrible frame of self-consciousness, which does not satisfy that which it purports to satisfy. While there is importance in selfhood, the self is strongest in a state of communion with other selves. The natural, sinful state of selfhood, the prism of self-consciousness, is that of conflict (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). This conflict, however,

is not irresolvable. As such, we transition into a discussion of self-consciousness, in a Christian framework, through a dissemination of several selections of Warren's poetry.

Chapter VIII: Warren's Poetry: The Reader and the Recognitions

It is important to continue revealing the nature of Warren's recognitions, which include Original Sin and the need for Grace (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). Warren is responding to the same problem of despair that Dante, Shakespeare, and Hemingway had responded to. Warren's verses possess inherent qualities that are unique to his remarkable poetic formulations that have changed the High Modernist poetic tradition in positive ways. Warren, a Southern Renaissance writer, is synthesizing the Southern Renaissance with High Modernism. Warren demands a deeply metaphysical contemplative and reflective self-examination in a deeply holistic way. His verses draw the reader inward rather than outward, to a position of anti-self-conscious interiority, in which the reader is drawn outside of oneself. It is a paradoxical subconscious interiority that demands the expulsion of the narcissistic self-conscious. This is in accordance with Warren's recognitions: "The recognition of the direction of fulfillment is the death /

of the self. / And the death of the self is the beginning of selfhood" (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). While many works have, and can, emerge from an intensive study of all of these poems, a relatively small number of them shall be treated in this section of the Thesis for spatial and focus-oriented reasons. First, however, it is necessary to explicate the notion of self-consciousness that Warren is critiquing throughout his poetry, and ultimately, throughout his canon as a whole.

The dangers of the narcissistic form of self-consciousness are thus. First of all, the term, in this case, does not refer to the concept of the soul or of a core being that recognizes her or his identity, a resonance of Being that has often been unjustly downplayed by Post-Enlightenment dialectics, at the expense of a notion of selfhood that surpasses finite time and space. Warren writes, in the *Foreword* in his *Democracy and Poetry*, that in "preindustrial" or, in Warren's sense, ancient "societies": "...the slave... was not regarded as a person at all" and the "poetry... of

an elite order did... develop the conception of selfhood” and “...the concept of self, with the associated values and issues, was central to poetry...” (Warren, *Foreword* xiv-xv). Warren is situating the notion of the self within time and space. For Warren, the notion of the self as a separate individual, without any respect for others, actually predates Descartes: it was present in the self-identities of the Egyptian Pharaohs and of other ancient rulers (xiv-xv). Members of the enslaved populace were, consequently, deprived of any notion of identity or of selfhood, which is, effectively, unnatural, or rather, a double-injustice. Then, he writes: “And if Christianity is to be regarded as a great central force in developing the notion of the significance of the self, and of democracy, what are we to make of all the paradoxes found in its history?” (xv-xvi). The separation of one’s comprehension of the term, “self,” from comprehension of the term, “soul,” has resulted in a particular problem: a fundamental misunderstanding of the Christian concept of the soul as something that is distinctly different from the Post-Cartesian and apparently “preindustrial” notion of selfhood (xv).

The notion of the self as a being who dwells with other beings, while possessing a certain uniqueness, which is expressed through one’s purpose in life, is an accurate synthesis between the Post-Cartesian singularity of self and the Christian, and also arguably Classical, notion of the communal self. However, these are not merely notions. They are descriptions of that which is real. Warren, in his essay entitled *Poetry and Selfhood in Democracy and Poetry*, writes: “‘Authenticity’ is merely one of the two poles of action, and the other pole is a sense of objective standards, just as the individual is one pole of the existence of the self, and the other, society, or more specifically, community” (Warren, *Poetry and Selfhood* 46-47). Warren is not disagreeing with the notion of the self as containing the two poles of “the individual” and the “community” (46-47). He is, however, disagreeing with the notion that these are “authentic” in the sense of the

perverted notions of selfhood as presented by the 1960's Counter-Culture, which, at their core, are rooted in solipsism (46). Solipsism is rooted in "the 'authentic' doing one's 'thing'" that "may involve anything from cretinism to crime... neither of which provides an exclusively reliable index to the existence of an immortal soul" (46). Human beings are not born alone in the midst of loneliness. They are born from other people, one's parents, and they dwell, for a time, within a communal setting. Human beings may be abandoned at birth, or worse, which disrupts the natural cycle of being.

The destruction of the awareness of one's participation in real existence, as a life that is lived with and defined by one's actions and behavior in the world, toward other people, is ultimately self-destructive. However, Warren is revealing that the separation of the self between interiority and exteriority is also a mistake, as he notes: "...the only 'authentic' utterance is the scream of agony or the moan of bliss: solipsism" (47). Solipsism is essentially the denial of the existence of reality, which ultimately, for Warren, harms, rather than lends aid to, an individual person. The "ideal" self is actually the Christian notion of the soul, which mediates between the two positions. Each individual is irreplaceable, unique and yet communal, vital and important, and particularly through one's relationships with other human beings. In short, the individual and the communal are fused, not into some impersonal proletariat, or into the other extreme of some perverted Narcissus. They are fused into a grounded, real, sense of selfhood, in which one's presence in the material-spiritual world matters, as spirit and matter labor together, simultaneously, in unison, in the same reality. To misunderstand this concept is a grave matter. Warren writes of Descartes: "Doubt, radical doubt, was his Archimedean point; and when he proclaimed doubt of both the evidence of the senses and the testimony of reason, he withdrew from contact with the world as [people] had been experiencing it" (49). This is the essence of

solipsism. The elimination of the Other destroys the self, and the elimination of the self destroys all other people, because chaos ever yields far worse chaos, and the Other need not be cast as an antagonistic entity. Selfhood is not a construct, but rather, an actuality. Self-consciousness, in both its narcissistic and deterministic forms, is precisely that which urges the commission of all sins, that conveys no thought to the needs of others whatsoever, and it denies “complicity” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214). It is now possible to comprehend Warren's recognitions as responses to a solipsistic view of selfhood, because, for Warren, solipsism depends on a narcissistic form of self-consciousness. This form of self-consciousness is narcissistic because it denies the existence of other people, their history, needs, desires, dreams, and everything that defines them. Solipsism is nothing short of madness. It is now possible to reveal the presence of Warren's recognitions throughout pertinent selections of his poetry.

From *Or Else* and *Being Here* to *Rumor Verified*, Warren's poems serve as unified windows into the consciousness of the landscape of Warren's lived surroundings, from Kentucky to New York City, to Connecticut and Vermont, with some excursions into Canada and France. Some of his poems are reminiscent of Roberts and Faulkner while others hearken more toward the styles of Pound and Hemingway. The place defines the style. Even still, while there are literary influences, Warren's poetry overwhelmingly reveals his own voice. His voice, in turn, subdues the primacy of his chief literary influences. His voice improves them, resulting in a catharsis, an ecstasy that one can detect through the process of reading his poetry. The selected poems from Warren's *Or Else Poems/Poems 1968-1971*, *Being Here Poetry- 1977-1980*, and *Rumor Verified Poems 1979-1980* reveal an intensive guide toward the realization of the central recognitions of existence because the poetry stimulates interior movements away from the trap of narcissistic self-consciousness.

First of all, in *Or Else Poems/Poems 1968-1971*, a fundamental change is demanded in the attitude of the reader, or else, as evident in “The Nature of a Mirror”: “The sky has murder in the eye” (Warren, “The Nature of a Mirror” 3). Time is the central subject of the anthology of loosely-connected poems. Time exists for the atonement of one’s offenses. Time exists for the movement beyond oneself. Time relinquishes the soul into an eternal death, when time passes heedlessly, when the soul refrains from change and refuses to bow. Time is confronted heavily throughout the volume’s pages from the beginning till the end. Time is the mirror in which one perceives the fractured self, fragmented by sins, and weakened by a lack of grace (3). It demands the bow, the surrender, and the movement away from shadows, through the acknowledgment of the contrivances of the flesh, the movement toward self-control, in order for one to internally oppose all human inclinations toward evil. It is “the recognition of complicity” that is “the beginning of innocence” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Complicity may be recognized in light of time. Time is of the essence: a limited life-span. Time is the movement toward grace and of the soul unto its self-appointed destiny. Human beings are not the masters of time.

The movements of Time toward the recognitions are present throughout Warren’s poetry (214-15). In this present era, as in many formerly present eras, atonement is a vastly misunderstood concept. It is misunderstood because it is often separated from a rooted notion of love. Love, moreover, is also a misunderstood concept, because it has become infused with its derivative: lust. Through this similar misunderstanding, atonement can be wrongfully equated with Puritanical flagellation and an extreme form of mortification that verges on despair. Love has also become nothing more than a relational, physical, ecstasy between two or more individuals, in a splintered society, in which the nuclear family has metaphysically suffered the fate of Hiroshima. Warren, however, presents an alternate view toward the subject.

In “Interjection #2: Caveat,” the reader is invited to consider the entire journey from a state of ignorance to a state of recognition in a condensed and imagistic form (214-15). The first main point is presented: “Necessarily, we must think of the / world as continuous... / ...for I have / bled for this knowledge, and every man / is a sort of Jesus” (Warren, “Interjection #2: Caveat” 11). This is the cardinal truth: to see the eyes of God in every person. Truth is the knowledge that can only be obtained through varying forms of rooted, or higher, reasoning, as revealed throughout Dante, through epiphanic apotheoses, as revealed through Shakespeare, and, particularly, through suffering, as revealed through Pound, Hemingway, and Roberts. Truth is countered by its opponent, Solipsism: “...if it were not so, you wouldn’t know / you are in the world, or even that / the world exists at all” (11). The world’s existence is challenged by a solipsistic nausea that denies the existence of reality.

Warren responds to solipsism in two ways. Firstly, in *America and the Diminished Self* in *Democracy and Poetry*: “If nothing is real, then there is no guilt. And there are no problems of politics, society, justice, or history” (Warren, *America and the Diminished Self* 22). And secondly, in “Interjection #2: Caveat”: “...the existence of anything / signifies more than the fact that it is / continuous with the world” (Warren, “Interjection #2: Caveat” 11). In other words, reality is real. There is a “slight glittering” on the highway, which is swiftly followed by: “...the earth underfoot is / twitching” (12). This marks the movement through Determinism, which is yet another fallacious notion, in which the “twitching” implies that all of reality is instinctual and, therefore, uncontrollable (12). Determinism is swiftly challenged by the “bright sun” that the “crushed rock” on the highway now represents, which moves toward its apex: “...the object screams / in an ecstasy of / being” (11-12). The reader is drawn into the intricacies of the metaphysical, physical, and supernatural dimensions of reality. According to Schuhriemen,

concerning the unnamed character of the poem: “The pain he has discovered can lead him back to the communion from which he has separated himself, since it is now possible for him to see that tragedy common to all mankind” (Shuhriemen 80). The unnamed character, and the reader, are led toward the recognitions while rejecting solipsism and determinism (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15).

