

SYMBOLISM IN THE AMERICAN NAUTICAL NOVEL

A Study through Cooper's The Red Rover, Melville's Billy Budd, and Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea

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Abstract: The aim of this dissertation cum article is to bring out the instances where sea is used as a symbol in the American sea novels by Cooper, Melville and Hemingway. The texts under scrutiny here are Cooper's *The Red Rover* (1827), Melville's *Billy Budd* (1924) and Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952). Through the discussion of these three texts, an attempt has been made to bring forward the usage of symbols in the sea novels and how they affect our reading and understanding of the novels. These apparently simple adventure narratives may sound like only fictional narratives aimed at providing entertainment. But a deeper level of reading and understanding through its symbolic implications will make the readers reach the true essence of these novels. This is the primary attempt of this article and the hope is that it will be greatly beneficial in drawing out the underlying symbolic interpretations of the American sea novels, separated by time and united by symbolic usage.

Keywords: *Sea, Symbols, Adventure, Mystery, Life etc*

INTRODUCTION

How sea can be seen symbolically in the American sea-novels is an idea which is fascinating enough to explore. In order to find out that, what we need to do is to opt for texts of different writers dealing with sea-narratives and make a close observation of their use of sea-symbolism. Sea-novels is a genre of literature which is rich in symbolism and as readers we need to have a close reading of the texts in order to be successful in drawing out instances of symbolism in the texts. Since the topic of this dissertation is about the use of sea symbolism in the select texts of Cooper, Melville and Hemingway, it is noteworthy to mention that the dissertation will be specific in its approach. But since writers vary in age as well as in their style of writing and their usage of words and symbols are also not identical, the study will be efficient in the overall context of the subject-matter. Through this dissertation attempts will be made at examining the use of sea symbolism in the selected sea novels of Cooper, Melville and Hemingway. How sea has been used by these writers in their works and how they have used it for symbolic implication will be the matter of discussion here. The dissertation will seek to achieve it through a close reading of the selected texts of these writers and highlight their wonderful use of sea symbolism and their multiple ways of looking at the sea.

The word 'symbol', in literature, is applied to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in its turn signifies something, or suggests a range of reference, beyond itself. It has been widely used by writers of different genres over the years to express certain ideas. It serves as a means to better express their ideas in a way which is different from everyday language. Having said that, symbolism in literature is not always difficult to understand if we give close attention to the text. In fact, it is believed that any reader, by dealing with the symbols, can help himself understand a text better. Thus symbols in literature is important and it facilitates effective reading and understanding.

In Chapter One i.e. the frame chapter of the dissertation, attempts will be made to showcase the link between symbols and literature over the course of time. The chapter will give us an insight into the history of symbolism in literature, dealing mainly with the symbol of sea. Sea symbolism in sea-literature will be the central attention of the chapter. Literature is often considered as the mirror of life and this is true to a certain extent. Literature has always given us wonderful interpretations of life and through it the art and beauty of life is captured. These interpretations are mainly given using various tools of literature. Symbolism is among the most popular of the tools, and is widely used by writers to showcase the mysteries as well as the beauty and grandeur of life. It is very much in use in the sea-novels. In the sea novels, sea serves as the background of the novel. In American literature, sea novels are very much popular and are widely acclaimed for their use of symbolism. Sea in American sea-novels is often considered to be the symbol of life as well as of regeneration. Life, with all its uncertainties, is equivalent to the sea which is also symbolic of those uncertainties. Sea-life does not ensure any certainty as there exists a continual struggle with doubts. Sea is equivalent to life in the sense that in both the sea-world and in life, there exists a 'cloud' of uncertainty. This is why writers of literary works use this symbolic comparison to highlight the very meaning of life. The symbolism is being used by American writers quite effectively in literature, particularly by the novelists like James Fenimore Cooper, Herman Melville and Ernest Hemingway. And it is in the subsequent chapters that we shall see individual analysis of the three texts of these three writers, namely, Cooper's *The Red Rover*, Melville's *Billy Budd* and Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.

In Chapter Two of this dissertation, attempts will be made to showcase Cooper's art of using sea as a symbol. Fenimore Cooper, the great American novelist who is famous for writing wonderful sea-narratives, depicts the art of using sea as multiple symbols. He is one prolific writer who has written a number of works based on sea. His novel *The Red Rover* is a novel about a sea-pirate named *The Red Rover* and events and situations lead the readers at understanding the pirate and his ambitions. The novel is praiseworthy for its romantic description of mystery and adventure, with sea as a constant influence and setting at the background. *The Red Rover* is a novel full of mystery and adventure and most of it if not all happens aboard the ships in the sea. This is one interesting novel where sea has been used as a setting and a symbol in abundance. What the chapter will aim at is to highlight these uses of sea-symbolism through certain quotations and references from the text.

The third chapter will look at the presence of sea-symbolism in Herman Melville's famous short novel *Billy Budd*. It is one of the finest novels by Melville apart from his masterpiece *Moby Dick*. Melville is the master at working with symbols in his novel. His *Moby Dick* not only serves as a symbol of life but also as a symbol of imperialism. The sailing of the ships across territories in the novel is seen as a symbol of the existing imperialism which made this free passing of ships across borders possible. In his short novel *Billy Budd*, which will be the subject of our discussion in this chapter, we will see Melville's genius as a symbolist. The novel maybe short in size, often referred to as a 'novella', the novel is rich in symbolism. This novel is about the central character of *Billy Budd* and certain happenings of his life aboard a ship. These happenings are essentially symbolic and sea plays a pivotal role in the background of all these happenings. Thus there is presence of sea-symbolism in the novel and this chapter will look to explore these symbolisms through references from the text.

Hemingway's critically acclaimed novel *The Old Man and the Sea* is the subject of analysis of Chapter Four. This chapter will seek to express the common idea of representation of life through sea. In the novel, we find the protagonist Santiago embarking on a journey on the sea. On his journey, he encounters a giant marlin. He battles nobly to earn this treasure and then fights the sharks to save it. This struggle ultimately defines him as a hero. Even though he loses the marlin to the sharks, he has won the battle of the sea and as such establishes himself as a successful man. Amidst all these actions, the sea constantly makes its presence felt and thus give ways to its symbolic interpretation. The chapter will look at highlighting the use of sea as the symbol in this novel. How sea has been used as a symbol in several parts of the novel as well as how it continues to have a symbolic presence throughout the main plot, will be showcased through this chapter.

In fine, the dissertation will seek to highlight the presence of sea symbolism in the writings of three great sea-novelists in American literature- Cooper, Melville and Hemingway. Through the examples from their selected works we will be able to get an idea about the wide range of possible ways in which sea can be used symbolically.

SEA AND LITERATURE

The aim of this chapter is to bring forth the history of sea-literature i.e. to showcase how sea has been constantly used as setting, theme and even subject-matter in literature. This chapter will also provide an insight into the use of sea as a symbol in literature in general and in fiction in particular. Apart from a brief overview of the history of sea-narratives in literature, the chapter is aimed at focusing mainly on the history and development of sea-fiction in American Literature.

Sea has been constantly related to human culture throughout the centuries. The contradictions in the nature of the sea, as experienced by people over the ages, finds its expression through various art-forms like poetry, film, music, art and literature in general. The contradictory nature of the sea as both peaceful and destructive, serene and wild, attracts the artists and they express this idea in their writings as well as through other art-forms like paintings and music. If we look back at the mythologies, we find the sea as a symbolic representation of a hostile environment dominated by fantastic creatures: the Leviathan of the Bible in one such example. In the works of Carl Jung, the sea symbolizes the personal and the collective unconscious in dream interpretation.

SEA IN LITERATURE

The sea has appeared in literature since at least the time of the Ancient Greek poet Homer. In his epic poem the *Odyssey*, written in the 8th century BC, he describes the ten-year voyage of the Greek hero Odysseus who struggles to return home across the sea after the war with Troy described in the *Iliad*. His wandering voyage takes him from one strange and dangerous land to another, experiencing among other maritime hazards shipwreck, the sea-monster Scylla, the whirlpool Charybdis and the island Ogygia of the delightful nymph Calypso.

Mediaeval literature also offers plenty of examples of rich encounters with the sea, as can be seen in the well-known romance of Tristan. The sea acts as a place of co-existence of the good and evil and also as the bearer of fate. Mediaeval romances frequently ascribe a prominent role to the sea. Chaucer's *The Man of Law's Tale* is one such example. The Tristan legend employ the sea as a structural feature and source of motifs. Many religious works written in the Middle Ages also reflect on the sea. The Old English poem *The Seafarer* has sea as the background. Sermons sometimes speak of the sea as representative of the world and the ship of the Church. In the sermons, we often find moralistic interpretations of shipwreck and floods. Similar motives are treated in Biblical paraphrases. Sea appears as the setting in larger works like John Gower's *VoxClamantis*.

