

MOBY DICK AND THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA
A COMPARATIVE STUDY

SLYVIA BURR ODENWALD

MOBY DICK AND THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

An Abstract

Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Sylvia Burr Odenwald

August 1970

ABSTRACT

In a study of Herman Melville's Moby Dick and Ernest Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea, many similarities are revealed which show that they illuminate each other by comparison. Contrary to the viewpoint of critics who have emphasized the contrasts in these two novels, Melville and Hemingway have similar views of the universe and man's struggle with life and death. They express these in similar ways and employ many of the same devices through which these ideas are disclosed.

Through the sea they present the changelessness of the universe in which men are born, struggle, and die. Other corresponding symbols are the whale and the marlin, the sharks and other sea creatures, and elements of nature, such as weather and degrees of darkness and light. Both authors employ Christian images and Biblical names to carry a thematic burden in their delineation of man's role within the universe.

However, the most outstanding similarities are found in characterization and theme. The protagonists are similar in age, experience, quest, isolation, pride, determination, courage, and strength. The theme of both works is profoundly voiced by Santiago: "Man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated." Through Ahab and Santiago both writers point out man's capacity to withstand the hardships of life, time and circumstance, and what man can do in courageously fighting any obstacles he finds in his way. Melville and Hemingway maintain that man's triumph is not measured in terms of victory or defeat, but in the way it is achieved. To have lived intensely is enough, for ultimately man's destiny is bound up with the manner in which he faces the cosmic challenge of the deep.

MOBY DICK AND THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA
A COMPARATIVE STUDY

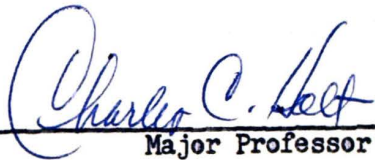
A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Sylvia Burr Odenwald
August 1970

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Sylvia Burr Odenwald entitled "Moby Dick and The Old Man and the Sea: A Comparative Study." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in English.

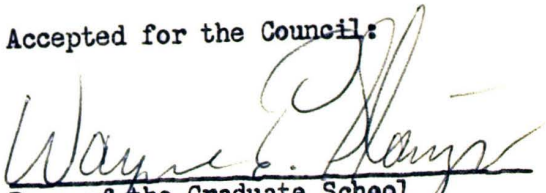

Major Professor

We have read this thesis and
recommend its acceptance:


Second Committee Member


Third Committee Member

Accepted for the Council:


Dean of the Graduate School

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express sincere appreciation to Dr. Charles C. Holt, Assistant Professor of English, Austin Peay State University, for his counsel and constructive criticism during the course of this study; to Dr. Edward E. Irwin, Chairman of the Department of English, and Mr. Malcolm S. Glass, Department of English, for their suggestions in the preparation of the manuscript.

Gratefulness is also extended to Mrs. Winifred Miller, Librarian of Springfield High School, Springfield, Tennessee, who suggested the topic of study for this thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. SYMBOLISM	6
III. IMAGERY	27
IV. CHARACTERIZATION	33
V. CONCLUSION	39
BIBLIOGRAPHY	43

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Reviewing The Old Man and the Sea, Malcolm Cowley compares it with Moby Dick by saying, "Moby Dick is still our greatest novel and the other is a long story; if they illuminate each other--and they do--it is only by contrast."¹ It is true that contrasts are evident; however, there are many more similarities revealed in a study of these two novels than appear at a surface glance. It is the purpose of this thesis to identify similarities between Herman Melville's Moby Dick and Ernest Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea in order to show that they illuminate each other by comparison.

These two American writers of different centuries have used their separate novels as vehicles to express a similar view of the universe and man's struggle with life and death. Both Melville and Hemingway choose the sea as the background and battleground for their profound study of human nature and human destiny, and as a metaphor for their views of good and evil. Through the sea they present the changelessness of the universe in which men are born, struggle, and die, while the rhythm of the sea--and the universe--rolls on. The voyages Santiago and Ahab undertake seem naturally ordered for the illustration of larger experiences of life. In each novel the mystique of fishing or whaling,

¹Review of The Old Man and the Sea, New York Herald Tribune Book Review, XXIX, No. 4 (September 7, 1952), 17.

with their limited triumphs and tragedies, is transposed into a universal condition of life, with its success and shame, its morality and pride and potential loss of pride.

Other corresponding symbols are contained in these novels: the whale in Moby Dick and the marlin in The Old Man and the Sea are both devices to try the physical and mental strengths of the main characters in the novels. Ahab's encounter with Moby Dick and Santiago's encounter with the marlin are more than mere physical encounters. A literal cord--like an umbilical cord--links Ahab to the whale and Santiago to the marlin. Other equally strong cords bind them to other forms of nature: the sea life, the birds, the moon, the stars, and the sun. Ahab is bound by human cords of brotherhood to Pip and the crew, and Santiago to Manolin and his neighbors.

Ahab and Santiago are both experienced fishermen who have known success as whaling captain and fisherman. It is this experience and success that enable each to endure temporary failure as he awaits his supreme testing hour. Santiago has gone eighty-four days without a fish before he hooks the marlin. Ahab has planned and searched for years waiting for an encounter with Moby Dick. In spite of the apparent failure both men experience, their self-confidence strengthens them to meet their fate with courage and fortitude.

Melville and Hemingway are both interested in the problem of alienation--isolation of an individual from society. Ahab produces his own isolation through his monomania, while Santiago's comes from going "too far out." Ahab finds no redeeming qualities in civilization. Neither does Santiago find comfort in his community. Both are set apart

by their tenacity and pride, and they experience extreme loneliness. This alienation produces similar reactions in the protagonists. Both are introspective as they contemplate their fate, and evidences of their complete isolation are vividly expressed by both novelists. The only visual tie which Santiago has with his community is the glow of the lights from Havana. When the glow is not visible, he then realizes his total isolation. Ahab's isolation is reflected when he severs his relationship with the members of his crew. He turns his back upon them, one by one, as he continually focuses upon his search for Moby Dick. The Pequod meets another ship, the Goney, in the chapter entitled "The Albatross." As the wakes of the two ships cross, a school of little fish which has been following the Pequod for several days swims to the sides of the Goney. The burden of Ahab's alienation weighs down upon him, as peering into the water, he murmurs sadly, "Swim away from me do ye?"

These two novelists similarly use the sharks as instruments of destruction and as representatives of evil in the universe. Other elements of nature, such as the weather and degrees of darkness and light, are used by Melville and Hemingway to provide mood and reveal emotions.

Many Biblical images pervade each novel. Melville chose to draw his symbols from the Old Testament, and the symbols used by Hemingway were centered around the Christ of the New Testament. Both Ahab and Santiago reach out to some power outside themselves for aid during the intense moments of their great struggles. Santiago offers many prayers to God, while Ahab pleads for help from the devil and supernatural forces.

Hemingway's principal theme in The Old Man and the Sea is man's capacity to withstand and transcend hardships of time and circumstance.

His treatment of Santiago in this book goes beyond that of the heroes in his earlier works. Most of his novels stress the cruelties and evils which hammer away at man, but in this story the emphasis is on what man can do in courageously overcoming any obstacles he finds in his way. Hemingway does not dwell pessimistically upon the fact that the sharks devour most of the marlin's flesh, but points out that Santiago bravely overpowers the marlin and brings his skeleton back to shore. So in the face of death, whenever it comes, Santiago has the consolation of knowing that he has stretched his physical powers to the limit and has endured. He can then rest and dream of the lions.

