THE AVOIDANCE OF COMPLEXITY IN THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

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ABSTRACT

Heroes are a rare exception to the generally complacent modern man; however, Ernest Hemingway has attempted to revive the idea of the hero within the Twentieth Century. Possibly the intrigue of the hero in Hemingway's works arises partly from being so historically out of context. My thesis is an investigation into Santiago of The Old Man and The Sea as a heroic figure. The investigation is primarily in terms of experience and manhood and I examine the areas of sexuality, emotion, isolation and action. Since there is a metaphysical continuity of the treatment of sex throughout the Hemingway canon, I have examined Santiago's sexuality to determine whether or not this continuity is broken. Apparently Hemingway could not escape sex as one of the major problems of man's existence and therefore Santiago's sexuality is seen as a metaphor. The determination revealed by Santiago in his isolation is not as much a continuation of a theme in Hemingway's writing as it is a culmination of a desire to find a completeness within oneself. Finally the actions of Santiago are investigated within the terms of the Hemingway code. Since there has been much written and hence much confusion regarding this code, I have gone into some detail in trying to make my interpretation of the code both justified and concrete. The meaning of ritualized

action and the meaning of Santiago's actions from an existentialist point of view are also an important part of my thesis. The question of whether or not Santiago can exist as a transcendental hero through whom the other fishermen are spiritually elevated is the last part of my investigation. In examining Santiago in each of these areas, it becomes very apparent that to understand Santiago as a man and especially to understand Santiago as any kind of a hero, one must also understand Santiago's motivations throughout all areas of his life. When one realizes this need to understand his motivations, it becomes increasingly obvious that the primary factor is one of avoiding complex situations and relations. Since avoidance is a negative approach to life, the values seemingly affirmed by Santiago are actually negative.

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CHAPTER I

Paradoxically, for Hemingway's characters, the only and ultimate reconciliation to life comes with death. Endurance, strength and adversity are positive forces in Hemingway's works only to the point where they become channels of escape from complexities of life. For Hemingway's heroes, this struggle to avoid the complexities of life is a basic motivating drive; it becomes a drive which provides a stable but none the less death seeking vehicle.

Both stability and assurance of one's ability to deal with whatever situation may arise become a necessity for Hemingway's characters together with a knowledge of ritualized (and therefore limited) form--a precision of predictable action and response. This need for stability and knowledge consequently leads to a certain limitation of the kinds of experience to be had and a dwindling in the number of situations desirable. Many of Hemingway's heroes, of course, are either forced into or enter, with insufficient knowledge and control, situations where they have no predictable form and subsequently no stability. In A Farewell To Arms, for example, Frederick Henry becomes much more than a mere ambulance driver when he becomes involved (however unwillingly) in the war to a much greater depth than he can understand. The 'fatal flaw' of most of Hemingway's heroes appears when Lt. Henry begins to think: essentially uncontrollable, his thoughts are about the war and his pas-

sive involvement in it (the nature of the war eliminates rather than confirms individual volition) and he becomes nauseated and flounders like a drowning man. Because he is in the war but no longer truly of it, by the assertion of his own will, Frederick Henry declares his own "separate peace" and retreats to the passivity of Catherine with whom the ritualized assertion of initiative can be maintained--at least until her death.

Very basically, complexities are associated with the unknown and simplicity with the known. Generally in Hemingway's work we find that complexities with which his heroes become involved surround the areas of death and relations with other people. These are the unknowns, the areas where there is no firm footing. When things are unknown, for Hemingway's hero they become uncontrollable and when life is uncontrollable, it presents only terror and chaos. In order to avoid complexities we find Hemingway's characters striving to find meaning in life through willed, personalized, controlled action: always the fear is of passivity itself. In a basic sense, the Hemingway hero must <u>do</u> rather than be <u>done to</u>, and when he is stripped of his prerogative of willed choice for any reason, the result is a loss of control in a psychic no less than physical sense: and only with a regaining of <u>willed choice</u> can control and manhood be maintained.

A basic area of complexity endangering Hemingway's

heroes are social relations with other human beings. The 'other than I' concept presents people who intrude, act irrationally, are living paradoxes of themselves and cannot be controlled. To a certain degree, others are controllable, for we see the various protagonists remaining separate by limiting the amount of interaction between themselves and other people. This limiting is possible when the other people are relatively weak but when there is strength of character or when the other person answers a basic need, the result is an inability to exercise complete dominion. Maria, Catherine and Brett are examples of intruders who offer to fill a void in various heroes' lives: but Brett herself is, ultimately, a threat because the very fact of Jake's wound renders their love incomplete, and gives to Brett that prerogative of willed choice, of initiative, which the Hemingway male cannot surrender.

The very fact that a human being has needs makes him vulnerable, according to Hemingway's philosophy, for to have needs is to admit to a lack of complete control. Hemingway must and does question even the very basic needs of mankind and the result is that these needs end up as being tainted. Primarily, Hemingway reveals that man's need for sex is one which renders man a subjected being. He tries to avoid and destroy this problem in The Sun Also Rises by having Jake Barnes be impotent from a war wound. It becomes obvious that this is a futile attempt and the ten-

sion and irony put into Jake's retort to Brett at the conclusion of the book reveals this. Brett, who has usurped the masculine role of initiative, says "'Oh, Jake... we could have had such a damned good time together.' Ahead was a mounted policeman in Khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me. 'Yes,' I said. 'Isn't it pretty to think so?'"[1]

The lack of interest in sex resulting from old age is another way Hemingway has tried to deal with or rather, avoid the problem in Across the River and Into the Trees and The Old Man and The Sea. Colonel Cantwell from Across the River becomes hopelessly entangled in a web woven of strands of the past and again there is a result of futility and anxiety but this time the story is much weakened from the attempt to live in the present through the past. Hemingway, in The Old Man and The Sea, virtually ignores the problem of sex by placing Santiago in the position of being old. In his last novel, sex--which for the Hemingway hero tends to be a medication for injured manhood rather than an act of healthy manhood--becomes subordinate to willed action on a level which requires no personal relations at all.

Like the complexity of a true sexual relationship, death cannot be faced squarely by most of Hemingway's heroes because it cannot be understood. The idea of dying bravely, which for Hemingway was the only way a 'real man' could die,

was never an understanding (for there can be none with death) but rather a tet-â-tete acceptance. Until death actually touches them, these heroes, who exist as spiritually numb in a protected microcosm of ritual, cannot accept death. The point of impact of the lance being driven into the heart of the marlin by Santiago is Hemingway's most dramatic reckoning of a man being touched with death. It is from this fatal moment of the dropping of his protection that Santiago also has his death in him. The fatalistic atmosphere which envelopes so much of the Hemingway canon is a natural conclusion to the inability to cope with thoughts of death until the moment of death rather than accepting death and then being able to face life. "You are all a lost generation" said Gertrude Stein in the epigram for The Sun Also Rises and the feeling is haunting but correct. For the men without faith in life, in God, in their fellow man and themselves, there remains only a kind of limbo; they are lost and their spiritual deadness is accentuated by their failure to accept the inevitability of death.

Because the finite man cannot comprehend the infinite, such as death, Hemingway feels that contemplation is dangerous. Passivity invites abstract thoughts; the mind wanders and has indefinite limits. The mind in the passive or contemplative state is a free thing, completely uncontrolled. While engaged in carefree wandering, the mind for Hemingway

is another complexity as it can become traitorous in causing one to think about things over which there can be no control.

In order to escape this danger, we find Hemingway's heroes involved in an endless series of actions. There are actions (not productive as in the Puritan ethic) which demand concentration, rely on knowledge or in some way involve body and mind in order to avoid idleness and abstract thought. Periods of inactivity are dangerous because of the possibility they hold for complexities of thought. The activities we find the Hemingway characters engaging in are not in themselves detrimental to the various characters' well being. However, the possibility of these actions being positive forces in their lives reaches only up to the point where these actions are engaged in for the avoidance of complexity. It is in the light of this drive to avoid complexity, that Santiago represents a culmination of rather than departure from Hemingway's preoccupations.

If the fact can be accepted that in Hemingway's work control and understanding of life equals the ability to face life, then the question of how life can be controlled and understood must be investigated. If life could be something which is basically static, there would be no need for extra control; however, life is always changing and there must be action enough to keep oneself occupied. Since life is not normally filled to capacity with action

but has periods of inactivity, Hemingway creates for his heroes a life filled with action. This self-willed involvement with action has come to be called by critics as the Hemingway code.

Although the code is to an extent the invention of critics, or at least the name is, I believe that this code reflects what actually happens in Hemingway's works and does not represent an externally imposed order. This code is one of masculine stance, courage, isolation and ritualized form. The code systematically excludes women and emotion as two potential threats to one's existence. It may seem peculiar that while masculinity is asserted women are excluded but for Hemingway, a man's "cojones" are what enable him to be physically strong, handle his liquor, shoot straight, fight hard, and are not necessarily for making love. The understanding of this code is fundamental in analyzing and evaluating the action of Hemingway's heroes, including Santiago.

The epitome of the code is found in a very condensed form in one of Hemingway's short stories called 'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place.' In this story, there are two waiters, one young and one old, serving an old customer who is deaf and drunk. The time is late at night and the young waiter is anxious to close up and go home to his wife who is waiting in bed. The older waiter wants to continue serving the old man and keep the cafe open for those who need it.

This place is both clean and well-lighted in constrast to the all night bars which are poorly lit, noisy and seldom clean. The old waiter realizes that the night holds unspoken terrors; the darkness is the unknown and for those who go to bed and cannot sleep, the darkness becomes crowded with uncontrollable thoughts invading one's mind. The old waiter not only realizes that it is important to have a simple, clean and bright place to avoid the night but also realizes that he is one of those who requires this kind of avoidance. "'You have youth, confidence and a job,' the old waiter said, 'You have everything.'"[2]

The statement points to an opposition that the younger waiter has not recognized. The younger waiter cannot and does not fathom the terror which being old and having no confidence can bring. The old waiter must keep occupied throughout the whole night or he will be faced with the utter hopelessness of his own prayer: "Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name they kingdom nada will be nada in nada as it is in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada and nada us our nada as we nada our nadas and nada us not into nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada."[3] This nada or nothingness is what lies waiting beyond the ordered cleanliness and light and the fear of this nothingness permeates even into the well-lighted room. The great nada threatens the whole meaning of existence once more be-

comes separated from the areas that are lit an controllable and enters the unknown shadows. At the same time, the darkness holds an attraction like that of the sweet odours of a carnivorous plant.

