

Theme of Alienation in Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man And The Sea*

Ernest Miller Hemingway is acknowledged as the most significant writer of the 20th century American literature. No other American writer has ever equaled the popular success and worldwide reputation of Ernest Hemingway. His prose style is universally recognized as one of the innovative of 20th century literature. His writings are honest, direct and clear. He wanted everything else to write well. The passion of his life was to write absolutely truly with no faking or cheating of any kind. Hemingway is greatly concerned with the meaning and values of human life. A study of the characters in his novels as they move in worlds of their own making should determine to what degree Hemingway's attitude toward life was shaped by his experiences as a youth, as a reporter, and as a soldier. The aim of the present study is to make a comprehensive analysis of alienation in the novel *The Old Man and the Sea* of Ernest Hemingway. The causes of alienation are enumerated by extracting the influencing factors like anxiety, despair, loneliness etc. The term alienation has been used over the ages with varied and sometimes contradictory meanings. In ancient history it could mean a metaphysical sense of achieving a higher state of contemplation, ecstasy or union - becoming alienated from a limited existence in the world, in a positive sense. Alienation has long been a popular theme in literature, but its rise to prominence came most sharply during the 20th century, as humans moved farther away from the world of nature and closer to that of machine. This notion of alienation, although commonplace by today's standards, is not general, as it can take on very different meanings and tonalities depending upon whether it is a person from society, a person from oneself, or a marginalized group of people.

In *The Old Man and the Sea* "The old man is a character isolated from people – and in fact from the world of humans entirely – in his time on the sea. This isolation defines who he is, and emphasizes the unique nature of his character. Isolation becomes both a weakness (he suffers from loneliness), but also a necessary element to his battle with the fish. Although the old man accepts and admits help from others, it is alone that he does battle with the marlin, that he must prove himself and his capabilities. Hemingway's protagonists, Santiago and Manolin, return to nature spontaneously, and through different ways: return to a simple, natural lifestyle, return to a harmonious interpersonal relationship, return to traditional old values and return to self's identification with nature to approve man's affinity for natural forms. Their return to nature and integration into nature has set an example for us. .

The novella *The Old Man and the Sea* does fulfill the expectation of the beat generation. It brings a story of an old man, living in backwoods village on the Cuban shore, isolated from the real impact of worldwide changes. Hemingway was an expert at deep-sea fishing and had won several prizes in various competitions, sometimes catching giant marlin. When he lived in Cuba, he acquired a house, nine miles outside Havana, and often fished in the Gulf Stream, much like Santiago. The background in *The Old Man and the Sea* is derived from real- life Cuban fishing villages near the Gulf Stream. The subject of the luckless Old Man who caught a giant fish also came from personal experience. In an essay on deep-sea fishing published in

1936, Hemingway had written of an old man who had caught a huge Marlin weighing nearly eight hundred pounds. With the fish tied to his skiff, he had bravely tried to fight off the sharks and was picked up by some fisherman in a state of half craziness with the sharks still circling his boat. When Hemingway met this old man, he promised to write a book about his experiences. It was more than twenty years before he turned the story into a book called *The Old man and the Sea*; it was to be Hemingway's final novel. Many critics see in it a comparison between Santiago, an old man fighting to master the fish and maintain his reputation, and Hemingway, an old man fighting to retain an active lifestyle. Even if the novel is not partially autobiographical, the novel proves

Hemingway's abilities as a novelist, for the book expertly blends facts and fiction to produce one of the most moving, poignant tales ever written. There is an old saying in the English language, "Every piece of writing is at least a little bit autobiographical." This may be true in all cases, but it is clearly predominant in Ernest Hemingway's "Old Man and the Sea. At the time that he was writing "The Old Man and the Sea," Hemingway's reputation was less than distinguished. Hemingway always puts his heroes in difficult and dangerous situations where they have to face death and destruction. They have to struggle hard and bear pains that display their courage, bravery and the power of endurance. The pain and suffering they undergo leaves healthy impact on their minds and makes them saner in their attitude. Hemingway's hero is a realistic person, showing stoical acceptance of painful reality, having nothing to complain or mourn if he is defeated. His heroes are given the choice of facing the inevitable with fortitude or despair. This philosophy of life made him select such rough fields of life for writing as fishing, hunting, horse-racing, bull-lighting, war, etc. He invariably tries to demonstrate through his novels that since extinction is the ultimate destiny of all living beings, to die gracefully is as important as to live honorably.