Melville expresses his basic attitude toward the universe and man's place in it through the narrative framework of Moby Dick. The feeling of impending doom pervades this novel from the first page through the epilogue. Ahab's mad struggle with Moby Dick is a reflection of his search for meaning in life itself. Melville allows Ishmael to view what happens to a man possessed by hatred and revenge to the point that this consumes his life and the lives of those around him. So Melville, through Ishmael, also points out that man has the capacity to withstand and transcend the conflicts he encounters. However, it is not the actual outcome in each of these novels that is so vital, but the way it is achieved, whether Ahab and Santiago will yield to fear and give up the struggle in fact or by falling back on self pity. The triumph of both of these heroes is that they do not yield but persevere no matter what the consequences. In each instance an individual has been singled out, and in terms of a contest of endurance that seems itself a paradigm of human life, he enters immediately into the gallery of literary immortals.

Ahab and Santiago are both successful fishermen fired by a compelling desire to complete their conquests. This desire is based upon their pride--a pride intensified by their age. Both protagonists are relentless as they plot their course to find the illusive marlin and whale. They are courageous and demonstrate an almost superhuman strength in their battles of endurance. They direct all their energies toward accomplishing a feat no one could accomplish easily. Santiago voices a resolution upon which both he and Ahab stake their lives: "Man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated." From their knowledge of "what I have against me" Santiago and Ahab each become aware of what he has inside him that will enable him to win. It is this sense of proving worth against a worthy adversary which sustains both old men in their time of stress. If each protagonist wins, "he has proved his own worth to himself once more, which is the proof men need in order to continue with the other and perpetual endurance contests into which birth precipitates them all."² These similarities of theme, symbolism, imagery, and characterization are the basis for the reciprocal illumination which results from a comparative study of Moby Dick and The Old Man and the Sea.

²Carlos Baker, Hemingway: The Writer As Artist, 3rd ed. (Princeton: University Press, 1968), p. 298.

CHAPTER II

SYMBOLISM

To be told that *Moby Dick* symbolizes evil or that Santiago's marlin symbolizes an old man's final achievement reduces these novels to mere textual notations without the force and power of the stories themselves. However, the realization of the possibilities of these meanings can help produce a real appreciation of the authors' craftsmanship and reveal a more complete picture of their works. There is the danger in symbol analysis that the authors' novels may be misinterpreted, but at the same time the value gained far outweighs the dangers involved.

The similarities in symbolism in Moby Dick and The Old Man and the Sea pointed out in this chapter are based on the sea, sea creatures, the weather and degrees of darkness and light, fishing equipment, and youth and age.

Both Melville and Hemingway use the sea as an image of nature which reveals deep realities of man and the universe and the conflicts involved. Hemingway views nature not only as eternal but eternally the same without any change of rhythm. The relationship of nature to man proceeds through basic patterns that never change. In a world of perpetual conflict, a sense of love and brotherhood binds together the creatures of nature and transcends the destructive pattern in which they are enclosed. Man and all nature's creatures participate in the same pattern of necessity and are subject to the same judgment. As Santiago

says, "Take a good rest, small bird. . . . Then go in and take your chance like any man or bird or fish."¹ Each living thing, man and animal, acts out its destiny and in the process becomes a part of the harmony of the natural universe. "This harmony, taking into account the hard facts of pursuit, violence and death, but reaching a stage of feeling beyond them, is Hemingway's view of the world."²

Hemingway was seldom interested in a non-human universe unless it could serve as a means to greater understanding of the mind of man. Philip Young points out that Hemingway's world is one in which things do not grow and bear fruit, but explode, break, decompose, or are eaten away.³ However, it is saved from total misery by visions of endurance, competence, and courage, by what happiness the body can give when it is not in pain.

In The Old Man and the Sea life is a struggle against the impossible odds of nature's forces in which--given such a fact as that of death--man can only lose, but which he can endure in such a way as to bring forth victory through dignity. Hemingway had an artist's grasp of the relationship between the temporal and the eternal, the relation of time and eternity. This concept he expressed through the use of imaginative symbols.

¹Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man and the Sea (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 55. All other quotations are from this edition and will be referred to by page numbers within the text.

²Leo Gurko, "The Heroic Impulse in The Old Man and the Sea," Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Old Man and the Sea, ed. Katharine T. Jobes (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 65.

³Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1966), p. 128.

Most of these come, by the way of the artist's imagination, from the visible material universe--the mountains and the plains, the rivers and the trees, the weather and the seasons, the land and the sea. To such natural images Hemingway attached the strong emotional power of his artistic apprehension of them. . . . As a result of their union with imagination and emotion, the various phenomena rise up as operative symbols in all his art. They become thereby not less real but more real than they are in themselves because of the double or triple significations with which they have been imbued.⁴

Santiago's relationship to the sea and to life within the sea is intensely personal. To him the sea is a personality:

He always thought of the sea as la mar, which is what people call her in Spanish when they love her. . . . the old man always thought of her as feminine and as something that gave or withheld great favours, and if she did wild or wicked things it was because she could not help them (p. 29).

It is capable, in a moment of fantasy, of taking a lover beneath a blanket of yellow seaweed. It is also capable of cruelty:

Why did they make birds so delicate and fine as those sea swallows when the ocean can be so cruel? She is kind and very beautiful. But she can be so cruel and it comes so suddenly . . . (p. 29).

The sea gives forth life and reabsorbs it. Santiago notes this when he becomes intrigued by the sight of a dead fish growing smaller and smaller as it sinks. Moreover, for Santiago the sea is life itself.

Santiago, whom Hemingway associates with the enduring vitality of the sea in the title and by the color of his cheerful and undefeated eyes (p. 10), clearly derives strength of body and character from his intimate relationship with the sea, his 'la mar.'⁵

⁴Baker, pp. 290-291.

⁵Jobes, p. 15.

Thus, Santiago stands, not alienated, but in his place in the oneness of all nature. This sense of solidarity with the visible universe and the natural creation is one of the factors which helps to sustain him through his long ordeal. He may, at times, be called upon to venture "far out," but he returns with the same rhythm as that of the sea.

Melville, too, focuses upon the conflict of man versus cosmic forces. To him the world of nature as symbolized by the sea is a haunted world stalked everywhere by blackness and evil. From the very outset Melville strikes a note of doom which resounds throughout the entire book. He sees in nature an "outrageous strength, with an inscrutable malice sinewing it."⁶ He uses the White Whale as the embodiment of "all the subtle demonisms of life and thought"; in short, "all evil." However, it is the sea itself, of which Moby Dick is a component, which nurtures such a force.

At a given moment, the sea seems to show itself capable of all the dark furies which only the more personified soul is capable of revealing. And the soul, for its part, reciprocates by talking back to the sea, each participating in the dialogue of sea and soul, malevolence may be answered with malevolence (as in the case of Ahab). . . .⁷

And in eternal darkness, "a thousand fathoms beneath the sunlight," it keeps its trophies of "unrecorded names and navies." There "in her murderous hold this frigate earth is ballasted with bones of millions of the drowned" (p. 332). Melville, like Hemingway, sees the sea as a personality.

⁶Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (New York: Heritage Press, 1943), p. 174. All other quotations are from this edition and will be referred to by page numbers within the text.

⁷Sam Bluefarb, "The Sea--Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Drama," *English Journal*, XLVIII (December, 1959), 505.

There were the gentle thoughts of the feminine air; but to and fro in the deeps, far down in the bottomless blue, rushed mighty leviathans, sword-fish, and sharks; and these were the strong, troubled, murderous thinkings of the masculine sea (p. 579).

From Father Mapple's sermon on the sea we see some of Melville's ideas on society. Father Mapple pictures organized society as inherently evil, and it is to these deceitful men that a Jonah must be sent.

Melville sees no hope of reform for the institutions of society. This is clearly seen in Chapter eighty-nine, "Fast-Fish and Loose-Fish," as he comments on these institutions and their political implications.

The sea as a symbol of nature not only has its own harmony, unity, and changelessness, but it also has its degrees of value. In these two novels this is contained in the idea of depth. The deeper the sea the more valuable the creatures living there and the more intense the experience deriving from it.