William Shakespeare, the great English dramatist and poet, also makes frequent and complex use of the sea and things associated with it in his literary writings. The following, from Ariel's Song in Act I, Scene II of *The Tempest*, bears example of that:

*Full fathom five thy father lies:
Of his bones are coral made:
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.*

Other early modern authors like John Milton and Andrew Marvell also made use of the cultural associations of the sea in their works. The examples include Milton's famous pastoral poem *Lycidas* (1637) and Marvell's *Bermudas* (1650). European exploration of the oceans in the fifteenth century caused a shift in the meanings of the sea. While life was seen as happy and less troublesome on the land, life at sea was rather threatened. Contrary to that, Joseph Addison identified the sea as an archetype of the Sublime in nature. Samuel Taylor Coleridge's narrative poem *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), developed the idea of the ocean as "realm of unspoiled nature and a refuge from the perceived threats of civilization". A large seabird, the albatross, played a central part in the poem, which in turn gave rise to the usage of albatross as metaphor for a burden. However, it is Byron "who has taken most of the credit for inventing the nineteenth-century sea, in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-16):

*There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea and music in its roar*

If we talk about the modern times, Joseph Conrad appears to be one of the most notable names associated with books on sea. The novelist wrote several sea-inspired books including *Lord Jim* and *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* which drew on his experience as a captain in the merchant navy. The American novelist Herman Wouk writes that "Nobody, but nobody, could write about storms at sea like Conrad". One of Wouk's own marine novels, *The Caine Mutiny* (1952), won the Pulitzer Prize. Herman Melville's 1851 novel *Moby-Dick* was described by the poet John Masefield as speaking "the whole secret of the sea" and is often regarded as one of the best sea-novels of all time.

In his 1902 poem *The Sea and the Hills*, Rudyard Kipling expresses the urge for the sea, and uses alliteration to suggest the sea's sound and rhythms "Who hath desired the Sea?—the sight of salt water unbounded— The heave and the halt and the hurl and the crash of the comber wind-hounded?" John Masefield also felt the pull of the sea in his *Sea Fever*, writing "I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky." The novelist Jorge Luis Borges wrote the 1964 poem *El Mar (The Sea)*, treating it as something that constantly regenerates the world and the people who contemplate it, and that is very close to the essence of being human.

SEA IN FICTION

Nautical Fiction or Sea Fiction is a genre of literature which has sea as the background or setting. These novels deal with a large variety of subjects, ranging from mere adventure stories to issues such as Imperialism, Colonial dominance etc., from politics to personal narratives and also man and nature conflict.

A distinct sea novel genre, which focuses on representing nautical culture exclusively, did not gain much popularity until the early part of the 19th century. However, works dealing with life at sea were written in the 18th century as well. This includes works such as Daniel Defoe's *The Life, Adventures & Piracies of the Famous Captain Singleton* (1720) and Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748). The latter is a picaresque novel partially based on Smollett's experience as a naval-surgeon's mate in the British Navy.

Jonathan Raban suggests that it was the Romantic Movement, and especially Byron, which made "the sea the proper habit for aspiring authors". The two most prominent early sea fiction writers were James Fenimore Cooper and Captain Frederick Marryat, both of whose maritime adventure novels began to define the expectations about such fiction. Critic Margaret Cohen describes Cooper's *The Pilot* as the first sea novel and Marryat's adaptation of that style, as continuing to 'pioneer' the genre. Earlier English novels like *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Moll Flanders* (1722), or *Roderick Random* (1748), though helped in popularizing the naval world, they used characters which were unfamiliar with the sea. This, no doubt, helped the land-bound society to better understand the play, but failed in fulfilling the immersive expectations of nautical fiction.

The importance of naval power in maintaining Britain's vast worldwide empire led to numerous novels with nautical themes. Some of these just touch on the sea, as with *Sylvia's Lovers* (1863) by Elizabeth Gaskell, where the nautical world is a foil to the social life ashore. Charles Kingsley is the most definitive writers of the genre, writing many books based on the maritime theme, including *Westward Ho!* Among other popular authors, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883), and Rudyard Kipling's *Captains Courageous* (1897) were remarkable. These books helped greatly in expanding the potential of naval adventure fiction.

Most of Conrad's works draw directly from this seafaring career: Conrad had a career in both the French and British merchant marine, climbing to the rank of captain. His most famous novel, *Heart of Darkness* (1899), is based on a three-year employment with a Belgian trading company. His other nautical fiction includes *An Outcast of the Islands* (1896) *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* (1897), *Lord Jim* (1900), *Typhoon* (1902), *Chance* (1913), *The Rescue* (1920), *The Rover* (1923).

A number of other novelists started writing nautical fiction early in the century. Jack London's *The Sea Wolf* (1904), was influenced by Kipling's novel *Captains Courageous* (1897). Nicholas Monsarrat's novel *The Cruel Sea* (1951) follows a young naval officer Keith Lockhart during World War II service aboard small ships. Another important British novelist who wrote about life at sea was William Golding (1911–1993). His novel *Pincher Martin* (1956) records the delusions experienced by a drowning sailor in his last moments. Again, Golding's postmodernist trilogy *To the Ends of the Earth* is another of those works which has sea-voyage at the center of action. The book is about sea voyages to Australia in the early nineteenth century, and draws extensively on the traditions of Jane Austen, Joseph Conrad and Herman Melville.

SEA IN AMERICAN FICTION

Nautical fiction, as a distinct genre in the American context, was first pioneered and popularized by American novelist James Fenimore Cooper. He is one of the most popular sea novelists in the history of American literature. Before starting his career as a novelist, he was a shipman in the U.S. Navy and that greatly influenced many of his fictional works and other writings. Cooper wrote a number of sea novels, the most popular among those are *The Pilot: A Tale of the Sea*, *Afloat and Ashore*, *The Red Rover* etc.

Cooper wrote, what is often described as the first sea novel, *The Pilot* (1824), in response to Walter Scott's *The Pirate* (1821). Cooper was frustrated with the inaccuracy of the nautical culture represented in that work. Though critical of *The Pirate*, Cooper borrowed many of the stylistic and thematic elements of the historical fiction genre developed by Walter Scott. In both *The Pilot* and the subsequent *The Red Rover* (1827) Cooper explores the development of an American national identity, and in his later *Afloat and Ashore* (1844) he again examines the subject of national identity as well as offering a critique of American politics. Cooper's novels created an interest in sea novels in the United States, and led both Edgar Allan Poe in *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838) as well as novelists like Lieutenant Murray Ballou to write novels in the genre.

Sea as a theme has been prevalent in American literature over the years. Many notable writers, namely James Fenimore Cooper, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville and Ernest Hemingway etc. have written major fictional works based on sea as their central theme. Melville's *Moby Dick* is often regarded by many critics as one of the best sea fictions to have ever been written in the history of English literature. Apart from that, we have Hemingway's classic sea fiction *The Old Man and the Sea* which has not only won the Pulitzer Prize for best fiction in 1954 but has also won accolades of many critics for its exceptional use of symbolisms. The novel is highly praised for putting forward an excellent story of the 'super-human' qualities of man.

Sea novel, as a genre of literature, attained its own distinctiveness and this led to writers of both Europe and the United States to produce major works of literature in the genre. Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, Victor Hugo's *Toilers of the Sea* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and *Lord Jim* are classic examples of that. John Peck, a literary critic, describes Herman Melville and Joseph Conrad as the "two great English-language writers of sea stories". Melville's fiction frequently involves the sea, with his first five novels following the naval adventures of seamen. These five novels are, namely, *Typee* (1846), *Omoo* (1847), *Mardi* (1849), *Redburn* (1849) and *White-Jacket* (1850). However, *Moby-Dick* is his most important work. The novel is greatly praised by critics all around and is sometimes also called the Great American Novel. It was also named "the greatest book of the sea ever written" by D.H. Lawrence. In this work, the hunting of a whale by Captain Ahab, involves the narrator Ishmael in a spiritual journey, a theme which is developed again in Conrad's much later work *Heart of Darkness* (1899). "*Call me Ishmael*" from *Moby-Dick* still remains one of the most popular opening lines in the history of English fiction and is subject to multiple interpretations.

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SEA NOVELS

Male Heroism: Those nautical novels dealing with life on naval and merchant ships set in the past are written by men and deal with a purely male world with the rare exception, and a core themes found in these novels is male heroism. Most of the sea novels are aimed at highlighting the aspects of male heroism. Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* is the finest example of that.

Presence of Women: Although there are nowadays instances of women working as fishers and even commanding naval ships, maritime fiction on the whole has not followed this cultural change. Generally, in maritime fiction, women only have a role on the ships as wives of marine officers. An example of a woman aboard a ship is Joseph Conrad's *Chance* (1913), where in the final section Captain Anthony takes his younger bride to sea with him. There are, however, stories of women dressed as men serving at sea. In 1815, American Louisa Baker supposedly wrote *The Female Marine; or the Adventures of Louisa Baker* a narrative about her life aboard the USS Constitution as a warning to other young women.

Representation of Working Class: Until the 20th century nautical fiction focused on officers as protagonists for the novels. However, historically, the bulk of people aboard nautical voyages are common sailors, drawn from the working classes. Joseph Conrad's novella *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* (1897) is an example of that where we find a black sailor from the West Indies aboard the ship.

Life ashore or outside sea: Another aspect of sailors' lives is their experiences in areas like public houses, brothels, lodgings etc. which caters to their needs away from home. Herman Melville describes this in the novel *Redburn*. There are also works that deal with their experiences in their home port and those of their families ashore.

Slave-trade: While many maritime novels focus on adventure and heroic deeds, the prime function of ships, other than warfare, is the making of money. The darkest aspect of this, involving both greed and cruelty is seen in the slave trade. *Sacred Hunger* (1992) is a historical novel by Barry Unsworth (1930–2012), which is set in the mid-18th century in the English sea port of Liverpool

aboard a slave ship. The novel's central theme is greed, with the subject of slavery being a primary medium for exploring the issue.

