

## Chapter 1

### Santiago and His Struggle in *The Old Man and the Sea*

#### Background of the Study

Santiago, the Hemingway Hero with high spirit and great endurance presents exemplary Heroism in *The Old Man and the Sea*. In spite of unexpected failure, discouraging situations, terrible suffering and unending struggle against natural forces; he does not give up his hope and efforts, but proceeds to further actions to achieve success through his hard work, patience and optimism. Every attempt he made deserves praise. Moreover, he has been presented as a man capable to accept any type of struggle and challenge for the fulfillment of his dream. Santiago appears as a character who can undergo remarkable transformations and enjoys renewed life even in failure. Except some transient emotional cracks, this mythical hero presents stoic determination in any situation with elevated spirit. This study is an attempt to investigate the protagonist character, Santiago, his patience, struggle, failure and his success, and what he feels when he finds himself in these different situations. Moreover, it also tries to find out what eternal success really is. The main argument of this research project is that Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* in its form and the protagonist's, high spirit in all circumstances of life displays elevated level of sublimity.

In the process of writing this thesis, available literatures were extensively reviewed. Different critics are found to have reviewed and critiqued the novel in different perspectives but no critic has analyzed the work focusing on the sublimity in its form and its protagonist's deeds. This is the point of departure found in literature review, and this issue is the problematic of the study.

The novel, regarding its form, has elevated style in the description of

landscape, sea and different activities of the protagonist. The author of the novel has tried to reach the inner psyche of the protagonist to make the readers feel what the protagonist really experiences and feels at different situations in life. He also presents the sublime perception of the protagonist at even generally accepted disgraceful aspects of life like taunting from prosperous fishermen and calling him 'salao' referring to worst form of being unlucky. Such a dealing of the hero leads him to be more determined in bringing his dreams into reality.

In the process of struggle, when he fails, he realizes his short-comings and is oxygenated to struggle further. It is clear that the hero feels a type of elevation of emotion even when he is struck by some misfortunes, of his life, let alone the times with his good luck. Such a quality of the protagonist has remained unexplored till the present time. Therefore, this study is focused on how Hemingway's hero Santiago deserves to be called a man with high spirit.

The present study especially tries to answer the queries how the protagonist reacts to his failure and victory; what it is that encourages him to accept every challenge of life and why he does not loose his heart even in very difficult situation. Such questions pave ways to the objectives to explore Santiago's reaction to his victory, failure and other adversities of life; to describe his optimism for the future that recharges him to face every challenge, and to delineate his patience and determination to deal with even very difficult situations. Likewise the research also attempts to describe serendipities and sources that enable him to accept every challenge of life with high spirit, and to construe the causes behind his constant determination with renewed life.

Summing-up all, the focal point of this study is to expose how the hero finds sublimity in his struggle, success and even in failure. Moreover, the work itself also

presents sublimity in its composition, which will be discussed along with hero's sublimity. This study goes ahead with the hypothesis that Santiago in *The Old Man and the Sea* does not only rejoice in his success but also has ability to endure hardship and failure with high spirit for ultimate success.

Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* has been interpreted through various angles by different critics, but the work has not been analyzed focusing on sublimity in its form and its hero's deeds. Therefore, the study is significant. Moreover, after the completion of the study, it will open new horizon for the aspiring researchers.

This study aims at analyzing the novel by using sublimity as a theoretical tool to diagnose the emotional state of Hemingway hero, in failure, struggle and success. Therefore application of theoretical insights of Longinus, Burke, Addison, Baillie and Kant, with respect to sublimity is the major tool of the study. *The Old Man and the Sea* is the primary source of data. Resources like critical writing, related articles in magazines, journals and newspapers will be the secondary sources of data. Supervisor's suggestions will be applied extensively. Moreover, the novel has been adopted in a film. This high spirit of Hemingway's hero and his deeds can be better exhibited through visual images. Filmic images provide the visual insight and support the theory of sublimity applied in the novel. It gives the realistic vision that Hemingway has tried to provide through the book. Therefore, pictures from the film related to the concerned issues will also be taken as the references to prove the claim.

First published in 1952, *The Old Man and the Sea* has become the best seller across the world. The book is small in volume, but sublime in content. Hemingway allows his readers to notice the specific cultural context in which the happenings of the plot take place in the narrative. There is symbolic significance, literal and specific topical references, religious or mythical allusions, natural rarity, historical specificity,

archetypal character, showing human struggle for existence.

Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899-1961) is generally acknowledged to be one of the most significant writers of the twentieth-century American literature. He was noted both for the intense masculinity of his writing, his adventures and widely publicized life. His succinct and lucid prose style exerted a powerful influence on American and British fiction. War, bullfighting, and fishing are used symbolically in his work to represent honor, dignity, and primitivism which are the prominent themes of his famous short stories and novels like *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), *For whom the Bell Tolls* (1941), and *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952).

*The Old Man and the Sea* was his last major fiction which was published in his lifetime. It was written in 1951 in Cuba and published in 1952. This short heroic novel was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1953 and also cited by the Nobel Committee as contributing towards the awarding of the Nobel Prize in literature to Hemingway in 1954. It was written while he was on a literary and personal siesta on the island of Cuba. The story, as is often seen in literary epochs, appears to be an extremely simple story at first glance, but laden with deeper sense of sublimity.

Santiago is an old man, who is regarded incapable of fishing in the Cuban fishing community and is often criticized. He has gone for 84 days without catching a fish, hence his apprentice, a young boy named Manolin, is forced to leave his company on board to work for more prosperous boat. Santiago one day sets out into the open sea and desperately goes a little further out than he normally would to catch a fish. At noon, a big marlin takes hold of one of the lines, but the fish turns out to be far too big for him to handle.

Hemingway pays great attention to the skill and dexterity that Santiago uses in coping with the fish. Santiago lets the fish have enough line, so that it won't break his

pole; but his boat is dragged out to the sea for three days. Finally, the fish, an enormous marlin grows tired; and Santiago kills it. Even this victory does not end Santiago's journey; he is still far out in the sea. Santiago drags the marlin to the side of the boat. The streams of blood from the dead fish attract sharks attacking the dead marlin.

Santiago does his best to drive the sharks away, but his efforts are not enough to prevent them from eating the flesh off the marlin, and the fish is left with only the bones for Santiago at last. Santiago gets back to shore, weary and tired, with nothing to show for his pains but the skeletal remains of a large marlin. Even the bare remains of the fish, and the experience with it has changed him, and also altered the attitude of others to him. Manolin, impressed by Santiago, goes to wake him in the morning after his return and suggests that they will once more fish together.

The popular reception of the novel comes from its part-parable, part-eulogy style--recollecting a by-gone age in this spiritual quest for discovery. Touching and powerful in turns, the story is told in Hemingway's simple, brittle style. The book reaches out to a very human need--for stability and certainty. In 1958, it was first adapted into a film under the direction of John Sturges. Many other film adaptations were released. The current research work also deals with a TV film of one hour and thirty two minutes made in 1990 under the direction of Jud Taylor.

### **A Look into the Past Observations**

*The Old Man and the Sea* served to reinvigorate Hemingway's literary reputation and prompted reexaminations of his entire body of works. The novel was initially received with much popularity; it restored many readers' confidence in Hemingway's capability as an author. First featured in *Life* magazine on September 1, 1952, this crisp and lyrical novella played a crucial role in the development of

Hemingway's critical reputation. Its publisher, Scribner, on an early dust jacket, called the novel a "new classic". According to Carlos Baker, "*Life* sold 5,318,650 copies within forty-eight hours. Advance sales on the regular American edition ran to 50,000 and settled thereafter into a brisk weekly sale of 3,000" (11). Sixty-two years after its release, it still remains a widely read book.

A lot of critics have examined it from various perspectives. Joseph Waldmeir, a prominent critic, has wholly considered the Christian imagery of the novel. Perhaps the most memorable claim therein is Waldmeir's answer to the question-What is the book's message?

The answer assumes a third level on which *The Old Man and the Sea* must be read-as a sort of allegorical commentary on all his previous work, by means of which it may be established that the religious overtones of *The Old Man and the Sea* are not peculiar to that book among Hemingway's works, and that Hemingway has finally taken the decisive step in elevation what might be called his philosophy of Manhood to the level of a religion. (120)

Waldmeir points out Hemingway's digression from earlier writings towards religion. He further claims the elevated form of the novel exhibiting manhood to the level of a religion. He gives evidence through Hemingway's blatant reference to the crucifixion following Santiago's sighting of the sharks that reacts: "Ay", he said aloud. There is no translation for this word and perhaps it is just a noise such as a man might make, involuntarily, feeling the nail go through his hands and into the wood (107). Thus, Santiago is compared with Christ undergoing the explicit struggle for the sake of good or manhood.

One of the most outspoken critics of *The Old Man and the Sea* is Robert P.

