

Ernest Hemingway's, 'The Old Man and the Sea': A Fountain of Inspiration**Dr. Rajiv N Aherkar,**Assistant Professor, Dept. of English,
YVSPM's Late Sow S.S.M. Arts College,
Gangakhed Dist. Parbhani-431514.**Abstract:**

The paper is an attempt to present how Ernest Hemingway tried to inspire the readers through his literary work, 'The Old Man and the Sea'. Ernest Hemingway is one of the most popular American writers of the 20th century. The novella, 'The Old Man and the Sea' invites the readers to read at various levels. The reader can receive the novella as a realistic story of an old man, Santiago who is an inspiration to the readers. The character, Santiago never gives-up and has self-confidence. He continues his journey even after failure. He has a strong belief that one day he will prove his ability. Santiago fights against the forces of the nature and catches a giant fish, Marlin and fights with the sharks to save the Marlin. Santiago's struggle proves that 'a man can be destroyed but not defeated'. The focus is also given to present how Santiago uses his experience to overcome all the calamities and make a way which leads towards success. The story of an aging fisherman, Santiago proves that Ernest Hemingway's writing is fascinated with idea of men proving their ability by facing and overcoming the challenges of nature. The paper is divided in to three parts. The first part is about the author, the second part is about the theme of inspiration and the third part is conclusion.

Key words: Inspiration, Nature, Experience.

Introduction:

It is very necessary to know the biography of the writers like Hemingway because without knowing personal life and experiences of Hemingway, we cannot understand his work. Personal experiences of Hemingway have place in his writing. The personal experiences and the influences on him are responsible to shape his writing style. That is the reason, it is attempted to give a brief account of his life and work. Biographical account is taken from the 'Encyclopedia Americana', Carlos Baker's 'Hemingway: the Writer as an Artist,' and Nobel Lecturers, Literature 1901-1967, edited Horst Frenz.

Ernest Miller Hemingway, an American novelist and short storywriter, who is widely recognized as one of the great authors of the 20th century, was born on 21st July 1899 in Cicero Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. His father, Clarence Edmonds (Doctor Ed), a doctor of medicine, was a hunter, and fishing. Hemingway adopted his father's outdoorsman hobbies of hunting, fishing and camping in the woods and lakes of northern Michigan. This also shaped his interest and supplied the basis for his writing. His mother, Grace Hall Hemingway was interested in music. He inherited

and observant eye and an extraordinarily sensitive mind.

Ernest Hemingway, a multifaceted personality, lived a legendry life and produced profound literature. His life and works were inter-dependent. He turned his life experiences into a literature. It proved to be of great interest to readers. His writing made him literary giant of twentieth Century American and won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1953 and the prestigious the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954. In his writing, one experiences the simple but true picture of the nature. His observation at every phenomenon of nature gave power to his writing style, which made audience rather than mere reader/listener. The best example of it is the opening paragraph of the novel, The Old Man, and the Sea. Where one can experience the cinematize effect. Hemingway, like a camera, described the scene in which the reader experiences like an audience every detail about the character.

Santiago: A Fountain of Inspiration:

Ernest Hemingway introduced archetypal character, Santiago, an old angler of Havana, went to sea for eighty-four days for fishing. He could not hook any fish. Manolin, a boy, accompanied him for the first forty days. The boy left the old man the behest of his parents who thought that the old man was an unlucky because he met no success during

long period. Santiago's struggle proves that 'a man can be destroyed but not defeated'. Santiago lived according to his own code of behavior, accepting the natural order and cycle of life, struggling and enduring and redeeming his individual existence through his life's work, and then passing on to the next generation everything he values, Santiago becomes an everyman. Manolin has very fond feelings for Santiago. He helped him to carry the fishing gear to his check. The patched sail was furled around the mast, and looked like the flag of permanent defeat. The blotches and scars on Santiago's body were the marks of his profession. His sea color eyes were cheerful and undefeated. He usually dreamed of golden and white beaches, great brown mountains and a number of lions he had seen in his visit to Africa in his youth-age. He no longer dreamed of storms, women, great occurrence, great fish, fights, and contest of straight nor of his wife. His dreams were also of positive which inspired him to overcome from the calamities he faced in his life. The story of Santiago is the story of everyman. The readers of different levels of understanding and ages can find something inspirational in this novella through the character of Santiago. Hemingway received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954 for his powerful, style forming mastery of the art of modern narration, as most recently evidenced in 'the Old Man and the Sea'. (Quoted by Jobes Katharine: 1968:01) In other words, the use of narrative technique in the novel 'The Old Man and the Sea' is the main reason behind bestowing the Nobel Prize for literature. The very paragraph of the novel cinematically introduces us to the characters.

"He was an old man who finished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days new without taking a fish. In the first forty days, a boy had been with him. However, after forty days without a fish the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally salao, which is the worst form of unlucky that's why the boy had gone at their orders in another boat, which caught three good fish the first week. It made the boy sad to see the old man come in each day with his skiff empty and he always went down to help him carry either the coiled lines or the gat and harpoon and the sail that was furled around the mast. The sail was

patched with flour sacks and, furled; it looked like the flag of permanent defeat (01)."