SYMBOLISM AND SEA NOVELS

Symbols stand for different interpretations and meanings. And these meanings also get different directions, because many theorists have given their views and theories which leads to a series of possibilities. Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), an English philosopher, believes that symbolism represents the human imaginations and thoughts.

Northrop Frye (1912- 1991), a Canadian literary critic and theorist believes that the word symbol means any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention. Frye in his *Anatomy of Criticism* brings this notion that readers deal with symbols in order to make his/her understanding more effective.

From these definitions it is evident that symbolism is beneficial in understanding a text better. The decoding of symbols in a text can lead a reader to a better and more comprehensive understanding of the text. This is true in all cases, irrespective of the genre. Sea novels, as a genre of literature, also uses symbols and these symbols are greatly relevant in the overall context of the play. The first and foremost symbol in most of the sea novels is, of course, the sea itself. The sea can be a symbol of the life, the living as well as of regeneration. The serenity of the sea may indicate peace, whereas the violent nature of the sea may symbolize death and destruction. Sea, in sea novels, has always been there as a symbol of life with all its uncertainties. It can indicate the journey of life on which man must proceed with confidence. Apart from the sea, we find symbols such as water, ship, fish etc. in the sea novels. The flowing water of the sea may indicate life's continuity, whereas the voyage made on ship may symbolize man's journey on the course of life. Fish symbols may vary depending upon the context. Where fisherman catching fish may be seen as a gift or reward, the sharks and other such attacking sea-animals may be seen as danger. Again, we find sea-novels constantly dealing with mysteries and adventure-stories. Some of these novels also present sea-monsters and other such fictitious characters in order to give it a mystic touch.

In fine, sea novels is a popular genre of literature where we find a constant play of symbols and it is these symbols which makes sea-novels more interesting and effective and at the same time, makes it one of the most popular genres of fiction.

SEA AS A SETTING AND SEA AS A SYMBOL

The sea novels deal with a wide variety of symbols and this is evident from our reading of the sea novels like *Moby Dick* and *The Old Man and the Sea*. What is interesting to note here is that in these novels sea does the dual role- both as a setting and as a symbol. Sea as a setting is ever present in sea-novels. In any sea-novel, sea is a permanence. There may be scenes which do not deal with the sea but the sea is always there in the background, keeping the readers aware of the fact that the main events and happenings will take place in the sea or will be related to the sea in some way or the other. If we take the example of Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, we definitely can understand this better. The sea in the novel is ever-present in the background and plays a considerable part in the story. The presence is so much felt that the sea almost gets the status of an independent character. The same can be said about Melville's masterpiece *Moby Dick*. Thus we can see that in sea novels, the sea plays a very important and influential role as the setting.

Again, the sea is present as a symbol. The depiction of the sea as a symbol varies from author to author but one of the most common aspects of looking at sea is, of course, as a symbolic representation of life. Sea, in most of the sea novels serve as the symbol of life and the living. The life may indicate life with all its positives and negatives, ups and downs and also the continuity of life i.e. the act of living. The water of the sea symbolizes the eternal life-force- the life in general which has no end, which continues to exist. Again, the same sea may indicate a particular life with its gradual progression, its problems and positives, its good and evil. The sea, in general sense, can be said to be symbolic of the act of living. But when it is used by writers for the symbolic representation of any particular aspect of the living, it becomes the symbol of life. In *The Old Man and The Sea*, for example, sea symbolizes the life where the giant marlin is the reward and the sharks are the problems. The same is highlighted in *Moby Dick* as well through the whale and Ahab's quest to hunt it down.

Apart from being the symbol of life, sea can be used as symbols in other ways also. Fenimore Cooper, the great American novelist who is famous for writing wonderful sea-narratives, depicts the art of using sea as multiple symbols. In his novels, we see sea representing mystery and adventure. Sea is also presented by Cooper as a world of harmony, in contrast to the life at land which is shown as a world of chaos. His novel *The Red Rover* wonderfully portrays the mystery and adventure that sea offers and in a way, carries with itself. Melville's *Moby Dick* not only serves as a symbol of life but also as a symbol of imperialism. The sailing of the ships across territories in the novel is seen as a symbol of the existing imperialism which made this free passing of ships across borders possible. In his other short novel *Billy Budd*, sea can be seen as a career of innocence and evil.

Thus, we see that in sea novels, sea is widely used as symbols of multiple aspects of life and it is through close and alert reading of the texts that we can draw out these symbols and understand its significance.

SEA SYMBOLISM IN FENIMORE COOPER'S THE RED ROVER

The aim of this chapter is to highlight the use of sea as a symbol in James Fenimore Cooper's famous sea-novel *The Red Rover*. The chapter intends to bring out the references to the sea in the novel to showcase how sea has been projected in this novel. The

chapter will also look at sea as an overwhelming influence over the actions or plot of the novel. In order to justify the use of sea-symbolism in the novel, certain passages have been used as reference.

James Fenimore Cooper is one of the most prolific writers in the history of American literature, especially if we consider the genre of sea-fiction or sea novel. He has written a number of sea-novels in his career and has enjoyed a great deal of success and popularity as a novelist. Before starting his career as a writer, he served in the U.S Navy and it had great influence on his writings. Many of his novels and other writings were greatly influenced by his career at sea. The novel that paved the way for his introduction into the American Literature was, of course, *The Spy*. The novel deals with a tale having the Revolutionary War as the background and was published in 1821. This marked the beginning of Fenimore Cooper as a successful American novelist. After the initial success, Cooper started writing on the sea and wrote a series of famous sea novels. Among writers who popularized the sea-fiction and documented the naval history in their writings, Cooper was the most acclaimed figure. His works on the early U.S. Navy were very much well received if we brush aside the occasional criticism. Though the romantic novel *The Last of the Mohicans* is often regarded as his masterpiece by many critics, his popularity mainly lies on his success as a writer of sea fiction.

In 1806 at the age of 17, Cooper joined the crew of the merchant ship *Sterling* as a common sailor. His next voyage took him to the Mediterranean along the coast of Spain. After serving aboard the *Sterling* for 11 months, Cooper joined the United States Navy on January 1, 1808 as a midshipman. It fulfilled an aspiration Cooper had had since his youth. Cooper's first naval assignment came in March 21, 1808 aboard the *USS Vesuvius*. For his next assignment, Cooper served under Lieutenant Taylor Woolsey near Oswego on Lake Ontario. It was in this service that Cooper learned shipbuilding, shipyard duties, and frontier life. His experiences in the Oswego area later inspired some of his work, including his novel *The Pathfinder*. On November 13 of the same year, he was assigned to the *USS Wasp* under the command of Captain James Lawrence. Aboard this ship, Cooper met his lifelong friend William Branford Shubrick. Cooper later dedicated *The Pilot*, *The Red Rover* and other writings to Shubrick.

The Red Rover is a novel by American writer James Fenimore Cooper. It was originally published in Paris on November 27, 1827, before being published in London three days later on November 30. It was not published in the United States until January 9, 1828. The novel follows the activities of the sailor Dick Fid, free black sailor Scipio Africanus and Royal Navy officer Harry Wilder as they encounter the famous pirate, 'The Red Rover'. The novel is filled with symbolisms and symbolic references and just like any sea-fiction, sea is present as a very significant symbol in the novel. The novel projects sea as a symbol of mystery, danger, doubt and uncertainty. The opening chapter of the novel is devoted to mainly giving an account of the colonial history of Rhode Island in Newport. The time he is talking about here is October, 1759, just after Quebec has fallen to the British, and the seaport of Newport, Rhode Island, has just finished celebrating the victory. What Cooper immediately manages to convey through his beginning paragraph is that the tide is going to change and the existing bliss of happiness and comfort is about to get disturbed when he says:

"Enjoying the four great requisites of a safe and commodious haven, a placid basin, an outer harbor, and a convenient roadstead, with a clear offing, Newport appeared to the eyes of our European ancestors designed to shelter fleets, and to nurse a race of hardy and expert seamen. Though the latter anticipation has not been entirely disappointed, how little has reality answered to expectation in respect to the former! A successful rival has arisen, even in the immediate vicinity of this seeming favorite of nature, to defeat all the calculations of mercantile sagacity, and to add another to the thousand existing evidences "that the wisdom of man is foolishness."

(Cooper, Rover 11)

The danger is of course present in the sea, as is revealed by the character Hector Homespun, a cowardly tailor who tells his customer, Pardon Hopkins the accounts of the awesome and uncanny exploits of a notorious pirate in the area. Both the pirate captain and his ship (with *Dolphin* as its real name) are known as 'The Red Rover.' Homespun also calls to the man's attention the strange, mysterious aura surrounding a reputed slave ship that has been anchored offshore for several days. Thus, through their talks we can sense something dangerous in the world of sea. Thus, sea appears mysterious and filled with danger and uncertainty.