Weeks. His 1962 piece *Fakery in The Old Man and the Sea* presents his claim that the novel is a weak and unexpected divergence from the typical, realistic Hemingway (referring to the rest of Hemingway's body of work as "earlier glories") (19). In juxtaposing this novel against Hemingway's previous works, Weeks contends:

The difference, however, in the effectiveness with which Hemingway employs this characteristic device in his best work and in *The Old Man and the Sea* is illuminating. The work of fiction in which Hemingway devoted the most attention to natural objects, *The Old Man and the Sea*, is pieced out with an extraordinary quantity of fakery, extraordinary because one would expect to find no inexactness, no romanticizing of natural objects in a writer who loathed W.H. Hudson, could not read Thoreau, deplored Melville's rhetoric in *Moby Dick*, and who was himself criticized by other writers, notably Faulkner, for his devotion to the facts and his unwillingness to 'invent'. (188)

Here, Weeks also criticizes Hemingway's divergence from earlier writings. He remarks that though Hemingway pays more attention to natural objects, he has not achieved romanticizing of the natural objects rather it seems loaded with fakery. He has become unrealistic.

William Faulkner, the contemporary of Hemingway and the famous writer has also criticized in Lee University's literary journal, *Shenandoah*, commending the novel:

His best time may show it to be the best single piece of any of us, I mean his and my contemporaries. This time, he discovered God, a Creator. Until now, his men and women had made themselves, shaped themselves out of their own clay; their victories and defeats were at the

hands of each other, just to prove to themselves or another how tough they could be. But this time, he wrote about pity: about something somewhere that made them all: the old who had to catch the fish that had to be caught and then lost, the sharks which had to rob the old man of his fish; made them all and loved them all and pitied them all. It's all right. Praise God that whatever made and loves and pities Hemingway and me kept him from touching it any further. (95)

In this Faulkner finds Hemingway discovering God and praises his characters and Santiago's hard struggle.

The critics, Iyengar and Nandakumar have also interpreted *The Old Man and the Sea* in a slightly different way and remark, "Hemingway sees man poised precariously in more or less alien background" (186). It focuses on heroic act of Santiago which he had undergone for his existence.

Though novel is a fiction greatly created by imagination, Hemingway has tried his best to give a real picture of human condition. Universality in matter of the decline of man's strength with old age, ups and downs of life, desire to be the best among fellow beings can be seen in this novel. The same universality and reality is considered by Antoine Serpico in a review of *The Old Man and the Sea*. He underscores:

Hemingway uses each one of his speculated infinite powers to conjure up an image of a man like all men, beaten up and worked down through the vast corridors of his life, looking for that one last meaningful touch of beauty to make it all seem sublime. And instead of giving him his one last jump for joy, he takes it all away from him. But he indeed does finally achieve it all. To tell us all, is the boy, who



watches the story unfold from the wings and in the end turns out to be what could be the best possible version of his character, a real boy.

(110)

Serpico comments that Hemingway has created a real man and a real boy, Santiago and Manolin respectively to give a sense of universality. Manolin takes up the footsteps of Hemingway hero, and makes the hero feel that he has not been defeated, and this consolation is what his final achievement.

So far realism is concerned, Torben Grodal underscores that the sensation of realism can be described in terms of the explicit or tacit feelings through which we evaluate the reality status of our perceptions, cognitions and actions, certain types of which are based on the idea of the audiovisual screen as a transparent window on the real world. He further claims:

The core element in the sense of something being real is that it is a pragmatic feeling evolved to support actions in a physical world by evaluating their feasibility and to distinguish information coming from inside body and brain from information coming from the exterior world. The development of sophisticated mental activities and the evolution of external media of representation have added further complexity to the cognitive emotional response that underlie our evaluations of reality status. (251)

Grodal's claim and study clarifies the importance of external media of representation, audio-visual for our cognitive emotional response and evaluate the reality status.

### **Film Adaptation of the Fiction**

The book, *The Old Man and the Sea*, has been adapted into a film, and the novel can be better understood if our reading is accompanied by watching its movie

adaptation. The camera better conveys us not only the meanings but also feelings of the characters through audio-visual channels. Moreover, the present study especially focuses on the features of sublimity found in the book, and sublimity is closely related to the feelings of the readers. Until there is exact feeling in the readers as expected by the given expression, there is no understanding. To instill such feelings into the readers, image and sound play especial role and they are the major aspects of film. Therefore, to understand how *The Old Man and the Sea* presents sublimity, any reader should watch its film adaptation. To understand the real meaning of scenes and different events in the film, the viewers should be able to learn some major elements of cinematography. To ease the readers for grasping the subject matter of the film better, this dissertation presents some of the main features of cinematography and the film adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea* in the following few paragraphs.

A film is a form of motion picture projected on the screen based on some themes or circumstances. Films are broadly classified into two categories: documentary and feature films. A film could provide more realistic sensation than a novel through realistic acting and a realistic visual picture. In films, sometimes the fantasy creatures are made to look realistic by according to the movement schemas that viewers have developed on the basis of experience.

Realism and *mise-en-scene* are close terms. The *mise-en-scene*, a French term roughly translated as "what is put into the scene" (put before the camera), refers to all those properties of a cinematic image that exist independently of camera position, camera movement, and editing. It includes lighting, costumes, sets, the quality of the acting, and other shapes and characters in the scene. And that realism of a place is very malleable in respect to the setting of the film, its ethnic and other features. The *mise-en-scene* is a kind of illusion of realism that makes us believe that the images are

of an everyday world that is simply “there”- one we know and are familiar with.

The T.V. film version of *The Old Man and the Sea* (1990), directed by Jud Taylor, and produced by William F. Storke and Robert E. Fuisz in association with Yorkshire Television is adopted by Roger O. Hirson from the novel by Ernest Hemingway. This motion picture was made entirely on the location of British Virginia Islands. This film exhibits many realistic details in the *mise-en-scene* that relate to the actions of Anthony Quinn as old Santiago, the major character. His ragged clothing and his sail patched with four sacks are visualized just as described in the book. The setting of the Cuban land at the seashore, small wooded houses, sea (Gulf Stream) in the film, reflect more realistic view than the novel. The characterization of Anthony Quinn as the old Santiago, Francesco Quinn as the young Santiago, Alexis Cruz as the boy, Manolin and the struggle of Santiago at sea and bay are picturized true to what Hemingway had tried through the novel.

The universal units of film composition- the long shot, medium shot and close-up bring spatial connections. Visual recognition between shots is one strategy of the continuity style. Most often the relationship between shots is one of the implications or inferences.



Fig. 1.1 Wide shot



Fig.1.2 Close shot

For example, we see a wide shot of Santiago at sea pulling his line with the fish, Marlin. This is followed by a cut to an extreme close-up of his hand. Even if the hand is quite small to attract our attention in the wide shot, we expect that it is connected to the previous shot since it makes logical sense. Renowned author on visualization, Steven D. Katz, in *Film Directing Shot by Shot*, asserts: “Narrative logic and the visual connection between shots cooperate to create sense of continuous space. This pair of ideas - cause and effect and spatial recognition - provide the organizational basis of the continuity style to the film” (121). Narration and visual connection between different shots bring coherence in the idea of the audiences is what Katz tries to explain. The above pictures taken from the film adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea* show the similar connection between extensive struggle of Santiago in the wider scene and close-up shot.

The close-up is used to bring us into closer contact with the action. Jean-Luc Godard once said that the most natural cut is the cut on the look. The powerful suggestiveness of this gesture helps explain film’s affair with winks, glances, stares, tears, squints, glares and the whole range of language that the eyes command. The eyes are perhaps the most expressive feature of the human face, communicating silently. Not only can the close-up reveal the intimate, it can make us feel as if we are intruding on moments of privacy or sharing a moment of vulnerability – as if the person on the screen has opened himself up to us. At the ending of the film, Santiago speaks to Manolin saying he missed him out in the sea. The close-up shot of Santiago’s eyes filled with tears make us feel emotionally involved with the event.

Movies are meant for more fun, entertainment and commercialization than novels. So, contrary to the novel, there are some additional new elements and character. The filmmakers also employ flashbacks- to Santiago’s marriage, to his

early fishing days and to one Herculean arm- wrestling contest. Despite these contraries, the film maintains the heroism and succinctness of the novella. Rick Kogan, a TV/radio critic, criticizes in his article “Anthony Quinn Comfortably Carries NBC’S *Old Man*”:

Few actors could make us believe-not to mention to be moved by-a line such as this, spoken to a fish: “I love and respect you very much, but as God is my witness before this day is through, I will kill you.” And this: “I have taken this fish, which was my brother.”

The TV dialogue pays homage to Hemingway’s close-cropped style. Otherwise, the movie takes considerable liberties. The most obvious is the introduction of new characters. (Hemingway 52)

Every film is a commentary on contemporary society. Correspondingly, the subject matter of *The Old Man and the Sea* is integrated with failure, destruction and struggle for success.