Hemingway chose the marlin, a fish related to the swordfish and usually weighing from fifty to four hundred pounds, as the subject of the old man's quest. The marlin is located in the depths, for Santiago goes much farther out than the other fishermen and casts bait in much deeper water. Although not as large as a whale, the marlin is sought because of the exciting, backbreaking fight it wages before it can be conquered by the fisherman. Hemingway states that the excitement in catching marlin

comes from the fact that they are strange and wild things of unbelievable speed and power and beauty, in the water and leaping, that is indescribable, which you would never see if you did not fish for them, and to which you are suddenly harnessed so that you feel their speed, their force and their savage power as intimately as if you were riding a bucking horse. For half an hour, an hour, or five hours, you are fastened to the fish as much as he is

fastened to you and you tame him and break him the way a wild horse is broken and finally lead him to the boat.⁸

Far out in the sea, Santiago finally succeeds in hooking the marlin, but it is not until he has been taken farther out by the fish that he realizes how big the fish is--over fifteen hundred pounds. Near noon of the second day Santiago sees the marlin for the first time.

He came out unendingly and water poured from his sides. He was bright in the sun and his head and back were dark purple and in the sun the stripes on his sides showed wide and a light lavender. His sword was as long as a baseball bat and tapered like a rapier and he rose his full length from the water and then reentered it, smoothly, like a diver, and the old man saw the great scythe-blade of his tail go under and the line commenced to race out (pp. 62-63).

As he continues his fight, his respect for the fish increases. "Never have I seen a greater, or more beautiful, or a calmer or more noble thing than you, brother" (p. 92). He loves the marlin, almost as his own brother, and yet he is determined to kill him. This determination comes from his sense of destiny: to demonstrate what a man can do and endure and to fulfill the task for which he was born.

Ahab's antagonist, the whale, is one of the largest animals that has ever lived and may weigh one hundred and fifty tons.

We find some book naturalists--Olassen and Povelson--declaring the Sperm Whale not only to be a consternation to every other creature in the sea, but also to be so incredibly ferocious as continually to be athirst for human blood (p. 191).

Ishmael tries to learn as much as he can about the great White Whale, and he discovers that Moby Dick apparently travels alone and is

⁸ Ernest Hemingway, By-Line: Ernest Hemingway, ed. William White (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), p. 240.

furiously destructive. He has maimed or killed many of his pursuers, so that those who have met him want to avoid him in the future--with the exception of Ahab. This Leviathan is much larger than most sperm whales; he has a snow-white forehead, a high white hump on his back, and a deformed, scythe-like lower jaw. Most striking of all, he seems to possess an "unexampled, intelligent malignity" (p. 194) which terrifies many of the men who have fought him. His most appalling characteristic, his whiteness, produces a mysterious horror:

But suddenly as he peered down and down into its depths, he profoundly saw a white living spot no bigger than a white weasel, with wonderful celerity uprising, and magnifying as it rose, till it turned, and then there were plainly revealed two long crooked rows of white, glistening teeth, floating up from the undiscoverable bottom. It was Moby Dick's open mouth and scrolled jaw; his vast, shadowed bulk still blending with the blue of the sea. The glittering mouth yawned beneath the boat like an open-doored marble tomb . . . (p. 587).

The great Moby Dick, with all his majesty and frightfulness, becomes inevitably the symbol of a universal power--or the mask of it--which Ahab feels to be unjust and against which he rebels. He piles on the whale's white hump all the rage and resentment felt by the human race from Adam down against the divinely permitted suffering in the universe.

As Father Mapple says in his sermon,

All the things that God would have us do are hard for us to do--remember that--and hence, he oftener commands us than endeavors to persuade. And if we obey God, we must disobey ourselves; and it is in this disobeying ourselves, wherein the hardness of obeying God consists (p. 46).

Ahab blames God for creating a world in which brotherhood is preached while cannibalism is practiced.

This idea is also conveyed through the use of another sea creature, the shark. Both Melville and Hemingway use the shark as a symbol of destruction. In Moby Dick the most extensive discussion of the shark is found in Chapter sixty-four. Ishmael compares the shark's devouring of the whale to their feasting on human bodies in a sea battle. By this he is suggesting that men butcher each other just as savagely as the sharks feed on the whale. Stubb orders Fleece, the old Negro cook, to "preach" to the sharks. Fleece calls them "belubed fellow-critters" as he addresses his discourse on human nature.

No use goin' on; de dam willains will keep a scourgin'
and slappin' each oder, Massa Stubb; dey don't hear one
word; no use a-preaching to such dam g'uttons as you call
'em, till dare bellies is full, and dare bellies is
bottomless; and when dey do get 'em full, dey won't hear
you den; for den dey sink in de sea, go fast to sleep on
de coral, and can't hear not'ing at all, for eber and
eber (pp. 315-316).

In Chapter 114, as the Pequod sails into the center of the Japanese whaling grounds, the weather is beautiful; the sea is calm. The sea is likened to a vast rolling prairie, and Ishmael says, "beholding the tranquil beauty and brilliancy of the ocean's skin, one forgets the tiger heart that pants beneath." The "teeth-tiered sharks" are allied with the tiger heart that pants beneath the sea. In "The Shark Massacre," Chapter sixty-six, the shark is pictured as so vicious that it is even dangerous after death: Queequeg almost loses his hand when he tries to close the jaw of a dead shark on the deck. Again when the Pequod encounters the Delight, a contrast is drawn of the feminine, gentle, unreal sky and the evil reality of the masculine sea with its ferocious sharks. Thus, the man who falls into the ocean with a shriek rises no more.

In the Epilogue Melville adds to the meaning of his shark symbol: "The unharmed sharks, they glided by as if with padlocks on their mouths; the savage sea-hawks sailed with sheathed beaks." Throughout the book Melville has pointed out that if society is evil, there are, however, some human relationships which are good. Men can be saved although society itself is doomed. Ishmael's survival is indeed miraculous. He is saved by his "brother" Queequeg's coffin. This brotherhood withstands the bite of the shark-infested society.

The symbol of the shark in The Old Man and the Sea is also one of destruction. One, two, and then in vicious packs, the sharks move in on Santiago's prize. The sharks attack the marlin, and the old man battles them for more than twelve hours, quitting only when he runs out of weapons. He loves the marlin and flying fish, but he genuinely hates the Mako and shovel-nosed sharks who attack and devour the marlin he has fought so long to capture. And he gladly kills them. "They were hateful sharks, bad smelling, scavengers as well as killers, and when they were hungry they would bite at an oar or the rudder of a boat" (pp. 107-108). Santiago apologizes to the marlin for allowing the sharks to eat his flesh: "'I shouldn't have gone out so far, fish,' he said. 'Neither for you nor for me. I'm sorry, fish!'" (p. 110).

Sylvester draws a parallel between the marlin's struggle with Santiago, and then Santiago's struggle with the sharks:

. . . the sharks are to the man what the man and current have been to the fish. Led by the champion shark, they are the final overwhelming natural odds against which a champion must pit himself. As they do their work Santiago's material gain and his strength are eaten away as had been the marlin's heading against the Gulf Stream, so that the reader feels a parallel between the old man's continued struggle after his marketable

take is gone and the marlin's stubborn resistance even when he is turned 'almost east' with the current (OMAS, p. 84). But like the fish the man has paced himself. He fights the sharks until "something" in his chest is broken (Just as the fish's heart had been pierced by the harpoon) and he notices the "coppery" taste of his blood in his mouth.⁹

The elements of weather and contrasts of darkness and light are present in both works. The dark evils of the sea in Moby Dick are brought more in focus by the tranquility pictured in Chapter 114: "slow heaving swells . . . brilliancy of the ocean's skin . . . and the distant ship . . . seems struggling forward . . . through the tall grass of a rolling prairie . . ." (p. 524). And again in Chapter 132 the beauty and tranquility are emphasized:

The firmaments of air and sea were hardly separable in that all-pervading azure; only the pensive air was transparently pure and soft, with a woman's look, and the robust and man-like sea heaved with long, strong, lingering swells, as Samson's chest in his sleep (p. 579).