The Red Rover is a novel full of mystery and adventure and most of it if not all happens aboard the ships in the sea. The sea serves as a symbol of mystery almost all throughout the novel and Cooper manages to depict it by showing certain incidents happening aboard the ships in the sea. The Red Rover, who as shown in the novel, is a sea-pirate and this is enough to give hints to the readers about the play of mystery and danger in the novel. The pirate's activities and others' quest to catch hold of him is enough to give the novel a sense of thrill and adventure-like feel. What Cooper wants to hint at through the beginning chapters is that the sea whose "invigorating breezes" served the purpose of rejuvenating and energizing the people around have now created a given way to a world of mysterious possibilities. The presence of *The Red Rover* in disguise and his kidnapping of the Homespun. We are hinted at the cleverness of the rover through his actions, his disguise and also through Harry Wilder's inability to identify him in spite of a number of meetings and conversations.

In the last few lines of Chapter Thirteen, there is again reference to sea when Cooper uses the light and the shade to show different aspects of the sea. He says:

In the midst of these encouraging omens, the sun dipped into the sea, illumining, as it fell, a wide reach of the chill and gloomy element. Then the shades of night gathered over the illimitable waste.

(Cooper, Rover 210)

The contrast between the light and the shade in relation to the sea is very nicely described in these lines. Cooper's description makes the sea more mystical a symbol. He talks about how the vast sea is illuminated by the setting sun whose rays fell on the sea-water. It, no doubt, makes the sea-water appear more beautiful but it leads to the night which is dark, without light and which covers the sea in its shades. It can be symbolically interpreted as the setting of the goods and the approaching of something dangerous. This danger is ultimately hinted at through the incidents that follows in the novel.

The same sense of mysticism can be seen in the conversation between Gertrude and Wilder in Chapter Fourteen of the novel when the two discuss about what they see when they observe the sea. Wilder's description of the sea can be subjected to symbolic interpretation.

"We see nothing," said Gertrude, when Wilder again stopped to gaze, as before, on the seeming void.

"Look!" he answered, directing their eyes with his finger: "is there nothing there?"

"Nothing."

"You look into the sea. Here, just where the heavens and the waters meet; along that streak of misty light, into which the waves are tossing themselves like little hillocks There...."

(Cooper, Rover 216)

Here the image of the heavens and the water meeting at a point is very much symbolic. The heaven, of course, refers to the sky. The sky and the sea meeting may indicate the greater meaning of life- the intermingling of the higher and the lower to create the perfect. For Wilder, the sea world makes it possible to see through the real message of nature. The real meaning of life can only be understood by looking at the sea. Wilder is full of appreciation for the sea. He sees in sea a world of brighter prospects or opportunities. In fact, through Wilder's dialogues Cooper has wonderfully portrayed the sea in its various symbolic interpretations. The sea, in spite of all the negatives and darkness around, can give one the essential 'light'. This light is the light of hope and it needs a wise man to understand that. Wilder says:

"Then, here is the sea getting up in an unaccountable manner! and look at these rags of clouds, which darken the heavens; and yet there is light enough, coming from the ocean, for a good scholar to read by!"

(Cooper, Rover 233)

Cooper's The Red Rover manages to use sea-symbolism very aptly in the novel. The sea is used in the background as being ever-present in the overall action. Again, the sea is referred to time and again for symbolic use. This is evident in the reaction of the ship-mates aboard the Royal Caroline when they were followed by the Rover's ship. Just as the Royal Caroline was about to depart, its captain broke a leg and thus Wilder was allowed aboard to replace him and provide his services to the ship. While leaving, Royal Caroline becomes hopelessly entangled by an incompetent pilot in the ground tackle of the Red Rover, and it is at this point Wilder takes command and manages to separate the two ships. However, he has to anchor the ship as by the time the tide and wind are unfavorable for setting out to sea. Soon after reaching the open sea, the Royal Caroline is soon followed by a strange ship which it cannot outrun. The crew becomes skeptic and restless and are filled with doubts and a sense of terror. Cooper very nicely describes their skepticism and restlessness through their actions and thoughts. They start thinking about the unexplained and inopportune accident that had disabled Captain Nichols, the uncommonly cool behavior of Wilder, whom none had seen or heard of before this voyage, the unaccountably heavy seas, and the eerie light on the water at night. The mentioning of the seas is important here as it draws a kind of symbolic relation between sea and fate. Sea can be symbolized as the bearer of fate. The heavy seas are symbolic of the impending dangers and as can be concluded from the thoughts of the seamen, it symbolizes the arrival of something evil.

The conversation between Mrs. Wyllys and Wilder is very interesting and here also we find references to sea which can be seen as a symbolic reference. For example, we can talk about the conversation between them in Chapter Fourteen when Wilder talks about his life and how he sees himself as a sea-man.

"I have reason to think I was born on the sea."

"Think!—You surely know your birthplace?"

"We are all of us dependent on the testimony of others," said Wilder, smiling, "for the account of that important event. My earliest recollections are blended with the sight of the ocean, and I can hardly say that I am a creature of the land at all"

(Cooper, Rover 213)

Not only Wilder, even the Red Rover, who is later discovered as Walter Heidegger, shows the same emotional sense of emotional belongingness to the sea. Sea, for him is more than merely a world full of water and ships. It is evident from his conversation with Gertrude in Chapter Nineteen when he defends the life of sea-men as a life of much fun, thrill and amusement, unlike what people assume it to be. He says:

"There are people who think the sea has no amusements," he said. "To a pining, homesick, seasick, miserable lubber, this may be true enough; but the man who has sufficient spirit to keep down the qualms of the animal may tell a different tale. We have our balls regularly, for instance; and there are artists on board this ship who, though they cannot, perhaps, make as accurate a right-angle with their legs as the first dancer of a ballet, can go through their figures in a gale of wind; which is more than can be said of the highest jumper of them all on shore."

(Cooper, Rover 295)

Cooper's *The Red Rover* is one fine example where we find Cooper defending the sea and sea-life through his characters and in this regard, his characters in this novel are powerfully drawn. Especially the central character of the Red Rover and the character named Wilder. These two characters are central to the whole action of the novel and it is through them that Cooper puts forward his ideas regarding the sea. The sea bears great symbolic meanings in this novel. References to the sea can also be seen in the songs sung by the little cabin boy Roderick. There is constant mentioning of the sea as well as of sea-men in his songs and it glorifies the life at sea.

If the sea in the novel can be projected as a world which is mysterious, the characters are equally mysterious. We find the pirate who is famously called the Red Rover, being a person who is not as evil and dangerous as his stories make him appear to be. We get to know that his real name is Walter Heidegger. And when this man reveals why he had become a pirate, we as readers cannot help but accept him as a heroic and patriotic man. He was an American colonial and in the British navy he had challenged to a duel an officer who had defamed his native land. Having killed his antagonist, he decided to wage a one-man war against Great Britain rather than submit to a court martial which he could not accept. His act of becoming a pirate, is thus rationalized as a form of patriotism. Henry Wilder, on the other hand, is also a character who is mysterious in the sense that his identity remains a matter of question to most of the other characters except Mr. Bignall. It is revealed that the real name of Wilder is Henry Ark and he is on a secret mission to catch the Red Rover and make him surrender.

The sea plays a role in the setting of every action. Every now and then, there are references to the sea. The sea is symbolically presented to reflect not only the situations but also the characters. The Red Rover, as the central character, serves Cooper's purpose greatly of highlighting the intermingling of good and bad in a human-being. Being a pirate, he, no doubt, has committed a number of crimes but that does not make him a character with absolute absence of any goodness. There are definitely positive qualities in him which are brought forward through certain instances in the novel. One such instance is that when he becomes aware that Wilder and his men are reluctant to participate in armed conflict against their former shipmates, he generously exempts them from this duty. This is one of the many admirable qualities in his character. Even Wilder acknowledges that though he was sent on the secret mission to destroy the Red Rover, Heidegger's personality has greatly changed him and he admires him for that. When Wilder insists that he cannot leave the two ladies behind on the *Dolphin* (the pirate-ship of the Red Rover), Heidegger also agrees to free both of them as well as Dick Fid and Scipio Africanus. This greatly reveals his chivalrous mentality. He is likened to the sea which is mysterious and which has both positives to look forward to and negatives to be aware of.

It is generally said that Cooper's sea novels blur the traditional distinction in maritime literature between sea and shore. The contrast prevails in Cooper's works between the shore as a realm of conflict and the sea as the realm of resolution, between a state of "disorder" and a world of harmony and order. But most of the action in a typical Cooper narrative takes place somewhere between these two worlds. And this prevails in *The Red Rover*. While we find the presence of social barriers in almost anything and everything in the world, the sea offers evidence of harmony. We find in this novel a harmonious blend of friendship between characters which are socially divided by class, race and colour. For Cooper, the sea novel offered an opportunity to blur social barriers between characters. Throughout the novel, a close friendship exists between Scipio Africanus, fellow sailor Dick Fid, and the naval officer Henry Wilder. Though the two men respect him and treat him like an officer, they remain friendly.

It is not only the story- full of mystery, suspense and dramatic twists and turning of events which is intriguing in the novel, but also its use of symbolisms and symbolic references. Apart from being constantly projected as the symbol of adventure and mystery, the novel also uses sea as symbol for time as well as for hope. This is evident when in Chapter Four the governess, Mrs. Wyllys says to Gertrude: *"I hope your dislike to the sea has magnified the time,"* Again, in the chapter we find sea-world being forecasted as the world of hope with a better prospect. This is evident in Mrs. Wyllys' remark *"Gertrude, my love, you will have pleasure in returning to this charming island, and to these cheering sea-breezes."*

Again there is also reference to the sea as a world which depends more on the outlook and approach than anything else. This is evident from the conversation between the Red Rover and Wilder in Chapter Six of the novel where the rover says:

"It is well. This is an oddly-constructed world in which we live, Mr. Wilder. Some think themselves in danger with a foundation beneath them no less solid than terra firma while others are content to trust their fortunes on the sea. So, again, some there are who believe praying is the business of man..."