Hemingway feels that in life there are people who participate in life and people who observe life as it passes just like on the ocean where there are boats that do not test their boundaries. The boats are the people in life, and most of the boats are silent. They paddle within the areas they know to be safe and always are cautious not to upset the life that they have established for themselves. Hemingway is explaining that most people don't raise a commotion; they just allow life to happen to them. The old man is testing his limits; he is challenging the ocean, and rowing where he wants to go, not where the ocean wants to take him. Hemingway believes that in life, the farther a person stays from the observers, the more free and exhilarated they will be.

Hemingway theorizes that in life there are going to be unexpected collisions. Just as the sea creates storms life creates storms. Those who live life to the fullest will be the least affected by these storms because they have the strength and the knowledge to handle them, but the observers or those on land will be destroyed because they do not have the power to handle the destruction that the storms will cause. The individuals who are far out to sea have the knowledge that the ocean will test them with momentous storms, and this is why they go so far out to sea. The people who Hemingway thinks face life head-on are represented by lions in the novel.

In the novel *"The Old Man and the Sea"*, the hero is alienated from human society and is left alone on the wide sea for three days and night. It was especially easy to notice the alienation in "The Old Man and the Sea". This was because throughout the whole novel, Santiago was alone. He fished alone, he lived alone, and the villagers didn't pay much heed to him. He wasn't alienated in a bad way, and he didn't seem to mind that he was often alone. During this time he does not feel alone and establishes his solidarity with the world of nature around him. This feeling enables him to bear his ordeal more easily. His isolation creates in him the feelings of brotherhood with the creatures of water and air. He loves the flying fish, the green turtles and the hawksbills and calls them brothers. He even liked the loggerheads that looked huge and stupid. The only sea creature that excited his contempt was the Portuguese men-of-war and scavenger sharks. When a tired warbler came to rest on his line, the Old Man felt very happy and wished to spread a sail for his comfort. He felt pity for the poor bird and thought that the life of birds was the hardest of all creatures. He felt compassionate even to the marlin he had hooked and called it his brother. He wished that he could feed the marlin as he had fed himself.

In this novel Hemingway further explored the themes of man meeting challenges and struggling alone, showing extreme determination and courage in face of the defeats, and living with "grace under pressure". And the main character Santiago becomes a typical "code hero" in literature. The novel has aroused the interest of many readers, and many critics have made comments on it. Those comments from critics mostly focus on "Hemingway Heroes". This thesis is intended to probe into the characterization of Santiago in *The Old Man and the Sea* from the following aspects: confidence and courage, love of nature and respect for life, expectation for the future. Through the analysis of Santiago, we can gain a good deal of enlightenment: when facing cruel social reality and miserable fate, man should be brave and should struggle with all the pains and sufferings to love and treasure life. We should understand that the meaning of life lies neither in "success", nor in "failure", but in the struggle itself.

Hemingway can be regarded as a son of nature. His upbringing in nature, his parents' early education, his personal experience in nature and his close contact with nature—all these factors have direct influences on the formation of his nature outlook. For him, nature is not only useful, but also peaceful and holy. He compliments its beauty and greatness, sympathizes with the spoilt nature, and satirizes man's arrogance and conceitedness. At the early stage of his writing, Hemingway describes many alienated characters. They are alienated from nature, further, alienated from society (others), and alienated from self.

These people have lost their close relatedness with nature, lack genuine spiritual communication and live in vanity and despair. Natural environmental crisis, social crisis and spiritual crisis oppress them so much that they are overcome by deep depression. When exposing man's alienation, Hemingway also probes into the root of it. He thinks that it is war and mechanized production or modern technology that have destroyed nature's beauty, engendered all the problems in modern society, and increased the conflicts between man and nature, between man and man, and between man and self. He has been searching for a solution to man's

alienation. In his opinion, return to nature is the best way to overcome man's alienation and reaches its maturity in his masterpiece

Hemingway treats nature as the central motif of his life and creation. The excellent descriptions of the nature and the close relationship between nature and man are the main feature of Hemingway's creation. In Hemingway's mind *The Old Man and the Sea* was the best writing of his life. This is a story about an old fisherman named Santiago who fished in the sea only by himself. After eighty-four days of not catching a fish, he hooked a great marlin. The old man had never seen or heard of such a big fish, one that was two feet longer than his skiff. Suffering a series of trials, the old man killed the great marlin and bound it to the skiff. But on his way home, sharks came up. The life-and-death battle was helpless for the old man, eventually there was only the bald backbone of the fish left. Hemingway created Santiago successfully as the protagonist.