The beauty and tranquility of nature are found throughout Hemingway's book from the first "it was pleasant and sunny on the Terrace," through the sunrises, cloud formations, fairweather breeze, trade wind, and quiet sunsets. There is a sustained feeling of the warmth of the sun. It gave warmth, hope, and healing to the old man's wounds. Along with the sustaining qualities of the sun, the appearance of the man-of-war, warbler, and wild ducks helps alleviate Santiago's loneliness at sea and reveals again his love for nature and its creatures. However, the sun's glare and heat at times add to his suffering. Santiago no longer even dreams of storms, but only of the lions playing in the sun.

⁹ Bickford Sylvester, "Hemingway's Extended Vision: The Old Man and the Sea," Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Old Man and the Sea, p. 91.

The elements of weather are used by both writers to emphasize Santiago's and Ahab's struggles. Hemingway chose to intensify Santiago's struggle by enacting it upon the background of the tranquil sea. This makes Santiago's mental and physical struggle stand out with every thought and action, and it demonstrates the quiet strength with which Santiago conquers the marlin. Similarly, Melville in Moby Dick uses the weather as an accent to Ahab's struggle. Melville employs lightning, fire, battering sea, and raging storm to dramatize Ahab's raging pursuit and violent encounter with Moby Dick.

Both authors also use light to express strength and confidence. Hemingway, in The Old Man and the Sea, uses light for emphasis. The predominant colors are the golden sun, its reflection on the sea, white clouds on a blue sky, and white tuna in the dark water. The night, when it comes, is not complete blackness but is lightened by the moon, stars, the lights of Havana, and, especially, the old Cuban fisherman's dream visions of the white peaks of the islands and the young lions on golden, white beaches. These add to the warmth and tranquility which soothe Santiago and give him added strength and confidence.

The use of whiteness and light in Moby Dick intensifies the evil blackness which surrounds Ahab's world. In "The Whiteness of the Whale" Ishmael tries to explain why Moby Dick's whiteness was his most appalling characteristic. In spite of its good and noble connotations, whiteness can be most frightening. Ishmael reflects on whiteness in animals: the polar bear, white shark, albatross, and albino horse. Whiteness in nature produces fear in man: the "White Squall" of the Pacific, the whiteness of the dead, a white fog at sea, and the ice and snow in the Antarctic. Of course, Ishmael fails to explain the horror

of whiteness, because the most disturbing characteristic of Whiteness--or more specifically of Moby Dick's whiteness--is the fact that it cannot be explained.

The first of nine ships which the Pequod encounters is named the Goney, or Albatross. Just as the Ancient Mariner in Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" caused the death of his crew by killing the albatross, so Ahab will destroy his crew in seeking to slay the White Whale. Thus the Goney, as Coleridge's slain albatross, is linked with superstition. The Goney is bleached and faded white, with salt spray from a four-year whaling cruise caked all over it. In Chapter 133 the white birds near Ahab's boat "fluttering over the water there, wheeling round and round, with joyous expectant cries" mark the presence of the White Whale even before the crew can see him. Here again Melville is using whiteness as a symbol for emphasis.

Jonah's swinging lamp in Father Mapple's sermon is the first of many important light, fire, and lightning images. Jonah watches the lamp in his cabin distort his vision. Ahab's vision, too, is distorted as he focuses more and more on Moby Dick and a need for vengeance. In Chapter forty-five we see Ahab below in his cabin pouring over his yellowed sea charts. The swinging lamp above his head throws shifting lights and shadows on his wrinkled forehead. One of the most dramatic moments of Melville's novel incorporates light imagery for effect. Lightning produces an eerie glow which frightens the crew. Ahab seizes the lightning rod links and challenges the lightning to destroy him if it can. When his "consecrated harpoon" also bursts into flame, Ahab picks it up and threatens to kill any man who interferes with his

quest for Moby Dick. Thus, like Santiago, these elements of light and weather give Ahab strength and courage for his task.

Ahab notices that the dying whale in Chapter 116 turns his head toward the sunset, and as soon as he dies, his body slowly turns in the other direction. Ahab murmurs to himself, "He too worships fire." Ahab feels that the movement of the dead whale away from the sun signifies that the "dark Hindoo half of nature" is more powerful than the life-giving sun. Ahab has committed himself to the forces of darkness: "Yet dost thou, darker half, rock me with a prouder, if a darker faith." His dark faith is in contrast to Starbuck's faith. When Ishmael in "The Gilder" implies that the sea (and man) hides its real self behind a golden appearance, Starbuck declares, "I look deep down and do believe." Along this same train of thought, Ishmael, in Chapter ninety-six, is almost hypnotized by the fire of the try-works. He states that all lamps beside the sun are false lights and are "liars." Ishmael, stupefied by staring too long into the fire, lets the tiller slip from his grasp and endangers the lives of all the crew. As he awakens to their peril, the truth about Ahab suddenly strikes Ishmael. He realizes that Ahab has gazed too long upon his fires of hate and has permitted the "wisdom that is woe" to become the "woe that is madness." Melville uses all of these references to reveal dramatically his ideas of man and the universe.

The Pequod, a whaling vessel, is equipped with every apparatus necessary to accomplish its mission. It is a large wooden vessel with three masts, nautical and navigation equipment, pursuit and processing equipment, and spaces below deck for the crew and holds for the cargo. The pursuit equipment consists of whaleboats, each containing five pairs

of oars, steering oar, harpoons, lances and lines. This equipment is used in capturing the whales in the earlier chapters and in the encounter with Moby Dick. With each encounter with the White Whale portions of the ship are rendered useless. On the first day of the battle with the Leviathan, Moby Dick destroys Ahab's whaleboat. On the second day three dart harpoons are thrust into the whale's sides. However, the lines become entangled as Moby Dick thrashes around in the sea. Although Ahab cuts some of these with his knife, two more whaleboats are smashed. The White Whale then capsizes the boat in which Ahab is riding. Again on the third day three boats are lowered. Moby Dick damages two of these, leaving only Ahab's. Ahab again darts a harpoon into him. Now he is linked to Moby Dick by the line, stretching like an umbilical cord from Ahab's hands into the whale's side. Moby Dick snaps the line, signifying death for Ahab, as the untimely severing of the life-giving umbilical cord causes certain death to the unborn. Free again, Moby Dick charges the Pequod, causing it to fill with water. Angrily Ahab casts another harpoon into the whale. But as Ahab stoops to clear a snarl in the line, it loops around his neck and jerks him out of the boat to his death. All that remains on the surface of the sea is Ishmael--afloat on Queequeg's coffin.

Similarly, Santiago's small fishing skiff is adequately equipped to convey him toward his encounter with the marlin. After he successfully conquers the noble marlin, his attempts to ward off the sharks are marked by losses of vital equipment progressively similar to that of the Pequod. The skiff's sail, attached to the mast, is patched with flour sacks. And the skiff's gear consists of a wooden box of coiled, hand-braided lines, a box of baits, gaff, harpoon and rope, two oars,

knife, tiller, and a short club made from a broken oar. Santiago catches the marlin on his line hook, and he holds the slashing cord with his bare hands. He and the marlin are equally caught on opposite ends of their umbilical cord, which is strengthened by the feeling of love and brotherhood Santiago feels for the marlin. After their long struggle, Santiago drives the harpoon into the fish's side.

When the sharks appear, the old fisherman kills the first shark with the harpoon. However, the rope snaps, and the harpoon disappears with the sinking shark. The old man lashes his knife to one oar and uses this weapon against the sharks until the knife blade snaps. Then he beats off the sharks with his club until one of them seizes it, and it too is gone. Jerking the tiller free from the rudder, Santiago chops with it until its wood splinters. Realizing his efforts are futile, he fits the jagged tiller into the rudder to steer and leaves the sharks to their feast. After sailing into the harbour, Santiago

stopped for a moment and looked back and saw in the reflection from the street light the great tail of the fish standing up well behind the skiff's stern. He saw the white naked line of his backbone and the dark mass of the head with the projecting bill and all the nakedness between (p. 121).

