

NATURE IS THE TEACHER TO SANTIAGO: A SYMBOLICAL EXPRESSION OF HUMAN STRUGGLE IN HEMINGWAY'S 'THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA'

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ABSTRACT: *'The Old Man and The Sea' (1951) is an epoch-making creation, of Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899-1961), a foremost American iconoclast, who targets on the representation of human struggles through the outreaching of different symbols and signs. Hemingway was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1953 and Nobel Prize in 1954 for this outstanding creation. Here, he intends to create a symbol for human existence through the struggles of Santiago-a Cuban fisherman as well as the protagonist in this novella. The struggles of Santiago are the manifestations of any individual's capabilities of enduring the ultimate nature. Santiago is the incarnation of extreme reality who will be symbolized here as the unbeatable warrior of nature with which, he learns to believe in himself only because, he is the source of his own greatness and determination in the heart of the sea. Like Hemingway, he feels honor and proud in facing the struggle and in trying to keep up well with the passage of time, not being defeated by death or destruction. However, the aim of this further study is to intensify the things related to the various usages of symbols or sings by the writer here.*

KEYWORDS: Symbol, Imagery, Bravery, Perseverance, Struggle, Adventure

INTRODUCTION:

To extend the related points, a clear view on the main streams of story is needed. The story begins with the fishing of an old man in a gulf stream. He is all alone in fishing who has not been able to catch a single fish even after 84 days. A boy was with him for the first 40 days but being a failure, the old man was about to lose the boy because the parents of that boy told him that the old man was a failure then and good for nothing. The boy has gone to another boat and caught three big fishes in the first week. But, the boy was becoming upset seeing the old man returning everyday with the empty boat. The boy rushed each time to the old man while returning home and helps him in restoring the boat things. There are lots of rifts attached in the sacks on the boat as if they were the signs of his tremendous failure. His old body with the folds and spots seems that he has a desert in his face-as old as the decay of a fishless desert. All these are the symbols of his bad luck. Everything of the old man has the touch of antiquity but his eyes are different. There we find the blue of the deep sea and unbeatable vision of life.

In fact, with the above facts, we get a picture of a certain society and that is about the society of a fisherman. The central character has become old struggling with the time and has reach to an end-the old age. Nevertheless, he goes for fishing in the Golf Stream in the hope of living well. In fact,

this is the phenomenon of a capitalist society how the capitalists capitalize and get separated gradually. In the same time, the love of the boy for the old man never ends and it shows that the capitalist way and greediness cannot ruin the humanitarian relationship. And for the presence of humanism, man can dream for a beautiful time.

In reality, a person's characteristic is more important than that of society, in this story because it is the struggle of the old man teaches us- Failure is not the end rather a regular struggle means a life.

In fact, this is a symbolic representation of Ernest Hemingway also because this is his last written novel and he wrote it when he was 53 years of age. To some researchers, Hemingway wrote this novel out of his total experience of life. This tendency has made this story a symbolic one relating to human life. For a while, we can reach to the final stream of life riding on the boat of the poor Santiago. (Tanvir Ahmed)

SYMBOLICAL STRUGGLE OF HEMINGWAY:

In 1899, Earnest Miller Hemingway was born in Chicago. He was very much different among all his family members. He fled from his home and started working as a day labor. He attended every war during his time with utmost sincerity. Among them, World War-I, II and the war of Spain in 1936 were remarkable. Besides being a journalist, he took the side of the war suffered people. Hemingway was a person mixed with two entities-the Hero Hemingway and a Simple Hemingway. Combining these two, he became a winner of time. He witnessed the counter-attacks of life. He married three women but left them soon. Later, he was seriously injured by the mortar shell and 237 pieces of iron were taken off from his body. Next, he fell into tow plane crash. But, nothing stopped him permanently rather, he started to travel again.

Symbolically, Hemingway struggles and struggles like the old Santiago. In fact, dream is the real asset of a person by which he goes on. Consequently, Santiago, dreams of a white lion in the white seashore of Africa not being defeated in the ocean of life. It is a very simple expression but a very strong vision of life. The lion is the symbol of the young boy-a representation of his own young life.