The plot is apparently simple but actually intricately designed. Most Critics agree that the theme of this book is man's capacity to withstand and transcend hardship of time and circumstance. The idea is conveyed through Santiago's adventures with the Marlin and with the sharks. Hemingway depicts in circumstantial detail elemental tests of endurance to which Santiago is subjected. His courageous response is summoning both physical energy and imaginative vision to counter the forces testing him.

The novel is indeed remarkable for its stress on what man can "do" and on the world as an arena where heroic deeds are possible. In this universe everyone has a role to play and Santiago's role is to pursue the great marlin: "that which I was born for", he reflects. To be a hero means to dare more than other man. To be a hero means to expose oneself to greater dangers and therefore more greatly to risk the possibilities of defeat and death. Santiago fulfills this test of heroism about such a man it would be absurd to say that things are done to him and that he does little. On the eighty-fifth day Santiago rows far beyond the customary fishing area. That is itself doing something big. Because he goes out too far in the sea, he catches the great fish. The fish is so powerful it pulls his skiff even farther out so far that he cannot get back in time to prevent the marlin being eaten up by the sharks. The greatness of the experience and the inevitable nature provides human beings with unlimited opportunities for the great experience.

The experience carries with it a heavy tragic price. Santiago's achievement creates a sensation among the fishermen in his village. The tourists of the story mistake the marlin for a shark but they too are struck by a sense of the extraordinary.

The novel opens with the description of Santiago, an old fisherman who works alone in a small skiff in the Gulf Stream. He is recently dogged by ill luck, for he has gone without catching a fish for eighty-four days. Initially, for the first forty days, a young boy named

Manolin keeps him company. Then the boy's parents forbid Manolin from accompanying Santiago, who has become 'salao,' the worst kind of unlucky man. Even though Manolin is working on another, luckier boat, he still cares about Santiago and is troubled to see the old man come in every day without catching a

single fish. With a silent expression of comradeship, the boy always helps the old fisherman to carry his coiled lines, his gaff, his harpoon, or the sail for his boat. Santiago's sail was like the old man himself - patched with age and furled with use. Santiago may be luckless, but he is not pessimistic; his sail may look as if it has accepted permanent defeat, but the old man has not. In fact, an oblique reference is made to the old man's kinship to the boy, making him seem younger than his years. Santiago loves the boy as a son, and Manolin takes care of the old man's needs as a son does his father and loves him as a brother or comrade.

In this first section, Santiago is pictured as having to fight both the land and the sea. Although he loves being a fisherman, the waters have not been kind to the old man as of late. For the last eighty- four days he has gone out in his boat and come home empty- handed. The land treats Santiago no better. Although it provides, shelter and rest, it also offers shame. Because of his lack of success in fishing, he often goes hungry on land. Additionally, he is laughed at by many for not catching any fish; people cruelly laugh and say he is too old to be a fisherman. To make matter worse, Manolin's parents have forbidden the boy to go out in the boat with Santiago because of his bad luck. As a result, for the last forty days, the old man has fished alone. This opening section also begins the development of the theme of the novel - man's struggle for survival in difficult circumstances. Due to his bad luck and his alienation, Santiago feels isolated and alone; but he refuses to be defeated. He dreams of doing heroic deeds in order to restore his respect in the community. When he later catches the giant fish, he is determined to master it to prove his worth - both to himself and his fellow fishermen.

In these opening pages, there are also several clues to the old man's character. First and foremost, Santiago is pictured as being exceptionally unlucky; it is not from lack of trying that he does not catch any fish, for he has continued to ply the waters for eighty- four days straight, never showing discouragement. It is also obvious that the sea is plentiful, for the baskets of the other fishermen are filled and Manolin has been catching fish on the "lucky" boat. Since he is a skilled fisherman, Santiago's unproductive stretch can only be attributed to bad luck. The old man refuses, however, to become dejected, bitter, envious, or lazy. Instead, he remains cheerful, optimistic, and confident. Despite his great strength and abilities, Santiago is a humble man. He lives in poverty, owning a small shack with no running water; yet he never complains. When things do not go his way, he does not blame outside sources, but looks for the cause within himself. He even says that he has probably not caught a fish in eighty-four days because he has not gone out far enough on to the sea. When his giant fish is eaten by the sharks, he blames himself for not fighting harder and not bringing better weapons with him on the journey. He even worries that perhaps he has killed the giant marlin out of pride and apologizes to it.