'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place' is particularly important in the understanding of Santiago. When Santiago was young, there were things in his life which blocked out the dark night; like the young waiter, Santiago probably never really grasped the terrors of the night. Now in old age, Santiago is stripped of his youthful strength and the carefree attitude of youth towards ageing is changed into a realization of the numbering of his days. His actions take on the aspects of the old waiter desperately attempting to maintain a clean, well-lighted place. Santiago is still strong in his old age but his strength can no longer be trusted. He is skilled but not lucky and he is alone. The only thing in which he has complete faith is his skill; not even the intense involvement in action provides the human and social immunity it had earlier in his life for now his actions bring him to the very brink of destruction.

The idea of nothingness is very strongly brought out in 'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place.' The story reveals that fear is not of any definite thing. The fear becomes a fear of nothing; everything threatens to become a one-faced nothing, even oneself. In the flat blackness, there is no possibility of trust except in the order of the clean,

well-lighted place or the code of ritualized form. Before the night was through, the cafe closed its doors and turned off the lights leaving only darkness. So too Santiago tries to maintain an order in his life but, as is inevitable in Hemingway's writing, this order is infringed upon and complexities squeeze in, crowding Santiago towards destruction and defeat. If Santiago would be able to make a new lance and go out again, there is always the next night and the one after that. While bravery increases as each night is encountered, pathos also increases and for this reason Hemingway does not allow Santiago to go on.

Lt. Frederick Henry of a Farewell to Arms is pathetic in his perpetual hanging on. Previous to his wounding and even immediately afterwards we see Lt. Henry trying to cling to hope for the continuation of life. While there is this faith, he can go on but even early in the book we see the faith dwindling. "It is never hopeless. But sometimes I cannot hope. I always try to hope but sometimes I cannot,"[4] relates Lt. Henry. Whereas Santiago dreams of lions on the beach, Frederick dreams that the war is over and he will go and live in peace in the Abruzzi. He also longs for the simple life; "I would be too happy. I could live there and love God and serve Him."[5] This dream of a life of faith and simplicity is only a dream because as much as he desires to avoid life's involvements with situations that are too complicated to understand, Lt. Henry

is fatalistically drawn towards destructive entanglements.

At first his life with Catherine, for example, is one of freedom, but slowly the unavoidable emotional involvements arise. Catherine, sensing Frederick Henry's fright of involvement, offers to be anything he wants her to be--to become something he uses rather than somebody he loves. In spite of Catherine's wishes to keep their relationship simple and free, she becomes pregnant and Lt. Henry is trapped. He is trapped by a fate he refuses to acknowledge. All of his efforts to enjoy life and to find meaning in life become twisted and aborted. There is no chance of Lt. Henry finding any lasting meaning in life.

While Lt. Henry is a victim, in that he is 'done to' rather than taking the impetus himself, he does attempt to reconcile himself to the war by declaring a separate peace. In short, he makes a choice rather than always having fate or somebody else choose what he should experience. We see the matter of choice also occurring in <u>To Have and Have Not</u>; Harry Morgan chooses to engage in several activities with his boat: he takes out charter fishermen, runs illegal Chinese immigrants, runs liquor and finally runs some Cubans from Miami to Cuba. All these are apparently controllable situations and yet they continuously overwhelm Harry. He is also a victim of being 'done to.' When Harry finally decides to make a choice at a crucial point

and shoots the Cubans on the boat (since they were going to kill him anyway) he again is done to; he gets shot and is left drifting on the Gulf Stream with no other choice but to lie still and take the pain of the wound in his belly. In these and other situations in Hemingway's writing, the importance rests on the fact that a self-willed choice was made, even if the results of these choices do not appreciably change the end result.

With this inevitability of being overwhelmed by what is around them, Hemingway's characters seem extremely fatalistic. However, these characters generally face life desperately trying to avoid complexities (indeed this seems to be the only kind of choice offered, fight or not fight but in the end be destroyed anyway) and their choices are generally motivated through avoidance. No matter how futile this choice of direction in life may seem, Hemingway places great value on the ability to choose. Santiago chooses to go beyond the shallow water; he chooses to fish alone; he chooses to fish for a giant marlin and he chooses to fight the marlin till one of them dies. Age is something which he cannot choose and we hear Santiago rationalizing that it is not bad luck to be old and alone "but it is unavoidable."[6] It is partly in spite of these choices and also partly because of them that Santiago is destroyed. He makes a choice and when he is destroyed, all his striving to eliminate the complex things of life is to no avail.

To the end, Santiago desperately tries to cling to the code of living, fighting and facing death as a man.

CHAPTER II

As was mentioned earlier, the ability to know where one stands in life is extremely important for the Hemingway hero. Through the making of deliberate or self-willed choice, the various complexities of life may be transformed into visions of simplicity which eventually become controllable. Whether these complexities are essentially unavoidable, like death, is not important but what is important is the visionary control placed on them in order to make even death appear to be controllable. Within his code of action, we find Santiago transform and manipulate an otherwise bleak and lonesome life into a series of forms of action. These forms are consistant throughout Hemingway's work and are re-used so often that they become a ritualized framework of existence. The fact that such areas of action such as courage, isolation and assertion of masculinity are in reality forms enables Santiago to live or at least get through life without terribly much thought.

It is the validity or meaning of this choice of life which must be questioned. To be a fisherman is Santiago's historical destiny or heritage and in the story there is very little room to question whether he had very much choice in this matter. He does not choose to be unlucky or choose to be old but he does choose to fish alone. Santiago's way of facing and enduring life is through a tremendous stoical courage, but a courage which only reveals

itself in isolation. He had finished eighty-four days without taking a fish yet he desires to continue going out to sea and keep trying. If Santiago really felt that he was "'salao,' which is the worst form of unlucky,"[7] he should have either given up or tried to fish with somebody else but he makes the definite choice of going out alone once more. If he had not chosen to continue his life in the way in which he does choose, anything else would have been an imposed choice; to him, anything else would have been at best an artificial and false hope over which there would be no possibility of control. In Santiago's life, self-willed choice reaffirms his whole mode of existence.

Proving himself is a basic assertion of Santiago's place in life and yet proving oneself often threatens this kind of assertion because it brings about the confrontation of interpersonal relationships. Because of this threat Santiago's choice is to become an isolated figure. In isolation the threats to an ordered life are greatly reduced. Not all the protagonists of course, literally isolate themselves in such a physical way as do Nick Adams and Santiago. Mental isolation is another area in which Hemingway explores the security from an interfering world. Through the proper ordering and control, mental isolation permits one to stand alone while in the middle of a crowd. Pedro Romero, the bullfighter in The Sun Also Rises is uniquely alone in the

middle of the Pamplona bull festival throngs, tuned in on a quasi-spiritual level with the afficionados. In isolation, life appears to be so much more easily controlled since the only threat to safety lies in oneself.

Since it is the wish of Santiago to be alone, one might suppose that the threat to safety arising from within would be minimal and yet we see otherwise in The Old Man and The Sea. If such a threat to life exists in isolation where supposedly there is a semblance of order, then the conclusion must be drawn that there is a fatalistic tendency of mankind being presented to us by Hemingway. This tendency reveals that no matter how much Santiago wants to live, there is some part of himself bent on destruction. Robert Jordan, in For Whom The Bell Tolls, with his suicidal-paternal heritage, also reflects this inclination in his life. Besides this inner traitor, that part of a man which desires the shadows of the night rather than the clean and bright room, there are the complexities of life which are unbeatable, unbearable and unrelenting.

While isolation is one of Santiago's major decisions in his life, going far out into the Gulf Stream is another one of his main choices which takes place in the story. The motivations of Santiago for going so far out and taking such risks warrants an investigation. If Santiago had not fished so far away from the other boats, it is probable

that he would not have hooked the giant marlin. The farther Santiago did go out, the greater the possibility of a large fish; more meaningful action or experience occurs along with a corresponding increase in danger. Had Santiago been able to hook such a monstrous marlin within hailing distance of any of the other boats, either Santiago would have been unwillingly intruded upon or he would have been tempted to call for help. This temptation is not only a supposition for when he is alone in the Gulf Stream and tied to the marlin, Santiago wishes Manolin was there to help him. "The story of Santiago, then, clearly represents a return, or rather, a re-emphasis and intensification, of the theme of isolation--the individual confronting his own destiny..."[8] One of the prime motivating factors for Santiago is isolation, as Dr. Cooperman states, in "Hemingway and Old Age", in order to face "his own destiny" rather than being infringed upon.

This figure of a man totally isolated in the physical sense is not a new aspect of Hemingway's writing but rather an area which Hemingway has explored from all angles. Santiago's isolation is perhaps different than any other heroes though because in addition to mental and physical isolation there is sexual isolation rendered by age. While the sexual aspect of life has been mentioned as one of the complicating factors of life in Hemingway's writing, on the surface Santiago seems to be immune to this problem.

There is a conspicuous absence of women in this novella but perhaps Santiago's sexuality is dealt with in a different way than in other Hemingway stories.

For Jake Barnes, life must be faced without sexual involvement because of an emasculating and humiliating war wound. Through Jake in The Sun Also Rises, Hemingway explores the possibility of a man living without the possibility of sexual involvement. Hemingway seems to indicate that it is better to live as only part of a man rather than to fall prey to the weakness of masculinity. Even absention from sexual involvements because of necessity or rather incapability leaves Jake Barnes with his desires and feelings. He still is hurt when Brett Ashley hops in and out of bed with nearly every other character in the book. Sex seems to be the paradox of the complete protection found in masculinity. Sexual involvements betray man; so often in Hemingway's writing they prove to be arrows shot at man's Achille's tendon: his emotional vulnerability. Nick Adam's sexual initiation with Prudy the Indian girl, for example, produces only the most painful of memories: the hurt he felt when he found out that Prudy had been carrying on with other boys.[9]

In order to attempt to deal with sex in any meaningful way, Hemingway's characters must either ignore sexual involvements or deal with them as Frederick Henry at first

uses Catherine. In A Farewell To Arms, Catherine is chosen by Lt. Henry as an alternative to the de-humanized war. He makes a self-willed choice of a separate peace in order to bring some individuality into an otherwise inhuman struggle and it is through a warm relation with Catherine that Lt. Henry tries to find meaning. With Catherine, all Lt. Henry is able to do is to use her and she in turn is completely willing to be used. Catherine tells Lt. Henry, "You see? I'm good. I do what you want,"[10] and yet the involvement becomes more than this, it becomes complicated. Ironically, it is only through their union that Lt. Henry can fulfil the need to prove himself as a separate person. The only positive factor in Frederick Henry's choice of Catherine and their emotional-sexual relationship is the fact of the self-determined choosing.