Then, in “I am Dreaming of a White Christmas, The Natural History of a Vision,” based on the title of one of Irving Berlin’s hit-songs, also famed for Bing Crosby’s performance, Warren hearkens the reader to something deeper. It is something that stems from the original purpose and existence of Christmas: to celebrate the birth of Christ. After meditating on the commercialism of modern Christmas “celebrations” in New York City, the nostalgia of a youthful past and family gatherings, Warren reaches an epiphanic discovery: “...the process whereby pain of the past in its pastness / May be converted into the future tense / Of joy” (Warren, “I am Dreaming of a White Christmas, The Natural History of a Vision” 13-22). The reader is invited to hearken to the epiphanic vision of grace, which one can only reach through the recognition of the sins of the past, thereby leading to the “recognition of complicity” that is “the beginning of innocence” in “a place where all is real” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15; “Interjection #3: I Know a Place where All is Real” 23). It is a place that invokes a movement toward a heightened metaphysical sense of the infinite signification and purpose of life that transcends finite human existence.

The direction towards the first recognition reaches its fulfillment in several places throughout the anthology and specifically in regard to the recognition of one’s fundamental nature (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). According to Strandberg: “In ‘Natural History,’ a poem in the Or Else collection of 1974, envisions the final phase of the osmosis of being in its

picture of a ghostly old couple, Edenic in their nakedness, being absorbed into nature--he into the rain, and she into the flowers” (Strandberg, “Image and Persona in Warren's 'Early' Poetry” 1).

This is not a non-identity, or an atheistic, despairing return to the Earth, but rather, the recognition of humanity’s place in the wholeness of Creation, a holy view of Creation, which points the reader toward God. Additionally, according to Strandberg: “*Or Else* (1974) ends with ‘**A Problem in Spatial Composition,**’ which is a verbal painting of sunset,” which is the movement toward death in which death is not portrayed as a finality, but rather, as an unknown (Strandberg, “Poet of Youth: Robert Penn Warren at Eighty” 1). It is unknown, but not nihilistic, and it is epiphanic. The poem reveals that “Distance flees westward, the sun low,” and later, “Sun now down, flame, above blue, dies upward forever in / Saffron: pure, pure and forever...” (Warren, “A Problem in Spatial Composition” 101). The emphasis is on the term “upward” (101). This presupposes a view of eternity that is not directed downward into an imaginary abyss of nothingness. It is directed toward a brighter eternity.

The fate of one’s soul that is unknown until it becomes known in the presence of God (101). It is the absence of knowing that presupposes a deeper necessity for humility. The human condition is defined only in the presence of death. This will become further evident in the selected poems from the next two anthologies that will be considered in this section of the thesis. In *Being Here Poetry- 1977-1980*, the necessity of the recognition of one’s place is examined, as well as the inherent need to for one to be mindful of one’s sins, and to avoid them, without forgetting history. In “October Picnic Long Ago,” Warren writes: “And over us all, in a flood, poured the golden October light” (Warren, “October Picnic Long Ago” 3). It is the light of a heightened sense of innocence, which can only be regained through the recognition of one’s “complicity” beyond the age of reason (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). This results in the

realization of free will and of the need for choices. Alternatively, “The recognition of necessity is the beginning of freedom” (214-15). One discovers the need to gain awareness of, identify, and enact, the recognitions, of choosing rightly, of complicity, of the need for repentance, and of the need for a true form of love that defeats the sinful condition of human existence (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.145). However, there is also the necessity for the recognition of place, to come to terms with one’s place, and to dwell within one’s place (Roberts 239).

The volume proceeds throughout several situations, but its prime trajectory is that of a movement from youth through maturity. After several childhood poems, the speaker reaches the point of recognition: the speaker is middle-aged and reflecting on the past. This was revealed in the last stanza of “The Moonlight’s Dream,” following the death of the passing years: “Though the long years now are, and the creek bulldozed dry, / And their sorrow and joy, their passion and pain and endeavor, ... / The highway has slicked the spot the white farmhouse once stood” (Warren, “The Moonlight’s Dream” 18). The speaker reflects on time, on lost childhood, the loss of place, and on the procession toward death. The speaker reflects on the movement away from the prism of selfishness, of self-lies, and deceits, which are often formed from vain self-assertions. Warren continues: “At sixty per I am whirled past the spot where my blood / Is unwitting of that as of the defunct stream, / Or of the ignorant night I strayed in the moonlight’s dream” (18). The speaker reflects on the transitory nature of reality, which demands a conscious recognition of the presence and existence of death.

Warren’s *Being Here* further contends with solipsism and determinism with equal fervor throughout the anthology, and doubtless, there are several poems that merit attention. In the interests of brevity in this section, however, it is necessary to focus on the direction of the anthology as a whole. According to Bloom: “Warren, in his prose ‘Afterthought’ to *Being Here*:

toward the cave: away from the shadows of denial, or rather, solipsism. It is important to recall Warren's grand tradition of cave imagery, which includes his novel *The Cave* itself (Stoneback, "The Box, the Glittering Strings..." 22-23). It is safe to state that Warren's cave imagery tends to have positive connotations, which is evident through his invocation of prayer imagery (Warren, "Mediterranean Basin" 4). On the other hand, there is the "as if," which can lead the reader to wonder as to whether or not this is a correct interpretation (4). The answer to this question emerges later in the poem. One moves toward true self-fulfillment through self-denial, resulting in the drops falling from the speaker's fingers: "each a perfect universe defined / By its single, miniscule, radiant, enshrined star" (5). The verses reveal this through its imagistic tendencies to draw the reader into an epiphanic contemplation that is deeper than the level of the aesthetic. The reader begins to realize one's own self-death, which is not nihilistic, despite its superficial appearance of nihilism. The death of the false image of self leads to a new birth: of the true self, who can stand triumphantly with God (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). If the poem was nihilistic, then no one would have existed in the shadows, and least of not which, a female figure, who is accompanied by the invocation of prayer imagery (Warren, "Mediterranean Basin" 4-5). The reader journeys through the motions of the recognitions and comprehends the true necessity: for grace (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15).

Grace is the gravest and greatest necessity in the life of any human person. Solipsism must be rejected. The determinism that follows solipsism must also be rejected. The madness of selfishness must be rejected. And yet, this rejection must not be self-conscious a narcissistic sense. It is one thing to state that "I reject self-consciousness" while remaining in a self-conscious state. One must inwardly reject it, feel "the death of the self," and the reader can feel this necessary self-death, the death of despair, through a close-reading of Warren's poetry (214-

15). There is a feeling of an inward withdrawal from self, an epiphanic immersion in the verses, which maneuvers the reader gently through the tomb of the false-self, the inferno of doubting God, the purgatorio of self-doubt, and toward the paradiso that awaits the conclusion: the grace that heralds eternal love (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.145). Without any of this, life is boring, dull, depressing, and naught but despair, or “surrogate of hope and destitution of spirit” (214-15). Thus, the selected poems from Warren’s *Or Else Poems/Poems 1968-1971*, *Being Here Poetry-1977-1980*, and *Rumor Verified Poems 1979-1980* reveal an intensive guide toward the realization of the central recognitions of existence because the poetry stimulates interior movements away from the trap of self-consciousness.

With the nature of the recognitions established, their presence shall be revealed throughout Warren’s famed novel *Flood*, and they shall be presented in the following way: they shall be applied to oneself, who can be any reader of this thesis and/or the author of this thesis. Through this application, one shall then be able to perceive how the recognitions are not merely metaphysical constructs, but actual artifices of reality, which can be found throughout real and lived experiences in a grounded, rooted, and decidedly real human existence. To do this, one must comprehend fictional prose in the realist tradition as grounded in Pound’s Imagism and Hemingway’s prosaic codification thereof, which were both appropriated and expanded upon by Roberts and Warren. Imagistic realist prose becomes a mirror-image of reality, which is expressed through significant language that refers to real persons, places, objects, and ideas.

Chapter IX: Sailing *The Flood*

To apply Warren's recognitions to oneself, one must accept the inevitable: this knowledge will change the reader who does not currently believe in the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Warren's *Flood* will be utilized within this cumulative context. *Flood* reveals the recognitions in different ways, from the first-person experience of a character who reveals the signs of her particular and changing spiritual status through imagery and description, to the author's omniscient descriptions of the spiritual movements of his characters. Warren's *Flood*, and his recognitions at large, reveal the need for an inherent movement toward true love from within the human condition because, without it, there is only unending despair, and true love is despair's greatest remedy.

In *Flood*, Warren's superior prose magnifies the power of the representation in the recognitions. *Flood* inherently possesses the same level of depth as many of Warren's works of poetry. It draws the reader into the text. The story of Brad Tolliver and Yasha Jones is also a story of place. Fiddlersburg's days are literally numbered: it will be drowned in a flood when the river is unleashed. It is also a place in which Brad Tolliver dwells in denial of complicity, which is one of the central problems of the novel (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214). As Ealy notes: "There are no innocent men in the sense of 'guiltless' in Robert Penn Warren's world" (Ealy 1). However, Ealy, when he refers to "overt responsibility for actions or outcomes one is somehow involved in," is missing the fundamental spiritual crux of the recognition (Ealy 1). To recognize "complicity" is to recognize Original Sin: the notion that all share equally in every commission of evil as well as every evil omission of virtue (Harent, "Original Sin" 1; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214).