The film is not merely the collection of characters, themes, settings or plots but a by-product of people’s quest for dignity. Renowned author on cinematography, Timothy Corrigan, in *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, affirms:

Films are not just about a story, a character, a place, or a way of life; they are also what John Berger has called: a way of seeing: these elements in our lives. Any film at any point in history might describe a family, a war, or the conflict between races but the ways these are shown and the reason they are shown in a particular way can vary gently. (21)

Corrigan clarifies that films not only describe but provide the opportunities to see. This quality of displaying things and activities is what is special with the film. Any

way the films can provide us with good sources of reading literature.

### **Organization of the Study**

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is the introduction to the study. This chapter deals with Hemingway, his hero Santiago's struggle in both book and film form. Besides the background information of the study, the first chapter also includes available literature review. The organization of the study has also been incorporated in this chapter. The second chapter forms the main body of the study. It incorporates two major areas of the study: theoretical tool and textual analysis. Sublimity has been taken as the tool of analysis. While discussing sublimity, reference, will be drawn from Longinus, Addison, Baillie, Burke, and Kant. While dealing with the textual analysis, examples will be taken from the text to explicate the instances of sublimity in the character of the hero and in the form of the book. The discussion also examines the sublimity as evidenced by the protagonist in the course of fishing for his existence at different moments. The second chapter delineates sublimity as the main theory expounded in *The Old Man and the Sea*. The last chapter concludes Hemingway hero Santiago as the champion hero infusing sublime sense in the future generation.

## Chapter 2

### **Santiago and *The Old Man and the Sea*: The Embodiment of Sublimity**

Often labeled as 'indescribable' the sublime is a term that has been debated for centuries amongst writers, artists, philosophers and theorists. Usually related to ideas of the great, the awe-inspiring and the overpowering, the sublime has become a complex yet crucial concept in many disciplines.

The word sublime is derived from the Latin *sublimis*, a combination of sub (up to) and *limen* (lintel, literally the top piece of a door), it is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "Set or raised aloft, high up" (Wood, 72). The word has many applications. A building or a mountain may be sublime, like a thought, a heroic deed, or a mode of expression. But the definition of the sublime is not restricted to value judgments; it also describes a state of mind the cavernous interior of St. Paul's Cathedral instills a sense of awe; King Lear's dying words fill the audience with lofty emotion; the idea of infinity is beyond words.

The sublime is especially related to aesthetics, describing sensory mediation with an emotional and cognitive impact on the observers. When the sublime is used in relation with some natural objects or art, it refers to the quality affecting human mind with its, grandeur and power, that inspire awe, reverence and lofty emotions towards that object.

In broad terms, whenever experience slips out of conventional understanding, whenever the power of an object or event is such that words fail, and points of comparison disappear, then we resort to the feeling of the sublime. As such, the sublime marks the limits of reason and expression together with a sense of what might lie beyond these limits; this may well explain its association with the transcendent, conceived by the theologian John Milbank "as the absolutely unknowable void, upon

whose brink we finite beings must dizzily hover” (211).

Some scholars connect sublimity to religious ideology. Philip Shaw, for example, tries to establish relationship between the sublime and religion:

Sublimity, then, refers to the moment when the ability to apprehend, to know, and to express a thought or sensation is defeated. Yet through this very defeat, the mind gets a feeling for that which lies beyond thought and language.... the concept of the sublime lends itself well to the idea of the transcendent, whether encountered in the Hebrew Bible or in the politics of Romanticism. Yet such instinctive feeling for the transcendental is rare these days. As a result of secularism, together with increasing global awareness and media sophistication, we seem less inclined to regard the breakdown of reason and expression as indicators of a higher or spiritual realm. (3)

Shaw’s claim is that mental or physical powers are overcome by the sublime, and in such situation, sublime gets connected to the transcendent through religion.

The notion of the sublime in association with the transcendent is reflected in the narration and monologue presented in *The Old Man and the Sea*:

He was comfortable but suffering, although he did not admit the suffering at all. ‘I am not religious,’ he said. ‘But I will say ten Our Fathers and ten Hail Marys that I should catch this fish, and I promise to make a pilgrimage to the Virgin de Cobre if I catch him. That is a promise.’ He commenced to say his prayers mechanically. Sometimes he would be so tired that he could not remember the prayer and then he would say them fast so that they would come automatically. Hail Marys are easier to say than Our Fathers, he thought.



‘Hail Mary full of Grace the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.’  
 Then he added, ‘Blessed Virgin, pray for the death of this fish, Wonderful though he is.’ (63)

Thus, Hemingway through the old man’s struggle is trying to focus on the religious transcendent. He moreover points on the sublime effect that man can achieve if he is guided by religious faith. The old man, in spite of his acknowledgement that he is not religious, vows to make a pilgrimage and says the prayers if he succeeds to kill the fish, the biggest catch of his life. This is how one can elevate oneself with strength. But like Shaw as he remarks that such transcendental is rare these days, the critic Thomas Weiskel also claims, “Even as the sublime continues to bear on our imaginative life, we no longer share in the sacred or mystical aspects of the sublime, which went unquestioned by previous generations” (36).

M. H. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* makes the sublime much clearer. He writes:

The concept was introduced into the criticism of literature and art by a Greek treatise *Peri hupsous* (‘On the sublime’), attributed in the manuscript to Longinus and probably written in the first century A.D. As defined by Longinus, the sublime is a quality that can occur in any type of discourse, whether poetry or prose. Whereas the effect of rhetoric on the hearer or reader of a discourse is persuasion, the effect of the sublime is ‘transport’ (ekstasis)-it is that quality of a passage which ‘shatters the hearer’s composure,’: exercises irresistible ‘domination’ over him, and ‘scatters the subjects like a bolt of

lightning.’ (316)

Here Abrams focuses on the transport quality of sublime. Such quality persuades the hearer or reader to have influencing effects over him.

It is interesting to think about the sources of sublime. Different philosophers may have had different views. Abrams mentions the source of sublime as:

The source of the sublime lies in the capabilities of the speaker or writer. Three of these- the use of figurative language, nobility of expression, and elevated composition- are matters of art that can be acquired by practice; but two other, and more important, capabilities, are largely innate: ‘loftiness of thought’ and ‘strong and inspired passion.’ The ability to achieve sublimity is in itself enough to prove the transcendent genius of a writer, and expresses the nobility of the writer’s character: ‘sublimity is the ring of greatness in the soul.’(316)

Though the figurative language is not abundant in *The Old Man and the Sea*, we see nobility of expression and elevated composition. Such loftiness and genius of Hemmingway can also be sensed in the novel. His description of the old man’s struggle is lofty. He applies simple composition but deep meaning. In the process of hooking the fish, Santiago remarks, “Fish, he said softly, aloud, ‘I’ll stay with you until I am dead” (50). Here lies the genius in the old man’s struggle and vow to keep continuing to tolerate the pain till the fish dies.

This is not the only instance of stylistic way of lofty expression, the physical features of the old man as Manolin notices are described in equally simple and impressive way:

When the boy came back the old man was asleep in the chair and the sun was down. The boy took the old army blanket off the bed and

spread it over the back of the chair and over the old man's shoulders. They were strange shoulders, still powerful although very old, and the neck was still strong too and the creases did not show so much when the old man was asleep and his head fallen forward. His shirt had been patched so many times that it was like the sail and the patches were faded to many different shades by the sun. The old man's head was very old though and with his eyes closed there was no life in his face.

(15)

Though the language is simple, the description is elevated in its content. The adjectives 'old' is qualified with the degree adverb 'very', which gives the impression to the readers that he was too old to do the job as described in the novel. The phrase 'very old' has been juxtaposed with the adjective 'powerful', and this type of binary opposition creates a type of strong emotion to the readers. Likewise, the miserable condition of the Old Man in the Sea is mirrored through the comparative description of his shirt with the sail "...patched so many times .... and the patches were faded to many different shades by the sun" (15).

The description of the old man's reminiscences of the past is equally starring, "He no longer dreamed of storms, or of women, or of great occurrences, or 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" (22). The old man's memory transcends beyond his present condition and goes back to the past but he does not have nostalgia about them. By the use of successive negative phrases with 'nor', the writer strongly focuses on how important role the childhood plays in a man's life. The use of language, though simple, conveys grave meaning and this gravity reflects the sublimity in language use.

### **Features of Longinus' Theory of Sublimity in *The Old Man and the Sea***

Longinus is often credited with the concept of the sublime in literature. He remarks, although "Nature is on the whole a law unto herself in matters of emotion and elevation; she is not a random force and does not work altogether without method" (2). Shaw adds something more to the idea of Longinus connecting the process of nature to the technical use of language for the sublime. That is why Shaw focuses on such stylistic features and states, "... feelings, in other words, may arise in nature, but art is required to give them shape and coherence" (14). So a number of devices may be employed to sublime effect that includes hyperbole, periphrasis, comparisons, similes and metaphor.

Longinus, though, brings the references of natural process and its contribution to highlight sublimity; he still focuses on the verbal expression that can echo a noble mind and emotion. This claim is restated by Shaw:

Longinus does not favor a return to aesthetic primitivism. His genius is not the wild-eyed; raving bard of romantic imaginings, but a cultivated, noble and urbane poet, aware of the distinction between the exhibition of raw, untutored feelings and the measured expression of weighty thoughts. Sublimity is thus 'the echo of a noble mind' and in many instances occurs 'apart from emotion' or even 'verbal expression'. In Longinus' view 'a mere idea' can 'sometimes be admired for its nobility'.