Maria, in For Whom the Bell Tolls, provides Robert Jordan with a chance to escape the periods of inaction which the nature of his job thrusts on him. She is able to fill in the empty spaces which otherwise threaten to become crowded with obscene moments of thought, an area of uncontrollable complexity. At the same time that Maria provides a sensual narcotic, she becomes a danger in Jordan's life. Without her actually asking, her very presence demands more than the casual but necessary use made of her by Jordan. She elicits emotional responses which threaten to be as self-destructive to Jordan as brooding

over the history of suicide in his family. In short, the only sort of relationship which Jordan is able to have with Maria is one where he uses her as a sleeping pill. While Jordan claims that there is more than the sexual aspect to their relationship his love is as questionable as are his motives for blowing up the bridge.

Previous to The Old Man and The Sea, each of Hemingway's books reveals that sex is one of the unavoidable complexities in men's lives. When investigating Santiago, (since Santiago lives by a code and therefore is a 'code hero') his sexuality must be questioned in terms of code action. Santiago appears to be entirely removed from the problems created by sexual instinct; his wife has been dead a long time and all that remains of her are a few trinkets and a picture. If he is, on the surface, removed from the problems of sex, his sexuality (if existent) must take place within the terms of the action of the story. These terms are not with Santiago's long forgotten wife but instead we find this aspect of his life taking place within the larger metaphysic of the sea. Santiago's sexuality is a metaphor for his affair with the sea and the life of self-assertion he leads.

The idea of sexuality as a metaphor presents us with the problem of whether or not Hemingway is justified in ignoring the other implications which physical sexuality contains. The problem of what some critics insist is a

lack of confrontation with emotion and sexuality in The Old Man and The Sea arises. The metaphysical continuity of sex in Hemingway's literature (of which I have only briefly sketched) is only apparently broken by Santiago. In the years before the action of this story takes place, Santiago's physical involvements with sex were with his wife. He also proved his masculine sexuality in his arm wrestling match with the negro. As a fisherman, Santiago has proven himself many times and must continue to do so. I believe that it is in the area of proving himself, of asserting his masculine capabilities that the sexuality of Santiago becomes a metaphor.

As implied in the story, Santiago is too old to either be able to partake of or be interested in sex, and yet he definitely has an affair with the sea. The sea is the old fisherman's source and support of life, his memento mori, his salvation and his destruction. The Old Man and The Sea takes on the dimensions of a love story of Santiago and 'la mar.' He neither belongs to the sea nor does it belong to him yet daily makes love to it. As Santiago, says, the other fishermen call it 'el mar' denoting something masculine, and daily fight it as an opponent but not so with him. Santiago gratefully and, more important, defiantly makes love to her while taking gracefully and nobly whatever he is given. The giant marlin is an orgasmic climax to this relationship. This use of the sea

by Santiago is consistant with the way Hemingway's heroes treat women throughout his writing. One is reminded of Margy Young-Hunt of John Steinbeck's book, Winter of Our Discontent, who lets the men of the town beat their frustrations out on her hips.

Santiago has a vast knowledge of the sea and a great compassion for those creatures, like himself, whose existence depends upon the sea. He knows where the great swell is, he knows the antics and characteristics of the sea's inhabitants and he knows just how to fish it. It is because of this intimate nature of Santiago's knowledge of the sea and the fact that his affair with the sea is essentially self-fulfilling that, metaphorically, Santiago's love for the sea is autoerotic.

The fact that Santiago is old is continually emphasized and reinforced yet the metaphor of Santiago's sexuality implies that within this old body there remains the power, vitality and youth with which sexuality is associated. This metaphor is supported through Santiago's continual assertion of himself and by the recurrence of his dream of the lions on the beach. "'Keep warm old man. Remember we are in September,' the boy said. Santiago replies 'The month when the great fish come...Anyone can be a fisherman in May."[11] The dichotomy of age and youth as played by Santiago and Manolin is reinforced by the obvious use of seasonal symbolism. Santiago feels that it

is easy for young men to be men; their masculinity is easily proved. It is in the September of one's life where masculinity is not measured by one's cojones but by how well one can perform from skill and memory. This time of old age is also safer because metaphorical sexuality is not subject to the irrationalities of young men and is therefore more easily controlled.

The lions are not only symbols of freedom and pride to Santiago, but of ultimate masculinity and sexuality.

> He no longer dreamed of storms, nor of women, nor of great occurences, nor of great fish, nor fights, nor contests of strength nor of his wife. He only dreamed of places now and of the lions on the beach. They played like young cats in the dusk and he loved them as he loved the boy. He never dreamed of the boy.[12]

This dream occurs the night before he catches the giant marlin. It is a dream of longing and the lions become internal crucifixes for Santiago. His vision of the lions is of young gods very similiar to the way the Egyptians viewed cats as gods and sexual symbols. The next time Santiago thinks of the lions, he is involved in his battle with the marlin. He asks himself a fatal and soul-searching question: "Why are the lions the main thing that is left? Don't think, old man he said to himself. Rest gently now against the wood and think of nothing."[13] Here again we see the avoidance of thought as a self-destructive process. Santiago realizes that there is more to his dreams than appears on the surface yet the answer-

ing of the questions which he asks himself would destroy the metaphor of his sexuality and as effectively destroy him as sexuality, to varying degrees, destroys other Hemingway heroes.

The more cognizant Santiago is of what life actually means, the more dangerous this self-realization becomes. This is one area where knowledge, for Santiago, does not mean control but rather provides a glimpse into chaos. When he again dreams of the lions, another dream of indulgence, the dream is tainted. The breaking down of the symbolism of the dream occurs partly because of Santiago's questioning of the dream and partly because he dreams at a time when physical alertness is demanded by the situation. He is brought out of his mental wandering by a sharp physical retribution by the marlin who is apparently spiritually tuned in to Santiago's laxity. The marlin, at this point, also seems to be reminding Santiago that it is September; as the cool land breezes of his dream merge with the reality of a still day, so Santiago's youth has gone. The book ends with Santiago, spread-eagled on his bed like a crucified Christ, dreaming once more of the lions. The lions are all Santiago has left. Early in the book, the lions possibly hold symbolic hope for Santiago but now they offer complete sublimation of everything else in return for the narcotic dream. In the end, Santiago is left with only a shadow of a metaphor.

Even in the terms in which Santiago's sexuality takes place, sexuality is a weak point in his stronghold of existence. Since sexual involvement is an area for Hemingway's characters, in which manhood is simultaneously proved and betrayed, there is a turning to other areas where masculinity and existence are asserted without the kind of danger sexual involvement brings. Often, these other areas of action are only repressive reactions to the fear of interpersonal involvement and provide only temporary solace. Personal assertion through action and courage help in keeping oneself occupied. This courage needed to face physical action can endure physical suffering but is ineffective against the pain wrought by personal or emotional involvement.

To fully understand Santiago's courage and action, it is imperative that the motivations of his actions are understood. While avoiding complexity seems to be basic to all of his actions, Santiago is desperately trying to prove himself as something. He tells us that he has proved himself a thousand times and yet he must prove himself again. It is a personal Illiad we are given in the relation of his tremendous arm battle with the negro giant. "As the sun set he remembered to give himself more confidence, the time in the tavern at Cassablanca when he had played the hand game with the negro from Cienfuegos who was the strongest man on the docks."[14] Santiago had not only proved him-

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self as a man, but ascertained his right to be a man. It is not enough that he was strong and that he was masculine in every sense of the word but he must, through action, show to himself that he still is capable of continuing his role. Now, in the September of his life as the sun sets at the end of the day, the memory of his past glories bridges the gap of years and gives Santiago confidence. This confidence is not as much in strength and skill as it is in his right to be where he is and doing what he is; it is a personal and historical destiny being fulfilled by the old man out in the Gulf Stream hooked to a giant marlin. The action of years past is not enough to sustain Santiago in the present for it is continued action which keeps Santiago alive. The past provings of himself in no way can compensate for the present so Santiago rigs his little skiff, goes beyond the shallow waters with the surer but smaller catch of these waters and into the Gulf Stream to struggle with la mar. It is necessary for Santiago to emerge from this struggle as El Campeon.

The metaphysical nature of the struggle as told in The Old Man and The Sea, paradoxically reveals man as a creature who, in spite of his ability to overcome tremendous odds, is ultimately doomed. Santiago's conscious and self-willed determination is seen when he says, "I told the boy I was a strange old man...Now is when I must prove it."[15] The maintenance of a clean, well-lighted room

see p. 67

is only possible by Santiago's persistence and determination and yet ultimately this room becomes an illusion. At the end, Santiago is as much in the code as he ever was but there is no longer any possibility of proving or asserting his right to manhood; he is a tired old man.

In the constant struggle for personal assertion, isolation and protection, it is interesting that Santiago has such a close relationship with the boy, Manolin. The obvious contrast of age and youth could make this relationship one of mutual desire and respect and the relationship then is not entirely unlike Blake's Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience except that here the lamb knows what is ahead. Another possibility is that their relationship is one which Santiago knows should be avoided but which attracts him anyway. The introduction to Manolin is very simple: "The old man had taught the boy to fish and the boy loved him."[16] Ostensibly Santiago treats the boy only as another fisherman but it becomes evident that both of these people love each other. Santiago is not a father figure to the boy because such a closeness would make Santiago responsible for the boy's future and fortune to a greater degree than Santiago wants to be responsible. Santiago loves Manolin not as a son or as a fisherman but rather with the same love he feels toward the lions on the beach. Manolin is more than just a young, noble creature; he becomes the young man of Santiago's

past faced with a life of infinite possibility.