Yet most of the novella takes place when Santiago is alone. Except for Manolin's friendship in the evenings, Santiago is characterized by his isolation. His wife has died, and he lives and fishes alone. Even so, just as he refuses to give in to death, he refuses to give in to loneliness. Santiago finds friends in other creatures. The flying fish are "his principal friends on the ocean," and the marlin, through their shared struggle,

becomes his "brother." He calls the stars his "distant friends," and thinks of the ocean as a woman he loves. Santiago talks to himself, talks to his weakened left hand, and imagines Manolin sitting next to him. In the end, these friendships—both real and imagined—prevent Santiago from pitying himself. As a result, he has the support to achieve what seems physically impossible for an old man. . . . The old man is confident and self-assured. He knows clearly he is no longer as strong as he used to be and he has nothing to rely on but his staying power and experience. As a fisherman who is often alone out at sea, Santiago knows very much about himself. He knows clearly what sort of advantages he has and to what extent he can win. And for the fish, he also has great ideas of how to win in a fair fight with his tricks and resolution. He has no illusions about his ability and never boasts about himself, what he waits for is the opportunity to prove his ability.

Santiago's actions are brief and accurate, and there is nothing unnecessary. It seems that all his actions are calculated and no energy is wasted.

This theme of human alienation and interdependence is reinforced by several symbols. Baseball, which the old man knows well and loves and which he thinks and talks about constantly, is, of course, a highly developed team sport and one that contrasts importantly in this respect with the relatively far more individualistic bullfighting, hunting, and fishing usually found in Hemingway's stories. Although he tells himself that "now is no time to think of baseball" (p. 37), the game is in Santiago's thoughts throughout his ordeal, and he wonders about each day's results in the *Gran Ligas*.

The Old Man and the Sea is a less fatal novel. . . . It is about man's successful negotiation with the feminine universe and his ultimate embrace of her caprices. The world of the story is, as Leo Gurko has provocatively said, "No longer a bleak trap... but a meaningful, integrated structure." (14) Santiago is united with the fish that he attempts to catch, because they are compatriots that are both battling for life in the sea. Santiago is not ultimately embittered by his journey, though he is ultimately defeated. The old man is wise enough to be capable of humility as we learn early on when he is assisted by the town people, "He was too simple to wonder when he had attained humility. But he knew that he had attained it and it was not disgraceful and it carried no loss of true pride." (13-14)

At the end of *The Old Man and the Sea*, the exhausted Santiago removes his mast from his skiff, and haltingly drags it up the beach to his shack by resting one end of the cross on his shoulder. The position in which Santiago carries the mast exactly mirrors the position in which Jesus Christ was forced to drag his cross on the way to his crucifixion. The mast, then, becomes a symbol for the cross, and cements the parallel that Hemingway sets up between Santiago's ordeal and Christ's.

Hemingway won the Nobel Prize for *The Old Man and the Sea* in 1954. In the citation for the prize, a special mention is made about his style. Since Hemingway had been a journalist, the hallmarks of journalistic style are evident in his writing, especially in this short novel. Using a minimum amount of words, he extracts maximum meaning and effect; the result is that his narration is simple, yet immensely powerful, pithy, and direct. The interior monologues that Santiago has with himself cleverly break the

exposition of the narrative. Hemingway definitely proves in *The Old Man and the Sea* that he is a wonderful teller of tales and a deft craftsman of words.