Hemingway's *For Whom the Bells*, a spiritually religious novel, directly influences *Flood*, which is also, as it shall be further revealed, a spiritually religious novel (Stoneback, *For*

Whom the Flood Rolls... 14-15; 16-17; 18-19). These “intertextualities” shall be examined in so far as they are relevant to the recognitions: after the presence of the recognitions, in and of themselves within the text, has been examined thoroughly (Stoneback, *For Whom the Flood Rolls...* 14-15; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). The uniqueness of Warren’s *Flood* exists within the similarities and contrasts between Brad Tolliver and Yasha Jones. The landscape mirrors Yasha’s spiritual condition as he and Brad arrive at the bluff above Fiddlersburg: “The river looked cold and gray as steel, except where it picked up the red of the now legitimate sunset” (Warren, *Flood* 39). The “cold and gray” imagery emphasizes the lonely deprivation, not only of the place that is preparing itself to be drowned in a surging flood, but of Yasha’s own loneliness (39). Warren continues: “Directly across the river, the low fields, some of them plow-land, stretched miles away, cut here and there by the brush of fence lines or the dim-glinting meander of ditch or creek, lifting far away to a darkness that must be woods on the western horizon” (40). The emphasis should be placed on the “darkness” that pervades the scene because of the interior “darkness” of Yasha (40). Warren continues: “The sun was sinking beyond that rim of darkness... He [Yasha Jones] stared down-river, beyond the distant shantyboat that seemed so lonely there on the stretch of waters backed by the darkness of woods and swamp” (40). The loneliness of the “shantyboat” reflects Yasha’s own inner solipsism, which he must labor to overcome throughout the novel (40).

The importance of the groundedness of a sense of place is one of the main key movements through which the soul may pass beyond solipsism. Warren continues: “Farther down, beyond the swamp, there was more woodland, dim in the failing light, tangled with shadow. There the ground was higher, a kind of low rim, he surmised, through which, long, long ago, the river had cut” (40). Yasha, in the midst of his solipsism, is also reaching for a sense of

place, which is his primary redeeming quality in this portion of the novel. Warren continues:

“There he could barely make out the newly tumbled earth, the white glint of what he took to be new cement, a small, mathematical rawness in the shadowy land. That would be the dam” (40).

There, Yasha begins to gather within himself a sense of place that is combined with the inevitable sense of loss of place that will swiftly follow it.

Yasha, despite his sense of place, remains in a condition of despair. Warren writes of how: “Yasha Jones looked up the ruined terracing toward the dark house. He looked down at the dark river, where, southward, an eddy broke into silver. He looked up at the moon riding infinitely high, and with disdainful ease, across the milk-pale emptiness of the sky” (50). The imagery of “darkness” continues (39). This imagery is then interlinked with feelings of “emptiness” or nihilism (50). Warren continues: “In this pale light you experienced an unassuageable emptiness. You feel the infinite flight of emptiness beyond the moon. The mockingbird burst out again, then hushed... Yes, reality was the uncapturable. That was why we need illusion” (50). Yasha is reflecting on the nature of the documentary film that he is attempting to create. However, the process of this filming also reveals Yasha’s own interior feelings toward existence: “the infinite flight of emptiness beyond the moon” that ignores the possibility that Infinity constitutes, eternally, as something rather than nothing (Warren, *Flood* 50; Zimmermann 1). Yasha’s thoughts stream toward the irony of the situation. His thoughts unintentionally speak to the ultimate paradox of fiction: “*Truth through lie... Only in the mirror, over your shoulder,... does the ghost appear*” (Warren, *Flood* 50). Warren is essentially describing his method of prosody: the contrived circumstances that are described through fiction can ultimately reveal key truths about existence.

Yasha Jones’ revelations lead the reader to the nature of writing, and of Warren’s prose:

it communicates something that is true about reality, but it does so through the composition of contrived situations, which had never before occurred in history, outside of the text. There are, however, real life situations that the text mirrors, but they are not the same because of their particular differences. Every situation contains a variable that is distinct from all other variables. This is why statistics should, at best, be regarded with pure suspicion. There are variables that cases have in common, but these only produce quantity. They do not paint the mental image that must accompany the text. Warren, and any good writer, paints or should paint the image fluidly, through the “*Truth through lie*” (50). The mirror-image destroys the biasness of one’s personal connections with a situation, allowing the reader to perceive the scenario in different, yet equally valid, ways, which will allow for a greater comprehension of the situation in question, a closer movement to the situation’s true nature.

The narrative shifts to Brad Tolliver in regard to the subject of fiction. Warren writes of how Brad perceives himself:

But there was an awe that compounded this awe: awe at her ability to speak without shame of her life, to move around in her life as though it were a house she inhabited so familiarly she could find anything in the dark. He [Brad Tolliver] would lie by her side in the dark, hearing the story unwind, and feel cramped and bound in some dark mystery which was himself, like a box (68).

Brad is noticing Lettice’s self-consciousness, and he is not yet realizing how this self-consciousness is a form of confinement. Warren continues:

Or perhaps, he sometimes thought, it was merely that he, himself, had no story worth telling. Perhaps, even, no story at all. He did not surmise that this fear was what had led him to try to recognize the stories of those who seemed to have no story. He did not realize that as soon as he began to try to create, to enact, a story for Bradwell Tolliver, he would lose that gift, the only one he had, of recognizing the story of someone who had no story (68).

The “story” is the false narrative of the self-conscious, the untrue narration of one’s own dreamy, sinful self, who exists apart from others in one’s solipsistic dream-world in which one sits and postulates oneself performing, enacting, and embodying dreams that cannot possibly come true (68). Warren exposes the true heart of the matter, of how Brad “did not know that every man yearns for his story... He did not know that the true shame is in yearning for the false, not the true, story” (68). The mechanism of how this unfolds is simple, but it requires further explication on part of Brother Potts.

Brother Potts presents key themes that exist at the heart of the novel, concerning the line between truth and falsehood, and of the need for true redemption. He declares to Yasha Jones: “Yes, relocation. It is their life these folks are being jerked out of, but if I can only make ‘em see how the Gospel of Christ is about relocation. It is jerking a man out of one life and relocating him in the life of the spirit...” (80). The process of the recognition of the recognitions is also a form of “relocation” (80). It is the movement from despair to hope. Brother Potts “was looking into the face of Yasha Jones with a humble pleading in his eyes” (80). It is as if he is gaining a sense of that which Yasha gravely needs. Brother Potts declares: “You know when a place dies, even just an old house gets torn down, it is like a lot of living goes with it. Some folks are hopeless now, some feel happy and sort of crazy with an excitement they got hidden in themselves like they could be young again, or get rich...” (80). He is describing how many of the citizens of Fiddlersburg are reacting to the impending transformation of their place. But, then he declares: “...’But you know the hardest to deal with though? It is the ones bitter in the heart. They feel all their living was somehow for nothing. But we have got to remember, the life we had was the life God wanted us to have...” (80). Brother Potts is presenting the recognition of supreme hope in the face of despair.

Brother Potts also presents the recognition of the light that must mitigate the “darkness” of Yasha’s own heart as well as the hearts of the people of Fiddlersburg (39; 80). Warren continues: “They drifted out into the sunshine, and the pained, blue eyes of Brother Potts blinked. Somewhere, far off in some house, a baby was crying. Brother Potts stood close to Yasha Jones. He seemed to have to stand close to him” (80). Brother Potts is assenting to “the direction of fulfillment” that is “the death of the [false] self” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). He echoes the heart of the novel through this movement. Warren continues:

The eyes found the paper, the washed-out blue of the eyes
darkening with a sudden intensity. The voice began:

‘When I see the town I love
Sinking down beneath the wave
I pray I’ll remember then
All the blessings that God gave.

“When I see the life I led
Whelmed and drowned beneath the flood---“
(82)

The poem serves as the prime touchstone of the novel. It is the importance of gratitude, of trust in God, and of hope, despite the vile contrivances of this life. Warren continues: “‘I know you have the feeling,’ Yasha Jones said. ‘I am glad that you read us the poem’” (82). Yasha Jones is beginning to recognize the recognitions in this moment. His heart is stirred and steered into the correct direction.

Yasha Jones ultimately journeys in the direction of the recognitions and redemption.

Warren reveals his revelation:

He shut his eyes, and saw River Street. The river slid
heavily, glossily past. That strange light inside his [Yasha’s]
head fell bright across River Street, and nothing moved
there.

He thought: *This may be it.*

Because he knew nothing of it, it could float before his eyes in its ultimate meaning, He suddenly hated all the things he had done, the things that had made him great.

Yes, this may be it.

He thought of how waters would rise and people come to know that the life that they had lived was blessed. (96)

The epiphanic revelation of the blessedness of life, of God, is that which Yasha has attained through his revelation. He begins to view the seeds of hope within his soul. He watches them begin to germinate. He “hated all the things he had done” because he can see his past and present sins, and recognize his “complicity,” which leads toward the recognition of eternity (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214; *Flood* 96).

Yasha reveals his revelations to Bradwell Tolliver. Warren continues, regarding the duty of a writer:

“To give an impression of the mysterious inwardness of life,” Yasha Jones said, ‘Not the obvious plottiness. Isn’t that it? He stood there a moment, very still, as though alone, then said: “To be overwhelmed with the outward, moving multiplicity of the world---that means we can never see, really see, or love the single leaf falling. And, therefore, can never love life, the inwardness of life. Yes---“

He paused, then resumed: “That is the last sin, for people in our business---no, in any business--- the sin of the corruption of consciousness” (127).

In other words, the chief danger, for a writer, is superficiality, which is sentimentalism, which is the failure to convey everything that must be conveyed: a sense of value. Yasha is not expressing a Romantic view of nature, which is both superficial and sentimental. He is expressing the inner depth of meaning when he states that one should “love the single leaf falling,” which demonstrates the epiphanic vision of the radical holiness of the Earth (Warren, *Flood* 127; *The Masts at Dawn* 116). He is not stating, however, that “plottiness” is unnecessary (Warren, *Flood* 127). Rather, he is stating that the recognition of the true, inner depth, of a presented plot, is far

more necessary than the mere presence of plot on a superficial, insignificant, and purposeless level. Warren then immediately supports Yasha's recognitions as he describes Brad's condition:

Brad went to his room... He lay on the bed, on his back, and stared up at the gray, cracked plaster of the ceiling. He thought of his father lying on the muddy ground. He wondered if he himself had had to come back to Fiddlersburg, as his father had had to go back to the swamp, to lie in the mud and weep (128).

There is plot, but it signifies something, even if Brad cannot see it for himself. As with Yasha before him, Brad's movement must begin with his sense of place (39; 128). The plot signifies the movement through which Brad must progress.

First, Brad must learn to live his life and to avoid the existential nausea of nihilistic self-pity. Warren continues:

His experience, he insisted, was perfectly valid and worthy. What, then, was the source of this spiritual lassitude? Then, lying in the dark, he gave himself the answer. He told himself that, somehow, he was outside of his own experience. He tried to fathom the meaning of these words that came into his head. He knew that they meant something, but he could not paraphrase them. He felt that if he could go back to Spain everything would be all right. If he could relive what he had lived he could find its inner meaning (143).