(Cooper, Rover 87)

Though Cooper's *The Red Rover* is not as popular as his other two great sea romances, *The Pilot* (1824) and *The Two Admirals* (1842), it has its own merits as an intriguing tale full of adventure. Some critics tend to draw a parallel between this novel and Melville's masterpiece *Moby Dick* (1851). Some of the early scenes of the novel, no doubt, bring to mind the classic Melville story. Harry Wilder can be compared to Ishmael in the sense that like the latter, he is also drawn mysteriously to a ship anchored in the harbor. His encounter with the Red Rover aboard the ship, again links it with Ishmael's meeting the enigmatic Captain Ahab. Just as Ahab forgets his inner self in his wild pursuit of the White Whale, so the Red Rover becomes a plunderer and killer in his own quest of revolt. However, taking aside these comparisons, the two novels appear rather contrasting in nature and style. While *Moby Dick* is written in an epic-scale, *The Red Rover* is more of a melodramatic romance written for the purpose of pure entertainment.

Cooper was one of the most popular 19th-century American authors, and his works were admired throughout the world. Balzac, the French novelist and playwright, admired him greatly. A contemporary reviewer in the *North American Review* noted how Cooper was particularly good at writing sea novels such as *The Red Rover*, the sea being his more natural element. The reviewer even compared him with Sir Walter Scott for his style of writing.

However, he was also subject to considerable criticism. Mark Twain famously criticized Cooper in his essay, "*Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses*" (1895). The essay reflects at Cooper's writing as cliched and exaggerated. Through this essay Twain criticizes his two famous works *The Deerslayer* and *The Pathfinder*. Whether the same can be said about this novel as well is a matter of scrutiny but it cannot be neglected that it is one intriguing stories on sea.

In fine, we can say that *The Red Rover* is one fine novel which depicts the mysteries and adventures associated with the sea-life. His close association with the U.S. Navy, various officials, and his familiarity with naval life provided him the background to research and write many of his works on sea and *The Red Rover* in one such remarkable work. The wonderful depictions of the sea-world and the exceptional use of sea-symbolism further enriches the novel.

SEA SYMBOLISM IN HERMAN MELVILLE'S BILLY BUDD

The aim of this chapter is to look at the presence of sea-symbolism in Herman Melville's famous short novel *Billy Budd*. It is one of the finest novels by Melville apart from his masterpiece *Moby Dick*. There are multiple perspectives of looking at sea in the novel. And this chapter intends to bring forth these multiple sea-symbolisms in the novel. Certain passages from the text are used to refer to the use of sea as a symbol and throws light on the overall symbolic interpretation of the novel.

In the overall context of the novel, just like Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, the sea represents life in general. However, in this Melville's short masterpiece, sea serves not only as a symbol of life but also associates with life the various positive and negative aspects. The setting of the novel is the last decade of the eighteenth century, 1797 to be exact. The British naval warship H.M.S. *Bellipotent*, who is in desperate need of extra sailors, recruits the young sailor Billy Budd, extracting him from his duty aboard the *Rights-of-Man*, a merchant ship. Billy appears to be a man of the best of potentials and his commanding officer, Captain Graveling, seems reluctant to let him go. However, since the decision is from a superior and since it was out of desperation, he had to agree to the demands and accept the happenings as part of fate. This is evident from the conversations between Captain Graveling and Lieutenant Ratcliffe, when the Captain says:

"Lieutenant, you are going to take my best man from me, the jewel of 'em"

(Melville, Billy 219)

This, to an extent, is symbolic of the superior-subordinate relationship that very much exists in anything and everything of life. This is true even in case of the marine officials. The position determines the power and it is this power which allows the Lieutenant to recruit a man who was very much well-liked in the merchant-ship, *Rights-of-Man* and whom the Captain did not want to let go. If we consider the sea to be the symbol of life in its absolute sense, then the actions related to the sea as well as aboard the ship in the novel serve as symbols for the uncertainties and wide range of possibilities that life carries. Billy Budd is unique in this sense. This novel is a masterpiece of Melville which highlights his tremendous use of symbolisms, both in characters, in names as well as in actions.

In order to understand this better, we can talk first about Melville's art of naming, both the characters as well as the ships. Both cater to his need for symbolic representation in the novel. Melville, as a novelist, shows tremendous amount of reliance on symbols in order to depict a deeper and more complex story than the one explicitly presented in the novel. The sea-symbolism can be better understood through the happenings aboard the ship involving the central character of Billy and the villainous figure named Claggart. By creating characters such as Billy Budd, who represents purity and innocence, the author is constructing a tale that draws its power from the religious significance it invokes. Billy, in the novel serves as the symbol of almost pure and perfect innocence. This symbol helps in drawing a religious angle to the novel. Billy, being shown as a victim for his innocence, appears to be the representative figure of Jesus Christ. Thus, the novel can also be read as a text dealing with religious symbolism.

Again, Melville is praised for his depiction of characters which are not only symbolic in one sense, but are also a subject of a wide range of interpretations. Billy, from all the apparent qualities as presented in the novel, seems more like a perfectly innocent figure. He stands for childlike innocence in a world of war which is dominated by evil men. The naming of the central character is really symbolic. What is noteworthy is that even Billy's last name is Budd, which symbolizes a bud in nature. A bud is something beautiful that has not yet fully grown- which has not yet opened itself to the world. It is also something that is protected and innocent, much like Billy Budd before he meets men such as Claggart aboard the ship. Billy's innocence is immediately recognizable as he leaves the *Rights of Man* to come on board the ship of Captain Vere. He is described by the narrator as being well-liked by his fellow men. He possessed as mentioned in one of the most important quotes in the novel- "*unpretentious good looks and a sort of genial happy-go-lucky air*". Melville, towards the end of the first chapter has given his readers all the necessary hints regarding Billy's innocence and how he manages to secure his place and at the same time gain popularity in the new and somewhat alien environment. The last paragraph of the first chapter reads:

“Aboard the Indomitable our merchant-sailor was forthwith rated as an able-seaman and assigned to the starboard watch of the fore-top. He was soon at home in the service, not at all disliked for his unpretentious good looks and a sort of genial happy-go-lucky air. No merrier man in his mess: in marked contrast to certain other individuals included like himself among the impressed portion of the ship’s company; for these when not actively employed were sometimes, and more particularly in the last dog-watch when the drawing near of twilight induced reverie, apt to fall into a sardonic mood which in some partook of sullenness. But they were not so young as our foretop-man, and no few of them must have known a hearth of some sort; others may have had wives and children left, too probably, in uncertain circumstances, and hardly any but must have had acknowledged kith and kin, while for Billy, as will shortly be seen, his entire family was practically invested in himself.”

(Melville, Billy 222)

However, Melville is wise enough to know that everything in the world is subject to imperfection as nothing can be perfect in the purest form. The imperfection in Billy lies in his habit of stammering which reminds the readers that even the greatest innocence cannot be perfect. Melville takes great care in making sure the reader is well aware of how he is “the Handsome Sailor” and how his “sweet and pleasant” looks and behavior makes him popular among the other sailors. Just as the descriptions of Billy’s make the reader think of innocence and purity, the descriptions of the surrounding evil indicate the exact opposite of purity as well as the absence of innocence. For instance, the physical descriptions of Claggart are far less appealing than those attributed to Billy Budd. Melville describes the opposite of Billy through his depiction of the character of Claggart. He uses physical descriptions of both the characters in order to attribute them their respective symbolic identity. Claggart’s description puts him in contrast to Billy. He is described by the novelist as:

“Now something such an one was Claggart, in whom was the mania of an evil nature, not engendered by vicious training or corrupting books or licentious living, but born with him and innate, in short “a depravity according to nature.”

(Melville, Billy 257)

Again, there are times in the novel when the narrator himself seems to be stressing on the idea that the evil in Claggart is beyond control. The events in the novel is presented in a way as if Claggart has no control over his behavior. It almost appears that evil is acting through him and the man is not in control of his actions. Claggart is compared to a scorpion by Melville which makes him appear dangerous and evil.

“With no power to annul the elemental evil in him, tho’ readily enough he could hide it; apprehending the good, but powerless to be it; a nature like Claggart’s surcharged with energy as such natures almost invariably are, what recourse is left to it but to recoil upon itself and like the scorpion for which the Creator alone is responsible, act out to the end the part allotted it.”

(Melville, Billy 259)

The sea symbolism can again be related here. The actions of Claggart though signifies pure villainy, his behavior aboard the ship seems rather mysterious as he is not in control of himself. The sea appears to have had enough influence over his psyche. Claggart’s actions are mainly presented as a response to Billy’s goodness which makes him insecure. This insecurity leads him to act in the most ruthless and devilish way and as a result portrays him before the readers as an antagonist. In fact, the contrasting characters of Billy and Claggart give the novel its much needed symbolic interpretation. While Billy becomes the symbol of good, Claggart is the symbol of complete evil. Thus, in the context of the journey of life which can be interpreted through the journey aboard the ship, Good and Evil can be studied as part and parcel of every man’s life. The presence of these two characters aboard the ship, thereby, indicates the essence of life that life, in itself, carries good and evil. And it is the constant struggle between good and evil that stands for the adventures of life- the adventure that the sea carries in its world of uncertainty and unpredictability. So, we can say that in the overall context of the novel, the sea serves as a dominating symbol which is always there at the background.