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Individuality in Ernest Hemingway's “*The Old Man and the Sea*”

Santiago as an Individualist:

Hemingway’s protagonist is a hybrid of the modern type and the classical one. Santiago is a poor Cuban fisherman, an everyman of poor society; a model the classists would unlikely use as a protagonist since they sought to represent figures of high social or political stature. Yet, the character’s individual, superior, and sometimes heroic qualities would fit him into the classical mould.²

The transcendental merits of Hemingway’s protagonist which are achieved through his natural intuition elevate him above human and physical restrictions and frustrations. Such an attitude was declared by Emerson and later by Thoreau. The latter, in his book entitled *Walden* emphasized the advantage of living simply within nature; an attitude established on the necessity of survival in hostile circumstances.³

Nature for Santiago is his main source of insights and stimuli for self-analysis. His empathy for sea creatures, his dreams and moral strength are inspired by his close association with the environment.⁴ The fisherman who sails far away into the vast ocean crosses the usual boundaries of his everyday fishing trips; it is an indication of his adventurous character and his desire to get closer to the natural and primitive and farther from human society. It is a call for a break with human civilization. Such a break is necessary for Santiago to live simply and in harmony with nature.⁵ A similar bond, on the part of the other fishermen, does not exist as the development of uncongenial mechanization continued (they use motors, buoys, and radios). It is a romantic attitude that reveres the simple and spontaneous rather than the sophisticated and artificial.

This oneness with nature and its living things is reflected also through the fisherman’s attitude that man is part of the cycle of life; today’s hunter could be tomorrow’s prey and man should fight in order to win and survive; thus man is seen as an individualist within the larger system of life, this is seen through the general development of the plot in which Santiago wins over the great marlin but later losses it to the sharks. It is a paradoxical view point that applies to Santiago’s outlook to the great marlin as well; he admires the fish and considers it sometimes near and sometimes beyond the humananimal boundary “Fish, he said, “I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends.”⁶

Animals, for Santiago are nobler and more able than man “They are not as intelligent as we who kill them, although they are more noble [sic] and more able”. (p. 53), so they could transcend humanity. By linking

himself with the marlin and the natural world Hemingway's protagonist is set apart from the rest of the world by his spontaneity and instinctiveness; qualities that associate the character with primitivism.⁷

Abrams and Harpham in their *Glossary of Literary Terms* see that a primitivist acts on the pulse of instinct. Human culture, thought, and the complexity of modern civilized society are all artificialities that degenerate man's morality and spoil his inner goodness. Santiago values the instincts and the passions over thought and reason, and the freedom of expression over silence and repression. Social philosophy holds that the ideal state is the simple and natural forms of social and political orders. These should replace the frustrations of a complex and highly developed social organization. Isolation from society is considered by primitivists as preferable to living in a highly developed society. Nature, unmodified by human intervention, is the Utopia of the primitivist.⁸

Hemingway, by presenting a primitive heroic character, seems to allude to his dissatisfaction with modern Western life.⁹ Santiago's primitivism can be detected by examining some of his acts like slicing fish and chewing its raw meat swallowing its juices to keep himself strong, also the scene in which he recalls hooking a female marlin does not relate to social sophistication:

...The female made a wild, panic-stricken, despairing fight that soon exhausted her, ... when the old man had gaffed her and clubbed her,...clubbing her across the top of her head until her colour turned to a colour almost like the backing of mirrors ... We begged her pardon and butchered her promptly. (p. 41)

The old fisherman is portrayed here as an individual who fights to survive just like an untamed wild beast. Modern primitivists consider pain a sign of that which is authentic, since pain is associated with the hardness of primitive life:¹⁰

He had pushed his straw hat hard down on his head before he hooked the fish and it was cutting his forehead. He was thirsty too...Then he rested against the bow. He rested sitting on the unstepped mast and sail and tried not to think but only to endure. (p. 37)

Later, the wounds and scars on his body make him appear as a Christ-like figure; his pains and stigmata associate him with the highest Christian ideal of sacrifice and individuality.¹¹ In the last part of the novella the image of the old man carrying the mast on his shoulder and stopping to rest before collapsing is a striking similarity with the story of crucifixion "then he shouldered the mast and started to climb" (P. 104) and another image in which he lays on bed in a manner suggestive of crucifixion charge the scene with highly emotional religious connotations of pain, fatigue, and self-sacrifice "Then he lay down on the bed...and slept face down on the newspapers with his arms out straight and the palms of his hands up." (p. 105). , displaying love and kindness to Manolin and even to his rival (the fish) parallels the relationship between Christ and his disciples, Manolin's crying corresponds to the supporters of Christ and their guilt after the crucifixion.