Brad must learn how to live life within the moment of existing. This does not, however, imply that, therefore, Brad should avoid reflection or deep thought. Rather, he must learn to reflect and to think only in the present moment, to reflect on the past rather than on the present, and to avoid becoming lost to the present. He is a writer, and as a writer, he must avoid "the sin of the corruption of consciousness," the prison of narcissistic self-consciousness, in which experiences are not lived because they are dissected, deconstructed, and ignored (127; 143). Brad's largest mistake is the notion that he can change himself by traveling overseas. Warren may be

referencing Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* in this scene, in which Robert Cohn mistakenly believes that he can change himself by superficially traveling to South America, toward which Jake replies: "You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another... Why don't you start living your life in Paris?" (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 19). Regardless of whether or not Warren is actually referencing Hemingway, the same point is clear in this scene, and if Jake was Warren's character, he might as well have said: "'Why don't you start living your life' in Fiddlersburg?" (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 19; Warren, *Flood* 143). The crux of Warren's text remains the same: the attainment of a strong sense of place is the opening movement on the journey toward the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15).

The first main opponents of the attainment of the recognitions are solipsism and nihilism (214-15). It is clear that Lettice Poindexter is definitively a solipsist in the wake of her "scene" with Dr. Sutton: "She [Lettice Poindexter] had run from this room as though nothing in it were real, as though he [Dr. Sutton] were not real" (151). As such, both Lettice and Brad are struggling spiritually. The contrast is made further clear when Yasha and Brad declare their views of the world to each other:

Yasha Jones blinked obediently upward. "No," he said, after a histrionic interval, "I don't see it. I do not see the hole. Perhaps because I believe in God."
 "I don't believe in God," Brad said. "And I don't believe in the black hole in the sky either."
 "What I believe in," he said, "is Fiddlersburg." (166)

Brad has arrived at the next crux of his problem. He believes only in his sense of place, and he does not believe that there is anything beyond it. He only believes in that which he can observe with his eyes. Yasha, on the other hand, is in the process of attaining the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). He reaches his epiphanic moment:

Now Yasha Jones, standing in the hot sunshine of afternoon in Fiddlersburg, thought back with envy on that Yasha Jones who had lain in the gorse and known himself as good as dead, peaceful, beyond fear and desire. But now he stood in Fiddlersburg, knowing that he was not dead and would have to endure, with joy, his life (Warren, *Flood* 167-68).

Yasha ultimately rejects despair within this scene. He has progressed since the earlier section of the novel, when he was surrounded by the imagery of “darkness,” and he has maneuvered himself toward the light that is constituted by a profound sense of place, hope, and of the need to live life joyously, “beyond fear and desire” (39; 167-68).

Brad, however, must reach the next step of his journey. Warren continues:

Now, hunched, shivering, in that room, in his overcoat, the beam of the flashlight on that spot, the same spot over there where the coffin had been, he began to weep. The weeping began suddenly, surprising him. It was as though somebody else were weeping. Then he tried to appropriate the process. He tried to profit from it. He even felt, momentarily, a pride that he, Bradwell Tolliver, could stand here in the dark house and weep. He waited for the reward, the sweetness, the relief that should come. Nothing came. The sobs wracked him dryly. The tears ran sparsely down his cheeks. He wondered why the wracking sobs produced so few tears.

All at once, he felt that it was some stranger who stood and wept in a grief that had not been divulged to Bradwell Tolliver. He had been tricked.

“Shit,” he said, out loud (196-97).

Brad is still entrapped within his nihilistic nausea, which swiftly develops into solipsism.

However, there is still hope for Brad because a part of him has wept to some degree.

Moreover, after his tense scene with Lettice Poindexter, after a long stream of negative emotions,

Brad concludes: “Nothing seemed real. He was not sure what might be the inner reality. Was there ever an inner reality?” (204). He is still contending with solipsism, which is, in reality, a grave temptation to despair. However, Lettice began weeping:

She laid her head down on the edge of the table and cried, almost without sound. He could see the tears running out of her open eyes.

In this manner Bradwell Tolliver entered the House of Forgiveness. He did not know that this is a house in which there are many mansions, some of which are lightless. (206)

There, in the abyss of his solipsism, Brad has managed to move beyond it, to enter into the reality of Lettice's weeping. He has discerned forgiveness, which implies he is on the precipice of a powerful spiritual change that is waiting to occur within him.

Brad then entered into the phase in which the soul attempts to determine the precise nature of one's spiritual dilemma. Warren continues: "She [Leontine] had said: *Being you's like being blind*" (232; 233). However, this is primarily a reference to superficial self-consciousness, which is something that Brad does not yet understand. Meanwhile, Brother Potts has finished his poem:

"When I see the town I love
Sinking down beneath the wave
I pray I'll remember then
All the blessings that God gave.

"When I see the life I led
Whelmed and sunk beneath the flood,
Let the waters drown regret and envy---
Make me see my life was good.

"God, make me know what I didn't have
Was the sweetest gift You gave.
Oh, let me know such perfect joy,
When what I did have goes 'neath the wave."
(239)

Thus, the heart of the novel has reached its apex. Joy alone can defeat self-pity. Then, Brother Potts states: "...it looks like... I had not got them [the words of the poem] down exactly the way they came. It looked like something had passed away out of 'em'" (240). He is recognizing the virtue of humility: to recognize that the apex of a -human- comprehension of spirituality is still

vastly incomplete in the face of God's Infinity (Zimmermann 1).

The discourse of humility continues. Yasha Jones references Dante, and Yasha and Brother Potts engage in the following exchange of words: "I get the notion," Brother Potts said, mournfully. "It is like my hand must have trembled." "Isn't that always true?" Yasha demanded. "Of all who try to life in the spirit? There is the vision, but..." (Warren, *Flood* 240). The emphasis, from both Dante and Brother Potts, is on the trembling: how the Infinity of God should force the hands of the finite, infinitely small, and yet infinitely loved, human being, to tremble in awe and ecstasy (Warren, *Flood* 240; Zimmermann 1). Then Warren continues: "Brother Potts," Yasha Jones said, "No one can restore the vision. But if we talk together, perhaps something of it will come back to you" (Warren, *Flood* 240). The recognition of God's Infinity need not deter one from seeking greater comprehension of the Truth (Zimmermann 1). Finally: "Then he [Brother Potts] added gaily: '...Shall we go into the house to the light?'" (Warren, *Flood* 240). The scene between Yasha and Brother Potts concludes with the movement toward the light, which Brad refrains from entering, within this scene (240-41).

Brad converses with his sister, Maggie, and she reveals the distinctive difference between the self as a lived, inner, communal, spiritual, and experiential entity, versus the self as a sentimental construct of narcissitic self-consciousness. She reveals: "I don't care what Leontine said," she [Maggie Tolliver] said. "What I say is, all you need is to relax and be yourself, your inside self" (242). The epiphanic revelation is the need to cease trying and attempting to be oneself, and to then allow oneself to be drawn forth into an epiphanically experiential existence.

Warren continues:

Watching him go up the walk, her heart was full of tenderness. When he had disappeared, she let her gaze move over the garden, the tumbling gazebo, the river, the far land.

Far off, there was a single light. Some house, some cabin.
Something was there, far away.

She stared into distance and the whole world seemed frail and beautiful in its drift of moonlight and field mist and the far-off darkness of woods. She yearned to lean over it all in protective tenderness.

She thought: *If only you could feel this way, always* (245).

Maggie engages in the epiphanic ecstasy of the recognitions, and of the radical holiness of Creation, in acceptance of herself, and of her place in the world (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15; *Flood* 245; *The Masts at Dawn* 116). In this case, the “darkness” is that of “tenderness,” rather than of nihilism, and it is the “darkness” of the leap of faith, of the great plunge, into an ecstasy of being (Warren, *Flood* 245). If it were otherwise, then the emphasis would have been placed on nothingness and despair, as it was in previous scenes (39).

Meanwhile, Yasha Jones, while in the ecstasy of truth, has spiritual dilemmas of his own, through which he must maneuver. This is the case because, post-recognition of the recognitions, there is ever further spiritual progress to undertake, until the moment of death in which, one would justly hope, the soul finally reaches God (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Warren continues:

He sat there, he told himself, in the stillness of joy... Yasha Jones had, for some years now, lived in the joy of abstraction---which means participation in all that is not yours, since you have lived past all that was yours. Having nothing, he had all. He had known how light falls on a leaf. He had know[n] how a hand turns on the wrist. He had known how a heart fills with longing. But it had not been his heart.

For he was, he had told himself, past longing. (Warren, *Flood* 264)

It is revealed that Yasha Jones, as with Bradwell Tolliver, is also still struggling with the problem in which the soul “lives outside of his own experience” (144; 264). This is the central crux of the problem. Yasha reflects on his World War II experiences, in France, and particularly

the moment in which he had killed an enemy soldier in a dark alley: “He now remembered the terrifying shudder of ecstasy as he had stood there over that dark heap. But he remembered how, finding himself in the grip of that ecstasy, he had been, suddenly, sick of himself; and of the world” (268). He felt “the recognition of complicity” in its initial horror, and he did not yet allow himself to become washed in the paradox of “the beginning of innocence” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214). He withdrew into the other extreme, which stands on the opposing shore across from the sentimental-narcissistic self-consciousness: the denial of the soul, and of identity, and of any form of selfhood.

Yasha’s denial of the existence of the self, of any form of identity, and of his former life in fear and terror of his past, resulted in a host of spiritual problems. Warren continues: “...Yasha Jones had thought of himself as already dead and knew that Monsieur Duval would die...” (Warren, *Flood* 270). Yasha then essentially entered into the motions of “The American Dream,” and then he encountered love, which he sought desperately, and performed selfishly, forgetting the nature of true love. Warren continues: “His [Yasha’s] greediness for her [Lucy Spence-- his wife he had married three weeks after burying the corpse of a stray dog] very process of life seemed to be without limit” (270). He was preparing himself, and her, for tragedy. They bickered briefly over money and then Lucy Spence died in a car crash, and there was nothing that Yasha could have done to save her (270-71). As Yasha reflected:

He sat there, and observed how the structures of River Street shifted and heaved in the moonlight. He thought how, if you look at a thing, the very fact of your looking changes it. He thought how, if you think about yourself, that very fact changes you. He was afraid that if he moved he would hear, not silence, but a great roar around his head, like wind. He was afraid that, if he thought about himself, something would happen (274).