Thus Santiago views the sharks' destruction.

For Hemingway the spectre of age was a terrible spectre; the virtue of action upon which he had based his art and life was the virtue of the young. His ideal heroes were young, courageous men who chose to act, to feel, to engage actively in the world about them rather than to observe or think about what is going on before them. His insistence on this is based on the idea that action is the means by which the hero can exercise his will, by which he can choose what he makes of

himself. In many of his novels Hemingway calls attention to the courage of the matador. His ideal hero, then, must face death like a brave matador in a bull fight and discover his strength in his moment of truth. Unlike most of Hemingway's other heroes, Santiago is an old man who must remember and recapture, to a certain extent, his youth. Hemingway accomplishes this in several ways.

Manolin stands for Santiago's lost youth. He has known the boy since Manolin was five years old, and he has taught the boy the arts of fishing. Like many aging men, Santiago finds something reassuring by recalling the past. Through Manolin he is able to recapture in his imagination, and to a certain degree in fact, the same strength and confidence which earned him the title of El Campeón. He had won this title by winning a handgame against a great Negro from Cienfuegos, "who was the strongest man of the docks." During his struggle with the marlin, the two phrases, "I wish I had the boy," and "I wish the boy was here," play across Santiago's mind again and again. He literally means that Manolin's presence would help him in this crisis. However, he is also invoking the courage and strength of his youth. Whenever he needs added strength he says, "I wish the boy was here." This phrase gives him courage to keep hanging on to the marlin's line, to eat the raw tuna again for breakfast, to unknot the cramp in his hand, and to summon strength to play his fish. He upbraids himself for wishful thinking about the boy and re-emphasizes Hemingway's code: "You have only yourself and you had better work back to the last line now" (p. 52). During the second night the same refrain has its same magical effect and causes the strength of youth to flow in and sustain the limited powers

of age. From this point on the refrain vanishes until the return voyage to Havana.

Another image which brings Santiago courage is that of Joe DiMaggio, the great baseball player. DiMaggio, whose father was a fisherman, is, like Santiago himself, no longer the great champion he was. Suffering from a bone spur on his heel, DiMaggio still continues to "play the game." This DiMaggio of Santiago's reverie is a man who performs well against the handicap of pain. It is this that makes him great in the old fisherman's eyes and gives Santiago the courage to endure the suffering and pain. Santiago had faith in the Yankees, because to him DiMaggio made the difference. Santiago felt that he could place his faith in someone who has the power to endure suffering. This power Santiago saw in DiMaggio, and, also, in himself.

Another sustaining image is that of the lions Santiago once saw at play on an African beach when he was young like Manolin. Traditionally, the lion is king of the jungle. Wells suggests that in Santiago's dreams

As the lions come out of the jungle and fill the old man's sleep, their cat-like playfulness, free of threat or challenge, suggests a harmony between the old man and the heroic qualities which the lions possess and the giant marlin possessed and which the old man has fought to realize in himself.¹⁰

Hemingway early establishes a definite symbolic connection between Manolin and the lions. The old man "only dreamed of places now and of the lions on the beach. They played like young cats in the dusk and he loved them as he loved the boy" (p. 25). In the afternoon of the second day

¹⁰ Arvin R. Wells, "A Ritual of Transfiguration: The Old Man and the Sea," Jobes, p. 63.

again he dreams of the lions on the long yellow beach:

he saw the first of the lions come down onto it in the early dark and then the other lions came and he rested his chin on the wood of the bows where the ship lay anchored with the evening off-shore breeze and he waited to see if there would be more lions and he was happy (p. 81).

And again at the end of the story the old man is asleep in his shack with the boy beside him. "The old man was dreaming about the lions."

Ahab, also an old man, has served on a whaling ship for forty years. He reflects on his youth by remembering the mild day when, at the age of eighteen as a boy-harpooner, he struck his first whale.

Although Ahab has no recurring dream from his youth as Santiago does, dream sense is an important mood in Moby Dick. Ishmael recalls a remembered dream of his childhood. Stubb, after being kicked by Ahab, attempts to make a long dream-analysis to Flask. Bezanson points out that

more subtly, numerous incidents of the narrative are bathed in a dream aura: the trancelike idyll of young Ishmael at the masthead, the hallucinatory vision of the spirit spout, the incredible appearance on board of the devil himself accompanied by "five dusky phantoms," and many others. The narrator's whole effort to communicate the timeless, spaceless concept of "The Whiteness of the Whale" is an act of dream analysis. "Whether it was a reality or a dream, I never could entirely settle," says the narrator of his childhood dream; and so it was with much of what occurred aboard the Pequod.¹¹

The relationship of Pip, the little Negro ship-keeper, to Ahab, although not as strong as that of Manolin to Santiago, is very similar to it. With his lightheartedness, Pip tries to draw Ahab back within the circle of human love and brotherhood.

¹¹Walter E. Bezanson, "Moby-Dick: Work of Art," Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Old Man and the Sea, p. 48.

Pip, though ever tender-hearted, was at bottom very bright, with that pleasant, genial, jolly brightness peculiar to his tribe. . . . But Pip loved life, and all life's peaceable securities (p. 440).

Pip's experience of being deserted at sea leaves him traumatized, but after the rescue Ahab questions Pip. As Ahab talks to the boy, he sees a reflection of his own sufferings in the harmless Pip. An observant sailor finds the bond between Ahab and Pip to be that the one is "daft with strength, the other daft with weakness." Touched by pity, Ahab decides that henceforth Pip will live with him in his own cabin. This parallels exactly the Santiago-Manolin relationship as Ahab, moved by the sight of poor lunatic Pip, stretches forth an unlooked-for fatherly hand: "Here, boy; Ahab's cabin shall be Pip's home henceforth, while Ahab lives. Thou touches my inmost centre, boy; thou art tied to me by cords woven of my heart-strings" (p. 55). Between Ahab and Pip there is now an actual sharing in the reality of food and quarters, as well as a sharing of thoughts, plans, and experiences.

Santiago and Manolin also share their food and experiences both past and present. The great feeling of love which binds Santiago to Manolin can be seen even from the very beginning of the story, as Santiago is watched through the boy's admiring and pitying eyes. On the morning of the eighty-fifth day Manolin brings Santiago his breakfast and helps him launch his skiff with a good-luck wish. At the end of the story Manolin again provides food and ointment for Santiago and talks with him about the future when they will fish side by side again.

After Ahab has taken Pip into his cabin, Ahab starts out of his cabin to go up on deck. Pip takes his hand to go with him, but Ahab tells him to stay behind, for he fears that his pity for the Negro boy

may sway him from his purpose. When Pip promises devotion to him and calls him "master," Ahab is deeply moved. Pip begins to weep for Ahab, who snaps out, "Weep so, and I will murder thee! Have a care, for Ahab too is mad!" The two clasp hands for a moment. Having placed his desire for Moby Dick over his devotion for Pip, Ahab turns his back on Pip and goes out leaving him to talk brokenly to himself. Ahab sees in Pip's devotion the quality that might cure his own malady, as Santiago saw in Manolin's devotion the love that alleviated loneliness. Ahab, however, refuses to be deflected from his pursuit by the stirring of any sympathy for others. Santiago, too, had to fish alone, turning his back upon Manolin's companionship not from choice but because of the command of the boy's parents.

Ahab does not lament the loss of the vigor of his youth, but he does lament several things he can no longer enjoy or use since he has become consumed with the desire to kill the White Whale. Ahab feels the compelling need to prove that, even with his ivory leg, he is as strong a man as before. In the same sense Santiago feels the compelling need to prove through the marlin that he still is a great fisherman. In Chapter thirty Ahab, after lighting his pipe and puffing on it for a few minutes, realizes that he no longer derives any pleasure from smoking. Remarking that his condition is sad indeed when he cannot enjoy his pipe, he tosses it into the sea where it hisses and disappears.