Longinus' interest in the sublimity of the noble mind extends, even to the concealment of its slavish dependence on the materiality of words. "A figure", he argues, 'is generally thought to be best when the fact it is a figure is concealed'. (15)

It could be best noted in Hemingway's old man. The old man conceals his skills, strength, and undefeatable spirit. He never complains about the humility and disgrace he attained. Hemingway remarks about Santiago: "He was too simple to wonder when he had attained humility. But he knew he had attained it and he knew it was not disgraceful and it carried no loss of true pride" (9). Santiago does not even wonder when he attains humility. He accepts the challenges with courtesy in spite of his old age. For example, a fisherman challenges Santiago for arm wrestling, which he later accepts it without hesitation. A scene from the film related to the arm wrestling seems pertinent here:



Fig.1.3 A fisherman challenging Santiago



Fig. 1.4 Santiago ready for arm wrestling

Santiago's characteristics of being simple, skillful, determined to exist and struggle in deeds not in words led him to bring aboard the big marlin, and this is the sublime we find in him.

As the echo of a noble mind, the sublime elevates man above the tawdry concern with wealth and status. However, as Longinus' text proceeds, something strange begins to happen. He goes on in his, *Longinus' on Sublimity*: "Wealth is at its most dangerous when its power is 'measureless'. The parity between this notion of wealth and the nature of the sublime is, however, merely formal. For, unlike the sublime, the grandeur of wealth is superficial and does not work to elevate the soul

but rather to wither and ruin it” (18). The implication of Longinus’ observation is, therefore, that the true sublime is on the side of morality.

Hemingway, in his novella does however, insist the morality and the noble mind of his hero, the old man. When the boy Manolin says, ‘That’s easy. I can always borrow two dollars and a half’, the old man Santiago suggests, ‘I think perhaps I can too. But I try not to borrow. First you borrow. Then you beg’ (14). This highlights his nobility towards life. In spite of his poverty, he seems content. He is also seen above the worldly prestige and status, when Hemingway in the novella tells us about his hero: “Many of the fishermen made fun of the old man and he was not angry. Others, of the older fishermen, looked at him and were sad” (7). This also conveys the sublime of Santiago above the worldly concerns like wealth and status. Again these descriptions of Hemingway about the old man reflect his ability of overcoming the natural instincts like anger and humility. His soul is raised high by his morality.

### **Features of Addison’s Theory of Sublimity in *The Old Man and the Sea***

We also find the descriptive excellence in Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea* which is the source for the sublime according to the eighteenth-century thinkers like Joseph Addison. They believed Longinus had failed to achieve this pre-eminent concern in the writings of the period. Joseph Addison, for example, in an essay taken from a series known collectively as “The Pleasure of the Imagination,” published in the *Spectator* magazine (between 21 June and 3 July 1712) offers the following account connecting sublimity with nature:

Such are the Prospects of an open Champion Country, a vast uncultivated Desert, of huge Heaps of Mountains, high Rocks and Precipices, or a wide Expanse of Waters, where we are not struck with the Novelty or Beauty of the Sight, but with that rude kind of

Magnificence which appears in many of these stupendous Works of Nature. Our Imagination loves to be filled with an Object, or to grasp at anything that is too big for its Capacity. We are flung into a pleasing Astonishment at such unbounded Views, and feel a delightful Stillness and Amazement in the Soul at the Apprehension of them. (qtd. in Shaw 35)

Not content with describing the effects of these sights on the imagination, Addison goes on to enquire into its origins. He maintains that the underlying cause of greatness rests on the side of the naturally magnificent object.

In a distinction derived from the empiricist philosopher John Locke, Addison insists that the ‘Primary Pleasures of the Imagination’ are stimulated by the ‘Sight’ of such objects, and that the ‘Secondary Pleasures of the Imagination ...flow from the Ideas of visible Objects’ (qtd. in Shaw 36). On the strength of this distinction, Marjorie Hope Nicolson argues that ‘Rhetorical ideas’ were ‘secondary’ in Addison’s scheme and that they had a great dependence upon primary ideas coming to man direct from Nature (310).

Our ideas of the sublime are thus rooted in sense perceptions; what we conceive is inspired by what we see. Still this does not explain why human beings should be driven to appreciate the ‘greatness’ of nature over its more beautiful aspects. Influenced, like Dennis, by the Neoplatonic idea of nature-as-system, Addison regards a beautiful prospect as an object of delight. Faced with beauty, the soul is content merely to delight in what it conceives; it is greatness that prompts the soul to investigate the particular causes of delight.

There are certain sublime phenomena, however, for example storms, earthquakes, and other disasters, that are subject to what Addison, in *Spectator* 416,

calls ‘Descriptions’ (qtd. in Shaw 37). Indeed, Addison goes on to imply in 418 that their greatness is a consequence not of any inherent quality but of an act of reflection. For Addison, the nature of this particular mode of greatness “does not arise from the Description of what is Terrible, as from the Reflection we make on ourselves at the time of reading it” (qtd. in Shaw 37).

Reflection can transform our perception of even the most hideous objects.

Addison continues:

When we look on such hideous Objects, we are not a little pleased to think we are in no Danger of them. We consider them at the same time, as Dreadful and Harmless; so that the more frightful Appearance they make, the greater is the Pleasure we receive from the Sense of our own Safety. (qtd. in Shaw 37)

Here, Addison comes to recognize the importance of rhetoric of ‘Description’ and the reflection of it which transforms our perception. He also inadvertently suggests an alternative to his earlier naturalistic account of the sublime. Here, as Ashfield and de Bolla suggest, it is rhetoric that allows the mind to compare “the ideas that arise from words, with the ideas that arise from the objects themselves” (67). Thus, art is required, in other words, to convert physical threat into pleasure. To this pleasure, Hope Nicholson calls, “pleasing astonishment” (306) as it transforms frightful appearance also into a pleasing surprise.

At this stage it is important to grasp that for Dennis, Addison, and other early eighteenth-century theorists, the sublime emerges at the point where the grand or terrifying object is converted into an idea. As the critics Ashfield and de Bolla argue, the overwhelming proximity of the mountain, the earthquake, or the monster becomes ideal and thus sublime as a result of the transformational power of language or



'description'. Words allow us to make comparisons between things, to make conceptions, to perceive objects as ideas and thus to regard the threatening proximity of things from a position of safety. The natural sublime, as conceived by Dennis and Addison, therefore offers ironic testimony to the triumph of the rational over the real.

So as applying the theory of Addison in this novella, we could see sublimity in the terrific size and beauty of the Marlin hooked by the old man. Hemmingway beautifully describes the nature, and the process in which the Marlin bulged out of the water and re-entered into the ocean. He also shows the way of the old man's hooking the fish to create the painful impression onto the readers. In the novel, the appearance of the Marlin before the old man is described in the following way:

The line rose slowly and steadily and then the surface of the ocean bulged ahead of the boat and the fish came out. He came out unendingly and water poured from his sides. He was bright in the sun and his head and back were dark purple and in the sun the stripes on his sides showed wide and a light lavender. His sword was as long as a base-ball bat and tapered like a rapier and he rose his full length from the water and then re-entered it, smoothly, like a diver and the old man saw the great scythe-blade of his tail go under the line commenced to race out. (60-61)

The description of the fish and its movements and other activities give the sense that the beholder has been filled with awe and pleasure. It exemplifies the decorative language used by Hemmingway in order to move the readers towards sensation of extreme size and beauty of the Marlin. It is the description which transforms the natural concept into a terrific pleasing experience. The following picture borrowed from the film magnifies the degree of the sublime.



Figure 1.5 Terribly beautiful leap of the Marlin

Also the sublime as the notion of the transformational power of language is captured by Hemmingway in the novella as he denotes the oppositional power, the big marline not as the enemy of the old man but as “friend” (74) or “brother” (92).

#### **Features of Baillie’s Theory of Sublimity in *The Old Man and the Sea***

Another eighteenth century influential theorists supportive to Addison in this idea of sublime is John Baillie. Somehow for Baillie also, in the discourse of the sublime, language works insidiously to transgress the boundaries between things, allowing properties to be transferred from one object to another so that anything even a dunghill may be raised to a point of magnificence. He takes up this point in his *An Essay on the Sublime*.