Manolin is also the representation of new age-a new lion that has the vigor of life. So, this vision is the source of his mental power, not to be defeated again and again but to dream newly. We know that the picture of any society is not always beautiful and lovely but ugly and cruel sometimes and it happened in the life of Santiago. Thorough short of phenomena, Santiago gets a little success in 85th day by catching a big fish after fighting for 3 days and thereafter, wins that. He has fought with the sea and the deadly Shark to save himself and his livelihood. Symbolically, the sea is the representation of capitalist society and the Shark is capitalist thing and like Santiago, we always struggle to achieve our best things to save our feeble lives. We need to learn from Santiago that one should not lose one's patience and interest in the hours of despairs while the worst time is hitting on. In leaving the struggle, there is no salvation of a life. Some thinkers like Tagor, believe that losing one's hope is a sin and the fate does not favor him well until the last time.

The main message of "Old Man and the Sea" is to keep waking up once devastated mind. Hemingway, has given us a very beautiful message through the speeches of Santiago-

‘Man is not made for defeat. ‘Man can be destroyed, but not defeated!’ (p.93)

So, a man can be annihilated but his mind should be always optimistic. Within this storm of unhappiness, man is to keep hope and live long. Indeed, every time is the bad time if a person handovers himself to the terrible time. He, who wins is a hero like Santiago who always inspires all struggling human minds to keep going on for having success.

EXPLORATION OF SYMBOLS:

A symbol is literary device that encloses more than a few layers of senses. Symbols carry great power in literature. The major point of symbols may be concealed at first sight but literally, it is the way of representing several other aspects, concepts or traits than those of visible ones in the literal transformations. Symbols can be used with any object or action that bears the meaning something more than its literal meaning. Likewise, we find some earth-shattering symbolic associations all through this story. They are really the matters of discussions here. So, let us jump right into the action:

SEA:

The Sea stands for a great function in the novel as a setting and a symbol. The major episode of the story takes place in the sea. Here, sea symbolizes the —earth and the Santiago’s loneliness in the universe. Santiago faces his ultimate challenge in nature, with no help and no recognition in the sea. According to Hemingway, man can prove himself good in isolation. It can also be symbolized both as Romantic and Feminine disposition. Clear water is comparable to the feminine clear thoughts and fresh water of the sea is the swimming place where a fantasized mind can swim in dreams. But it is the ultimate teacher to everyone and everything in nature. Its blue color also represents the dreams of Santiago.

MARLIN:

The Marlin is the giant. It was 18 feet long fish that fought with Santiago in the middle of the ocean for three days and three nights. Although Santiago gets the appearance of the marlin on his first afternoon at sea, it rejects to get nearer to the surface and as an alternative; it pulls Santiago again and again from land. Santiago praises the marlin's good looks and endurance, and believes it as a "noble" opponent, informing the fish repeatedly that even he loves it, he must kill it.-

"Fish... I'll stay with you until I am dead." (p.18)

"Fish, I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends." (p.19)

Symbolically, the marlin is presented as Santiago's praiseworthy adversary. Fighting against such an opponent carries out the best individual valor, patience, and love. Judging the Marlin as his alter-ego, he considers the marlin as male and pictures the fish is old because the marlin represents Santiago himself to overcome his own weaknesses rather than showing strength and thus, Santiago transcends those weaknesses.

The Marlin also represents power and resistance. It stands for the mirror image of Santiago who thinks Marlin's power equivalent to him and even called it brother instead of enemy-

“You are killing me, fish, the old man thought. But you have a right to. Never have I seen a greater, or more beautiful, or a calmer or more noble thing than you, brother. Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills who.” (p.33)

Santiago pulls out the same qualities that the fish owns and values to go on some points like, perseverance and excellence, significance in living, reliability to one's own particular character and ways, honorability of soul. As Santiago and the marlin keep on fighting for three days, they became intimated. But when, he caught marlin, it is ruined by sharks later and Santiago undergoes the devastation of mind too. So, like Santiago, the marlin is absolutely paralleled with Christ. (Radjaa).

THE MAST:

Besides, we need to say about the Mast. Here the mast symbolizes the cross which Jesus Christ was compelled to drag. The wish of the writer to represent Santiago as Christ like stature, mast represents the cross in the novel. At the end of 'The Old Man and the Sea', Santiago takes away his mast from his skiff and draws it from the beach taking that on his shoulders by taking rest in several places on the way to his shed. —He set up going up again. At the pinnacle, he knocked down and rested for some time keeping the mast on his shoulder. He struggled to get up but it was too hard and he sat there and looked at the road. Lastly, he put the mast down and stood up. He suffers there for three days. Later, he gets the mast up and put that on his shoulder and goes along the road.