In Chapter thirty-seven Ahab sits in his cabin, watching the wake of the Pegud and the sunset. He considers the torment of his driving urge to destroy Moby Dick and regrets that he can no longer enjoy beauty.

In Chapter 118, he comes on deck with his quadrant and looks through it carefully at the sun, calculating his position precisely. Then he addresses the sun as a "high and mighty Pilot," saying that it can tell him where he is, but cannot help him find Moby Dick. In a fit of rage because the quadrant's information is so meaningless to him, Ahab dashes it to the deck and crushes it, yelling, "Cursed be all things that cast man's eyes aloft to that heaven, whose live vividness but scorches him!" Each of these are symbols of the rejection of some aspect of Ahab's connection with the rest of humanity. Day after day he severs more bonds with reality and sanity and moves deeper into his monomania.

CHAPTER III

IMAGERY

Both Hemingway and Melville rely on Christian imagery to carry a thematic burden in their delineation of man's role within the universe. In The Old Man and the Sea many parallels can be drawn between Santiago and Jesus. The character names selected by both Melville and Hemingway can be traced to Biblical names.

The name Santiago literally means Saint James. In the New Testament, James, one of the sons of Zebedee, was a fisherman, apostle, and martyr from the Sea of Galilee. In the comparison of Christ and Santiago, Santiago was teaching Manolin not only the art of fishing but truths about life. Jesus was a great teacher who taught his disciples to be "fishers of men." Santiago suffered in his struggle with the marlin for three days; Jesus suffered three days on the cross. Santiago's hands were torn and bleeding, as Christ's were pierced and bleeding from the nails on the cross. The line holding the marlin lashed into Santiago's back; Jesus' back was scourged by the soldier's whip. Santiago complained of a piercing headache; Christ experienced pain from the crown of thorns. Santiago carried his mast up to his shack, falling under the weight of it, as Christ carried His cross up to Calvary, falling under the weight of it. Santiago fell across his bed in the attitude of Christ on the cross: "and he slept face down . . . with his arms out straight and the palms of his hands up" (p. 122). After his ordeal of suffering, Santiago and the boy planned for the future:

"We must get a good killing lance and always have it on board. . . . It should be sharp and not tempered so it will break. My knife broke."

"I'll get another knife and have the string ground.

. . .

"I will have everything in order," the boy said (p. 125).

After His death on the cross, Christ was resurrected and met with some of His disciples to plan the continuance of His work. Santiago loved the fish, felt a strong bond with him, and called him his "Brother." The fish was a symbol of Jesus and the Christian religion, and He called all who believed in His way of life "brothers."

Santiago showed certain qualities of mind and heart which were clearly associated with the personality and character of Jesus Christ in the Gospel stories. Santiago had attained a humility which could co-exist with pride, as did Christ's humility, which co-existed with pride in His mission. "He was too simple to wonder when he had attained humility. But he knew he had attained it and he knew it was not disgraceful and it carried no loss of pride" (pp. 13-14). Jesus was many times called "the great fisherman." When Manolin called Santiago "the best fisherman," Santiago said,

"No, I know others better."

"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" (p. 23).

The old fisherman showed love and compassion for the marlin, other fish, turtles, and birds--almost all of nature's creatures--as well as for the boy Manolin. Jesus was known for His love and compassion for all of nature's creatures--even the smallest bird--as well as for man.

Santiago also demonstrates the quality of faith. The boy says, "He hasn't much faith!" "No," the old man said. "But we have. Haven't

we?" (pp. 10-11). In his battle with the sharks the old Cuban does not lose hope. "It is silly not to hope, he thought. Besides I believe it is a sin." Christ, too, throughout His life demonstrated faith and hope and tried to challenge His followers to do likewise.

In a sense, The Old Man and the Sea is a study in pain, in the endurance of pain and in the value of that endurance. The old fisherman fishes as much for a chance to prove himself as he does for a living, and, though he fails to bring the giant marlin to market, he wins the supreme chance to prove himself in the terms he best understands.¹

In the end, pain for Santiago becomes literally the means of distinguishing reality from unreality: "He had only to look at his hands and feel his back against the stern to know that this had truly happened and was not a dream" (p. 98). The power to endure pain gives man the power of mastery over life and thus a basis for hope and faith. Christ, in his brief lifetime, also endured much pain. But both He and Santiago had the determination, the staying-power, which helped them to last to the end. Theirs was the ability to ignore physical pain and suffering while concentrating on a larger goal to be attained. Backman comments,

Etched on the reader's mind is the image of the old man as he settled against the wood of the bow . . . and took his suffering as it came, telling himself, "Rest gently now against the wood and think of nothing."²

Although Santiago avows that he is not religious, his allusions to God, Christ, and the Virgin are not oaths as might be expected from a professional Cuban fisherman. They are simple petitions to a source of strength outside himself which he needs: "Christ knows he can't have

¹Sylvester, p. 59.

²Baker, p. 299.

gone." "God let him jump." "God help me to have the cramp go."

Santiago does not depend only upon God's intercession, but he does all within his own power to "work the miracle." He massages his hand, exposes it to the sun, and keeps up his strength by eating the raw tuna. He also engages in more formal prayers.

"But I will say ten Our Fathers and ten Hail Marys that I should catch this fish, and I promise to make a pilgrimage to the Virgen de Cobre if I catch him. That is a promise."

He commenced to say his prayers mechanically. Sometimes he would be so tired that he could not remember the prayer and then he would say them fast so that they would come automatically. Hail Marys are easier to say than Our Fathers, he thought (pp. 64-65).

And then at the climax of his struggle with the marlin he says: "Now that I have him coming so beautifully, God help me endure. I'll say a hundred Our Fathers and a hundred Hail Marys. But I cannot say them now" (p. 87). All the qualities which the old fisherman sees in the marlin--beauty, nobility, courage, endurance--are the attributes which he most values. These are the traits which change life from futility and meaninglessness, and perhaps this is the main link in the comparison of Santiago and Christ.

Many of the names Melville selected for Moby Dick also appear in the Bible. Ishmael, the name of Melville's narrator, was the outcast son of Abraham and Hagar. Elijah, the shabby, demented old man who appears twice before the Pequod's sailing and shouts his warning, parallels the Biblical prophet Elijah. Elijah was sent by God to help save the Northern kingdom from Baal worship during the reign of Ahab, the wickedist of all the kings of Israel. King Ahab was slain after a reign of twenty-two years in a battle with Syria. The Jeroboam, the

ship plagued by an epidemic, bore the name of another Biblical king. Gabriel, the madman of the Jeroboam's crew, tried to foretell what would happen to Ahab. In the Gospel of Luke, the archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary to foretell the birth of Jesus. The captain of another ship, the Rachel, begs Ahab to help him find his son, for whom they are searching. In the book of Genesis, Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, waits many years before her "looked for" son is born.

One of the most apparent Biblical references is to Jonah in Father Mapple's sermon. Father Mapple anticipates Ahab's basic course of action throughout the novel. He mentions a poster on the wharf from which Jonah plans to flee from God's will; the poster offers five hundred gold coins for a man who murdered his father. This foreshadows almost exactly Ahab's offer of the gold doubloon in Chapter thirty-six to the first man who sees Moby Dick. Ahab will not disobey himself to obey another "law." He sails to the ends of the earth in search of the White Whale. He sulks below decks, like Jonah, at the beginning of the voyage; and, as he reads his charts, he sees a distorted world in the swinging lamp just as Jonah did. Father Mapple most aptly says,

All the things that God would have us do are hard for us to do--remember that--and hence, he oftener commands us than endeavors to persuade. And if we obey God, we must disobey ourselves; and it is in this disobeying ourselves, wherein the hardness of obeying God consists (p. 46).