After beginning with the claim that a sublime is the “Disposition of Mind”, which is “created by grand Objects, the *Sublime in Nature*” (8), Baillie nevertheless admits that some “Objects ... (that) are a bit great and immense, if long connected with such, will often produce an Exaltedness of Mind” (35). He admits that this connection is the constructive nature of the sublime. Baillie writes:

*Connection* is a powerful Force .... For by daily Experience we know,

when certain *Pleasure* has been raised in the *Mind* by certain *Objects*, from an *Association* of this kind, the very same *Objects* themselves which first occasion'd them are not so much painted in the *Imagination*; and it is from this source that the Beauty and Delight of *Metaphor* flows. (35)

It is a metaphor that enables us to transform objects into idea. It is the idea that transforms ugliness into beauty. Baillie's view, "Just as the lover conceives beauty even in the imperfections of his Mistress, in a Cast of the Eye, a Lisp, or any other little Blemish, so the gravest Philosophers also owe great Part of their Pleasure to this Stealing of Beauty from one Object to deck and adorn another" (34–35) is appropriately applicable here. Following this admission, Baillie is drawn to the reluctant conclusion that certain objects become sublime as a result of association, or connection.

Finally, what Baillie adds to this system is the idea that sublimity no longer resides in the object alone, or in the mind of the beholder alone, but in the discourse within which it is framed. Examining the novel, we could trace discursive sublimity in the characterization of Santiago, the protagonist. So far the critic Leo Gurko is concerned, he has failed to judge this idea of sublimity. His projection is limited to the natural harmony. He explains Santiago's evolution as, "A sense of brotherhood and love, in a world in which everyone is killing or being killed, that binds together the creatures of Nature, establishes between them a unity" (378). The following lines from the novel are also analyzed from the same perspective: "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" (92). The expressions are not only loaded with awe but also

with admiration and pleasure. Words from opposite poles have been brought together to create the situation of high level of sublimity. The writer describes the fish as the killing force, and at the same time great, or beautiful, or noble. The old man finds himself in such a sublime position that he is deliberately ready to accept death. It amplifies that Santiago, like the other creatures of the sea, must kill or be killed. As he is joined literally to the marlin through the fishing line, his struggle indelibly joins the two in spirit. His efforts to kill the Marlin or be killed by him form a bond of spiritual brotherhood between the old man and the fish. Moreover, it unfolds loaded sublimity in this system of natural harmony and feeling of spiritual brotherhood. The use of metaphors, comparisons and Santiago's expression of compassionate appreciation for his adversary associate the idea of sublimity.

#### **Features of Burke's Theory of Sublimity in *The Old Man and the Sea***

Looking closely at the work of the political philosopher, Edmund Burke, whose aesthetic treatise *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, published anonymously in 1757, has a massive and lasting impact on the discussion of the sublime. Having determined that the "sublime is a function of the combinatory power of language, and not merely a quality inherent in certain words and objects or for that matter in the divine, the stress begins to fall on ways of accounting for this phenomenon" (Shaw 48).

For Burke, the 'source of the sublime' is 'whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror' (36). The first part of this definition appears to confirm Burke as an advocate of the natural sublime, in the tradition of Burnet, Dennis and Addison. Yet, as the sentence precedes the idea that sublimity is a quality inherent in certain objects begins to fade; the rhetoric of conversance and analogy shifts the origins of the sublime away from

physical things and towards mental states. The trajectory does not end here, however, as, in a further development, we notice that the sentence itself has become obscure and inscrutable, a formal demonstration of the expressive uncertainty as remarked by Ashfield and de Bolla in their criticism, through which sublimity is conveyed. This seems to confirm that the origins of the sublime reside in words rather than in ideas.

The ambiguity of Burke's brief definition of the sublime is typical in *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* as a whole. As a follower of the empiricist school of philosophy, Burke maintains that our knowledge of the world is derived entirely from the evidence of the senses. He insists that sense impressions are "the great originals of all our ideas" (22). By adopting the language of empiricism, Burke appears to recast the sublime as an object not only of philosophical but also of scientific enquiry.

However, with an echo of Baillie, Burke reasons that "by words we have it in our power to make such combinations as we cannot possibly do otherwise. By this power of combining, we are able, by the addition of well-chosen circumstances, to give a new life and force to the simple object" (158). It is language that enables us to select and combine ideas.

Burke also traces the source of the sublime to "whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror" (36). The stress of the negative aspects of the sublime marks the crucial difference between Burke and his Post-Longinian predecessors. Paulson in his book, *Representation of Revolution*, compares the sublime, "Where Addison, for instance, regards the sublime as 'liberating and exhilarating, a kind of happy aggrandizement', Burke, by contrast, sees it as 'alienating and diminishing'" (69). A mode of pleasure may nevertheless be derived from this experience, as Burke continues: "When

dangers or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful” (36-37). The self may be delighted in sublime terror so long as actual danger is kept at bay.

Burke’s definition of sublimity has been more clarified by M.H. Abrams’ reassertion. He writes:

An important tendency in critical theory was to shift the application of the term, ‘the sublime,’ from a quality of linguistic discourse that originates in the powers of a writer’s mind, to a quality inherent in external objects, and above all in the scenes and occurrences of the natural world. Thus Edmund Burke’s highly influential *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, published in 1757, attributes the source of the sublime to those things which are ‘in any sort terrible’- that is, to whatever is ‘fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger’- provided that the observer is in a situation of safety from danger, and so is able to experience what would otherwise be a painful terror as a ‘delightful horror’. The features of objects which evoke sublime horror that Burke stresses are obscurity, immense power, and vastness in dimension or quantity.

(317)

Thus, it makes clear that Burke’s sublime lies in pleasure and pain, obscurity, immense power and vastness.

Such sublime which is fearful, dangerous but pleasing, in Burke’s words ‘delightful horror’ can be traced in Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea*. He describes the extreme cruelty of the ocean and the delicate life of small birds like

flying fish. He writes:

He was very fond of flying fish as they were his principal friends on the ocean. He was sorry for the birds, especially the small delicate dark terns that were always flying and looking and almost never finding, and he thought, 'The birds have a harder life than we do except for the robber birds and the heavy strong ones. Why did they make birds so delicate and fine as those sea swallows when the ocean can be so cruel? She is kind and very beautiful. But she can be so cruel and it comes so suddenly and such birds that fly, dipping and hunting, with their small sad voices are made too delicately for the sea'.

He always thought of the sea as.... feminine and as something that gave or withheld great favours, and if she did wild or wicked things it was because she could not help them. (25)

Here resides sublimity in the wild power of the vast sea which can destroy lives. Yet the protagonist, the old man finds it kind, very beautiful as feminine and something that gives and favours to run lives by providing fish, the food.

Here Burke is indebted once again to John Baillie, who has described sublimity as a contradictory sensation of pleasure and pain: "The sublime dilates and elevates the Soul, Fear sinks and contracts it; yet both are felt upon viewing what is great and awful" (31-2). The key word here is 'viewing'. For Baillie, there is a difference between engaging in a fight for survival and contemplating it from afar. Where the former involves a real possibility of annihilation, the latter treats it merely as an idea. To invoke a contemporary example: the experience (fight) of old man, Santiago with the sharks for saving marlin is pleasurable and painful at the same time. The following scenes related to the old man's struggle to achieve his goal add even

more vividness in description:



Figure 1.6 Santiago battling with sharks



Figure 1.7 His harpoon piercing a shark

There is pleasure and pain in the exhibition of Hemingway's old man's virility. Out of fear and pain of losing his marlin, Santiago challenges the situation and speaks out, "But man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated" (103). The old man, all alone, fights with sharks to save his biggest catch just to retain his prestige in his community is pitiable. He undergoes pain and creates a painful touch to the readers as well is the sublime in the text.

Santiago struggles unendingly. He feels safe though at the cost of some flesh of the Marlin and getting the sharks beaten. He expresses, "Think about something cheerful. Every minute now you are closer to home" (104). Here lies the pleasure, the old man receives. The impulse to sustain oneself in the face of danger is thus closely related to the experience of the sublime. To return to Burke's thesis, just as the eye contracts to preserve itself from the 'pain' of a blinding flash of light, so the 'I' shrinks into 'the minuteness of its own nature' in the encounter with terror (122-3). In both cases, 'self-preservation' (36), the passion for which resides at the heart of the sublime, is made dependent on a corresponding act of exertion: the eye and the 'I' are defined by their ability to 'labor' against destruction. If the self is lost in what Burke



calls 'general society' (37), it is paradoxically recuperated in the 'painful' encounter with the sublime.

In the *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Burke has argued that 'darkness is more productive of sublime ideas than light', though he adds the qualification that "such a light as that of the sun, immediately exerted on the eye, as it overpowers the sense, is a very great idea. .... Extreme light, by overcoming the organs of sight, obliterates all objects, so as in its effects exactly to resemble darkness" (73-4). In formal terms, therefore, the notion of a radical light appears to be in accord with the Burkean sublime. Accordingly, Burke forges distinction in the *Reflections* between the artificial light of the Revolution, which dissolves all "the sentiments which beautify and soften private society" (171), and the natural light of the sun, which enters "into common life, like rays of light which pierce into a dense medium, (and) are by the laws of nature, refracted from their straight line" (152). Burke draws the conclusion that sublime is the quality like of the sun's light whose extreme light on our eyes can cause darkness for a while but does not distract the peaceful private society.