The mast is an indisputable mention to the cross of Jesus. It is on his skiff where situates the mast. As Santiago represents Christ, the mast represents the cross. (Radjaa)

LOST HARPOON:

Harpoon is the strength of fishermen in the sea. Generally, the loss of harpoon bears the meaning of the loss of power and Santiago is in this situation amidst the sea and the strength. He beat it with his blood mashed hands throwing a good harpoon with all his power-

“He took about forty pounds,” the old man said aloud. He took my harpoon too and all the rope, he thought, and now my fish bleeds again and there will be others.” (p.38)

However the loss of harpoon means his vulnerability and this situation symbolizes the loss of power and the strength of Santiago.

SANTIAGO:

Indeed, tenacious Santiago is the icon or symbol of a hero, a warrior, a Christ, a master and some others. As a hero, he wins the fishing even after a long time. As a warrior, he sticks to his prey up to the last hope; as a Christ; he sacrifices himself in bearing pains and hardships of life and as a master, he teaches that young boy-Manolin. He has won every battle of life though, he had to

undergo with lots of miseries. To him, life was a battle and a win afterwards. He learns how to keep patience in difficult times but, he sacrifices his own life by committing suicide later in his life and this can be the message to humanity that his death is not the end but the begging of winning the time.

It is showed by the biblical influence of the story that the old man and Jesus have to suffer in many of the same ways. The old man was absolutely a fisherman of fish and Jesus a hunter of sacred of souls. (B. Parmar) Besides Santiago's patched shirt symbolizes the flag of defeating color but of hope.

SANTIAGO'S EYES:

Furthermore, though Santiago is physically an old man his eyes continue in the same color with no change. So, these eyes signify the unchanged willpower of Santiago to attain his great catching in the life.

“Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same color as the sea and were cheerful and undefeated” (p.5)

MANOLIN:

However, Manolin is the young boy, is the apprentice of Santiago. He respected Santiago as his master- *"There are many good fishermen and some great ones. But there is only you."* (p....) Sandamali denotes that Manolin symbolizes the youth of Santiago and the disciples of Jesus. Plus, he is the symbol of responsibility of the younger upon the elder. When Santiago used to look at Manolin, he would find his younger age in him-Manolin.

“I must have water here for him, the boy thought, and soap and a good towel. Why am I so thoughtless? I must get him another shirt and a jacket for the winter and some sort of shoes and another blanket.” (p.28)

In fact, Santiago is represented here as the mentor, the teacher, the guide, the Holy Father of Manolin and Manolin as the pupil, the son, and his own youth for the old man. Actually, he wanted to have mental peace and happiness by keeping that boy near to him always in his ride.

JOE DIMAGGIO:

Joe DiMaggio is the forerunner of Santiago's baseball world. When Santiago endures badly at the sea, he comforts his heart thinking about Joe Dimaggio. Truly, DiMaggio symbolizes the mental vigor and hope that the old man has for Manolin. He desires that one day; the boy will grow up and be like the great DiMaggio, not with a view to being a poor fisher like him. Though DiMaggio is not presented in the novel, he upholds it as a significant part.

OTHER FISHERMEN:

All of the other fishermen in the story were the people who used new equipment for fishing while Santiago goes to fish in a small skiff. When Santiago brings the skeleton of the large Marlin, they try to put him down by saying the following. Hemingway uses these fishermen and the proprietors

of the coffee shop for the symbolical representation of the people *who don't like appreciating others*.

"What a fish it was. There has never been such a fish. Those were two fine fishes you took yesterday too." (p.58)

The fishermen represent the persons who would think about themselves rather than others. In this way, the fishers are like the sharks wanting to take things away from Santiago while Santiago is much like the marlin.

THE LIONS:

Indeed, lion is the symbol of Youth. Santiago's opening mention of the lions is in unfolding the days of his boyhood, in sailing ships to Africa. There, he saw lions playing on the beach. To us, youth represents a blissful and cheery time when things were uncomplicated, unperturbed and peaceful. The dreams of the lions are the journeys of Santiago to his happy place with memories that are consoling and endearing.

"He no longer dreamed of storms, nor of women, nor of great occurrences, nor of great fish, nor fights, nor contests of strength, nor of his wife. He only dreamed of places now and of the lions on the beach. They played like young cats in the dusk and he loved them as he loved the boy." (p.308)

Besides, Lion also symbolizes Strength and Power of mind. When he faced a great battle to capture the marlin, he needed great power physically and mentally because Santiago needed the strength for the next day to capture the Marlin and at that time, it seems that he dreams about the lions. His initial dream of the lions occurs just before a three-day fishing trip. The second one comes in during a nap in the midst of his battle with the Marlin. And, the third one comes to his mind near the end of the story.