However, as the lions invade the solitary struggle of Santiago with the marlin, so Manolin creeps into the privacy of Santiago's thoughts while at sea. Santiago finds himself wishing for Manolin's help and this wish mars the great, solitary courage of Santiago. Manolin, to a certain extent, provides company for Santiago within the solitary confines of Santiago's code of isolation. Manolin also provides Santiago with the sustainment of hope which in turn supports Santiago's vision of life and therefore also protects Santiago's vision.

As Bickford Sylvester points out, it is Manolin with whom Santiago carries out his game of charades. "There was no cast net and the boy remembered when they had sold it. But they went through this fiction every day. There was no pot of yellow rice and fish and the boy knew this too."[17] It is Manolin that is Santiago's provider, looking after Santiago's bodily needs on shore and leaving Santiago without these details to worry about while preparing to go fishing. Fishing is the main thing that is left for Santiago just as the lions are the main thing left in his dreams. Manolin makes it possible for Santiago to go out and once more try to prove himself.

While relationships between individuals are one of the ultimately unpredictable and uncontrollable areas of life, Manolin does not pose a major threat to Santiago's

simple life. Santiago's greatest battle in life is not with the marlin but rather with himself and his advancing old age. Without essentially removing or interfering with the private nature of this battle, Manolin provides Santiago with aid. Santiago does wish for the boy's help when he is fighting the marlin but the important factor is that Manolin is not there and their relationship does not leave Santiago incapable of taking willed action. He manages to bring the marlin up to the point of death all by himself. Even if the boy had been with him, the marlin still would have fought as hard, still would have been too big to put in the boat and still would have been destroyed by the sharks.

The morning before Santiago embarks on his fateful mission, he wakes Manolin and then apologizes when he sees Manolin is still sleepy. "Que va.' the boy said, 'It is what a man must do,'"[18] Here Manolin states the imperative not only for Santiago having to wake the boy but for the whole reason behind Santiago's existence. Everything which Santiago does can be summed up in the boy's statement, "It is what a man must do." There is no issue in life besides this necessity; Manolin recognizes that necessity and helps Santiago in his struggle by helping him face the marlin alone. At the end of the story, after Santiago has come in to port with the giant marlin's skeleton as the only testimony to an otherwise mute struggle,

again it is Manolin that looks after the physical needs of a crucified Santiago.

The relationship between Manolin and Santiago threatens to become as complicated as any of the inter-personal relationships in Hemingway's writing because of individual unpredictability. While Manolin may threaten to become a complication in Santiago's life by having Santiago become dependent on having Manolin supply his physical needs, this threat does not materialize. Manolin provides a way of making Santiago's job and life a little more simple and Santiago never expects Manolin to run errands or look after his physical needs. If Santiago had expected Manolin's service to the point of reliance, their relationship would have become a complexity to Santiago. Rather, Santiago accepts what Manolin has to offer and therefore keeps their relationship simple. Santiago has no responsibility to Manolin; what he does for Manolin and what Manolin does for him is done out of mutual love and respect, expecting nothing in return.

Another reason that the threat of their relationship becoming a complexity does not materialize is that the bout with the marlin is faced in isolation. The fact that the boy provides physical comfort at the end only serves to emphasize the suffering of Santiago while he had been in isolation. The boy's presence at the end also helps to point out that Santiago's three day ordeal was an entirely sep-

arate experience from the other fishermen's. (Manolin had been out three times and caught four fish since Santiago had left.)

Part of Santiago's drive to prove himself is for Manolin's sake. Manolin, indeed, is a reflection of Santiago as a young man, and as he proves himself, Santiago builds up a reincarnated youth. Their relationship is not imposed but rather a chosen one; Santiago has taught the boy since a very early age. Theirs is a deliberate, self-willed involvement which in itself offers a degree of surety. The friendship of Santiago and Manolin is much like Santiago's decision to fish way out in the Gulf Stream; their friendship contains possible dangers from dependence as well as the promise of a 'deep water' experience.

Fishing far out in the Gulf Stream by himself is not a negation of age for Santiago but rather an attempt to prove to himself and to Manolin that age, if anything, has tempered him into a tough, resilient man. Again we remember the words of Santiago, regarding September. This is "the month when the great fish come."[19] While Santiago does dream of the lions on the beach, he realizes that the dreams can only sustain him in a world without action. If he is to remain a man in the September of his life, he must turn to vigorous action as a means of combatting the senility that old age holds over him as Damocles' sword. The possibilities of retirement or a pension could only

exist in Santiago's mind as the lowest forms of obscene substitutions for death. However, Santiago's action is not motivated entirely from fear but also partly by his image as it appears to the boy. We see this in the following conversation which takes place prior to the battle with the marlin:

> "Que va," the boy said. "There are many good fishermen and some great ones. But there is only you."
>
> "Thank you. You make me happy. I hope no fish will come along so great that he will prove us wrong."
>
> "There is no such fish if you are still as strong as you say."
>
> "I may not be as strong as I think," the old man said. "But I know many tricks and I have resolution." [20]

While Santiago is in part motivated by the boy's image of him, Santiago has faith in his own ability. He does not believe himself to be invincible but still treasures the possibilities that the experience he is facing will hold. Another important aspect of Santiago's willingness to go beyond the other fishermen is the fact that Santiago thinks in terms of immediate action. In this conversation we see him expressing wonder regarding the outcome of the fishing trip but he still does act for the immediate present.

Santiago's tricks and resolution are only a small part of the action in which he involves himself. The importance placed on action by Santiago warrants a fuller discussion on the motivations behind the actions of Santiago

and on the action itself.

CHAPTER III

Control is one of the points of Santiago's code which has been briefly touched on in this paper. Santiago's self-imposed destiny is seen in the rigid self-control he enforces on himself and it is only through this control that there can be any victory for him. He muses that it is better to be lucky for then more fish are caught but there is no coincidence of luck with Santiago's age. While he feels that it may be better, commercially, to be lucky, he knows and feels that it is more noble to be skillful. Santiago's is an exact skill:

> Before it was really light he had his bait out and was drifting with the current. One bait was down forty fathoms. The second was at seventy-five and the third and fourth were down in the blue water at one hundred and one hundred and twenty-five fathoms. Each bait hung down with the shank of the hook inside the bait fish, tied and sewed solid and all the projecting part of the hook, the curve and the point, was covered with fresh sardines. Each sardine was hooked through both eyes so that they made a half-garland on the projecting steel.[21]

It is the exactness of this skill which Santiago can understand and which pays off. Before he hooks the marlin and he is dreaming about baseball, we see him bringing himself sharply around. "Now is the time to think only of one thing. That which I was born for."[22] It is not a coincidence that in the next moment, a time of complete preparation, the giant marlin takes the bait six hundred feet below the surface.

In striving to intensify the action to the utmost and

thus subordinate emotions, Santiago is driven to the point where the struggle with the marlin becomes a struggle to assert the very meaning of his existence. The marlin becomes an alter ego to Santiago which elicites emotional responses and moral justification. Each time Santiago becomes lax in his determination or lets his thoughts wander, the marlin seemingly punishes the old man with physical retribution. This punishment is a necessity in the context of the story for any laxity is a violation (not only in principle) of the code of action.

Santiago's involvement in action is self-willed; it is not the same kind of involvement that Lt. Henry in A Farewell to Arms experiences. Lt. Henry, seeking to escape the war for an evening, takes out Catherine, kisses her and then she says, "Oh darling...You will be good to me, won't you?"[23] Frederick Henry is drawn along with the current because a love affair seems to offer a more pleasant even though equally untrustworthy alternative to the war. Catherine draws him into a relationship that he is willing to be involved in but he is not ready for the commitments that she demands. He says, "I knew I did not love Catherine Barkley nor had any idea of loving her. This was a game..."[24] When Catherine tells Lt. Henry that she is going to have a baby, she asks "And you don't feel trapped?" He responds with, "Maybe a little. But not by you."[25] The baby is not the cause of his feeling trapped as much as his essentially

involuntary involvement.

Santiago's total involvement in action rather than the exploration of experience found throughout the Hemingway canon such as Catherine's and Lt. Henry's relationship) constitutes, according to some critics, a failure. It is the terms of this failure or possible success which must be examined. The Old Man and The Sea gives to the reader a 'triumph' of ritualized action in which action becomes a self-sustaining entity not requiring the kind of exploration of experience found in previous Hemingway stories. Since the code hero is essentially amoral, the 'triumph' of action as a way of life also must be investigated on amoral grounds.

Writing of the Hemingway code, Leo Gurko states that "It is not enough to have will; one must also have technique. If will is what enables one to live, technique is what enables one to live successfully."[26] It is through technique that Santiago attempts simultaneously to face life and to protect himself from the complexities of life. When discussing The Old Man and The Sea, it is possible to ignore any imposed 'code' but what we must not fail to do is to see the ritualized manner of living that Santiago has. Also, it is important that the limited scope of experience which this ritualized living offers be recognized.

The fight with the marlin is the highlight of Santiago's life but he must face this experience only in terms of the

rules he has formulated for himself throughout his life. His is a stoicism common to the Hemingway hero. However, the limitation in action seriously narrows any possibility for Santiago's action to achieve transcendent meaning. (The use of transcendence here and throughout this discussion is intended to refer specifically to the ability of the characters within the book to find enough meaning in Santiago's actions to allow them a vision of some 'larger than life' goal to their daily existence). Whereas the tragic implications of his fight with the marlin are not entirely destroyed, the validity of the experience lies solely within the code of ritualized action.

The ritual is an attempt to face life and death through reduction. This reducing of the acceptance of experience to fit given patterns is a negative approach to life for it becomes the avoidance of complexities. Santiago has proved himself a thousand times but he must prove himself again. It is not through the assertion of life that he can face death but rather through the assertion of death that he should be able to face life. Because Santiago is too late in accepting death, he cannot fully experience life. Even after he brings in the marlin's skeleton, he cannot give up but must maintain the illusion of his succes. Only as he maintains the ritualized formulation of belief can he remain in a realm of stability. This role which Santiago plays is a very particular one which he has

been preparing for all of his life and is, as Gurko points out, static as is everything else in Santiago's world.