The novel is not divided into divisions or chapters but for our understanding. It can be divided into four sections as,

The prologue, which introduces the reader to old Cuban fisherman Santiago,

Santiago's struggle with marlin and victory.

Santiago's struggle with sharks and defeat, and

The epilogue describes defeated Santiago becomes undefeated in spirit and discussing future plan with the boy, Manolin.

The structure of the novel is so beautifully constructed; each sentence has value in the narrative. If a single sentence is removed, it will damage the meaning.

The boy and the old man enjoyed of drink at the terrace. Manolin brought fresh sardines for the old man. With the help of the boy and with a sense of confidence and hope, the old man, on eighty- fifth day set sail to fish into deeper water. Santiago did not want to catch the fish only for survive but to prove his ability and his struggle was for his identity as a successful fisherman. Today he was going far out where no one had ever ventured. He loved the smell of the morning sea, which he thought of as feminine. He heard the sound of the flying fish. They were his friends as they showed the presence of big fish. He felt sorry for the sea birds that were never able to catch any fish.

Using his experience, Santiago woke up early in the morning and before it was really light, he went deep into the sea and had thrown his baits at a precisely determined depth where the big fish swam. While he was observing the sea activities, one of his lines received a jerk. With his experience, he understood that a fish was tampering with the bait. Being an expert, he knew that the nibbling of a fish was of marlin. The fish had the bait and started pulling the swift. The boat way forced slowly with the line. Santiago wished he had the boy with him to help him and though that no one should be alone in old age. Then he thought of choice, he felt that the choice of the fish is to stay in the deep dark water far out beyond all snares and traps and the old man's choice was to go there to find him. Being a

fisherman, he could not have reversed his choice. The only choice left was to endure.

During the whole day, the fish kept on towing the boat. The old man wondered at the behavior of the fish. He was badly injured and helped in the struggle and thought of the boy to help. He cut the other lines to avoid further problems.

The sun rose for the second time, he noticed that the fish was not tiring. He saw a little bird sat on the line and the hawk around. It flew as the line received a jerk. He had a cramp in his left hand. He prayed God to get rid of the cramp, but nothing was happened. He experienced the loneliness when he looked across the sea. He prayed for victory though he was not religious. He saw a flight of wild ducks in the sky. With single hand, he continued his fight with a big fish than he had expected. By heat of the sun, the left had unclamped. It was a positive sign. His thought of baseball and the hand game victory with Negro gave his some strength. His thought about unworthy man who ate the noble fish. He caught a small fish and ate it to maintain his strength. In his sleep, he dreamed of a vast school of porpoise, long yellow beaches and saw the lions. He was woken by the jumping of the fish. The old man led to will the fish. He tried to get the fish near but could not. With all his strength, he made a supreme effort to draw the fish nearer and was able to stab the fish with his harpoon through the heart. The fish was dead. He won the battle. He started towards as a winner with his trophy.

The blood of the fish had spread everywhere on the sea which attracted the sharks. The first shark took a large amount of flesh of the fish before the old man killed it. The mutilated fish bled more profusely, which drew more sharks. The old man was feeding as it he himself was being bitten by the sharks. He saw his fortune disappearing. Marlin's blood was a sign for all sharks. Another shark that came snapped the knife blade. At sunset, more sharks came and he killed them with his club.

The sharks had eaten his half fish yet he was hopeful. He though it sinful not to hope. By midnight, he had to fight more sharks. After losing club, he continued the hopeless battle with sharks. No more sharks appeared after that because there was nothing left to eat. His experience forces him to

stop his attempt to save marlin. The sharks had stolen his trophy (the fish) and it was useless to spend energy to fight with the sharks. He continued his return journey and he reached the harbor. He pulled and tied the boat. No one was there except him. He had to sit five times while carrying the mast across his shoulder. He was tired. He reached the shack at last fall asleep. The next morning, the boy found the old man asleep. He wept at the sight of his hands and went to get some coffee. A group of anglers who were gazing the skeleton of marlin, they were wonder struck. The boy came with some food. The old man woke up and happy to see the boy. He told the boy all about the happenings. He ate the food and advised the boy to keep a good killing lance and a knife always on board. The old man was sleeping in his shack dreaming of lions.

Conclusion:

The novella, 'The old Man and the Sea' is a classic in true sense as Malcom Cowley studies 'Moby Dick' and 'The Old Man and the Sea' comparatively and come to the opinion that 'The Old Man and the Sea' is 'classical in spirit' 'Moby Dick' is quintessentially romantic, (Quoted Katherine T. Jobs, 1968:106). Hemingway like a storyteller conveys his message to the reader. He tells the story of undefeated old Cuban angler, Santiago in such a manner that it becomes the story of every individual. It gets the universal appeal. The plot structure is organized in such a well plan that the writer moves Santiago from type to archetype. The great fish will not come to a great fisherman; the fish will only be caught by a great man. His struggle with the fish is presented in such a manner that struggle becomes universal struggle of like and he becomes 'elemental man and quest here.' Santiago did what ready he was born for. He did not neglect his profession. It is his quality, which made him real being.

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