This comment about Jonah was given as a warning to Ahab, too. In Chapter ninety-five a seaman refers to the pieces of blubber before they are boiled as "Bible leaves," because they are cut so thin into slices.

Ahab, like Santiago, also calls upon a force outside himself for help in his quest for Moby Dick. In the chapter entitled "The Forge," as Ahab pours blood onto his scorching harpoon head he says: "Ego non

baptizo te in nomine patris, sed in nomine diaboli!" Thus he not only gives of himself to the very limit, but calls upon the devil's help as he dedicates his harpoon.

A parallel can be drawn, too, between Ahab and Christ. Melville points out that Ahab sleeps

"with clenched hands, and wakens with his own bloody nails in his palms." But there is this difference, says Chase, between Ahab and Christ: these are Ahab's own nails. He is not a sacrifice; he is a suicide--destroyed by his own willful monomania.³

³Richard Chase, Melville (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), p. 44.

CHAPTER IV

CHARACTERIZATION

Just as the sea has its degrees of value, so there is a human hierarchy: heroes and ordinary men. To be a hero means to dare more than other men, to expose oneself to greater dangers, and therefore more greatly risk the possibility of defeat and death. The characters in both stories are of the sea and influenced by the sea. As Bluefarb suggests, "the storms and the calms both induce and reflect the storms and the calms within the lives of the characters portrayed."¹

Both Ahab and Santiago are old men who have lived their lives at sea and have obtained their living from the sea. However, their desire to complete their conquests is based upon their pride--a pride intensified by their age. Both men are courageous as they face their opponents and the unknown future. They pit their strength--almost superhuman at times--against these forceful creatures of nature. They both give of themselves to the limit but call upon a force outside themselves for support of their efforts. Both Santiago and Ahab are obsessed with the desire and determination to win. Because of this determination they are both isolated from society and experience the pangs of loneliness. The reader feels sympathy for Ahab in his desire for revenge on Moby Dick and for Santiago in his desire to land the marlin. Santiago's relationship to Manolin and Ahab's to Pip demonstrate a tenderness found in human relationships. Indeed there are many similarities between the characters of Ahab and Santiago.

¹Bluefarb, p. 501.

In Moby Dick we find that

it is the sinister and gigantic figure of Captain Ahab that pervades the book and gives it its emotional quality. I can think of no creation of fiction that approaches his stature. You must go to the Greek dramatists for anything like that sense of doom with which everything that you are told about him fills you, and to Shakespeare to find beings of such terrible power.²

Melville establishes Ahab's personality in a most effective way--well before he puts in an appearance, almost before he is even named. In Chapter sixteen, in the description of the general breed of the Nantucket whale-hunter, Melville describes Ahab as a man of "audacious daring, and boundless adventure," possessing "a globular brain and a ponderous heart," who thinks "untraditionally and independently," and who now stands out as "a mighty pageant creature, formed for noble tragedies," but who also shows a certain "half willful over-ruling morbidness at the bottom of his nature" (p. 79). In Chapter twenty-eight Ahab appears on the quarter-deck--a big man, apparently in good health, who looks as though he were "made of solid bronze." Two physical deformities are evident: a tremendous, livid scar which runs from his cap to his collar, and an ivory leg made of a whale's jawbone.

Captain Ahab stood erect, looking straight out beyond the ship's everpitching prow. There was an infinity of firmest fortitude, a determinate, unsunderable wilfulness, in the fixed and fearless, forward dedication of that glance . . . And not only that, but moody stricken Ahab stood before them with a crucifixion in his face; in all the nameless regal overbearing dignity of some mighty woe (p. 132).

Through Ishmael's eyes we see the implacable captain, who is a concrete example of the strength, courage, and indomitable will out of

²W. Somerset Maugham, "Moby Dick," Atlantic Monthly, CLXXXI (June, 1948), 104.

which heroes of fiction are made. Hiding behind the guise of an ordinary whaling voyage is Ahab's search for Moby Dick. He must proudly conquer this whale and satisfy his consuming desire for revenge, thus proving his superiority. "Talk not to me of blasphemy, man; I'd strike the sun if it insulted me," he cries. It is thus that we see Ahab at the summit of his daring; indifferent to both good and evil, he stands erect in the midst of his terror-stricken crew, his foot upon the kneeling Parsee, his left hand grasping the lightning-links, his face turned fearlessly upward to where "God's burning finger" rests upon the masthead of his ship. To Ahab, God is a cruel taskmaster, and his personality does not allow him to compromise or even learn to live with life's conditions as he finds them. He resorts to the only course he knows--hate-produced revenge. Ahab states that whether the White Whale is merely a mask of evil or evil itself, he will wrack that hate upon him. Driven to this extreme by his monomania, the Ahab who began as man's champion ends in refusing the plea of the captain of the Rachel, shutting his heart against the memory of his own son, and leading his crew to their needless death.

Through Manolin's eyes we see Santiago, the old Cuban fisherman, who is similarly a strong character.

The old man was thin and gaunt with deep wrinkles in the back of his neck. The brown blotches of the benevolent skin cancer the sun brings from its reflection on the tropic sea were on his cheeks. The blotches ran well down the sides of his face and his hands had the deep-creased scars from handling heavy fish on the cords. But none of these scars were fresh. There were scars as old as erosions in a fishless desert.

Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same color as the sea and were cheerful and undefeated (pp. 9-10).

Santiago realizes that whatever he does he must accomplish by his own strength. Hemingway pictures the conflicting roles of the marlin and the old man: the marlin's role is to live in the depths of the sea and escape the pursuit of man; Santiago's role is to pursue the marlin. This is true also in the roles of Ahab and Moby Dick. Santiago feels a deep admiration for the great strength of the fish, just as Ahab admires the tremendous strength of Moby Dick. In their final struggle, Santiago reflects in his exhaustion: "You are killing me, fish . . . But you have a right to . . . Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills who"

(p. 92). And later,

You did not kill the fish only to keep alive and 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 (p. 105).

Santiago is a code hero who comes with the message that while a man may grow old and be wholly down on his luck, he can still dare, stick to rules, persist when he is licked, and thus by the manner of his losing, win his victory. Santiago is a moral realist, so he questions his real motivation. He recognizes that he did it for pride to show that he was still El Campeón, and yet he lays claim to love. He settles on the solution that he had gone too far out. Baker describes this as an over-extension:

The lines of communication stretched past the breaking point, possible support abandoned, danger courted for its own sake, excess of bravery spilling over into foolhardiness.³

Prideful Ahab also relies upon his resources as he directs the search for Moby Dick. He feels a deep admiration and awe for the great

³Baker, p. 317.

strength of the leviathan. In his intense desire for revenge he isolates himself from the crew. Melville spoke of the solitude and isolation of man in the term "Isolatoos," which he created in describing the Pequod's crew: "They were nearly all Islanders . . . 'Isolatoos' too, I call such, not acknowledging the common continent of man, but each Isolato living on a separate continent of his own" (p. 108). Ahab's isolation is self-imposed as he shuns the friendship of the crew and continues in his obsessed pursuit of Moby Dick. Melville created in Ahab a fearful symbol of the self-enclosed man who brings disaster both upon himself and all of those connected with him. Through Ahab he displayed his belief that the man whose solitude is thrust upon him is to be deeply pitied. However, the man whose isolation is self-inflicted through repudiation of his social ties creates grief for himself and pain for others. Whereas Santiago experiences physical pain, Ahab's pain is mainly that of the mind and heart.

The reader can understand Ahab's desire for revenge. The "grand hooded phantom" inspires in him not only fear but a magnetic attraction, just as fire produces both fear and attraction. He has lived "in a desolation of solitude," and it destroys him. Arvin suggests that Ahab has refused to accept the interdependence that is the condition of genuinely human existence, and that he feels, like Jonah in Father Mapple's sermon, that his dreadful punishment is just.⁴ Objectively this is true. In identification with Ahab the reader has undergone the double movement of aggression and submission, of self-assertion and self-surrender which gives the book its tragic quality.