The emphasis, here, should be placed on the repetition of “he was afraid,” and of how his fear had led to his life of living a lie, which led to the “darkness” of his sense of place earlier in the novel, while he journeyed toward the central epiphany of the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15; *Flood*, 39; 167-68; 274). Yasha must confront himself, accepting “the direction of fulfillment” that can cause the true “death of the [false] self” in order to find “the beginning of [true] selfhood,” and, as evident from his recent conversations with Brother Potts, he has begun to enter into these motions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15; *Flood*, 239-40; 274). Brad Tolliver is the character, in this novel, with whom the recognitions are concerned the most.

Brad ultimately discovers the recognitions, but he must learn them blatantly, through pages upon pages of recurrent imagery of some form of “darkness” (Warren, *Flood* 39). Warren then reveals his praise toward Hemingway: “And justly, for it was the masterwork of a master writer, who, in this, had at last discovered the deep truth of man’s relation to other men, and had fused it with his own tragic sense of individual destiny... The book was called *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, by Ernest Hemingway” (306). This High-Modernist reference, recalling the horrors of the Spanish Civil War, serves as the necessary background the first and most necessary recognition. It is the fact that: “The recognition of complicity is the beginning of innocence” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). This is the struggle that Bradwell Tolliver must endure. He must recognize his complicity, his reality, and the realities of good and evil.

There are moments in which Brad can see the vision of that which he perpetually rejects. Warren continues: “Something could be redeemed. Everything could be redeemed... He could marry Leontine Purtie... He could take care of her... He was overwhelmed by pathos and protectiveness” (Warren, *Flood* 360). There is the vision of love as caring for the other person, but then everything fell apart. Brad thought that “he would never see Leontine Purtie again”

(371). He languished once more in despair. Then, Brad was on the shantyboat, surrounded by the imagery of “darkness” on the river (371). Then came: “He looked up at the sky. The Bear had now sunk below the darkness of the swamp-woods. Vega, west-northwest hung high and bright. That whirr and merciless grind swelling from the swamp darkness seemed to fill the sky up to all the stars” (377-78). The depth of his despair grew deeper and deeper. Warren continues: “Brad Tolliver sat there in the Jaguar and was overwhelmed by rejection and envy. He felt rejected by life” (383). His pain was self-inflicted. Brad alone held the keys to his prison of despair. Warren continues: “The emptiness was palpable, like a dense but invisible fog that condenses coldly on the cheek, in darkness” (385). Brad had sensed, throughout the novel and in this moment, that there was, and is, something inherently wrong with his spiritual condition.

Brad moved slowly toward Truth in his spiritual progression. Warren continues: “He stood and marveled at the fact of his joy in her [Maggie’s] joy... Then something happened. There was still the elation, but now it was not the out-going joy in her joy, it was the in-going joy of vindication” (387) Brad was beginning to recognize his inherently spiritual needs in greater clarity. Warren continues: “In that instant as he heard the steps approaching from the dark hall, he felt as though a cry were mounting in him. The cry was a cry of yearning; he yearned for that joy in her joy to come back to him” (389). Brad yearned for the epiphany, the epiphany that Yasha Jones and Brother Potts have discerned and lived, but Brad continued in his struggle (167-68; 239). However: “The joy did not come. It would never come... Behind Yasha Jones was the darkness of the hall” (391). Brad was caught in between the epiphany for which he yearns and his fatal, nihilistic, impulses. Then Calvin Fiddler entered the scene with his pistol, and: “It was then that Bradwell Tolliver heaved his bulk at him, with a clumsy, fatalistic, uncoordinated motion, like a brick chimney undermined” (398). Brad, in the depths of despair, fatalistically

attempted to save the lives of his sister and Yasha. Brad was gravely wounded in the process, which, in turn, allowed for Calvin Fiddler's redemption (398-99).

Bradwell Tolliver must ultimately ascend from his despair in order to find true happiness (387). Warren continues, first, by describing the depths of Bradwell's despair:

...even while the sun burned on his shoulders, he felt now, deep inside, the very breath of that blackness blowing cold on his innermost soul.

But he had learned that you can learn to live with anything, and had, in the long months, come to a grim acceptance of that black beast with cold fur like hairy ice that drowns in the deepest inner dark, or woke to snuffle about, or even, as now, might heave unexpectedly at him and breathe upon him... he had even come to have an affection for that black beast. For in the hours before dawn the beast, weary with its own heaving and snarling, would lie down beside him and snuffle, as though trying piteously to warm itself from whatever warmth there was in Bradwell Tolliver (404).

His condition is such that he is dwelling in the Ninth Circle, to reference Dante, of his own *Inferno*. His "black beast" resembles "The emperor of the woeful kingdom" who "rose from the ice below his breast," who has "hairy flanks" (Dante, *Inferno* 34.28-29; 73; Warren, *Flood* 404). Warren, if one recalls, had referenced Dante earlier in the text, and the resurfacing of Dantean imagery is not only unsurprising, but powerful in its force of depth as it embodies the sorrowful condition of Bradwell Tolliver's soul (Warren, *Flood* 404). Dante describes how Virgil "clambered down," "from hank to hank," and how he journeyed: "between the thick pelt and the crusted ice" (Dante, *Inferno* 34.74-75). One should consider this comparison carefully. Warren clearly describes the "black beast" that has "cold fur," which he specifically compares to "hairy ice," in imagery that mirrors the depths of "Dis": "that drowns in the deepest inner dark" (Dante, *Inferno* 34.20; Warren, *Flood* 404). The allusions are clear and precise. This is the

horror, the horror of Brad's familiarity with despair, that Brad must ultimately ascend from (Warren, *Flood* 404).

Brad begins the final movement of his journey toward the epiphany of Truth when he visits Cal Fiddler, who reveals to him that, after his re-confinement, after he had shot Brad: "I felt different. It was like knowing that life, which I myself had never had... which is a sort of medium in which the *you* exists, like a fish exists in water, is beautiful" (412). He has found the balanced view of selfhood, the symbiotic relationship between the salvation of one's soul and the flow, or movement, or world-fabric of synchronization, between one's soul and all of Creation. Brad reads the letters of his former wife, Lettice Poindexter: "It changes you to realize that a body has a soul living in it..." (429). The reader and Brad both learn that there is still hope for an immortal, indomitable human spirit, who, through the grace and power of God, will surpass death. Lettice reveals: "...I woke up one day a Catholic... I am grateful to God for all that has led up to this joy I now have... Here is where you have to pray. To know the *nowness* of God's Will" (431-32). It is the "recognition of the direction of fulfillment" (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). There, emerges, the importance of rejecting solipsism: to pray to perceive the Will of God, praying and dwelling within the experience of the moment, avoiding the sentimentalism of narcissistic self-consciousness.

Then, Lettice reflects on precisely that which Bradwell Tolliver must do in order to fully realize the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15; *Flood* 431-32). Warren continues: "For you see, a person wickedly trivial like me has to get everything the hard way. A person dumb like me has to be prodded to what they call the Leap of Faith" (432). Therefore, Brad must, also, relinquish his over-thinking. Lettice reveals: "I had to be forced, by all the terrible things that had happened, to jump" (436). Thus, Lettice had needed to recognize "complicity" in

order to endure “the Leap of Faith” in order to find “innocence” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15; *Flood* 431-32; 436). Then, Brad himself, reflecting on Lettice’s words, finally reaches his own form of the epiphany. Warren continues: “Therefore, in his inwardness, he said: *I cannot find the connection between what I was and what I am. I have not found the human necessity.* He knew that that was what he must try to find” (439). In other words, Brad has finally perceived the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). This leads to the grand coda that concludes the novel:

He might even, some day, come back to Fiddlersburg---
rather, to the edge of the waters that would cover
Fiddlersburg.

For this was his country.

But then, even as he felt a sudden, unwilling,
undecipherable, tearing, ripping gesture of his innermost
being toward those people over yonder, ...he thought: *There
is no country but the heart.*

And for a moment he mistook the brightness of moisture
in his eyes for the flicker of sun, far off... yonder across the
lake” (440).

Brad, despite his decades of detesting Fiddlersburg, of denying the realities of the place, himself, and the world, finally accepts his sense of place in an epiphanic ecstasy, which remains even after he turns to view the lake that was once the flood that had drowned the town (439-40). He has progressed spiritually, and he has finally abandoned despair. He has finally embraced God.

Interlinked and unified with the recognitions, however, is the necessity for another recognition: the presence of the world-fabric, which is expressed so intricately in Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, which Bradwell Tolliver had read (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15; *Flood* 306). Warren’s *Flood* and Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls* are intensely, truthfully, and powerfully interlinked. As Stoneback notes in his essay “For Whom the Flood Rolls...”:

From his opening pages, Warren plays symphonic variations on images and themes from *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, including a pattern of sometimes faint, sometimes obvious echoes of Hemingway's epigraph from John Donne. An intricate pattern of island and continent imagery, of the clod being washed away by the sea, in this case the flooded river, provides the deep structure of Warren's novel. And there are *bells* everywhere, a tintinnabular racket, tolling and telling the lot of humankind (Stoneback 15).

There are the epiphanic reverberations of the world-fabric: the spiritual inter-connectedness of all human beings as the children of God. Stoneback continues:

In the opening scene Brad Tolliver (probably pronounced in the regional variant form *Toll-iver*)... thinks of his success with his first book *I'm Telling You Now*, published under the editorship of Telford Lott. The black man who fills his gas tank is dressed in a Happy Dell theme-costume ornamented with little *bells*, and Brad mentally christens him Jingle *Bells*... Both men are islands, uninvolved in mankind, unaware of the tolling bell (15).

The imagery of bells is pronounced. Moreover, Brad's un-involvedness "in mankind," his unawareness "of the tolling bell," is, precisely the crux of the matter: he is unaware of the "complicity" that he must recognize (Stoneback, *For Whom the Flood Rolls*... 15; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214). As revealed and substantiated throughout this thesis, Brad ultimately attains this knowledge and finds the epiphanic ecstasy of Truth in all its glory (Warren, *Flood* 440).