Borrowing Burke's words, Santiago, the protagonist of *The Old Man and The Sea* possesses sublimity like the natural light of the sun. In spite of the hardship, he undergoes in the Cuban context, moreover the eighty-four days without catching a fish and the follow-up disregard as being a 'salao', the worst form of being unlucky. It is like the darkness caused by the sun's light. So, inspired by such situation, Santiago does not give-up his hope and attempts. Instead, his determination to head out where men had never gone and to bring his luck back is the product of that darkness. So, darkness is more productive of sublime ideas than artificial light.

### **Features of Kantian Theory of Sublimity in *The Old Man and the Sea***

The German Idealist philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), is widely held to be the first scholar properly dealing with philosophical treatment of the sublime. In his *Critique of Judgment*, published in 1790, Kant writes to his descriptive summary of the feeling of the sublime, which is reminiscent of Burke in its use of physiological and psychological vocabulary:

The feeling of the sublime is a pleasure that arises only indirectly: it is produced by the feeling of a momentary inhibition of the vital forces followed immediately by an outpouring of them that is all the stronger. Hence it is an emotion, and so it seems to be seriousness, rather than play, in the imagination's activity. Hence, too, this liking is incompatible with charms, and, since the mind is not just attracted by the object but is alternately always repelled as well, the liking for the sublime contains not so much a positive pleasure as rather admiration and respect, and so should be called a negative pleasure. (98)

Kant's emphasis is seen in both positive and negative aspects of emotion in the sense of liking and repelling. More importantly, negative pleasure along with the feeling of momentary suspension of vital forces is associated with sublime.

The beautiful carries with it directly a feeling of life's being furtherer, whereas the sublime, by contrast, involves a suspension of the vital powers. Where the apprehension of beauty is straightforwardly appealing; the sublime alternates between attraction and repulsion. Kant, moreover, agrees with Burke in concluding that the sublime is a source of pleasure, albeit of a strictly negative kind. But where Burke links sublime delight with the psychological relief at having survived and managed a life threatening experience, Kant looks towards more rarefied horizons. Here again we

must keep in mind the rigorously transcendental nature of Kant's philosophy. Philip Shaw reasserts Kant's philosophy. He asserts:

The point is not to focus on the sensuous or empirical aspects of human existence, for knowledge, in the strict sense, is derived not from the world of experience but rather from the *a priori* (meaning independent or before) conditions of experience. In a judgment of taste, therefore, it is not the object itself that is beautiful but the manner in which the mind apprehends that object, manifesting in accordance with an indeterminate concept of understanding. Like the beautiful, therefore, the sublime is not a property of nature....

....A sublime object may be terrifying, but the fact that one derives pleasure in the contemplation of such object and not pain suggests that one's feeling is radically subjective. The object, as it were, no longer has any bearing on one's judgment, as it would do in the contemplation of beauty. More so than beauty, the sublime is on the side of mind: 'the sublime, in the proper meaning of term', writes Kant, 'cannot be contained in any sensible form'. (79)

Here, Shaw points out the remarkable distinction between the beautiful and the sublime as distinguished by Kant. Beauty is noted as being connected with the form of the object having boundaries, while the sublime is to be found in a formless object represented by boundlessness.

Talking about the dynamical sublime, Kant says that it is a source of delight, because it is contemplated from afar. It is our ability to appreciate our weakness in the face of nature and at the same time to put this weakness into perspective that transfers the attribute of 'mightiness' away from the object and towards something within the

mind of the perceiver. Nature thus conceived has 'no dominion over us'. The sight of the 'boundless ocean' may dwarf our imagination, yet our ability to conceive of this deficiency points to the existence of a higher faculty, something greater even than either nature or imagination. As Kant continues:

And we like to call these objects -boundless ocean, threatening rocks, volcanoes with all their destructive power, sublime because they raise the soul's fortitude above its usual middle range and allow us to discover in ourselves an ability to resist which is of a quite different kind, and which gives us the courage (to believe) that we could be a match for nature's seeming omnipotence (120).

Kant, to reiterate, regards the sublime as an attribute not of nature, but rather of the soul. For him fearful and destructive powers of nature are the sources of sublime as they help create the power of courage, endurance and self control in facing the fearful and the dangerous situation. Only there occurs the moment of sublime.

We can justify this philosophy of Kant with the relevance from the text of Hemingway. He describes the greatness of the marlin in all its destructive power that leads the old man to create an ability of endurance and also a belief that he could be a match for nature's omnipotence. Hemingway goes on about the fish:

'He is two feet longer than the skiff,' the old man said. The line was going out fast but steadily and the fish was not panicked. The old man was trying with both hands to keep the line just inside of breaking strength. He knew that if he could not slow the fish with a steady pressure the fish could take out all the line and break it.

He is a great fish and I must convince him, he thought. I must never let him learn his strength nor what he could do if he made his

run. If I were him I would put in everything now and go until something broke. But, thank God, they are not as intelligent as we who kill them, although they are more noble and more able. (62)

Here, Hemingway compares the destructive physical features of the Marlin with the old man's physical weakness. But in spite of the weakness, man prepares himself capable of fighting for existence. He emphasizes man's intelligence which gives strength to him to fight with his inferiority.

Hemingway further describes his earlier experiences and realizes his present efforts he has to make:

The old man had seen many great fish. He had seen many that weighed more than a thousand pounds and he had caught two of that size in his life, but never alone. Now alone, and out of sight of land, he was fast to the biggest fish that he had ever seen and bigger than he had ever heard of, and his left hand was still as tight as the gripped claws of an eagle. (62)

It is the mental strength and courage that enables a person to submit himself to face pain, and any type of perils such as the random, excessive movements of a storm, or the failure after arduous work. Through the encounter with the vast in nature, the mind discovers within itself a faculty that transcends the realm of sensible intuition. This is called mathematical sublime in Kant's view.

Similarly with the dynamical sublime, in contemplating might from afar, the mind realizes the rational idea of freedom-from its slavish dependence on nature and the faculty of imagination. M. H. Abrams delineates Kantian sublimity and its two kinds. He states:

Kant divided the sublime objects ....into two kinds:

1) the 'mathematical sublime' encompasses the sublime of magnitude of vastness in size or seeming limitlessness or infinitude in number. 2) The 'dynamic sublime' encompasses the objects conducive to terror at our seeming helplessness before the overwhelming power of nature, provided that the terror is rendered pleasurable by the safe situation of the observer .....he describes the experience of sublimity as a rapid sequence of painful blockage and pleasurable release 'the feeling of a momentary check to the vital forces followed at once by a discharge all the more powerful'. In the mathematical sublime, the mind is checked by its inadequacy to comprehend as a totality the boundlessness or seeming infinity of natural magnitudes, and in the dynamic sublime, it is checked by its helplessness before the seeming irresistibility of natural powers. (318)

In both cases what is uncovered is the rational a priori ground of cognition, a pure idea of totality or freedom, which is not subject to the empirical, contingent conditions of nature.

Significantly, both realizations arise on the basis of an initial failure in our ability to comprehend. Kant summarizes his views on sublime as follows:

the feeling of the sublime is a feeling of displeasure that arises from the imagination's inadequacy, in an aesthetic estimation of magnitude, for an estimation by reason, but it is at the same time also a pleasure, aroused by the fact that this very judgment of the inadequacy, namely, that even the greatest power of sensibility is inadequate, is (itself) in harmony with rational ideas, insofar as striving toward them is still a law for us. (114-15)

The experience of the sublime thus involves a feeling of pain brought about by incapacity of imagination followed “by a powerful sense of relief (even elation) in so far as the formless phenomenon can be grasped as a totality in terms of a rational idea” (81) according to Crowther.

The failure of the greatest faculty of sense thus serves to negatively exhibit the higher faculty of reason. We get a feeling, in other words, for a capacity within our minds that is “essentially transcendent to (that is, free from) all determinations of nature, inner and outer” (Burnhan, 99). The key word here is ‘feeling,’ a high faculty of reason to go beyond nature’s power.

The very fact that we are able to conceive of infinity as a whole, that we are able, in other words, to comprehend ideas which exceed direct empirical presentation, supports what Crowther’s words emphasize on: “we are beings with capacities that transcend the limitations of our finite phenomenal existence” (100). Sublimity, therefore resides in the human capacity to think beyond the bounds of the given. M.H. Abrams also concludes the Kantian sublime as “the experience of the sublime manifests on the one hand the limitations and weakness of finite humanity, but on the other hand its ‘pre-eminence over nature,’ even when confronted by the ‘immeasurability’ of nature’s magnitude and the ‘irresistibility’ of its might” (318). Abrams focuses sublime on the human limitations and weaknesses. At the same time he focuses on the human capacity to transcend the vast magnitude and overwhelming power of nature.

Santiago, in *The Old Man and the Sea* is shown possessing this sublime human capacity. The opening of the novel gives introduction of the displeasure or pain in the human incapacity or weakness which every man should undergo.