⁴Newton Arvin, Herman Melville (Toronto: William Sloane Association, Inc., 1950), p. 179.

The warmth of the reader's sympathy for Santiago can be traced in part to the way Hemingway has drawn his portrait. Santiago feels a loneliness because of Manolin's absence, but Santiago's separation is not "radical alienation."⁵ It comes from his being salao, unlucky. He has not caught any fish in eighty-four days. This jeopardizes his position in his community. However, the skeletal evidence of his still formidable prowess as a fisherman restores the respect of the community and reinforces the compassion they have felt for him all along.

It is not the actual outcome in each of these stories that is so vital, but the way it is achieved; whether the heroes will yield to fear and give up the struggle, either by giving up in fact or by falling back on self-pity. The triumph of both Ahab and Santiago is that they do not yield but persevere no matter what the consequences. In all of these traits Ahab and Santiago are alike. Thus characterization adds its proof to that of theme, symbolism, and imagery in the abundant similarity between Moby Dick and The Old Man and the Sea.

⁵Jobes, p. 15.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This study of The Old Man and the Sea and Moby Dick has revealed more significant similarities than would seem immediately apparent. Each of these novelists in his own way and in his own time sought to express his personal view of reality and eternity, of man and his place in the struggles of the universe. And to this purpose each brought his own personality and experience--his very being.

Melville and Hemingway found in the sea an appropriate symbol to demonstrate their views of good and evil in the universe. In 1837 Melville shipped as a cabin boy on a freighter to Liverpool. Although he returned after his voyage to teaching, the seawater was in his blood, and by 1841 he was aboard the Acushnet bound for the South Seas. Out of this experience grew all his greatest books, from Typee to Moby Dick.

During Hemingway's many years as a journalist, he traveled extensively. The persons, places and life he encountered were to become matter for his novels and short stories. Hemingway considered as home a fifteen-acre estate in Cuba. He also wrote many articles on fishing, among them "Marlin Off the Morro," "There She Breaches," "Out in the Stream," "Fishing the Rhone Canal," "Tuna Fishing in Spain," "Trout Fishing in Europe," and "On the Blue Water." The latter was a Gulf Stream letter, containing a brief account of an old Cuban fisherman, which Hemingway developed into The Old Man and the Sea. As a fisherman himself

and an observer of Cuban fishermen, Hemingway had a wealth of actual experience from which to portray Santiago and his quest.

Both authors saw in the fisherman's struggle to catch and conquer his fish a parallel of man's struggle in life's quest which each man must endure. Melville and Hemingway chose for Ahab and Santiago the largest of the sea creatures as the object of their quest, in order to try the physical and mental strengths of these main characters. Each writer showed that his protagonist's encounter was more than a mere physical one by emphasizing the humanistic quality of man. Although Ahab was shown as being bound to Pip and the crew, his personal search for Moby Dick was all consuming. Santiago's love for Manolin and his desire for self-esteem and prestige among his neighbors motivated and strengthened his determination for conquest. Each protagonist turned his back on human ties and set out alone to face his battle with the adversary.

Similarly, Melville and Hemingway were both interested in the problem of alienation. Ahab's isolation from society was self-imposed, and Santiago's temporary isolation in his skiff was also self-imposed. However, neither finds comfort in his community, primarily because of his willfulness and pride. To point up the determination of Ahab and Santiago, both novelists used sharks as instruments of destruction and as representatives of evil in the universe. They also used weather and degrees of darkness and light to provide mood and reveal emotions. Each novelist cited Christian images and names from the Bible to carry a thematic burden in their delineation of man's role within the universe. Melville and Hemingway pictured Ahab and Santiago as calling for help from outside themselves--Ahab from the devil and supernatural forces and Santiago from God.

In Moby Dick Melville convincingly pointed out that an obsessed life, based on revenge and pitted against nature, was doomed, bringing disaster both upon itself and the group of which man is a part. Ahab's mad struggle with Moby Dick was a reflection of his search for meaning in life itself. Ishmael realizes this truth, and Melville allowed him to live to prove that man can survive life's struggles and rise above them.

In The Old Man and the Sea Hemingway pointed out man's capacity to withstand and transcend the hardships of life, time and circumstance. Even though it is a short tale, perfect in form and execution, it expresses Hemingway's faith in the sufficiency of life lived for itself. "Old Santiago's triumphant struggle with his Fish, which results in a giant skeleton, underlines the moral: to have lived intensely is enough."¹ Santiago did what he was born to do; and in so doing, he achieved being. Ahab and Santiago both lived their philosophy: "Man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated."

Through similar elements of theme, symbolism, imagery, and characterization, Melville and Hemingway sought to imprint upon the pages of literature their interpretation of man's voyage through life depicted against the setting of the sea. It is at such times as portrayed in these stories that the qualities of men come to the surface; and these qualities--in the hands of Melville and Hemingway--are seen as though exposed to the powerful beam of a ship's searchlight on a stormy night.

¹Robert E. Spiller, et al., Literary History of the United States, third edition, revised (New York: Macmillan Co., 1946), pp. 1398-99.

In Moby Dick and The Old Man and the Sea the sea reflects life's challenge in terms of man's own decisions in a crisis. In this challenge lies the force of the sea as a maker of character and as a mirror which serves as a reflector of character. "For ultimately each man's destiny is bound up with the manner in which he faces the cosmic challenge of the deep."²

Ernest Hemingway, The Writer As Artist, Third edition.
New York: The Century Press, 1968.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, ESQ (December, 1959), pp. 501-510.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, ed. William White, New York: The Century Press, 1967.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, Kenfield, Moby-Dick: Centennial Essays, University of Minnesota Press, 1953.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1953.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953.

Ernest Hemingway, The Sea-Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Reality, New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.

²Bluefarb, p. 510.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

43

- Arvin, Newton. Herman Melville. Toronto: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1950.
- Baker, Carlos. Ernest Hemingway. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962.
- _____. Hemingway and His Critics. New York: Hill and Wang, 1963.
- _____. Hemingway: The Writer As Artist, Third edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.
- Bluefarb, Sam. "The Sea--Mirror and Maker of Character in Fiction and Drama," English Journal, XLVIII (December, 1959). pp. 501-510.
- Bowen, Merlin. The Long Encounter. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.
- Chase, Richard. Melville. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.
- Hemingway, Ernest. By-Line: Ernest Hemingway, ed. William White. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.
- _____. The Old Man and the Sea. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.
- Hillway, Tyrus and Luther S. Mansfield. Moby-Dick: Centennial Essays. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1953.
- Howard, Leon. Herman Melville. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1961.
- Jobes, Katharine T. ed. Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Old Man and the Sea. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968.
- Levin, Harry. The Power of Blackness. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958.
- Matthiessen, F.O. American Renaissance. New York: Oxford University Press, 1941.
- Maugham, W. Somerset. "Moby Dick," Atlantic Monthly, CLXXXI (June, 1948) pp. 98-104.
- Melville, Herman. Moby Dick. New York: The Heritage Press, 1943.
- Miller, James E., Jr. A Reader's Guide to Herman Melville. London: Thames and Hudson, 1962.

Mumford, Lewis. Herman Melville: A Study of His Life and Vision. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1929.

Rovit, Earl. Ernest Hemingway. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1963.

Spiller, Robert E., et al. Literary History of the United States. New York: Macmillan Co., 1946. pp. 441-471; 1395-1399.

Stephens, Robert O. Hemingway's Nonfiction: The Public Voice. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968.

Weeks, Robert P. Hemingway. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.

Young, Philip. Ernest Hemingway. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1964.

_____. Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration. University Park: Penn State Press, 1966.