The concept of the "noble savage" was not unpopular in the literature of the 18th century. The term refers to a person who belongs to an "uncivilized" group or tribe and is considered for this reason morally superior

to people who live within civilization.¹² The name of the French educator Jean Jacques Rousseau was particularly associated with this term.¹³

Rousseau in his influential novel entitled *Émile* (1762) advocates the idea that without the bounds of civilization man is essentially good. The wild untamed and unrestricted state of man which existed before the creation of civilization is the best condition for the flourishing of human goodness and happiness, people's innate goodness and spiritual purity are corrupted by their experiences in society. Rousseau thus recommends that a child's emotions be educated before his reason.

The idea that primitive people are "naturally intelligent, moral, and of high dignity in thought and deed"¹⁴ applies to Hemingway's protagonist, Santiago. A close examination of this character would reveal that optimism and the ability to see hope even in hopeless situations is one quality that ranks Santiago as a dignified individual. In spite of the fact that "he had gone eighty-four days without taking a fish ... the old man was still cheerful and undefeated... his hope and confidence had never gone" (p. 8); he believes that every day is a fresh beginning that could bring in something new and good; "every day is a new day." (p. 25) His lion dreams are symbolic representations of strength, endurance, and dignity "he only dreamed of places now and of lions on the beach. They played like young cats in the dusk and he loved them as he loved the boy." (p. 19). The religious image of presenting Santiago as a Christ-like figure alludes to the old man's dignity "The old man carried the mast on his shoulder." (p.10) His empathy, pity, and admiration toward the marlin reveal tenderness of heart and a high sense of morality "he began to pity the great fish that he had hooked. He is wonderful and strange." (p. 40) In the same way we see that the old fisherman's humanistic attitude towards a pair of marlin he had hooked before indicates that his primitivism has not spoiled his nobility; instead, these actually seem to be closely allied qualities that spring from his realistic knowledge of the necessity to survive and his pity and admiration toward sea creatures:¹⁵

He remembered the time he had hooked one of a pair of marlin. The male fish always let the female feed first, ... That was the saddest thing I ever saw with them, the old man thought. The boy was sad too and we begged her pardon and butchered her promptly. (p. 41)

Santiago's personality is differentiated from that of his fellow fishermen in his village; his romantic attitude to the sea emphasizes his individuality within his community. He looks at the sea as a female "la mar":

The old man always thought of her as feminine and as something that gave or withheld great favors, and if she did wild or wicked things it was because she could not help them. The moon affects her as it does a woman, he thought." (p. 23)

While "some of the other younger fishermen, those who used buoys as floats for their lines and had motor-boats... spoke of her as el mar which is masculine. They spoke of her as contestant or a place or even an enemy." (p.23) The generation gap between Santiago and the younger fishermen individualizes him further more.

Hemingway's protagonist demonstrates a tendency to identify himself with the world around him; this oneness applies not to his fellow citizens but rather to the inanimate universe around him also to his attitude toward the great marlin. The high regard with which he views the marlin calls to mind the tradition of "animality".¹⁶

Animality is associated with the rise of primitivism as a philosophy, in which some advocates see that to correct the damage caused by modern society on man's morality man should take animals as models of dignity and goodness. Animals are seen as noble, balanced, reasonable and in touch with nature; it is an extreme form of primitivism. Animality means also imitating animals or the desire to be animal-like.¹⁷ Animality in "The Old Man and the Sea" can be seen in the ways Santiago blurs the line between the human and animal. This can be observed through the symbolic significance of the fishing line that connects the great fish with the old fisherman.

Man is the only creature who is known to identify himself with animals; thus, such an act is an indirect assertion on man's humanity.¹⁸

The fact that Hemingway in many of his works, like *The Sun Also Rises* and "The Old Man and the Sea", is interested in presenting situations that require little thinking but much endurance is another manifestation of animality in the writer's output "He rested sitting on the un-stepped mast and sail and tried not to think but only to endure." (p. 37) The old man behaves mostly impulsively asserting his distinctiveness from his fellow human beings and closeness from the instinctual, natural and un-tamed. Another clear reference to animality in Hemingway's saga is presented through his empathy and admiration to green turtles and hawk-bills:

He loved green turtles and hawk-bills with their elegance and speed and their great value Most people are heartless about turtles because a turtle's heart will beat for hours after he has been cut up and butchered. But the old man thought, I have such a heart too and my feet and hands are like theirs. (p. 29)