Stoneback astutely notes further "intertextualities" that persist throughout the novel. He writes:

There are also many intertextualities of character, theme, and situation: for example, Hemingway has a doomed priest and Warren has a dying preacher [Brother Potts], both performing with grace under pressure the necessary sacraments for a dying town; Robert Jordan, on the battlefield in Spain, thinks about his grandfather and the American Civil War and his contempt for his father's

cowardice; Brad Tolliver circles the Confederate monument in Tennessee, thinks about the Spanish Civil War and his contempt for his father; Jordan, dying in Spain, tells himself to think about Montana; Tolliver, living in a dying town in Tennessee, remembers the face of a dead soldier he'd seen in Spain and wishes he had died in battle there; Jordan looks at the river under the bridge thinking "Roll, Jordan, Roll!"; Brad looks at his river and thinks of the flood waters that will soon roll over his home town; and both men experience their symbolic "Crossing Over Jordan" (Stoneback, *For Whom the Flood Rolls...* 15-16).

The connections and comparisons are apt and indisputable. However, Brad is not a clone of Robert Jordan, and Stoneback is suggesting that Robert Jordan and Brad only share the similarities of the background of the Spanish Civil War.

Brad, however, must pass through a spiritual journey: a journey of recognition, which inherently involves human wickedness. Stoneback continues:

Here we might note that page 185 of *Bell* contains Pilar's description of the dinner for Finito, the dying matador who had so much fear but was so valiant in the bullring, Finito who could not eat much at his own final banquet. At that point in Hemingway's text, then, Brad puts down the book, goes to dinner, and does not eat much... (16).

This is one of such similarities. However, Brad was never "valiant in the bullring" in this case (16). He is unlike Finito. Instead, as Stoneback elaborates:

The short-term effect, the immediate aftermath of Brad's reading Hemingway, is a wild, drunken, sex-drenched party leading to a kind of mini-orgy orchestrated by Brad, who first makes a party guest dance with his sexy, scantily-clad wife, Lettice, and then throws his sister into the arms of the party guest. He drags his wife upstairs for sex, and the guest and Brad's sister have sex on the front lawn in what is often described as a quasi-rape scene. This leads to the murder of the party guest and infinite repercussions of the post-*Bell Tolls* sex and violence. And it is the beginning of the end of Brad's marriage, a divorce that is inextricably linked to the reverberations from the Spanish Civil War... Brad is a veteran of that war and his wife Lettice has been a crusader

for Communist Party causes. The sexy dance scene that leads to violence and ruin is itself a coded reference to Hemingway's novel. (16-17)

Brad becomes truly complicit in the crime of the quasi-rape, the sacrilegious defilement of sex, only to forget his complicity, to wallow in existential nausea, and this is why he must find the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). If he does not, he will fail, and as this paper has revealed, Brad did not fail. Stoneback continues: "After the war he becomes a successful Hollywood writer, cynical about his success writing superficial popular work; he finally comes home to Tennessee, makes peace with his home town, peace with himself..." (Stoneback, *For Whom the Flood Rolls...* 18-19). This peace-making, as the novel revealed, was a long and arduous process: 440 pages of spiritual toil and progression.

Brad Tolliver eventually understood the resonances of Donne, Hemingway, and the recognitions of *Brother to Dragons* (Stoneback, *For Whom the Flood Rolls...* 19; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Like Robert Jordan, Brad Tolliver concluded his novel as "he feels blessed and whole and at one with himself and the world... beyond all -isms and abstractions" (19). Brad recognizes the recognitions, ejecting the self-pitying false self, attaining true innocence and true freedom, and moving toward his true self, who is known in the eyes of God (Stoneback, *For Whom the Flood Rolls...* 19; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 270-71; *Flood* 440). Stoneback brings Brad's story to its epiphanic resolution: "The church bells will soon toll for the last time, the flood will soon roll, drowning all the life that has been lived in that place, but Brad's final wisdom comes to him in the novel's closing lines: '*There is no country but the heart*'" (Stoneback, *For Whom the Flood Rolls...* 19; Warren, *Flood* 440). Brad has become one with himself, the world, his place, and he has established his ultimate recognition of all: the existence and epiphanic, all-forgiving, all-embracing, and all-encompassing love of God.

Warren's text fits into the entirety of the thesis. In Pound, one found the expression of the problem: a cynical, realistic, and practical view of history. Human beings clearly have *not* behaved in utopian ways. Principality after principality have warred against the other over money, land, and power. Yet, for all of these 'achievements,' they are dust on the pages of history. They are nothing. Even ancient Rome, for all its glory, is a dung-heap surrounded by a modern, distinct, and different city. This view of history existed even in the days of Homer. Dante and Shakespeare pointed toward the heavens. Hemingway did the same, but he applied it to history, to living one's life in any place in which one dwells. Roberts, learning from Pound, performed the same application, perfecting the means through which the landscape expresses the interiority of her characters. Warren is the coda of this tradition: its fulfillment. Warren, who admired Roberts, who understood Hemingway's writing style, if not his views, and who understood Pound, unified High Modernism and the Southern Renaissance in something new, powerful, and epiphanic. The point, however, remains the same: all of these authors and poets lead the reader to the same conclusion. Hemingway, Roberts, and Warren revealed the spiritual and religious dimensions of this conclusion.

In the contemporary world, it is difficult for certain types of claims to be made: claims that would be viewed as *hubris* if not some form of racism or misogyny or "intolerance." The Church is viewed, by many, as a hypocritical, mortal, and political institution, which partook in many negative contrivances. Dante answers those critics: of course the -human beings- who handle the mortal dimensions of the Church -have sinned- and wrought chaos (Dante, *Inferno* 19.49-120). Pound would not have disagreed, and for that matter, nor would Hemingway. Yet, one might justly wonder as to what had lured Hemingway into the dimness of the cathedral. It all leads back to "the recognition of complicity" (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 114). All human

beings possess the same impulses that would one day build the nuclear warhead (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). The thrashing of the club against the bones of the fallen lion became the nuclear physicist's machines toying with atoms. The casting of a spear into the heart of another human being became the pressing of a button in a bomber-airplane over Hiroshima, or the pressing of the mechanism that launched the gases in the death-chambers of the Holocaust. It is true that there were many people who could be designated as trustworthy, or good, who became the victims of the club-thrashers and spear-throwers and nuclear bombers. One may wonder as to how they were complicit (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214). This is the heart of the matter: the victims naturally -hate- the perpetrator. Hatred is hatred: the emotion to condemn the other, which implicitly demands a form of judgment. It is the antithesis of love. The sin of one person leads to the sin of another person. The victim participates in the hatred of the perpetrator, the blind following the blind, into the abyss. The hatred that exists between the children of God will never bring justice to the victim or true vindication to the perpetrator. Divine love, alone, can do this: divine, true love, a love that forgives and becomes forgiven (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.145).

The struggle is to maintain this place of spiritual being: to surpass the impulse to hate, to judge, to condemn, and this does not imply that, therefore, perpetrators should be permitted to roam the earth freely. Rather, sin should be punished, but tempered in its punishment, as the victim controls oneself, forgiving the perpetrator, releasing oneself from the shackles of hatred, the slavery of wrath, and the misery of despair. Then, and only then, can one be truly free, released from the shackles of the shared sin, the perpetrator's crime and the victim's hatred of that crime and of the criminal (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214). The human impulse, the impulse of sin, is to deny the humanity of one who harms another. The criminal becomes the scum, the chattel, and the threat that must be exterminated. The keys of despair, however, are

held within oneself. One's greatest foe, the worst of perpetrators, is oneself.

By recognizing this truth within oneself, one begins to gradually lose narcissistic self-consciousness in order to embrace the true self (214-15). The false self spits, cackles, yells, weeps in self-pity, performs violence, lies, cheats, steals, murders, rapes, or thinks of these things, curses, hates, and wrathfully seeks to ruin one's fellow human beings, all of Creation, and even God Himself. The true self forgives, embraces, abandons hatred, considers the welfare of one's fellow human beings, smiles, laughs pleasantly, speaks in a gentler tone, weeps for the suffering of others, resolves disputes, speaks truthfully, works fairly, spares lives, and refuses to harm others. The true self is at peace (215). The true self, however, can only exist, in its ultimate, epiphanic, fulfillment, in Heaven (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.130-45). The true self, in its nature, dwells with God. One can only, in truth, become the true self through death. One can, however, strive to become the true self during life on Earth. The glory exists within the striving. There are no "grey areas" in Heaven. There are only "grey areas" on Earth.

The attitude of the person who strives toward true selfhood is the same attitude as that which is conveyed through Warren's later recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Imagine the following scenario: one is forced into combat with another, the result of which is the assailant's death, which was not attained purposefully. One accidentally killed the other in an act of self-defense. One, then, has a choice. One can follow the natural human, fallen, impulse: to gloat over one's fallen foe. Or, one can follow the supernatural impulse, toward which one must strive, and this is the impulse of recognition. Once again, "The recognition of complicity is the beginning of innocence" (214). To hate one's fallen opponent is to plunge into a deadly error. One can proclaim: "I hate you, scum of the earth, who dared to assail me, who hath now ensnared me in thy death." To do thus would be to submit to both hatred and despair: and to

spiritual, emotional, and psychological slavery, in bondage to the perpetrator through the emotions of one's wrath. At this point in this hypothetical discourse, one might proclaim: "You, writer of this paper, have never been in this type of situation in your high-academic ivory tower. How dare you tell -me- what to do or how to think!" This is the typical, American attitude, and it is the lurching desire for innocence, for complete vindication, and justification, and to live life without any form of consequences whatsoever (Warren, "The Use of the Past" 32). There are problems with this mentality. It is indeed a necessary longing. However, this longing cannot be fulfilled through a mere assertion of this nature. Rather, it can only be fulfilled through love. The sample exclamation expresses anger, which is not the path to true freedom. It expressed hatred, which is another form of slavery.

In order to escape from this calamity, one must, instead, adopt a penitent position. One must feel sorrow, even for the unintended death of the perpetrator, and one must dare to desire that the perpetrator should not be condemned to the abyss, and that, one day, there will be peace between the victim and the perpetrator in Paradise (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.130-45). Otherwise, one will become ensnared within one's hatred, in the guise of righteous anger, and only condemn oneself. Then, there are two condemned souls, who both dwell in the Inferno of wrath, and one might justly ask as to what good any of this has accomplished (Dante, *Inferno* 19.49-120). True love, and forgiveness, must liberate the soul (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.130-45). If not, then one has only served to condemn oneself, to submit to the false self, to abandon the hope of becoming the true self as the self was willed to be in the eyes of God (Dante, *Paradiso* 33.130-45; Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15).