An article by F. W. Dupee states that Hemingway's "new novel, The Old Man and The Sea, has nothing to do with the legend, except as it registers a determination to shake the legend off."[27] This attempt to classify the action as self-supporting (that is sufficient to sustain life in itself) cannot be entirely trusted. The facts that the story is written so as to appear simple and that the code of action is of the most basic kind of code do not justify a simplistic approach to the story. These aspects all serve Santiago in the capacity of camouflaging life's complexities.

S. Cooperman sees this total dwelling on action as a kind of emasculation. "Essential to this emasculation is the inability to handle any quality of otherness except in terms of ritualization. The other, whether animate or inanimate, is tolerable only insofar as it can be manipulated, controlled as one controls the trout-line, the bull-fight, the hunt, or the female..."[28] Hemingway's heroes live in a constant fear of a personal Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty. This principle states that nothing can ever be exactly determined since by the act of observing of participating, that thing ("animate or inanimate") is changed. The result of such a philosophy, whether held consciously or subconsciously, is that the world is seen

as unstable and changing, much to the fear of those who seek stability. This uncertainty is the reason behind Cooperman's statement in an article entitled "Death and Cojones" where he states that "there is in Hemingway's work an almost maidenish fear of the full spectrum of potentialities within experience."[29] The inescapable and final experience of death is not faced unless by ritual because it holds the unknown. All that Santiago can do is to pretend that there is no death but if he cannot accept death, he cannot live. The irony and tragedy of Santiago's clean, well-lighted place is that it represents "a search for those areas where a man can at least maintain the illusion of making love to death rather than being violated by it."[30] Santiago does make love to the sea but the sea, in spite of his knowledge and skill as a fisherman, "violates" Santiago anyway.

There is more truth than is at first apparent in Santiago's statement that fishing kills him in the same way as it keeps him alive. Not only does this idea present a revelation of Santiago's insight into his situation but also it gives a prophetic outlook regarding the action. He abandons everything except for the solitary purpose of catching a giant marlin and yet secretly Santiago realizes that the significance of the action he is involved in is an illusion. At the hands of la mar he cannot make love to death. The sea is predictable only to a certain extent;

the manner in which the sea pierces Santiago through with Santiago's own lance comes as an unexpected shock. It is not the fight with the fish nor the physical torture of the sea which makes Santiago so susceptible but rather it is his intimate relationship with the marlin. The marlin becomes Santiago's brother; it becomes his own self. The marlin is huge, a largeness brought by age, and yet it has all the qualities of nobleness and strength that the young lions on the beach have. When Santiago plunges the harpoon into the marlin it is a plunge necessary to culminate the action. At the same time as Santiago plunges, he kills part of himself. It is immediately after the first shark violates the marlin that Santiago shows weakness and begins to rationalize both his action and his motivation.

The killing of the marlin is a necessary sin and is followed by commensurate guilt.

> It is silly not to hope, he thought. Besides I believe it is a sin. Do not think about sin, he thought. There are enough problems now without sin. Also I have no understanding of it.
>
> I have no understanding of it and I am not sure that I believe in it. Perhaps it was a sin to kill the fish. I suppose it was even though I did it to keep me alive and feed many people. But then everything is a sin. Do not think about sin. It is much too late for that and there are people who are paid to do it. Let them think about it. You were born to be a fisherman as the fish was born to be a fish. San Pedro was a fisherman as was the father of the great Di Maggio.
>
> But he liked to think about all things he was involved in and since there was nothing to read and he did not have a radio, he thought

> much and kept on thinking about sin. You did not kill the fish only to keep alive and to sell for food, he thought. You killed him for pride and because you are a fisherman. You loved him when he was alive and you loved him after. If you love him, it is not a sin to kill him. Or is it more?
>
> "You think too much, old man," he said aloud.
>
> But you enjoyed killing the dentuso, he thought. He lives on the live fish as you do...
>
> "I killed him in self-defence," the old man said aloud. "And I killed him well."
>
> Besides, he thought, everything kills everything else in some way. Fishing kills me exactly as it keeps me alive. The boy keeps me alive, he thought. I must not deceive myself too much.[31]

In this passage, which is the longest piece of moralizing Santiago engages in, we see revealed the whole conflict of the death of the marlin as well as the acceptance of death as a vulnerable or exposed state.

When Santiago spits his bloody saliva into the ocean and says "Eat that galanos, And make a dream you've killed a man,"[32] two cogent points are revealed. The first point is that the shark's desecration of the marlin is a desacration of Santiago's own existence. But it is the second point which is more important and that is Santiago says "make a dream" which indicates that it is not the sharks who have put Santiago's death in him. Santiago is dying because he is tired inside and because there is so little left for him in life now that the marlin, his brother, is dead. Santiago is tired but still he refuses to accept the ultimate death that awaits him. His suffering is drawn out not because of fate but because he can deal with suf-

fering through endurance while death ends all and cannot be coped with in any known terms. Even if Santiago would die at this point, bravely and with any form of control, his death would be more futile than the death of any of Hemingway's characters. One is reminded of T. S. Eliot's poem, "The Hollow Men," where we see that:

> This is the way the world ends
> This is the way the world ends
> This is the way the world ends
> Not with a bang but a whimper. [33]

Santiago's sustainment of a dream, a dream that is symbolized by that of the lions on the beach, becomes a pathetic ending for one who has undergone what he has. His physical body, at the end, becomes his worst enemy. His body betrays him; his left hand continually cramps on him. "I hate a cramp, he thought. It is a treachery of one's own body. It is humiliating before others to have diarrhoea from ptomaine poisoning or to vomit from it. But a cramp, he thought of it as a calombre, humiliates oneself especially when one is alone."[34] His hands and his face, the naked parts of his body, continually remind him of his 'oldness'. No matter how hard he tries to avoid the problem of age and what it is doing to his way of life, he is still haunted by the unavoidable spectre of time.

Of all the complexities which Santiago must face, time is the one which looms largest. The trail of time is evident as it marches across his life, his hands, his work

and everything he is involved with except the changeless sea. It is a much more foreboding view of time than the description Hemingway once gave: "It is the food of experience, the soil of wisdom."[35] Through a concentration on total action, Santiago has attempted to create a timeless world and yet at best the world of Santiago's making provides only a nearly invincible suit of armour. The protection has its Achille's heel for without this flaw, the sharks would not have had the effect they did on him. Theoretically the action alone should have been able to entirely fulfil Santiago but it does not and consequently he has to bring in the skeleton as an assertion of his abilities of his life.

When he comes to the lights of Havanna, we have this realization:

> He could feel he was inside the current now and he could see the lights of the beach colonies along the shore. He knew where he was now and it was nothing to get home.
>
> The wind is our friend, anyway, he thought. Then he added, sometimes. And the great sea with our enemies. And bed, he thought. Bed is my friend. Just bed, he thought. Bed will be a great thing. It is easy when you are beaten, he thought. I never knew how easily it was. And what beat you, he thought.
>
> "Nothing," he said aloud. "I went out too far."[36]

Life for Santiago has been a continual battle to avoid complexities and finally he must come home to port; home is a place where life is active only in the imagination. The only way idleness can be fought by Santiago in port is to

drink beer on the plaza and plan other great fishing trips that will never come true. The pain of Di Maggio's bone spur becomes mere idle talk in port whereas Santiago could actually feel the same pain while fighting the marlin. After the marlin is dead and the pain has passed, he asks himself, "But do you think my hands were as great a handicap as the bone spurs."[37]

The battle with the marlin is Santiago's final struggle. The magnitude of the episode and the fact that the marlin is Santiago's "true brother" altogether eliminates the possibility of a superceding climax. The time setting is in the September of Santiago's life, the hurricane seasons, and it is a time which is extremely dangerous. The possibility of a magnanimous success with such adventure and such a fish is offset by the possibility of a correspondingly great defeat.

In spite of Santiago's attempts to keep everything simple, he becomes involved in a heroic but very real life and death struggle. The line joining him to the marlin becomes a common umbilical cord forcibly linking them together. From the fatal moment when the marlin is hooked, Santiago's life passes before him in an almost direct parallel to the struggle of the marlin. However, when the marlin is tired, as is Santiago, the fish comes up to meet his death in a brilliant climax. Santiago goes out to sea to meet his death ("fishing kills me exactly as it keeps

me alive") but the climax of the fight with the marlin does not result in an immediate death for Santiago. Rather, Santiago is like a matador who made a clean kill and then carelessly or fatefully, whichever one prefers, is gored by the falling bull because of a careless move by the matador. In the beginning of the story Santiago has good vision, "Everything about his was old except his eyes..."[38] but now his vision has become clouded and he fails to see the consequences that the marlin's death may have. The fish's death puts Santiago's death in him as well but Santiago dies more slowly with his old battered body making a mockery of him. ["His very oldness is monumental and rock-like; this endurance becomes a statement of desire rather than a human reality."[39]

Ultimately the meaning that Santiago's endurance and affirmation holds lies entirely within the confines of the walls Santiago has built. While he is alone in the Gulf Stream and fishing, we see his tremendous skill, strength, and stamina. These three areas of experience in action help Santiago maintain a certain freedom from moralizing or philosophizing on life and his specific role in life. Even though these areas of experience help to maintain the illusion of simplicity, the complexities of life lurk in shadows, threatening torment whenever Santiago's defences are down. In moments of weakness, Santiago questions his role in the areas of strength, luck, isolation and specifically

old age. While he fishes, the action sustains him for it calls into play all of his defence mechanisms. But when he is finished bringing in the marlin, the real Santiago, stripped of his armour, emerges from behind a facade and he is a physically and spiritually tired old man.

His rituals are meaningful to him while he is able to maintain the identity of the stoical fisherman. Robbed of a boat and a fish, the rituals only prolong the fiction and ultimately prove traitorous. The rituals are traitors because now, even with rituals, Santiago cannot meet life's reality; Santiago's encounter with the marlin has invaded his life to a greater degree than he realized. When he says "it is either you or me, fish,"[40] ironically both must die.

The meaning of ritual action is valid and helpful only for as long as the illusion can be sustained. The illusion is the original cause or condition which necessitated that kind of action. When Santiago is finally back at Havanna, things have changed for him; the reader is given the feeling that the sustainment of the first picture we have of him--"He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream."[41]--is no longer possible. The simple, manly life Santiago has led no longer provides sufficient protection against life's complexities; even with all the simplicity, old age creeps into his life, totally unreconcilable with Santiago's way of life. While the sharks of the ocean have

stripped Santiago's marlin clean, symbolically the sharks of reality and especially the one called time have left Santiago with only his dreams of the lions and a new Ford spring lance. Perhaps the saddest thing for Santiago is that he does attempt to die by the same code which enabled him to live and yet death does not come at the moment of truth. All of Santiago's efforts have been towards the retention of hope and yet it is evident at the end of the story how entirely without sustenance is the hope that Santiago has left.