Hemingway describes his protagonist, Santiago at the starting:

He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish. In the first forty days a boy had been with him. But after forty days without a fish the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally *salao*, which is the worst form of unlucky, and the boy had gone at their orders in another boat which caught three good fish the first week. It made the boy sad to see the old man come in each day with his skiff empty and he always went down to help him carry either the coiled lines or the gaff and harpoon and the sail that was furled around the mast. The sail was patched with flour sacks and, furled, it looked like the flag of permanent defeat. (5)

This painful introduction about the protagonist is the experience of sublime that man possesses in this finite humanity. Such painful experience has been invited by the old age and the fate of Santiago which is a weakness of mankind, moreover of all living creatures. And such cannot be avoided.

But still transcending the limitation of our finite phenomenal existence, he goes out far in the Gulf Stream, north of Cuba in the Straits of Florida to fish where no one had ever stepped. And finally after an extended struggle and patience, he hooks a big Marlin and straps it to the side of his skiff and heads home. The picture below, taken from the film shows Santiago with his trophy, the Marlin as a whole. It is the success he achieved. It exhibits extreme struggle of Santiago in spite of his old age. This scene of the great fish, bigger than the skiff of the old man and the man dragging it to tie to his skiff is itself sublime. Some of his efforts and the struggle he had to do can be viewed in the wide shot below:





Fig. 1.8 Santiago with marlin

Such capacity of Santiago to go beyond his limitation and challenge the vast magnitude of the sea is sublime in the novel.

When Santiago heads toward his home with marlin, sharks attack the marlin. Santiago, then exhibits his protracted struggle to keep away sharks. After beating up sharks, Santiago notices that some fish meat has been taken away. In the novel, he then asserts:

‘They must have taken a quarter of him and of the best meat,’ he said aloud. ‘I wish it were a dream and that I had never hooked him. I’m sorry about it, fish. It makes everything wrong.’ He stopped and he did not want to look at the fish now. Drained of blood and awash he looked the colour of the silver backing of a mirror and his stripes still showed.

‘I shouldn’t have gone out so far, fish,’ he said. ‘Neither for you nor for me. I’m sorry, fish.’(110)

Thus, Santiago finally realizes that he and the fish both have achieved failure. Till the final realization, Santiago, the old man is left with the bodily lost marlin that is the skeleton. This scene of the old man with the skeleton of marlin is taken from the film

adaptation of the novel. It is a sublime in pathetic moment that arises from the old man's inadequacy of imagination.



Fig. 1.9 Santiago bodily lost the marlin

Santiago has an epiphany over his loss at sea: “And what beat you”, he thought. “Nothing”, he said aloud, “I went out too far” (120). It is the judgment Santiago made of his inadequacy of knowledge about the law of the nature. Santiago feels that he went beyond the mortal boundaries to find his great marlin; that like Oedipus, he had committed hubris. “It is as if”, Edwin Moseley asserts, “Santiago’s final struggle has led to the kind of wisdom that Oedipus, for example, reaches only through protracted experience and struggling” (207). Santiago achieved wisdom through pain. This pleasure transcended the pain. Thus, we can observe that Santiago develops a feeling of sublime in the feeling of his pleasure that arises from his imagination inadequacy.

The dynamical sublime, in which consciousness realizes its independence from nature, thus compels us to sacrifice our pleasures, substituting self-interest for the disinterested love of the good. It is the sublime to sacrifice one’s child for the sake of the truth. Kant’s tenacious insistence on the primacy of truth leads to some disturbing conclusions.

In Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* (1987), a novel about the unimaginable traumas of Afro-American history, the central character, Sethe, resorts to desperate measures in

order to save her children from slavery: she slits her eldest daughter's throat, attempts to murder her two sons, and threatens to kill her baby. She later states, "If I hadn't killed her she would have died, and that is something I could not bear to happen to her" (200).

In an interview, Morrison explains that through sacrificing her children, "Sethe is claiming her role as a parent, claiming the autonomy, the freedom she needs to protect her children and give them some dignity" (43). The words "autonomy" and "freedom" signal that Sethe is attempting through this monstrous act to reclaim a sense of the moral law as that which exists apart from sensible interest. If slavery is understood here as the denial of autonomy, of the right to think for oneself and to assert one's independence from the empirical, then infanticide (literally, the taking away of that which is regarded as the slave master's property) is a means not only of reclaiming identity but also of affirming the transcendental conditions of morality as a law exceeding even one's interests as a parent. In this example the law is affirmed negatively, i.e. by way of the sublime: for Sethe the children of slaves must be killed in order that they might not die. Therefore, sublimity for Kant, is the feeling that arises whenever we, as subjects, become aware of the transcendental dimensions of experience. The sublime occurs, that is, whenever ideas exceed the application of a concept; at such moments the mind comes alive to the existence of a faculty of reason transcending the limits of our sensual existence.

Analyzing Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* from this faculty of reason, we find sublimity in Santiago's bringing the skeleton of Marlin aboard. Near the end of the novel, Hemingway draws a striking conclusion. He shows the protagonist totally tired and as if beaten up due to his failure in bringing the marlin with flesh. On the other hand, he emphasizes the value of the skeleton of the marlin.

He writes: “Many fishermen were around the skiff looking at what was lashed beside it and one was in the water, his trousers rolled up, measuring the skeleton with a length of line.... He was eighteen feet from nose to tail,’ the fisherman who was measuring him called. ‘I believe it,’ the boy said” (122).

The skeleton of the marlin which Santiago brought aboard was a thing of surprise to the other fishermen. Before Santiago was indicated with the name ‘salao’ by them as he caught no fish for eighty-four days. But the great skeleton surpassed their expectation. Therefore, the skeleton is the sign of overcoming the old man’s humiliation. It goes beyond the general concept of success that is bringing the whole marlin with flesh. Here, the real reputation or success of the old man came along with the skeleton of the great fish and lasting impression of the old man in the eyes of the boy Manolin. The general idea transcending the limits of our sensual existence is sublime in the text.

As Kant relates sublime with the pure and independent, we can correspond the idea in *The Old Man and the Sea*. Santiago with pure vision for life moreover the optimistic purity faces the struggle in an independent way. Alone in the sea, not even with the companionship of Manolin, and without the emotional support of other fishermen, he ventures out far. Afterwards, he gets hold of only the skeleton of Marlin which is a defeat in the eyes of general viewers and even to Santiago but at the end, he takes it in encouraging delight and self realisation of his mistake of venturing too far.

After Kantian sublime, appears the Romantic sublime. In Romanticism, the discourse of the sublime is developed as a response to the limitations of Burkean empiricism. For Coleridge, writing under the influence of Schelling, sublimity consists of in the endeavor to overcome the distinction between words and things. Yet

Coleridge also admits that mental freedom is the product of language's inability to coincide with itself. It is at this point that he comes closest to agreeing with Kant. But where Coleridge goes beyond Kant is in his identification of the incompleteness of language with the breach between matter and the divine.

In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the reader is faced with competing versions of the sublime. Here Victor Frankenstein seeks, through the creation of "perfected" human being, to bypass the limits of our "faulty" nature (77). The inference is clear: the faulty is associated with the female reproductive system. That the outcome of this transgression should be monster is indicative, no doubt, of Shelley's consciousness of the innate error, the hubris, at the core of the masculine sublime. What is clear is that Victor's wish to create a perfect being is prompted by his disdain for society; to the scientist, man is not defined by his social being, but by his capacity for self-determination. To this extent, he echoes the philosophical findings of Kant and his Idealist followers; like them, what Victor craves is a release from nature. The dream of a perfected being is also, then, the dream of a man unfettered by social or biological limits; it is a dream of pure freedom, in the Kantian sense. Female writing of the Romantic period, however, maintains an ambivalent relation with the concept of the sublime, not least because of its identification with masculine concepts of power and domination.

*The Old Man and the Sea*, though dealing greatly with the male characters and the masculine sublime it can be viewed supported by some female writers of the Romantic period. In the case of Hemingway, the Gothic writer, she objects to him and tries to show the masculine hubris.

Fictions pave a way for us to see the elements in our lives through words, symbols, imagery and allegory. In *The Old Man and the Sea* the old man named

Santiago is featured. It starts with the simple line: “He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the gulf stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish”(5). On the surface, this sentence is extremely simple in the sense that it provides easy to understand facts and lacks any superfluous information about the fisherman. Yet, if thought about the fact that he has gone 84 days without taking a fish, it tells a lot about the man right away.

The sentence can be a rich source of mines for critics. It is wonderful and even unbelievable that an old man continues his efforts to fish for eighty- four days without any achievement. His patience and determinations go beyond the limit that humans do have. This transcendence of the old the man’s quality presents a type of sublimity. For those eighty-four days, every day marks his failure, and it is out of our imagination that a normal human has such optimism for achievement, yet keeps going ahead for the same purpose. Old man’s forbearance, resolve, purposefulness and sanguinity become elements of the sublime in his characters.