Santiago observes bondage of "brotherhood" with the marlin and green turtles; he calls the marlin "my brother". However, the necessity of survival pushes Santiago on with his battle with the fish "I wish I could feed the fish, he thought. He is my brother. But I must kill him and keep strong to do it." (p. 49) Hemingway seems to present a character who echoes Rousseau's belief that society corrupts man. Santiago's individuality is emphasized through setting him apart from urbanized society. Sophisticated and civilized life has resulted in cutting modern man off from the natural world and instinctive impulses.¹⁹ The character, with his loneliness and isolation preserves his innate goodness "He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream." (p. 5)

References to Santiago's alienation are found in his physical isolation from the main land going far into the wide ocean, his distinction from the other fishermen in his fishing techniques, his characteristic physical strength " "But you went turtleling for years off the Mosquito Coast and your eyes are good." „I am a strange old man". (p. 9), and being a lonely widower.

The protagonist's seclusion is an indication of his separation from human society "He had probably started to talk aloud, when alone, when the boy had left." (p. 31), "He looked around for the bird now because he would have liked him for company. The bird was gone." (p. 46), and "I wish the boy were here" (p. 47). Santiago is conscious of his alienation from the rest of the local community "If the others heard me talking out loud they would think that I am crazy, I do not care. And the rich have radios to talk to them in their boats and to bring them the baseball." (p. 32). Though the old man is aware of his alienation and independence, yet he often longs for the boy's company and support. Such solidarity is not possible after the boy's parents ordered him to leave Santiago and join another more fortunate fisherman. However, they are united only when the old man returns home on land where they achieve integration with each other.

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He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish. In the first forty days a boy had been with him. But after forty days without a fish the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally *salao*, which is the worst form of unlucky, and the boy had gone at their orders in another boat which caught three good fish the first week. It made the boy sad to see the old man come in each day with his skiff empty and he always went down to help him carry either the coiled lines or the gaff and harpoon and the sail that was furled around the mast. The sail was patched with flour sacks and, furled, it looked like the flag of permanent defeat. (1.1)

The old man is forced into isolation because of his bad luck.

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But you went turtle-ing for years off the Mosquito Coast and your eyes are good."

"I am a strange old man." (1.46, 1.47)

The old man's description of himself as "strange" identifies him as a unique character, different from others. Because he is so different from others, he is often alone

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On the brown walls of the flattened, overlapping leaves of the sturdy fibered guano there was a picture in color of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and another of the Virgin of Cobre. These were relics of his wife. Once there had been a tinted photograph of his wife on the wall but he had taken it down because it made him too lonely to see it and it was on the shelf in the corner under his clean shirt. (1.52)

The old man has had solitude forced upon him, separated from his wife by death and the boy by his parents.

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Sometimes someone would speak in a boat. But most of the boats were silent except for the dip of the oars. They spread apart after they were out of the mouth of the harbour and each one headed for the part of the ocean where he hoped to find fish. The old man knew he was going far out and he left the smell of the land behind and rowed out into the clean early morning smell of the ocean. (2.20)

Isolation is an inherent part of the old man's daily activity.

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Quote #5

He did not remember when he had first started to talk aloud when he was by himself. He had sung when he was by himself in the old days and he had sung at night sometimes when he was alone

steering on his watch in the smacks or in the turtle boats. He had probably started to talk aloud, when alone, when the boy had left. But he did not remember. When he and the boy fished together they usually spoke only when it was necessary. They talked at night or when they were storm-bound by bad weather. It was considered a virtue not to talk unnecessarily at sea and the old man had always considered it so and respected it. But now he said his thoughts aloud many times since there was no one that they could annoy. (2.52)

The old man is dissatisfied with isolation, creating for himself the illusion of company.

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Quote #6

"If the others heard me talking out loud they would think that I am crazy," he said aloud. "But since I am not crazy, I do not care. And the rich have radios to talk to them in their boats and to bring them the baseball." (2.53)

The old man envies the company that others have, or that others have created for themselves artificially.

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"I wish I had the boy" the old man said aloud. "I'm being towed by a fish and I'm the towing bitt. I could make the line fast. But then he could break it. I must hold him all I can and give him line when he must have it. Thank God he is travelling and not going down." (2.77)

The old man at first wants the boy to help him fight the fish.

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Quote #8

Then he said aloud, "I wish I had the boy. To help me and to see this." (2.87)

The old man later desires the boy's presence because he wants someone to share the experience with.