Again, the symbolism is also visible in the case of the names of the ships. The H.M.S. Bellipotent symbolizes society, with the activities of most of the characters aboard standing for the condition of human culture by and large. In fact, the different ships in the novel relates to different sorts of social orders: the Rights-of-Man symbolizes a place where people keep up their uniqueness, while the Bellipotent speaks to a military world which is more or less under the risk of savagery. The manners indicate a kind of wickedness where the principles of society intrudes upon the individual privileges of men. The Athée, whose name signifies “the skeptic” in French, symbolizes the counter religious parts of a capable, war-driven society. Thus the ships aboard the sea can be related to the different characteristics of people and different outlooks of them towards life. If we look at sea as the symbol of life then we can definitely project the ships as symbolic of an expedition- the journey of life.

The novel is indeed one of Melville’s best short novels and certainly among his greatest sea-adventure stories. In this sense we can draw a parallel between Moby Dick and Billy Budd. In Moby Dick Melville narrates the tale of obsession and destruction. In the novel we find the sole survivor of a lost whaling ship relating the tale of his Captain’s self-destructive obsession to hunt down the white whale named Moby Dick. The obsession can be related to the desire to achieve the ultimate success in life. The same can be seen in the character of Billy Budd where he tries his best to present himself as the perfect man and desires to achieve his ultimate success i.e. to prove his worth among his fellow seamen and especially to the master-at-arms, Claggart. After a farewell to his old mates, Billy settles in rapidly among the organization of the Bellipotent. He demonstrates himself to be the most innovative and enthusiastic in his part as a sailor and soon wins the admiration of his more experienced kindred mariners.

Thus, Billy and Captain Ahab though seems apparently quite different in their appearance and behavior, the common human desire of achieving success in their respective fields makes them alike.

The sea-symbolism is evident in both the novels. While in Billy Budd, sea symbolizes the journey of life with all its goodness as well as its evils, in Moby Dick the sea is more of a dominating force which is dangerous and can be life-threatening as well. Captain Ahab's struggles are suggestive of the danger as well as the sense of adventure that sea-life carries. The sea in Moby Dick is suggestive of the wide range of unknown and mysterious possibilities.

“Consider the subtleness of the sea; how its most dreaded creatures glide under water, unapparent for the most part, and treacherously hidden beneath the loveliest tints of azure. Consider also the devilish brilliance and beauty of many of its most remorseless tribes, as the dainty embellished shape of many species of sharks. Consider, once more, the universal cannibalism of the sea; all whose creatures prey upon each other, carrying on eternal war since the world began.

Consider all this; and then turn to the green, gentle, and most docile earth; consider them both, the sea and the land; and do you not find a strange analogy to something in yourself? For as this appalling ocean surrounds the verdant land, so in the soul of man there lies one insular Tahiti, full of peace and joy, but encompassed by all the horrors of the half-known life. God keep thee! Push not off from that isle, thou canst never return!”

(Melville, Moby 332)

In the above mentioned passage from Moby Dick we find Melville describing the mysterious nature of the sea perfectly. The passage describes Melville's overview of man's place within nature and the power that nature has over man. Melville also draws a contrast between the sea-life and the life at land. In this act of contrasting, while he uses terms such as 'devilish brilliance' and 'universal cannibalism' in relation to the sea, he considers the life ashore or at land as 'green gentle and most docile'. By doing so, he gives the sea-world a sense of mystery.

Moby Dick or The Whale is one of the finest examples of Melville's use of sea-symbolism. The sea in the novel, as described by critics, give way to a number of symbolic interpretations. It symbolizes life, imperialism, uncertainties etc. in the novel. There are also passages in the novel which highlight Melville's idea of the difference between sea and land to highlight the wild and dangerous aspect of the sea.

“Wherein differ the sea and the land, that a miracle upon one is not a miracle upon the other? Wherein differ the sea and the land, that a miracle upon one is not a miracle upon the other? Preternatural terrors rested upon the Hebrews, when under the feet of Korah and his company the live ground opened and swallowed them up for ever; yet not a modern sun ever sets, but in precisely the same manner the live sea swallows up ships and crews.”

(Melville, Moby 331)

What Melville tries to project here is that sea is not all calm and peaceful as it appears to be. It can be hostile and dangerous at times. And it depends on the individual's capabilities whether he will be able to live or perish in the sea. Melville depicts it very well in Chapter 58 of Moby-Dick when he says: *“But not only is the sea such a foe to man who is an alien to it, but it is also a fiend to its own offspring”*

Melville was unique in the sense that his descriptions of the sea appear to be more convincing and less fantasized. This has got to do with his personal experiences as a ship-man. In 1839, he was signed as a ship-man aboard the St. Lawrence which cruised from New York to Liverpool. The voyage greatly influenced him and it motivated him to write about sea-voyage and experiences on the sea. His famous work Redburn: His First Voyage (1849) was greatly inspired by this journey aboard the St. Lawrence and certainly draws from his own experiences as a sailor. Again, in 1841, he went on a sea-voyage on the ship named Acushnet which travelled from New Bedford and went through places such as The Bahamas, Cape Horn and Rio and finally anchored at NukuHiva at the Marquesas Islands. Aboard the ship, Melville met William Henry Chase, the son of Owen Chase, who gave him a copy of his father's account of his adventures aboard the *Essex*. Melville later wrote that: *“The reading of this wondrous story upon the landless sea, & close to the very latitude of the shipwreck had a surprising effect upon me.”*

Melville's first book, Typee (1845), is loosely based on his stay in or near the Taipi Valley. He also draws on his experiences at sea in his book Omoo: A Narrative of Adventures in the South Seas, the sequel to Typee. In 1843, he joined the US Navy initially as one of the crew members. This navy experience is used in White-Jacket (1850), Melville's fifth book. Melville's wander-years created what biographer Arvin calls *“a settled hatred of external authority, a lust for personal freedom”* and a *“growing and intensifying sense of his own exceptionalness as a person”*, along with *“the resentful sense that circumstance and mankind together had already imposed their will upon him in a series of injurious ways”*. Scholar Milder believes the encounter with the wide ocean, where he was seemingly abandoned by God, led Melville to experience a *“metaphysical estrangement”* and influenced his social views.

Melville is one exceptional writer who has managed to wonderfully use the sea as both as a setting and a symbol in his novels. And his wonderful descriptions and references to the sea suggest his mastery over this technique of using symbolism. The ending of the novel has a profound meaning. It symbolizes the crucifixion of innocence at the altar of justice. Billy is subject to capital punishment in the name of maintaining law and order aboard the ship. Billy's act of killing Claggart with a blow is seen as

an act of murder and the conspiracy of Claggart and the sudden impulsive reaction of the innocent Billy was never taken into consideration while taking the decision. Captain Vere acts as a strict disciplinarian and allows everything to happen in spite of being aware of the fact that Billy was innocent and his action was only a sign of his impulsive behavior. Billy spends his last hours in chains on board an upper firearm deck. The ship's clergyman or purser endeavors to profoundly plan Billy for his demise. However, Billy appears to be in a condition of perfect peace and renunciation.

Melville sets up the purser for the religious imagery that comes later in the content when Billy is liable to the tricks of Claggart and later hanged. He doesn't understand that there is shrewd on the planet as he is starting at yet still a "bud" and not alert or exposed enough to negative characters like Claggart. The death of Billy Budd stands out as the highlight of the novel. The death symbolizes the 'death' of goodness and simplicity in a world filled with corruption and evil.

Chapter 25 one of the most important chapters in the novel. It is in this chapter that we find Billy dying with his last words "God bless Captain Vere!" These last words greatly signify Billy's innocence and draws a parallel between his death and Christ's crucifixion. Again in Chapter 27 we find the sound of the sea-waves being mentioned as a 'break' from the silence created by the tragic death of Billy Budd. The narrator says that the execution of Billy has created an environment of absolute shock and silence which is only disturbed at intervals by the sound of the waves of the sea.

The silence at the moment of execution and for a moment or two continuing thereafter, a silence but emphasized by the regular wash of the sea against the hull or the flutter of a sail caused by the helmsman's eyes being tempted astray, this emphasized silence was gradually disturbed by a sound not easily to be verbally rendered.

(Melville, Billy 316)

The sea here can be seen as the symbol of the continuity of life or existence. The sound of the waves indicate that in spite of all the deaths and loses in life, life tends to continue. Billy's death may have happened aboard the ship in the middle of the sea and it may have created an atmosphere of silence aboard the ship, but unlike the silence of the physical world, the world of nature continues to exist and function as before. The symbolic interpretation we can draw out of the lines here is that life in nature is subject to continuity.

On its arrival voyage, we find the Bellipotent in an encounter with the French warship, the Athée, or Atheist. In the encounter, Captain Vere is severely injured and it ultimately leads to his death. His sense of remorse and guilt is expressed in his last words, "Billy Budd, Billy Budd." Thus, we see that though Captain Vere had to stand by the law and punish Billy with death-penalty, deep inside he was indeed feeling guilty. And that glorifies Billy even after death as the symbol of pure and absolute innocence. The sailors also remembered Billy fondly for his behavior and innocence and memorialized him in a song that became a sailors' ballad. The narrator gives the words to the ballad, entitled "Billy in the Darbies" which narrates the final moments of Billy's life sympathetically and tragically.