This is the point in which atheism fails: it despairs of any form of hope of an eternal life or existence after death (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 215). It despairs of the salvation of all who

were slaughtered without any hope of vindication. It abandons them: all of them. It abandons hope (Dante, *Inferno* 3.9). It may not abandon hope today, or tomorrow, but it will, ultimately, abandon hope upon the last day: in the final stroke of breath upon one's deathbed. It is the ultimate abandonment, the severance, between oneself and the entirety of the human race. It is the denial of complicity, of sincerity, of hope, of life, of being, and of innocence (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). It is the denial of freedom. It is the death of meaning, of signification, in self-destruction. As one generation perceives the hypocrisy of human sins and despairs, refraining from belief, so also must the following generation perceive the following: the hopelessness of nihilistic nausea, the need for hope, and the necessity of the recognition of the recognitions of Robert Penn Warren.

One soul cannot convert the soul of another person, or persuade the soul of another to convert, for only one can convert oneself. Coercion is not true conversion. True conversion occurs within one's soul: within recognition. The soul must be lead out of the depths of one's despair as Dante is lead through the *Inferno* in his *Commedia*, as he states: "...then we came forth, to see again the stars" (Dante, *Inferno* 34.139). The soul can only be lead by God. Sometimes, the soul is led through the epiphanic movements of the ocean of God's favor, and, at other times, the soul is led through the reading of a text. God communicates with the reader through the text. This is why, for Hemingway, Roberts, and Warren, writing was a holy vocation: to formulate the text, as God wills for it to be formulated, and edited, and finalized: so that God may communicate with the reader in an interior locution- a dialogue between the soul and her Creator. The soul may resist, and resistance will result in despair, if it is absolute. Yet, even within the staunchest resistance, there is still hope that the seed will be planted within the soul: the seed that will germinate and sprout into "the Leap of Faith": the decision to recognize the

recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15; *Flood* 432). Terror and despair will ruin one's soul, but trust and hope will save one's soul eternally, not due to the soul's own merit, but because God eternally loves the penitent soul. Despair results in destruction, but hope results in salvation.

Despite all of this, one may still remain un-persuaded. If this is the case, then one must avoid the inclination to "arm-chair" dismiss these claims as rubbish. It is the easiest of inclinations, and, the most anti-scholarly. One must rather look deep within oneself for the rationale as to why one would disagree. One should consider the alternatives to this worldview. There is the morally relativistic alternative, which promises tolerance, freedom, true diversity and equality, which is essentially a neo-utopian-Enlightenment and philosophically Modernist view. However, this view does not produce that which is promised. It promises peace in a peaceless framework. Conflict remains conflict (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 15). Some may balk at the notion of conflict-resolution as something that is unrealistic. This is the case because conflict is inherent in the human condition, it is inherent because human beings are fundamentally fallen creatures, which, in and of itself alone, does not negate the recognition of the existence of the soul (Harent, "Original Sin" 1). However, an inclination toward evil is not the same as a definitive necessity for evil. There is still hope because the ability to choose the antithesis of evil, as defined earlier by the distinction between the false and true selves, still exists within the human condition. The ability to choose goodness over evil, however, requires perseverance, because goodness is not the natural inclination of humankind (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). It requires strength through endurance. It requires an inherent rejection of self-pity in favor of the strength to overcome and persevere throughout one's challenges. It is necessary, for self-pity only furthers the destruction of the self into the complete lie, the abyss of falsehood, the

reverse-epitome of the depth of fraud, which is the soul's ultimate nightmare: unending despair.

In the morally relativistic worldview, there is despair, because goodness cannot be asserted as such (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 215). It cannot even be recognized. It can exist as a "maybe," or as a "perhaps," or as a "possibility," but it can never be viewed as definitive. For definitiveness would imply an assertion of "one side over another," which is merely a politicization of humanity. To politicize is to draw-up boundary lines, to divide, and to mobilize in forces (Stoneback, *For Whom the Flood Rolls...* 19). It is the antithesis of the recognitions (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). For the recognitions call for something different, a greater path, a path in which there need not be boundary lines, upon which one need not politicize the human race. However, in the natural inclination toward evil, there is a natural inclination toward non-recognition, toward ignorance, and most of all, toward a blatant refusal to understand the thought-processes, emotions, and spiritual conditions of other people. It is natural. It is not, however, supernatural or epiphanic.

In this inclination, tolerance replaces love. Tolerance, however, is not an acceptable replacement for love. Tolerance allows for a hatred that is stymied by a mere "I may not like you, but I will -tolerate- you," which is not the same as love. As Seth Parton notes in Warren's *Band of Angels*, one must recognize the fact that, at times: "'Love must scourge in the name of Truth'" (Warren, *Band of Angels* 34). There are certain thought-patterns, actions, and behaviors that cannot be tolerated. In a system of complete tolerance, one must, therefore, necessarily tolerate the Nazi guard who shoves the Jewish person into the gas-chamber in a concentration camp. Once one realizes the implications of one's worldview, one must then begin to attempt to see how such implications unhinge one's worldview. A notion of good, as opposed to a notion of evil, is necessary, because it is necessary to have a strong, firm, moral ground upon which to

reject horrors such as those of the Holocaust.

Love, while demanding that no human being should -hate- or wish eternal condemnation on the Nazi, must also condemn the concentration camp, in a refusal to “tolerate” the concentration camp, and it must condemn the mortal, grave, and horrible beyond description, sin of genocide. If one decides to hate the Nazi soldier, then one imprisons oneself in one’s own self-made concentration camp in the prison of self-consciousness, in which one remains bound and shackled, choking in the gases of one’s own hatred in an eternal and unending death. This is why it is necessary to forsake hatred and condemnation, and all of its synonyms, which serve to constitute Hell itself (Dante, *Inferno* 3.9). One must forsake these horrors in order to become truly freed and liberated from the evils that were committed by one’s perpetrator. If one does not recognize the need for such a movement, if one continues to wallow in self-pity and eternal hatred, then one will have, ultimately, lost the war.

It is a terrible truth. It is a terrible and necessary truth (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). It is a terrible truth that may yet liberate the soul from the confinements of despair. It is a hard truth to speak, to communicate, one that would, likely, result in a further onslaught of hatred and self-pity on part of those who dwell within that state of non-being. This is the terror of Hell: the unendingness of hatred and self-weeping (Dante, *Inferno* 3.1-9). It is understandable, comprehensive, that a sufferer of grave injustice would long for justice, for restitution, and for liberation from the oppressor. However, to eternally condemn the perpetrator is nothing more than a continuation, a perpetuation of the injustice, in which no restitution can ever be found, because the true restitution exists in the restoration of love, of hope, and of spiritual freedom, of charity (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 214-15). Without these things, there is only malice and despair, which will never result in the justice, restitution, and liberation that the victim so greatly

desires. This is the case because these principles are, fundamentally, antitheses. There is no middle ground between them. There are some cases where the either/or is necessary, while, at the same time, the and/both is also necessary. It is both either/or and and/both. There is no middle ground between good and evil. There is, however, a middle ground between condemnation and salvation: where the soul, through the recognitions, may yet be saved despite one's sins, when one's sins are condemned, while one's soul is not condemned along with one's sins (214-15). Warren's *Flood*, and his recognitions at large, reveal the need for an inherent movement toward true love from within the human condition because, without it, there is only unending despair, and true love is despair's greatest remedy.

Conclusion: This Thesis in the 21st Century

The thesis has reached its long-awaited moment: the explication of its exigence. It's exigence is simply this: the modern world is writhing in despair (Warren, *America and the Diminished Self* 30). "Despair" and "hope" can finally be grounded as multi-contextual forces, which were present in a multiplicity of contexts, from Dante's historical situation in medieval Florence to Shakespeare's in Elizabethan and Jacobean England to Pound's in early 20th-Century Europe, to Hemingway and Roberts, and ultimately to Warren in the post-World War I and post-World War II Eras. The essence of these multi-contextual forces, as revealed throughout this thesis, remained unchanged, despite the general flux of world history. This thesis shall conclude with an effective treatment of particular elements of Dr. H.R. Stoneback's canon of scholarship, which effectively explicate how and why this thesis is valuable and important as a whole.

Stoneback presents us with a knowledge that can span across a vast multiplicity of religions, cultures, and belief-systems, as well as worldviews. The term "Catholicism" is often misunderstood, for it is a Catholic faith, which need not merely communicate resonances and ideas that are exclusive to the Church alone. The Greek notion of the term "Catholic" is a designation of universality. For Stoneback, "religious questions" are often antithetical to political and ideological questions (Baker and Stoneback, *Pilgrimage...1*). It is important to separate the religious from the political and the ideological, or quite simply, to separate the exhortation to avoid sin from the sins of humankind.

Stoneback tragically learned the nature and trauma of ideological "isms" first-hand, when his Chinese students, acting without his direction or approval, marched into Tiananmen Square, in Peking, which is now Beijing, on a fateful day in early June of 1989, when they were

slaughtered before his eyes on live-television (Stoneback, Ftn. 4 in “The Priest Did Not Answer...” 111; “The Priest Did Not Answer...” 109-10). Hemingway’s novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* depicts tragedies of a similar nature, and particularly in “Pilar’s Story,” in which Communist Forces had conquered a small town, and former friends and neighbors plunged into fanatical rage and eradicated each other based on superficial Party-lines (Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* 106-27). Throughout the sequence, a true, non-hypocritical, Catholic Priest, “did not answer” to the unanswerable horrors that took place (124-27). The Priest, himself, was slaughtered, but not before he had prayed over all who had died before him (124-27). In his famed “The Priest Did Not Answer” Essay, Stoneback reflects on the distinction between religious knowledge and ideological “isms,” revealing that Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Toll’s* “ultimate vision approaches the profound and elusive, tragic and redemptive knowledge that declares the need for expiation in the life of communities and nations, a need that has been promulgated in and by all of the outrageous and paradoxical Tiananmen Squares of our bloody century” (Stoneback, “The Priest Did Not Answer’:...” 109-10). One should not confine a quote-on-quote “comprehensive” study of Roman Catholicism to the involvement of Catholic clergymen in Francisco Franco’s Fascist regime for this reason. One should avoid all similar false equivalences. The Priest, in Hemingway’s novel, did not succumb to the allure of politics or the spiritual and/or metaphysical maladies of “isms” (Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* 124-27; Stoneback, “The Priest Did Not Answer’:...” 109-110).