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Quote #9

No one should be alone in their old age, he thought. But it is unavoidable. I must remember to eat the tuna before he spoils in order to keep strong. Remember, no matter how little you want to, that you must eat him in the morning. Remember, he said to himself. (2.88)

The old man distracts himself from his solitude by focusing on the task at hand.

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That was the saddest thing I ever saw with them, the old man thought. The boy was sad too and we begged her pardon and butchered her promptly.

"I wish the boy was here," he said aloud and settled himself against the rounded planks of the bow and felt the strength of the great fish through the line he held across his shoulders moving steadily toward whatever he had chosen. (2.93, 2.94)

The old man wishes the boy were there in order to share the experience, as he has done in the past.

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Quote #11

His choice had been to stay in the deep dark water far out beyond all snares and traps and treacheries. My choice was to go there to 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. (2.96)

The old man's solitude extends to the fish – they are in isolation from the rest of the world, but together because of it.

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Quote #12

Aloud he said, "I wish I had the boy."

But you haven't got the boy, he thought. You have only yourself and you had better work back to the last line now, in the dark or not in the dark, and cut it away and hook up the two reserve coils. (2.101, 2.102)

The old man distracts himself from his solitude by focusing on the task at hand.

He looked around for the bird now because he would have liked him for company. The bird was gone. (3.23)

The old man finds company in the creatures of the sea because he lacks the company of men. He may, however, prefer their company to men.

Quote #14

He looked across the sea and knew how alone he was now. But he could see the prisms in the deep dark water and the line stretching ahead and the strange undulation of the calm. The clouds were building up now for the trade wind and he looked ahead and saw a flight of wild ducks etching themselves against the sky over the water, then blurring, then etching again and he knew no man was ever alone on the sea. (3.49)

The old man takes comfort in the presence of the creatures of the sea, despite the fact that there are no other men in sight.

Quote #15

"I told the boy I was a strange old man," he said. "Now is when I must prove it." (3.76)

The old man is strange in his individuality, in his isolation from others; it is in solitude that he must prove his individuality, his unique and admirable nature.

If you're not tired, fish," he said aloud, "you must be very strange."

He felt very tired now and he knew the night would come soon and he tried to think of other things. (3.83, 3.84)

The old man recognizes his own strange individuality in the fish.

Quote #17

An airplane passed overhead on its course to Miami and he watched its shadow scaring up the schools of flying fish...

[...]The boat moved ahead slowly and he watched the airplane until he could no longer see it.

It must be very strange in an airplane, he thought. I wonder what the sea looks like from that height? They should be able to see the fish well if they do not fly too high. (3.93-3.95)

In his isolation, the closest the old man gets to other people is a glance at a passing plane.

Quote #18

It was dark now as it becomes dark quickly after the sun sets in September. He lay against the worn wood of the bow and rested all that he could. The first stars were out. He did not know the name of Rigel but he saw it and knew soon they would all be out and he would have all his distant friends.

"The fish is my friend too," he said aloud. "I have never seen or heard of such a fish. But I must kill him. I am glad we do not have to try to kill the stars." (3.105, 3.106)

The old man feels uneasy at having to kill the fish, as it will push him further into isolation on the sea

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If the boy was here he would wet the coils of line, he thought. Yes. If the boy were here. If the boy were here. (4.4)

The old man needs the boy not only for companionship, but for assistance in fighting the marlin.

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Quote #20

I cannot be too far out now, he thought. I hope no one has been too worried. There is only the boy to worry, of course. But I am sure he would have confidence. Many of the older fishermen will worry. Many others too, he thought. I live in a good town. (4.146)

Although the old man is isolated from others, he never feels completely alone.

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Quote #21

When he sailed into the little harbour the lights of the Terrace were out and he knew everyone was in bed. The breeze had risen steadily and was blowing strongly now. It was quiet in the harbour though and he sailed up onto the little patch of shingle below the rocks. There was no one to help him so he pulled the boat up as far as he could. Then he stepped out and made her fast to a rock. (4.173)

Even when he returns to land, the old man is still alone.

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"Did they search for me?"

"Of course. With coast guard and with planes."

"The ocean is very big and a skiff is small and hard to see," the old man said. He noticed how pleasant it was to have someone to talk to instead of speaking only to himself and to the sea. "I missed you," he said. "What did you catch?" "One the first day. One the second and two the third." (5.30-5.32)

The old man's love for the boy is largely based on the companionship the boy provides for him.

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