An optomistic outlook regarding Santiago's actions is seen in an article published by B. Sylvester. He states that "The Old Man and The Sea reveals Hemingway's successful achievement at last, of a coherent metaphysical scheme--of a philosophical naturalism which although largely mechanistic in principle, embraces the realm of human affairs and gives transcendent meaning to the harsh inevitabilities Hemingway has always insisted upon recording."[42] Not only does this statement comment on the possible significance of Santiago's action but also it brings another critical issue into focus. We must ask the questions--to what extent is there a larger transcendent or symbolic meaning to the story and if there is, to what extent does a larger meaning affect Santiago as a private man? It is very important that the private nature of the struggle be realized.

The opening words of the story state that Santiago

"was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream..."[43] After he hooks the marlin, Santiago emphasizes the solitude of his whole life. Speaking of the marlin, Santiago says, "His choice had been to stay in the deep, dark water far beyond all snares and traps and treacheries. My choice was to go there and find him beyond all people. Beyond all people in the world. Now we are joined together and have been since noon. And no one to help either one of us."[44] Sylvester feels that this isolated action provides a discovery of a truth in the story (for the reader) which can give "meaning to all struggles, including man's."[45] What this great truth actually is, Sylvester does not bother to explain. Because of various assumptions in Sylvester's "Extended Vision" article, he goes on to conclude that one of the redeeming themes of The Old Man and The Sea is not isolation but interdependence; Sylvester asserts that the meaning of Santiago's action leads to the conclusion that mankind is not an island. Sylvester assumes that self-reliance and self-containment of the individual can supply the needs of an essentially depraved society; this is a negation of the vital fact that Santiago's sole commitment in life is to himself. Jake Barnes of The Sun Also Rises is another very good example of a man in isolation. The reader is made quickly aware of Barnes' impotence and yet we see that he is not and cannot be immune to the subtleties, amenities and dangers of women. Jake Barnes'

running away, like Santiago's exploration of action, takes the form of continual motion and activity. The fact that both Jake Barnes and Santiago are continually doing something shows that their activity is a narcotic to the heightened sensitivity of what it really means to be all alone. For Jake Barnes, the drunken affairs and sordid scenes are only the other side of his mirror; they are a hazy recollection of the times before the stupid wound and also a blurred picture of the life he is actually leading in his attempts to escape the consequence of being what he is at the present, a man in isolation. Jake Barnes can no more serve as a redeemer to the depraved society than can Santiago. I use the word depraved in the sense that in The Old Man and The Sea, all the other fishermen fish only in the shallow water, never allowing themselves to be placed in a position for a 'deep-water' experience. Before Santiago can serve as any kind of saviour to these others, he must solve his own problems and needs.

Perhaps what Sylvester feels is the 'truth' imparted to the reader is found in the "affirmation of the values of strength, total immersion in activity, and the exploration of adversity."[46] What Sylvester was looking for in Santiago is the kind of men Hemingway was fascinated by; "I delight," says Hemingway, "in men of power, in masters of situations, in masters of men."[47] However, Santiago is no longer powerful, is governed by situation and does not

want to master men. If the role of saviour requires firstly self-reconciliation, one can question whether these values observed by Sylvester actually reconciles Santiago as a man to the world around him. For Hemingway's characters, the only and ultimate reconciliation comes with death. Strength, activity and exploration of adversity are three channels of exploration in this novella but these serve as positive forces in Santiago's life only to the extent where they become avoidances of complexity.

The exploitation of adversity which is an opposition to natural forces "is paradoxically revealed," claims Sylvester, "as necessary to vitality in the natural field upon which the action takes place."[48] What he is trying to persuade the reader to accept is that the isolated agony, suffering and defeat that Santiago undergoes out in the Gulf Stream become a meaningful experience for the shallow water fishermen. While the assertion of humanity in terms of nobleness and dignity is positive, the casting of Santiago in the role of symbolic hero is not in accord with the story. The other fishermen simply cannot relate in any meaningful way to Santiago's experience; all they can do is wonder at the size of such a huge skeleton.

Melvin Backman takes a more realistic approach to this dilemna. In an article entitled, 'The Matador and the Crucified' (1955), he points out that Santiago is indeed crucified but the possibility of a saviour role ultimately

has nothing to do with Santiago but rather other people's conception of Santiago. The fact that Santiago is crucified is also strangely intermingled with his role as a matador. Backman says that The Old Man and The Sea is a prime example of the crucified in Hemingway's work. The receiving of pain and the reaction to it are a determination of Santiago's stance which in turn measures his courage. "Although it is unjust, he thought. But I will show him what a man can do and what a man endures."[49] p. 16 The matador motif is "a great force held in check, releasing itself proudly in a controlled yet violent administering of death."[50] The moment of truth occurs when Santiago becomes one with the marlin at the instant death enters both of them.

Santiago shares the death in a manner no other Hemingway hero is capable of doing. This closeness becomes paradoxically at once more meaningful in the act of communion and more obscene in the devastation of the marlin by the sharks. Santiago's killing of the marlin is the completion of love and the degrading of love. The intensity of the relationship between Santiago and the marlin leaves the old man so susceptible that when the sharks attack, they may as well have been tearing chunks from the fisherman's heart.

Identification rests not with the killer in this story as in previous ones by Hemingway but rather with the victim. This transference is interesting not so much in

the questioning of a right to kill but in the determination of roles. At the end, the role of victim has been taken by Santiago; "Santiago's killing of the fish is his suffering."[51] The final triumph of enduring pain and of success in catching the marlin to end his bad luck is offset by the rewards of a haunting skeleton sailing as a ghost ship beside the skiff and the fact that Santiago's death is now also in him.

Harry Morgan of To Have and Have Not drifts on the Gulf Stream surrounded by the same things which are around Santiago. For Harry, there is no marlin with which to struggle; there is nothing at all with which to fight and yet both Harry and Santiago need something to oppose. As water springs off a tight cable, so vitality arises from the action of a struggle and a realization of the need to struggle. Hemingway does not capture the struggle that Harry has against succumbing to pain as he so effectively does with Santiago but he prophetically utters something through Harry Morgan; this is a death-bed utterance which Hemingway fights all through The Old Man and The Sea and yet seemingly would like to ignore:

> "Don't fool yourself," he said. The captain and the mate both bent over him. Now it was coming. "Like trying to pass cars on the top of hills. On that road in Cuba. On any road. Anywhere. Just like that. I mean how things are. The way that they been going. For a while yes sure all right. Maybe with luck. A man" He stopped...

> "A man," Harry Morgan said, looking at them both. "One man alone ain't got. No man alone now." He stopped. "No matter how a man alone ain't got no bloody...chance."
>
> He shut his eyes. It had taken him a long time to get it out and it had taken him all of his life to learn it. [52]

Harry dies, as Santiago ultimately must, because he was tired not only physically but also spiritually weary of fighting to stay alive. While death may come easy when one is already tired or dead inside, it is when life has been experienced as both Harry and Santiago have experienced at one time (Harry's passion for his wife and Santiago's recurrent dream of the lions), death comes much harder.

Lt. Henry in A Farewell To Arms also relates his concept of death and what death does to people. He says, "The brave dies perhaps two thousand deaths if he's intelligent. He simply doesn't mention them."[53] Later on when things begin to close in on Frederick and Catherine we see a very fatalistic outlook, an outlook which must also be applied to Santiago's tiredness. Lt. Henry says:

> If people bring so much courage to this world, the world has to kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. The world breaks everyone and afterwards many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry.[54]

The proof that Santiago is close to death is that he is too noble and too brave to be broken any more and he must die. He admits to himself that "You're tired old man...

You're tired inside."[55] It is much more than physical weariness brought on by the physical struggle but rather the 'spiritual' implications of the struggle-death-destruction motif that bring Santiago to his death. Again, when the sharks mutilated the marlin we find this tragic passage; "The old man could hardly breathe now and he felt a strange taste in his mouth. It was coppery and sweet and he was afraid of it for a moment...He spat into the ocean and said, 'Eat that galanos. And make a dream you've killed a man."[56] The physical breaking of his body is evident in this passage but what is just as important is that the sharks are not the ones who put Santiago's death in him. It is also important to note that Santiago's fear of the death in him is brief because he cannot allow himself to think about the possibilities. Rather than taking the idea of death bravely, I feel there is a fatalistic resignation in Santiago's attitude.

Santiago cannot be viewed as a saviour figure who has or even provides enlightened vision that mankind is not an island as Bickford Sylvester suggests. To view Santiago as such would place the cross squarely on the old fisherman's shoulders. Hemingway attempts to do this in the scene where Santiago carries the mast back to his hut. However, there is no redemption for the fishermen who spend their lives meagerly fishing in the shallow waters, afraid to face the great natural forces, potentials and dangers of the Gulf

Stream. The bravery and suffering of one old man is hardly a great enough price to pay to redeem the unfortunates who will never embrace any such ultimate struggle as does Santiago. Their crosses must be born alone. The impression which Santiago does impart to the other fishermen is questionable as to depth and comprehension. The motivation of Santiago in his struggle, as dynamic as it was, and the failure of the other fishermen to grasp the real meaning of his action casts serious doubts over Santiago's role as a transcendental hero within the context of the book.

Santiago's eventual reconciliation to death (not the resignation which has been indicated) cannot and does not take place within the limits of the story. The essential struggle is not that of Santiago dying but rather the intensely personal struggle which is based solely in action. Even moralizing is negated as traitorous to one's existence. While action is necessary, for Santiago action becomes a skilled mechanical response which is self-perpetuating and finally rewarded only by an approaching nada.