Stoneback’s scholarship both exposes and opposes the false equivalency of misconstruing religion with economics and politics. In “The Priest Did Not Answer...”, Stoneback continues: “...in all places and times and most especially in our century so ravaged by politics, our epoch so devastated by statism, murderous dogmatism, and isms of every kind, the free, volitional act of

resistance to the gnostic rage of ideology---of the left or of the right---must be linked, as Anselmo and Pilar know... with communal sacraments of atonement” (109-10). Atonement does not attempt to forget injustices in some form of paradoxical amnesia. However, atonement also does not ensnare humanity in a further paralysis of violence and vengefulness in the guise of justice. Hemingway, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, reveals Anselmo’s atonement: ““To me it is a sin to kill a man. Even Fascists whom we must kill... To take the life of another is to me very grave’... ‘To kill them teaches nothing’ ... ‘You cannot exterminate them because from their seed comes more with greater hatred’” (Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* 41-42). To atone is to seek forgiveness, and also, to be willing to forgive, as Anselmo reveals within Hemingway’s novel. Forgiveness does precisely what it claims to, it forgives by acknowledging one’s errors, the need for penance or some reasonable form of reparation, and most importantly of all, it rebuilds in the midst of, and in spite of, certain tragedy. It prevents the commission of graver sins. Moreover, a Pilgrimage can function as an expression of repentance, which leads to gentleness, happiness, value, dignity, and hope. It can do so by drawing the pilgrim into greater epiphanic notions, such as the universality of such values, which can then liberate, rather than metaphysically confine, an individual person.

The values, including courage and compassion, dignity and hope, exist regardless of one’s cultural background or overarching worldview. In Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*, Count Mippipopolous declares: ““You must get to know the values” (Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* 67). It is possible for people from numerous cultural backgrounds, on all continents, to behave courageously through grace under pressure, performing one’s duties effectively in spite of one’s hidden fears, in the process of protecting other people and oneself from harm. It does not matter as to whether this present example concerns a medieval Japanese village, when an

opposing Shogun invades the town, an African Masai encampment at nightfall, when a lion strikes from the shadows, or a trench in Fossalta, Italy, in World War I, when the Austrian artillery fires its rounds at Ernest Hemingway and his comrades. Courage is courage, and there are countless examples of the exemplification of this value on the part of people from all cultures and backgrounds. Courage is not bound to ideology. Courage does not cease to exist as soon as one crosses continents. Linguistic differences do not negate the existence of this behavioral value as it is constituted by actions in the world. “The values” are not only existent through actions, but they are also present within each person, and within particular, including specifically religious, places (67).

Stoneback reveals an inherently human desire -for- meaningfulness and purposefulness and for gentler and happier ways of living life. This is evidenced by a multiplicity of cultural and religious and theoretical frameworks throughout the history of the Earth. Stoneback, in his famed *Reading Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises* reveals that Hemingway parallels the modern Pilgrimage of Lourdes with Jake Barnes' inherent desire for spiritual healing through a medieval, far older, Pilgrimage that demands a great measure of both spiritual and physical expiation, or, in short, courage (Stoneback, *Reading Hemingway's...* 134-39; 150-51). Jake journeys down the more storied pilgrim-route, from Paris through Bayonne, through the Pyrenees, from France to Spain, to Pamplona, and he journeys to Roncevaux, and then back to Pamplona, and then, to San Sebastian, as a pilgrim, who would appear to have every reason to despair (134-39). Jake knows that he must not despair if he is to live life fully, completely, and joyously, despite his wounds (134-39). Roncevaux is known for Roland's famed last-stand, in *Le Chanson de Roland*, surrounded on the battlefield, blowing his horn too late, and comporting himself courageously until he died, and this resulted in Charlemagne's key verse: “*Ah que ce cor a longue halein*”

(“Ah that horn has a long breath”) (188-189; 190; 191-96). Jake finds his inner joy through sacramental rituals of communion, such as fishing, in places such as Roncevaux, as he communes with both the present and the past, gaining a heightened sense of hope and joy and value (188-96). This speaks to 21st Century students because many, in our time, and especially within academia, can feel the vast influence of “Post-Modern” currents of despair, which are unsatisfying and insufficient, because the inherently human need for hope is not accidental.

In a seemingly uncertain world, filled to the brim with violence and “isms” and traumas, the following message is deeply compelling because of the firm resonance of hope that it offers to contemporary students (Stoneback, “The Priest Did Not Answer...” 109-10). The perceptions of sacredness, though not inherent divinity, of the Earth, and of the sacredness of a Higher, Infinite Power, in both sacred natural vistas and in architectural places, of sacredness, or “upper-case” Pilgrimages, are essential to the pilgrim, regardless of one’s worldview (Baker and Stoneback, *Pilgrimage... 1*; Zimmermann 1). Stoneback, in his Interview with Dr. Allie Baker for *The Hemingway Project*, declares: “True pilgrims are never ‘lost,’ certainly never ‘aimless’ for no one is more ‘aimed’ with a fixed, set destination than a pilgrim... Pilgrimage is a kind of externalized mysticism staged on long consecrated holy ground and it is as much concerned with the body’s relationship to place as with the soul’s relationship to Fate” (Baker and Stoneback, *Pilgrimage... 1*). To be willing to journey on the Pilgrimage, as a pilgrim, is to acknowledge the core recognition of the somethingness of existence, forever and ever, even beyond the universe. This is the central crux: nowhere is never somewhere; somewhere is forever. “Somewhere” is also rooted and fixed within one’s place: within the “fixed, set destination... staged on consecrated holy ground” (1). Stoneback’s perspicacious scholarship continues to yield great depths of knowledge about not only ourselves, but, more importantly, about the world in which

we live, the lives that we share, and the experiences that we endure, together, as we share in the plights, and more importantly, joys, of this Earth.

And thus, overall, from Dante to Shakespeare, from Pound to Hemingway, and from Roberts to Warren, to Stoneback, one can trace a counter-momentum against despair. Dante opposed the despair of Homer and Virgil. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* presents an opposition to despair in and of itself as rooted in Anglican theology. Pound reveals the presence of despair in its resurgence in the aftermath of World War I. The term "resurgence" is utilized only in the sense that despair is always in a state of resurgence, always returning, and never ceasing, in its efforts to destroy the human spirit. Hemingway, Roberts, Warren, and Stoneback all respond, unceasingly, with hope, through their exercise of grace under pressure on the page.

The abyss is the abyss. It will neither care for nor bury the dead, nor preserve the weak, nor subdue the oppressor, nor procure justice and equality, and nor shall it protect human rights. It shall neither produce gender equality nor respect for persons of differing sexual orientations, nor shall despair preserve a banal, Leftist form of political correctness, a correctness that seeks to stifle voice, and drown away the existence of moral choices into a flood of horror. Non-being, and the guiltlessness that results from it, shall not result in its desired conclusion, of complete and freer innocence. Rather, it shall result in an internal *Inferno*, endless internal self-inflicted-torture, an eternal suffering that shall receive no remedy, and this *Inferno* shall produce the most painful, horrific, death, for the individual who is caught within despair. For the Christian believer, the *Inferno* shall transcend death infinitely in an endless horror without conclusion.

And yet, one can turn to the ethos of Hemingway, a World War I veteran who had suffered grievous wounds that remained with him for the rest of his life, and to Roberts, a Kentucky writer who knew the harsh life of the rural tenant farmer, and to Dante, who had been

exiled, and to Shakespeare, who got himself caught in monarchical politics. One can turn to the ethos of Warren, who had witnessed the horrors of the Mid-Late 20th-Century, and finally, to H.R. Stoneback, and all of the aforementioned likely had more ethos upon which to support despair than many self-proclaimed nihilists, atheists, and agnostics. And these scholars, poets, playwrights, and/or writers, did not despair. They knew that cynicism is ever a self-inflicted, burning, wound, which sings one's soul forever, and that, therefore, cynicism must be rejected. The self-inflicted wound, endless self-pity, only results in the abyss, and the abyss neither frees, nor liberates, nor saves, nor preserves, nor aids, the human spirit.

The following recognitions shall not be presented as some naïveté or banal optimism. They do not deny reality. They assume that treacheries, betrayals, murders and mass-destruction, all manner of crimes against humanity, all manner of personal-moral deficiencies, all manner of vice, exist. One must believe in God in spite of all of this. It sounds as if this statement is a clarion call for madness. Brooks writes:

...man does and does not dominate the world. There is a world in which, despite its beauty and despite man's creatureliness, man is in some way an alien. If a part of nature, he is also in some sense now cut off from nature, and cannot hope to re-establish an easy rapport with nature. On the other hand, though man must strive with nature... he cannot hope to dominate nature, and must learn to fear it, respect it, and finally love it. (Brooks 131)

Brooks converges with Warren's notion from *The Masts at Dawn*: that one must "try to love so well the world that we may believe, in the end, in God" (Brooks 131; Warren, *The Masts at Dawn* 116). Warren already revealed, throughout his many works, that solipsism, determinism, and nihilism, all constitute the real madness. For Brooks, the American Literary Tradition, from the Imagist school of Pound and Eliot, through Hemingway, and implicitly Roberts, and Warren, "is not a record of meaningless violence," and the Tradition reveals that "with the breakup of the Christian synthesis, nature and history have tended to fall apart..." (Brooks 128-29). This is why

further recognitions are necessary. It is time for a universalization of the “Christian synthesis,” its application to all people, regardless of one’s background, faith, or lack thereof, to arise from the ashes of the current historical moment, restoring “nature and history” (Brooks 129).

The author of this thesis shall now add to Warren’s recognitions. The recognition of the somethingness of existence reveals the existence of God. The recognition of the existence of God reveals life’s true significance. The recognition of the universality of true values reveals greater liberation. And beyond greater liberation lies the soul that is true selfhood. Only Warren can conclude these: “All else is surrogate of hope and destitution of spirit” (Warren, *Brother to Dragons* 215). And only hope can defeat despair. Hope is not an optimistic flourish that disregards the multiplicity of problems and horrors and evils in the world. Hope is the expectation that God will triumph, the force that enables one’s soul to forgive, and to seek forgiveness, in order to achieve greater depths of inner peace and innocence, which are rooted in a numinous, luminous, epiphanic resonance of awe, and wonder, and beauty (Harent, “Original Sin” 1; “The Virtue of Penance” 1). As Warren put it, we recall, that: “we must try... / To love so well the world that we may believe, in the end, in God” (Warren, *The Masts at Dawn* 116). Thus, the return to Christian themes in certain High Modernist and Southern Renaissance sources indicates the existence of a literary counter-momentum, which reacts against the pervasive post-World War I, and broader 20th Century, environment of nihilism and despair (Warren, *America and the Diminished Self* 30).

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