In fine, we can say that the sea in this short novel serves not only as a setting, a place where all the actions take place, but also as a symbol. The sea can be seen as a wild influence over the people aboard the ship. The ship that sails on the sea serves as life-symbol and in this sail (the continuation or the continuous flow of life) man is subject to different challenges. Thus, the uncertainty prevails.

SEA SYMBOLISM IN HEMINGWAY'S THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

The aim of this chapter is to highlight the use of sea as a symbol in Hemingway's most critically acclaimed novel The Old Man and the Sea. Through this chapter, we can get a glimpse into the multiple aspects that Hemingway highlights through a single symbol i.e. the sea. How sea has been used as a symbol in several parts of the novel as well as how it continues to have a symbolic presence throughout the main plot, is scrutinized here. To justify this, certain passages have been quoted from the text which validates Hemingway's use of sea-symbolism in the novel.

One constant thing in the novel is the portrayal of life in general through the life and struggle of a particular character. Santiago's life with all its ups and downs can be seen in the larger context as the life of man in general. Life, in essence, is unpredictable. This unpredictability is very nicely drawn in this novel through certain images, signs and symbols as well as through certain events or incidents. Life in the very simple sense may indicate the art of living. To have a life is to be alive and living. However, if we look for the answer to the question- what actually we mean when we talk about Life- we can get a wide range of answers from various books, journals, poems, short-stories and even scientific explanations. The very basic definition of life, as we can think of, is that it is the condition which distinguishes us from inorganic matter or things, including the capacity for growth, reproduction, functional activity and continual change preceding death. Thus life refers to the art of living through certain continual activities. It symbolizes a long journey till we meet our end by means of death. Life also indicates the existence of a human being or animal. In this existence, there involves the aspects like growth, reproduction, change etc. Nothing is certain in this journey. Life can always be unpredictable. When we think about the possibilities of growth and change in life, which no doubt is a certainty, we tend to often neglect the question- What is the growth and what is the change?. Growth or change can be both positive and negative. Positive growth is something which is beneficial for us. On the other hand, a negative growth is certainly not welcome in our life. Positive growth is appreciated because it leads one to success. Positively growing in life means growing through certain achievements which are praiseworthy. On the other hand, a negative growth indicates certain happenings which, no doubt, is a part of growing up, but it is a kind of struggle or failure. As a human being, we are subjected to both positive

and negative growth and we live our life through this uncertainty. Life can never assure one of any particular type of growth. In the journey of life, there lies alternate possibilities. And this is what makes life worth living.

Life, as a unique force of nature, has found widespread attention in various fields of work, of both Science and non-science subjects. Many writers, critics, scientists have tried their best to give us an insight into the very meaning of life- what it is and how it works in mankind. Since we are dealing with literature here, we can talk about the interpretations of life that literary writers and critics give us.

Literature is often considered as the mirror of life and this is true to a certain extent. Literature has always managed to give us wonderful interpretations of life. These interpretations are mainly given using various tools of literature. Some of these tools include metaphor, metonymy, simile, symbolism etc. Symbolism is among the most popular of the tools, and is widely used by writers to showcase the mysteries as well as the beauty and grandeur of life. Symbolism refers to the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities by giving them symbolic meanings that are different from their literal sense. Life can be represented through a variety of symbols like flower, water, candle etc. Sea is one such symbol which is often used in literature to indicate life and its existence with all the uncertainties. Sea is equivalent to life in the sense that in both the sea-world and in life, there exists a 'cloud' of uncertainty. This is why writers of literary works use this symbolic comparison to highlight the very meaning of life. The symbolism is being used by American writers quite effectively in literature, particularly by the American novelists like Fenimore Cooper and Hemingway.

Nautical fiction is a popular genre of fiction where sea serves as the central background of the novel. In American literature, nautical fictions or sea novels are very much popular and are widely acclaimed for their use of symbolism, particularly the use of sea to denote human life. Sea in American Nautical fiction is often considered to be the symbol of life as well as of regeneration. Life, with all its uncertainties, is equivalent to the sea which is also symbolic of those uncertainties. Sea-life does not ensure any certainty as there exists a continual struggle with doubts.

In any sea-fiction, one of the major symbols is the sea itself. It stands for all of life on which man must sail. In both the sea and in life, there are a number of possibilities that lie hidden from the common eye. Among these possibilities there are some gifts which are to be treasured while there are some problems which are to be defeated or from which we have to come out. But man can reach neither of these possibilities unless man embarks upon the journey. If man is lucky enough to discover a treasure, he must fight until death to retain it; and if man is unlucky and manages to discover something evil lurking underneath the surface of the sea, he must fight it bravely till the end. In either case, it is the struggle that is all important, and a man obtains the status of hero if he battles the sea (life) with grace under pressure.

For example, in this regard we can talk about the novel *The Old Man and the Sea*. In the novel, we find the protagonist Santiago embarking on a journey on the sea. This journey can be interpreted as the journey of life. On his journey, he encounters a giant marlin which can be seen as a treasure. He battles nobly to earn the treasure and then fights the sharks to save it. The sharks are symbolic of the problems and struggles of life. This struggle ultimately defines him as a hero. Even though he loses the treasure (the marlin) to the sharks (the problems), he has won the battle of the sea (life) and as such establishes himself as a successful man.

The Old Man and the Sea is one of the finest sea fictions to have ever been written in English and is particularly considered as one of the best novels in American literature. The novel has received critical acclaims from critics all around the world. The novel is rich in symbolism. The very plot of the novel is woven in a way which depicts the connection between sea and life. Life is greatly highlighted through the depiction of the protagonist's journey across the sea. The novel, if we go by the basic narrative, can be interpreted as the struggle of an individual to overcome his ill-luck through hardships and labour. But a deeper and more elaborate analysis of the novel makes it evident that it is not about a man and his life, but the Man and the Life. That is to say that the novel, though seem individualistic, is not merely a personal narrative of the Old Man. Rather the Old Man is symbolic of the human race as a whole. Hemingway's portrayal of Santiago seems more like the portrayal of the ideal man- a perfect specimen of how a man should behave and what persona he should carry. Thus, Santiago, the Old Man is typical of the "Hemingway-Hero". A Hemingway Hero is often described as one who exhibits the principles of honor, courage and endurance. In other words, the Hemingway Hero displays qualities that, in a life of pain and tension, "make a man a man." When the world knocks him down, the Hemingway Hero always gets back up and never loses his integrity. This is evident in the character of Santiago. He showcases tremendous amount of endurance and courage and fights till the end with his head high to keep his honour intact and gain respect of everyone. Santiago manages to come out of the dangers of the sea through hardship, thereby symbolically implying that we can come out successful in life in spite of all the problems if we are strong and willing enough to fight till the end.

The Hemingway-Hero is not the specimen of exceptional man, superior to the general mass. The hero of a Hemingway novel is generally a common man and his struggles and fights for success is more or less convincingly drawn. In this way, Santiago, as a hero, signifies the same qualities. The important question here is- who is a hero? *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* is of the opinion that hero is "a person, especially a man, who is admired by many people for doing something brave or good". *The Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* expresses "The hero of a book, play, film, or story is the main character, who usually has good qualities. Again, as per the view of Webster's *Universal English Dictionary*, a hero is "a person of exceptional bravery; a person admired for superior qualities and achievement; the central male character in a novel, play, etc." From these definitions given above, we can get some ideas about the characteristics or qualities of a hero. The definitions make one thing clear that the hero, unlike some common beliefs, is not a man supremely gifted and a figure with

superhuman qualities. The hero can be a general person, one from the commoners, which achieves that status through characteristic valour or bravery. In this aspect, the novel's central character is truly a hero. This heroism of Santiago is portrayed in the novel only through his journey aboard the ship on the sea. This symbolic journey, which, if analyzed in the larger context, will further strengthen the idea that the real hero is the one who can prove his worth in the ups and downs of life.

Sea represents a great role in the novel as a setting. The main event of the story takes place in the sea. Thus, the novel uses sea both as setting and symbolism. The sea-symbolism is not only of the life, but can be interpreted in other sense as well. Here sea can also symbolize the universe and the Santiago's isolation in the universe. Though people have their own identity in their specific places, in a universe people are helpless from others and become alone. In Santiago's village, he has his identity as a fisherman and always gets the help of little Manolin, the young boy and a few of others. These people still consider Santiago's worth as both a good fisherman and a good human being. However, it is at sea, that Santiago faces his ultimate challenge, with no help and no recognition. According to Hemingway, man was most able to prove himself worthy in isolation. The novel, in this regard, is an example of Naturalism in Literature that controls the lives by environment.

The giant Marlin of the sea is the ideal opponent in the novel and it symbolizes the last chance that can come for the individuals. Here in the novel, Marlin struggles to avoid its death. Death is the ultimate reality of the lives of all beings. The Marlin serve as life's opportunities or gifts which can be attained only after struggle and hardship. The sharks that attacked Santiago on the sea could represent those who would tear apart anyone's successes, because they destroyed all the effort of Old man and his hopes. —the shark came in in a rush and the old man hit him as he shut his jaws. He hit him solidly and from as high up as he could raise the club. This struggle not only highlight the fighting spirit in Santiago, but also acts as a symbol. The fight against the sharks symbolize the willingness to fight which should be present in every human being. Every human, in spite of all the pains and problems he is subjected to in life, must fight bravely in order to achieve the ultimate success of life and establish himself as a worthy human being- the real hero of the real world.