Hemingway's exactness in technical detail (both through verbal description and the demand on his heroes) is reflected in the various heroes' attempts to control the results of their action. Harry Morgan says that Mr. Johnson's way of fishing was sloppy. Harry demanded control and precision in his clients as well as in himself. He also keeps emphasizing that the only way that big marlins can be fished

is to troll and then when hooked the fisherman must be ready to take real punishment before boating the fish. While the idea of punishment is not understood by Mr. Johnson, it is evident that the enjoyment is not of soft sensuality but something fulfilling which adds magnanimity to success. The greater the exactness and skill, the more success in fishing as well as in the ultimately uncontrollable microcosm. However, the ritual of exactness in action does not aid Santiago in actually contronting problems as much as it does in avoiding them since the confrontations which take place within the code are very limited in meaning. Everything great and heroic for which Santiago is given credit becomes tainted by the matter of his ritualized action and the consequences of a lack of confrontation.

Bickford Sylvester ignores the fact that Santiago is going through a purposeful ritual; he only looks at the action and its connotations in a context removed from any code. The consequence of this view is that there is a false perspective regarding the kind of redemption provided. "Hemingway has at last been able to employ the central paradox of the bullfight and the hunt so as successfully to reconcile the forces of love and violence which have hitherto remained ironically separated..."[57] says Sylvester. Once more he ignores the facts of previous occurences of love and violence in Hemingway's works as they fit the role of willed, personalized action.

For Santiago, there is an attempt to maintain the illusion of simplicity; any involvement which threatens to become love threatens the existence of the illusion and of Santiago himself. But Santiago loves the sea and loves the marlin as something which symbolizes all that is good and mysterious and powerful in the sea. While the love for the marlin is a direct cause of Santiago's destruction, Hemingway attempts to salvage the old fisherman through a simultaneous occurence of love and violence. While the marlin ultimately must be killed, just before Santiago actually drives the lance into the fish we have a very unusual abstraction coming from Santiago. He says, "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."[58] This is an abstraction because Santiago's refusal to accept the reality of death previously has not essentially changed; the death of which he is talking here must be abstract, a symbolic thanatos. Again, after the marlin is being taken back to Havanna, Santiago says that "Fishing kills me exactly as it keeps me alive."[59] Violence has become a manifestation of love, and love a manifestation of violence. Killing the marlin becomes an act of love through which self-assertion is attained; the marlin's death is much more symbolic to Santiago than the success of a commercial venture seen in the shallow water fishermen.

Love and violence are a fullfillment of willed, personalized action only as long as they can be controlled. Santiago can neither love nor kill the marlin until the marlin takes the bait and is secured to Santiago's line. Whereas involvement has created throughout Hemingway's writing a danger to individual existence, in The Old Man and The Sea Hemingway has tried to lessen this danger through the simultaneous exploration of love and violence. It is because these areas become more than areas of exploration but rather areas of escape that Hemingway's attempt to provide some kind of protection for Santiago fails.

There are no slogans uttered as the old man drives the lance through to the marlin's heart yet we know that action culminates, in one instant, all of the fisherman's love and violence. There is also a love and violence symbolized by the Mako's terrifying beauty. Sylvester attempts to argue that this joining of diametric opposites is indicative of a new outlook, a new mode in Hemingway's writing. If love and violence occurring as aspects of each other is new for Hemingway then it is possible to say that all earlier stories of Hemingway are irrelevant or at least not of major importance in commenting on the kind of resolution which is undergone in The Old Man and The Sea. However, I believe that there is a metaphysical continuity in this particular aspect of experience throughout the Hemingway canon and therefore a metaphysical perspective is needed

in regarding the occurence of love and violence in The Old Man and The Sea. A metaphysical perspective in this case is one where it is the essential effect of the two areas as they appear together in Santiago's life, an effect which becomes the major concern rather than the mere observance of the paradox. This effect as already stated, is one which appears to offer a sanctuary from involvement but eventually must lead to Santiago's destruction (even though it may be subconscious or fatalistic) as another attempt to avoid complexity through ritual.

In another article by Sylvester based on a phrase coined by Carlos Baker, "Informed Illusion in The Old Man and The Sea," we find that there is an admittance of the presence of a ritual in this novella. The ritual, finds Sylvester, is a systematized sustainment of belief or informed illusion which helps in upholding the belief which made the illusion both possible and necessary in the beginning. This perpetration of belief reveals that Santiago must fill the void that plagues him during periods of inactivity, a void which is filled with nothing but disillusionment and despair. The falsity has become a necessary part of Santiago's life.

To a greater degree than any of Hemingway's other protagonists, Santiago masters a ritual which permits life or at least existence in an annihilation-threatening world. It is the realization by Santiago of his ritualized life

through self-willed or purposeful action which enables him to carry on. This action is purposeful to the extent that the aim is to perpetuate the ritual.

In the "Informed Illusion" article, Sylvester points out that there is a retention of hope while recognizing the hopelessness and inevitability of Nada. The fact that the old man is never completely despondent reveals that there is and must be some hope with which to avoid the full significance presented by the utter nothingness of destruction. At the end of the story the retention of hope becomes pitiful when one realizes that Santiago will never even make a Ford spring lance let alone plunge one into any more marlins. Again we see that Santiago places his hope in something tangible and possibly controllable, as he has tried to do all of his life.

Leo Gurko says that "There is no less tragedy than before, but his has lost its bleakness and accidentality, and became purposive."[60] Frederick Henry believes that he can control his amount of involvement in the war by being an ambulance driver; he says, "Well, I knew I would not be killed. Not in this war. It did not have anything to do with me."[61] Then the "bleakness and accidentality" of which Gurko speaks is revealed. While eating macaroni and cheese, Lt. Henry is nearly killed from the shrapnel from a mortar. The uncontrollable or accidental aspect of this event becomes a very real and physical complexity to Henry.

In A Farewell To Arms and other Hemingway stories previous to The Old Man and The Sea we see irony rather than tragedy. For Santiago, willed, purposeful action is the fulcrum of the tragedy and Santiago's awareness heightens the intensity of the outcome.

Santiago's field of action has its own complexities which, in spite of apparent simplicity of life, threaten Santiago's ability to understand and control his own life. The immersion in a non-industralized, non-political sphere of action does not bring any liberation in itself; it only simplifies and intensifies the remained complexities. Of this simplicity, we find Gurko saying that Hemingway's "ability to get inside this type of character without the fatal self-consciousness that mars so much literary 'primitivism' is a measure of how far he has succeeded...in freeing himself from the familiar restraints of convention,"[62] It is when Santiago breaks this simplicity of action and becomes self-conscious that complications arise which threaten the possibility of a return to the realm of simplicity.

CHAPTER IV

We are forced to ask what the meaning of action within a ritualized framework can possibly be. Sylvester says that "...the value of the rare act is found in the act itself."[63] If this were so it would justify Sylvester's other arguements which have been mentioned. However, I do not feel that his statement can be accepted as true since there are other implications which must be answered. Santiago's success in finding a more complete meaning to life through immersion in action is limited. The old man is totally involved in his work, specifically that of catching and landing a giant marlin and this action drives thoughts from his mind. Yet Santiago cannot help but keep returning to abstractions, aspirations and moralizations. When this action in which he is involved meets its ultimate end in the mouths of the sharks, Santiago does not go down to immediate destruction but still attempts to maintain his own clean, well-lighted room. In port he does attempt to carry on the fiction with Manolin even though his, Santiago's, death is in him.

If we were able to ignore the motivation of avoidance behind most of Santiago's actions and concentrate on the action itself, there is the possibility of vitality, meaning and dignity which the encounter with the marlin has given to Santiago's life. The tremendous courage and skill seems to lend personal enrichment to the aged fisherman. He has proven himself once more. If it were not for the

drive for avoidance, the fact that the dream of the lions at the end is a swan's song would also not matter. Even though all visible evidence is that of failure, it was a momentous failure and he has commanded a new glint of respect in the eyes of the other fishermen. Unlike To Have and Have Not and Winner Take Nothing there seems to be a glory here in the magnitude of effort behind the failure of the old man. If all these things were true, then we might suppose that Hemingway has finally revealed a new and vibrant resolution to life. However, the fact remains that these possibilities are negated by the motivation behind Santiago's actions.

The Old Man and The Sea is a powerful book but not even Hemingway knew where the compelling and moving power came from. I believe that the source of the power is the unique resolution of the action being at once a success and a failure. The failure is mainly the lack of transcendence within the story. Santiago cannot give himself to a meaningful relationship with anybody other than himself. Even his relationship with Manolin remains on the grounds of devotion of a pupil to a master. However, the lack of Santiago's transcendence, his social-unconsciousness, operates at a different level than his desire to be alone; it is not isolation which is the sole cause of the failure in transcendental terms. Individualism or isolation is not a negative force in itself for Santiago but rather is danger-

ous in its vulnerability. "It is in solitude," writes Hemingway, "that the passion for perfection best nurses itself. The soul communes with itself in loneliness until its energies often become intense."[64] This intensity of individualism not only permits the greatest climax of experience but also holds in store the worst possible defeats. Santiago's 'victory' arises from the fact that he is the most successful of all of Hemingway's protagonists in keeping his action within the confines of the code, even though this way of life is inevitably damned.

Because Santiago is able to exist within the code to a greater extent that any previous Hemingway hero, I believe it is necessary to investigate the action from an existential viewpoint. Writing of the problem of existentialism, Albert Camus said that "...the great problem of modern times arises: the discovery that to rescue man from destiny is to deliver him to chance. That is why the contemporary mind is trying so desperately hard to restore destiny to man--an historical destiny this time."[65] In Santiago's desparate attempt to assert himself, he becomes a metaphysical rebel, rebelling against "his condition and against the whole of creation."[66] In asserting himself he denies God; he places his actions within a historical destiny, a destiny which denies eternal stability and which places faith solely in man and his place in the continuum of time. Nada is the hopelessness of chance which may lure like the dark shadows beyond the room's light but the dan-

gers of chance cause a necessity to rely on a specified code of action. If the existential viewpoint of Santiago as a metaphysical rebel may be accepted then the thought of Santiago's possible transcendence is an innate contradiction. Santiago's historical destiny of a life of action (to assert existence) is fulfilled in this story in the fight with the giant marlin. Throughout the struggle between Santiago and the fish we never hear him crying out for justice for he has no concept of justice (since within the context of the historical destiny there are mistakes but no sins) even though there is a larger morality evident in the killing of the fish and the consequent paying with his own life. While it is because of this larger morality that Santiago feels guilty for sinning, even the guilt over the fish's death must be suspect in existential terms. Camus says, quoting Epicurus. "Death has no meaning for us, for what is indefinable is incapable of feeling, and what is incapable of feeling has no meaning for us."[67] Existential philosophy also holds "...an insistance that human life is understandable only in terms of an individual man's existence, his particular way of life."[68]

Santiago is indeed a unique man, not representative and not able to be classified in any order or schemata. We see Santiago's life as something which is totally ultrarational and consequently he is unable to use reason to

explain things or understand life. At the same time reason is incapable of answering his needs, we must realize that it is the whole man, a unified being including reason, feeling, action and every other area of human experience, which makes Santiago what he is. This complex makeup of Santiago is the reason that paradox and ambiguity are the only methods Hemingway has of presenting Santiago's dealing with the desired and the dangerous; to maintain a vision of simplicity of life, Santiago must be able to react in the safest way in given situations and the safest way is often paradoxical. Involvement becomes a paradox in itself because Santiago must deal with disimiliar knowledge and feeling. It is also the fact of the nature of Santiago's involvement in the Cartesian duality (the fact of being and understanding the interaction of self with the world compose this duality) that justifies an existential outlook.