"I wish he'd sleep and I could sleep and dream about the lions, he thought. Why are the lions the main thing that is left?" (p.308)

In the other words, behind his dream, the lions are concerned with the idea of the afterlife or heaven. Later, Santiago dreams no longer of achieving triumph and contenting in life. In its place, he visions of a diverse place altogether, anywhere exterior of the social context for getting triumph, success or failure that he has sustained within him for so long. Santiago is religious. He prays for his comfort of life and makes a mystical connection with unseen world after earth. The sea is the heaven to him and his fight for having success is really surprising.

SHARK:

Shark is the symbol of enemy. Some researchers think that it is the symbol of capitalist persons who eat the pure flesh and suck the blood in a society and the poor people like Santiago, become their prey. However, during the voyage, he saw that the birds are failing to catch fishes. Again and again, they are failing but they did not lose patience. They were compelled to hunting because they

were hungry. In fact, *bird's failure* is foreshadowed here as the future failure of the old man, Santiago:

As he watched the bird dipped again slanting his wings for the dive and then swinging them wildly and ineffectually as he followed the flying fish. The old man could see the slight bulge in the water that the big dolphin raised as they followed the escaping fish. The dolphin were cutting through the water below the flight of the fish and would be in the water, driving at speed, when the fish dropped. It is a big school of dolphin, he thought. They are widespread and the flying fish have little chance. The bird has no chance. The flying fish are too big for him and they go too fast. (p.39)

Later, Santiago manages to kill most of Sharks around him in the sea but they tear apart the marlin's body and leave Santiago alone and devastated. Marlin is compared here as the good opponent in the battle having but the Sharks are treated here as the evil force-cruel and arch enemy. They can also be seen as the symbol of the annihilating forces of nature.

Sharks present tension and a thematic representation of death in Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. They also illustrate the tenacious character of Santiago, the old man who will not give up.

In addition, Sharks in *The Old Man and the Sea* expose the multifarious nature of life and the apprehension and reception of death. This foreshadows Santiago's character and his respect for death. During the period of isolation, Hemingway pictures Santiago with himself as a way of foreshadowing the role Sharks. The perilous situation of Santiago states-

'Unless sharks come. If sharks come, God pity him and me.' (p.45)

The above lines symbolically depict the plenty of dangers and obstacles in his future life. Unluckily for Santiago, the sharks came and Hemingway improvised it with the ensuing struggle of the old man and thereby, revealed the old man's perspectives on life and death-'*It was an hour before the first shark hit him.*'. So, Santiago keep the harpoon close enough to kill that enormous fish with bold and resolute heart. It was a three day fight back to land the fish that brings about Santiago's emotional and physical spirit. So, in this story, the Shark fish is meant to symbolize the struggle of life and the dawdling process of a person near to death. It is the messenger of death in this story. (Joe Ricker)

CRUCIFIXION IMAGERY:

Crucifixion Imagery "In order to imply the insight of the old man's sacrifice and the glory, Hemingway decisively likens Santiago to Christ. In line with Christian mysticism, Christ, sacrifices his life for the greater glory of mankind. Crucifixion imagery is the most eye-catching approach in which, Hemingway generates the symbolic parallel between Santiago and Christ. When the palms of Santiago are first cut by his fishing line, the bookworms cannot help thinking of Christ suffering and his stigmata. Soon after, during the arrival of the Sharks, Hemingway represents the old man as a crucified martyr and says that he creates a sound like Christ while having his nails embedded through his hands. (John Frye)

CONCLUSION:

Now, it is apparent that the symbols of this novella and the several expositions that are stranded for the symbols are really significant because each of them represents the nature in earth along with the representations of human struggles. In 'The Old Man and The Sea', Hemingway depicts a picture of struggle of an old man to capture the greatest panorama of his own life and to defend his accomplishments from the man-like predators who came to annihilate it. It is really important to state that the author has used numerous symbols in the text to signify his hero-Santiago, as a man who does not accept the defeat in a life. Santiago uncovers the place of the human kinds within the paths of nature. Consequently, Hemingway overlords the novel with symbols in order to shape the hero as a prolific one who is bothered by the nature but not defeated. Indeed, these are the messages towards the humanity that nature is the manifestation of human kind and it is the best teacher for all forever. Here, Hemingway's usages symbols also picture the nineteenth and twentieth century struggles of individualism and also regarding human minds and their surroundings.

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