There is a scene late in the story in which Santiago has fought off a shark. “But I killed the shark that hit my fish, he thought. And he was the biggest dentuso that I have ever seen. And God knows I have seen big ones” (103). Santiago then feels beaten for a moment only to realize and say out loud to himself, “‘But man is not made for defeat’ he said. ‘A man can be destroyed but not defeated.’ I am sorry that I killed the fish though, he thought” (103). Again, this entire passage is a nice example of simple language offering so much for a reader to extract. So much more is being said than just the words on the page.

The story ends as a tragedy, as the old man fails to bring board the fish whole, but, as all good tragedies do, provides a catharsis for the reader and leaves one with perhaps a better understanding of the life around them. It is a work of heroic pathos

distinguished by its natural admiration for every individual who fights the good fight in a world of reality overshadowed by violence and death. Though deceptively simple as all Hemingway works seem to be, *The Old Man and the Sea* manifests extended sublimity.

Hemingway in the novel, channels the best features of a style, all too imbibed in modern writing, with his first person, athletic narrative coloring the vast expanses his mind visualizes in all their hues. He creates characters out of nature, religions out of fish and sinners out of sharks. Carlos Baker includes the remark of Hemingway about his book, “No good book has ever been written that has in it symbols arrived at beforehand and stuck in. . . . I tried to make a real old man, a real boy, a real sea and a real fish and real sharks. But if I made them good and true enough they would mean many things” (25). Thus, symbolical words and descriptions are used by Hemingway to create real images of his characters and nature.

In this Hemingway’s novel, we see sublime in terms of racial harmony and natural harmony. Santiago’s spiritual binding with the fish during their struggle represents an important image of natural harmony in the novel. Through Santiago’s dependence on fish for food, Hemingway illustrates another image of natural harmony. His dependency upon the sea for sustenance places the sea and its denizens in high esteem for Santiago. Claire Rosenfield emphasizes the relationship ‘between the eater and the eaten’ asserting that Santiago must fish to eat and eat to fish (43). Rosenfield draws the analogy that, because of the marlin’s social and spiritual value to Santiago, it becomes a ‘totem animal’ in the novel (44). Because of the fish’s importance, Santiago not only personifies the marlin, but also he epitomizes its characteristics throughout the novel.

Predictably, Spanish and Cuban historical and cultural contexts also interact in

this novel, more pervasively; and these further demonstrate the primary role of topicality in specifying relevant symbolism. There is, for example, a profound thematic pattern that we have yet to glory in, because it can only be recognized by readers willing to become familiar either with Spanish history from a Cuban perspective, or Cuban history from a Spanish perspective.

Much of the novel is directly or indirectly associated with the Virgin of Cobre. Near Cobre, a small town in southeastern Cuba is the sanctuary of Our Lady of Charity, a small statue of the Virgin Mary. An image of the Virgin hangs on Santiago's wall, as it does in most Cuban houses; the text implies that his wife may, like many other Cubans, have made a pilgrimage to the shrine and brought back this picture. In 1916, Pope Benedict XV declared the Virgin the principal patroness of Cuba. She is, then, a figure associated with Cuba's national identity. Now according to legend, this statue of the Virgin Mary was floating on a wooden board off the coast of eastern Cuba in 1628, when it was found by two Indians and a Creole in a rowboat. And it is an ancient Spanish legend that the body of Saint James (Santiago) also appeared floating on the sea, in its case already inside a boat, and was found off the coast of Spain, near Compostela, where it was said to have come from the Holy Land, even though the boat had no rudder or sail. Thus the legend of the patroness of Cuba parallels, in the Spanish New World, the far older legend of Santiago in old Spain.

Hemingway has again found in history, the contemporary cultural history, a parallel entirely relevant to his plot. For the New World legend of a mysterious boon, or blessing, discovered at sea, by humble Cubans in a rowboat, looks back to the seaborne gift of Saint James' remains off the coast of Spain, and looks forward to the modern Santiago's discovery-while at sea in a rowboat that loses its tiller- of a 'great strangeness,' or mystery, at the moment of the marlin's death (Sylvester, "Extended



Vision” 133).

Moreover, the relic, or boon from the sea repositated at Santiago del Prado, Cuba, at the shrine of the Virgin is regarded as a spiritual endowment to the Cuban people, as the seaborne relics at Santiago de Compostela are regarded as a spiritual gift to Spain. And Santiago, the modern fisherman, brings ashore the skeletal relics of his strange encounter, skeletal remains that spiritually enrich those among the people of modern Cuba who are still capable of appreciating his values and accomplishment.



Fig. 2 Cubans appreciating the skeleton relic brought by Santiago

Santiago is shown living in a divided community, a village turning from the craft passion of the old Cuba to a new materialism. But those supporting national pride and old values are sustained by Santiago’s circular sea journey in his wooden boat. Their traditional values will last now, in their hearts, until their next champion, Manolin, reenacts the age-old fertility rite, risking everything to maintain the vital contact between the human community and the mysteries of nature -the contact that preserves the community’s sense of wonder, despite the encroaching materialism.

Manolin is only one of a circle of young men in the community who is devoted to sustaining Santiago, the pure, craftsman, scorned though he may be by the dominant new materialists. So the struggle of Santiago in bringing the skeleton relic, Cubans capable to appreciate his values and accomplishment, and Manolin reenacting the footsteps and perceptions of Santiago is sublime in itself.

At the end of the novel, Hemingway through Manolin's impression presents a sublime transformation in Santiago. The promise of Manolin to accompany him in the coming days to learn his skills of fishing and tolerance not caring his parents' restriction shows how the sublime spirit of Santiago's efforts has made an impression on him. Santiago is not seen presented by Hemingway as a loser but a failure just because of his inadequacy of tools to attack and defeat the scavengers (sharks). He speaks to Manolin: "We must get a good killing lance and always have it on board. You can make the blade from a spring leaf from an old Ford. We can grind it in Guanabacoa. It should be sharp and not tempered or it will break. My knife broke." (126). The boy Manolin replies, "I'll get another knife and have the spring ground" (126). He also remarks: "I'll bring the luck with me" (125). On Santiago's questioning: "What will your family say?" He replies: "I do not care. But we will fish together now for I still have much to learn" (125). Manolin is in any situation determined to follow the footsteps of the old man in any circumstances. Such remarks in the novel are sublime.

All the theories mentioned above prove that Hemingway's novel represents sublimity in its own way. With the notion of existentialism, determination, natural harmony Christianity, oscillating imagery, the novel penetrates into sublimity. Hemingway's true genius lies in the manifold applications of how he presents the struggle of his protagonist, his failure but not defeat and ultimately his success through Manolin, the new generation.

## Chapter 3

### Sublimity in Hemingway Hero

Ernest Hemingway's '*The Old Man and the Sea*' is a modern novella exhibiting the great valor of its protagonist, Santiago, the old man. Despite the brevity of its volume, it presents the highest possible level of sublimity in terms of human faculty. It seems true what Hemingway remarks: "Less is more" (128). This novel surpasses the insight of a modernist idea. It is tragic in nature vividly presenting the furthest possible limit a human can go in his struggle for existence to establish himself as a super-being in the human world and thereby achieves salvation.

The research was started with the hypothesis that the hero of the novella, Santiago presents a level of sublimity with constant hope and expectation. The study has justified the hypothesis in the same line as he has been found to have displayed high spirit, great endurance and optimism in all ups and down of life. He has not been found to be over excited at success and downhearted at extreme failures. This is the sublime we find in the hero, the essence of the study projected.

A lot of ups and downs have been noticed on the life of the protagonist. Especially the downs are the examples of extreme failures that could have made a normal human being very sad. But Santiago, without being moved, reacted to each and every situation with constant temperament. This is one of the examples of his greatness, reaching the level of sublimity. The study has also shown that he never stepped back from going ahead on his mission even in very depressing events. He accepted every challenge with his courage and confidence. Santiago's activities and temperament show that he remained determined and courageous to face any difficult situation with his high level of optimism. Wounded but determined, he struggled.

To talk about the novella itself, as the study has shown can be said to be a

good example of the sublime. The language, though simple in presentation, has been used in such a way that the writer has been able to convey noble thoughts and lofty feelings. In course of theoretical discussion, the theories of the sublime as propounded by Longinus, Addison, Baillie, Burke and Kant have been seriously taken to find out the right application in the text. The study has shown that the novella embodies most of the features of sublime in relation to language use, description of the protagonist, his activities or emotions and natural phenomena. Santiago's compassionate appreciation of his rival for his great dignity shows elevation of his simplicity. And despite his respect for the fish, he kills it. This exhibits sublimity in the natural phenomena. The description of fish, Marlin and his struggle to escape fills every reader with awe, wonder and pleasure, which manifest the sublime in the work.

Moreover, both the fiction and the film adaptation cumulatively enables to apprehend the sublime in Hemingway hero Santiago- his struggle, failure and success! Success to bring to the shore only the skeleton, though failing to get the fish whole, infuses in the upcoming generation the image of indomitability and indefatigability which constitutes the ultimate sublimity in the novella.

Thus, this research work explores the sublimity in Hemingway hero Santiago in both film and fiction together and establishes that the readers and audiences alike achieve a sublime effect - an effect which evades definition!

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