At the same time that isolation aids Santiago in maintaining a unified illusion, he is overwhelmed by his alienation. "For the man aliented from God..., from his fellow man and from himself, what is left at last but Nothingness."[69] This emptiness brings a need to fill the void which is why Santiago is so active. The code of ritualized action by which he becomes involved is then finally an attempt to delay or disguise the ultimate pessimistic ending Santiago sees himself heading towards.

An existential view of Santiago and his actions also makes necessary an investigation into the possibility of transcendental meaning within The Old Man and The Sea and the role of the symbolic hero. Emanuel Kant specified that it was through the intuitions of the mind that experiences were felt rather than through forms created by past experience. Very basically, transcendental knowledge exceeds the physical limits of conception and conceived, resulting in unilateral symbolic action of the aspects of subject and object on each other; this is how symbols are born. "To consider the literary work as a piece of language is to regard it as a symbol, autonomous in the sense that it is quite distinct both from the personality of its author and from any world of pure objects, and creative in the sense that it brings into existence its own meaning."[70] This statement is indicative of transcendental meaning but also raises the question of metaphysical perspective of the work. The perspective of Hemingway in The Old Man and The Sea can be determined in the answers Hemingway gives to questions; these answers take the form of "paradox, ambiguity, metaphor, tension."[71] With this type of answer, the destruction of the Cartesian duality of subject and object takes place. Meaning becomes an activity which is a unique relationship between what formerly was known as subject and object with both sides affecting the relationship. Wallace Steven's poetry is an excellent example of

the use of transcendental knowledge.

What all this leads to is that the symbolic hero (in transcendental terms) can be defined as that form of man which joins together the finite and the infinite. Through the symbolic hero, other characters of a story should be able to 'see the light.' However, we have already seen that Santiago has removed himself from a destiny which presupposes the existence of an infinite. Contrary to the role of the romantic hero of Carlyle, Santiago's role does not include a conscious destruction of idols or other objects which the other fishermen have mistakenly placed as symbols but are in reality solely objects or broken symbols.

Santiago's role is firstly to show that he has within him the human dignity suited to the role of a symbolic hero. Before he has his death in him he has the appearance of a transcendental hero, an appearance based on the natural conclusion of the action in which he is involved. This appearance proves to be meaningless because he cannot face death and when the death becomes so real that he cannot ignore it he simply resigns himself to it. At this point Santiago's ritual of action collapses and all that is left is a spectre; it is also at this point that Santiago fails as a symbolic or transcendental hero within the context of the story.

Rather than defeat or destruction, perhaps Santiago's

indicated death should be seen as simply the end. Santiago's thought that a man can be destroyed but not defeated indicates that death is not destruction and if faced like a man, is not defeat. When a man becomes an old woman, figuratively speaking, then he is no longer a man and his masculinity is destroyed. Since he would no longer be a man, defeat becomes not only possible but inevitable. In life man is succeptible; he may be destroyed and then defeated. Death may be more than a final reward for man because it can become a final affirmation of a particular way of life. Death offers a final stasis and if death is faced bravely, as only a man can face death, then death not only reaffirms the stoical existence but also presents a certain immortality. In Hemingway's own life we see self-willed death as the final choice to overcome his physical illness and thus reaffirm his philosophy of masculinity. A brave death is neither defeat nor destruction but in order for death not to be only Nada, there must be choice of action. Santiago has fished and fought well yet through doing so he creates the opportunity for death to select him. The fatalistic manner in which death overtakes Santiago increases the tragedy but renders him unfit for a transcendental role.

"To be a hero means to dare more than other men, to expose oneself to greater dangers, and therefore more greatly to risk the possibilities of defeat and death,"[72] says

Gurko. The important aspect of motivation seems to be lacking in this definition. We find that of the two kinds of men which Gurko claims exist in the Hemingway canon, heroes and lesser men, the heroes invariably are driven to 'heroic' deeds to stop their becoming involved in the messy processes of emotion and thinking. Some of the instances of men being given credit for heroic actions are completely ridiculous as Frederick Henry is in A Farewell To Arms. He was wounded while eating macaroni and cheese and then given a citation for bravery because of his wounding.

An attempt is made by Gurko to equate the intensity of an experience with its success in terms of transcendence. He says that the giant marlin's skeleton uplifts to varying degrees, according to their station, the fishermen and the tourists. The awesome sight is indeed uplifting but only to the extent that it is an affirmation or a particular way of life. The skeleton only serves to remind the fishermen that there are fish of such greatness and the tourists, who are also surprised at the size, do not recognize what the skeleton is from; none of the people can grasp the significance of the skeleton. The failure to understand is a result of the extremely private nature of the action and consequently the action does not have any public spiritual results. Even Santiago feels that he must go out again to prove himself.

The position of hero has as one of its basic assumptions a higher plane of existence. For Hemingway, the only

divinity is found in action: killing well, dying well, fighting well. All other aspects of the divine present a hollow terror, a terror which is lurking always outside of the clean, well-lighted room. While I believe that Hemingway was trying to allow Santiago to find meaning in the void, in the shadows, within the terms of the book there is no possibility of finding such transcendence.

Gurko feels that The Old Man and The Sea is optimistic rather than pessimistic because of the affirmation of man's possibilities rather than man's inevitable failure to face up to the world. But this optimisism is severely limited because of the ordered sphere in which any possible transcendence takes place. "The heroic impulse," says Gurko, "is part of a traditional process handed down from one generation to another, that the world is a continuous skein of possibility and affirmation."[73] Yet the possibility and meaning of affirmation constituted by the heroic action is essentially negative; the action is part of a desperate need to assert oneself in a world which scoffs at assertion.

By his stance as a man, Santiago seems to promise that he will rise above the complications held by age and that sheer courage, action and determination will defeat or nullify time. Yet time has undermined this "aged monument" and one wonders if Santiago would have been crucified had he been a young man. Ultimately Santiago cannot pro-

vide a reconciliation of old age with the code of action. Either he is a man of action, exhibiting all those traits which sustain the code, or he is a tired old fisherman. The only kind of reconciliation possible for old men is to take greater risks and take their chances on greater disappointments.

Old age stands as that final complication in life which cannot be avoided and to which the man of action cannot effectively reconcile himself. No matter what games of avoidance are played, old age becomes as treacherous as the Portugese man-of-war; old age also trails poisonous filaments. The Old Man and The Sea is finally pessimistic because no matter what kind of monument Santiago appears to be, he is ultimately doomed when he can no longer avoid the fact that he is a tired old man. After bringing in an eighteen foot marlin's skeleton there is nothing but the dreams of the lions on the beach which can provide a further avoidance of the problem of life.

I believe that Hemingway does attempt to reconcile the problem of old age with the code of action through trying to create Santiago as a hero. The possibility of success and the evidence of failure has already been discussed regarding the matter of Santiago as a symbolic hero. What Hemingway cannot reconcile and something which Santiago cannot avoid is that above all Santiago is an old man. Young men, if the code of willed action fails in any way,

always have the opportunity to gather their forces once more for an attack on life. For the old fisherman, the code of action has led him into an experience that cannot really be controlled and when everything is over and Santiago admits he went out too far, he only has his dreams left to support him. Hemingway does not attempt to allow Santiago an escape from the final consequences of a failure of the code but throughout the book there seems to be an unwillingness to give in to any adversity and desire to have old age triumph. The only reason Santiago even survives the fight with the marlin long enough to take both of their corpses back to Havana is that a spark of determination remains within him; this is why Santiago is remembered.

The scope of Santiago's 'success' lies within his action and personal fortitude and while he is able to remain within his code and avoid complications, he is successful. The resolution is paradoxical, however, since this type of ritualized action is vulnerable and since Santiago must necessarily fail as a symbolic hero in transcendental terms. The assertion of his right to personal existence is the compelling force of the story. Assertion such as Santiago's strives to go beyond the pessimistic outlook of the existentialists yet is drawn back by a strong undertow, a flood tide of unavoidable complexities. The old man's courageous attempt to abide by Hemingway's own maxim,

'il fait (d'abord) endurer, or literally, one must above all endure or last, is met by failure.

At one point Santiago declares that a "man can be destroyed but not defeated."[74] However, Santiago's ending is no less final than that faced by other Hemingway heroes. For Nick Adams, Robert Jordan, Jake Barnes, Frederick Henry and others, immersion in action gives but brief solace and ultimately the end these men face is nihilism. The main difference between these men and Santiago is that his immersion in action has sustained him into old age when life is too well known and the parting comes harder.

In "A Man's Credo," Ernest Hemingway wrote: "The book which I wished to be the crowning work of my life was The Old Man and The Sea. The work was done under great difficulties. Old age was creeping upon me. But few men die of old age. Almost all die of disappointment, passionate, mental or bodily work, or accident. Man is the most hard worked of all animals. A long life deprives man of his optimism. A short life is better."[75] While various critics have applauded The Old Man and The Sea as being Hemingway's most complete and positive works, others have damned it as a falsity to the code by which Hemingway lived. I believe that this book is a final statement by Hemingway of the values of the code of ritualized action but that these values become meaningless in the incessant drive to avoid complexities.

FOOTNOTES

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