The sea in the novel is also presented from Santiago's point of view. In the initial parts of the novel, we find Santiago's interpretation of the sea i.e. his outlook towards the mighty sea.

"He always thought of the sea as 'la mar' which is what people call her in Spanish when they love her. Sometimes those who love her say bad things of her but they are always said as though she were a woman. Some of the younger fishermen, those who used buoys as floats for their lines and had motorboats, bought when the shark livers had brought much money, spoke of her as 'el mar' which is masculine. They spoke of her as a contestant or a place or even an enemy. But 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. The moon affects her as it does a woman, he thought."

(Hemingway, Old Man 19-20)

Santiago, as we find in the novel, looks at the sea from a different perspective as compared to the other seamen and people of the village. The writer says, while other people mostly consider the sea as 'el mar' which gives it a kind of masculinity, Santiago looked at the sea as 'le mar' which is feminine. We find the novelist saying that 'le mar' is a term used by the villagers to indicate their love for the sea. The sea was very seldom looked at from the feminine perspective by the villagers. They always considered the sea from a masculine point of view, thinking it to be a contestant or a place or even an enemy. However, Santiago excused the wildness of the sea thinking about the positive aspects of the sea. He thought that it was otherwise of great favour if we could excuse its wildness and destructive abilities. For Santiago, sea-world is a world of possibilities.

Santiago, as the central figure or protagonist of the novel, can be seen as the 'carrier' of Hemingway's ideas of life and how a man in his true sense and spirit should approach it in order to make it worth living. Santiago, being the ideal projection of the 'Hemingway-hero', indeed manages to do that.

Again, Santiago shows his dedication towards his aim i.e. to catch the giant marlin in spite of all the ill-luck which keeps him away from the success. The extended length of his bad luck on the sea, makes people feel both pity as well as make fun of him. People tend to pity him and consider him to be a 'salao' which means a man of 'the worst form of bad-luck'. They had little faith in his abilities, and apart from the young boy Manolin and some other people who knew his capabilities, others tend to avoid his company. The conversation between Manolin and Santiago at the beginning of the novel makes it evident:

"Santiago," the boy said to him as they climbed the bank from where the skiff was hauled up. "I could go with you again. We've made some money."

The old man had taught the boy to fish and the boy loved him.

"No," the old man said. "You're with a lucky boat. Stay with them."

"But remember how you went eighty-seven days without fish and then we caught big ones every day for three weeks."

"I remember," the old man said. "I know you did not leave me because you doubted."

"It was papa made me leave. I am a boy and I must obey him."

"I know," the old man said. "It is quite normal." "He hasn't much faith."

"No," the old man said. "But we have. Haven't we?"

'Yes," the boy said....

(Hemingway, Old Man 4)

Thus, we see that Manolin's father had little faith in the Old man's capabilities and he stops his son against going to the sea with Santiago. This is symbolic of the real-life situation and the characteristics of mankind in general. If we consider sea, as the representative of life, then Manolin's father stopping his young boy would indicate people's tendency of running after success and avoiding those people or objects which they feel will no longer help them in their success. The passage is also evident of the fact that in life's journey, more often than not, man has to fight alone and if one is not in the right side of his fortune, no one will be there to blindly support him. Here, Manolin's father could realize that the old man has gone eighty four days without catching a fish and as such it is of no benefit to let his son go on the sea with an unsuccessful old fisherman like Santiago. Santiago understands this very well and accepts this as part and parcel of one's life. He, no doubt, has great belief in the young boy and wishes to have his company, but he knows that it is unlikely that a boy would be allowed by his father to keep company of an unsuccessful person like him.

"If you were my boy I'd take you out and gamble," he said. "But you are your father's and your mother's and you are in a lucky boat."

(Hemingway, Old Man 6)

These words uttered by the old man is greatly symbolic of the man's desire to have the company of Manolin, who he considers to be a boy with great potential and a bright future on the sea. The old man, in spite of all the failures and the lack of company, does not shy away from trying and, as we see in the novel, he embarks upon the journey to catch the giant marlin all alone. This is symbolic of the fact that one must be motivated enough to embark upon the journey of life (which the sea symbolizes) even if he has to face all the troubles and pains alone. And this journey must be embarked upon with a positive attitude and mentality. That is exactly what the Old Man shows when he says *"Eighty-five is a lucky number"* (Hemingway, Old Man 9). When he reminds himself of how he has gone eighty four days without catching a single fish, he does not feel defeated or broken. Rather, Santiago appears to be positive and confident. He indeed shows tremendous amount of courage and confidence and it shows his belief in the idea that 'every day is a new day'. He, being the old and experienced man he is, knows that there are ups and downs in everyone's life and it only takes a moment to change it. And in life's journey you have to always wait for that moment eagerly and capitalize on the opportunity whenever life provides you with one. Thus, he does not get bogged down by all the disappointments of the past. Rather, his confidence in himself remains unshaken and he is as determined as before to achieve success because after all it is a new day and a new beginning. And since life is uncertain, this new day may turn out to be lucky for the old man.

The old man's words and arguments in the novel are not only logical but also symbolic to a great extent. For example, he says:

"I may not be as strong as I think," the old man said. "But I know many tricks and I have resolution."

(Hemingway, Old Man 14)

This is true of one's life in order to survive. The old man says that he knows a trick or two to survive on the sea and most important of all, he is firm and resolute in his aim. This again is symbolic if we consider it from the point of view of human life. If sea is the symbol of life, then the tricks are symbolic of the skills or alternate-ways which a man must have in order to come out of difficult situations in life. Life, may not always be favorable and it may not always be as simple as one thinks or hopes it to be. There are situations in life when one can find himself or herself at the wrong end of things and then it will become very difficult for him to come out of it. But as the old man shows in the novel, one must be firm in his resolutions in order to become successful in spite of a stretched period of bad luck. The character of Santiago is greatly symbolic of the ideal man- the man who has belief on his own potentials and who is willing to embark upon the journey based on his own 'tricks' and firm and resolute spirited individual.

This positive attitude is reflected in many parts of the novel through Santiago. In fact, through Santiago, Hemingway gives his readers an important message regarding life. Santiago is the representative of the man of confidence and firm resolutions. He, no doubt, goes through many problematic situations in the novel, but nothing can keep him away from trying. From the conversations between Manolin, the young boy and Santiago, it is revealed that once before also he had gone eighty seven days without catching a single fish. But then he caught one on the next day. Thus, this long stretch of eighty four days of ill luck is not something new. Herein lies an important message for everyone. In life, problems are never certain in number. As life is a journey of unpredictability and uncertainties, the possibility of problems and struggles in life is also uncountable. Sometimes, there may be an extended period of ill-luck in life. Again, there may be more than one occasion when life throws challenges upon an individual. Santiago's life is symbolic of that. The old man is subjected to different problems at different stages of the novel. But he is never bogged down by any of it. Hemingway writes:

But, he thought, I keep them with precision. Only I have no luck any more. But who knows? Maybe today. Every day is a new day....

(Hemingway, *Old Man 22*)

These lines wonderfully depict the old man's tremendous amount of confidence and belief in himself. This confidence and belief in his own capabilities greatly encourages him at certain tough points of his life on the sea and on his quest to catch the giant marlin. One of the most celebrated lines of the novel- "A man can be destroyed but not defeated"(Hemingway, *Old Man 80*) further establishes the point that Santiago is Hemingway's projection of the 'undefeated' man. This idea of being undefeated does not necessarily mean undefeated in the practical world of struggle. Rather, here defeat or victory is measured at the psychological level. And it is here where Santiago wins as a hero and an individual. When he remarks that a man is not made for defeat, he is glorifying the idea of the ideal man with the ideal mindset. This glorification of the ideal man by Hemingway through the character of Santiago really makes the novel praiseworthy. This has continued right through the novel and such remarks like, "I wish I could show him what sort of man I am", "Let him think I am more man than I am and I will be so" and "But I will show him what a man can do and what a man endures"(Hemingway, *Old Man 47-49*) further establishes that point.

The sea-journey (symbolically the journey of life) is most wonderfully depicted by Hemingway and the Hemingway-hero has come out of it successful after all the struggles. What these struggles have symbolized is the fact that uncertainty and problems are part and parcel of every human being's life. And complaining or accepting defeat is not the solution. Hemingway, rather, tries to instill the spirit of positivity in the readers through the spirited character of Santiago. This attempt at instilling the positivity can be greatly felt through the dialogues as well as the monologues in the novel. Santiago appears to be a spirited individual. This spirit comes from self-scrutiny and self-awareness. At the same time, we find him thinking about the greater possible struggles of life which makes his present struggle appear bearable and less intense. For example,

"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."

Imagine if each day a man must try to kill the moon, he thought. The moon runs away. But imagine if a man each day should have to try to kill the sun? We were born lucky, he thought.

(Hemingway, *Old Man 56-57*)

The *Old Man and the Sea* is a novel which is highly centered around man's symbolic journey on the course of his life. The Sea, as can be seen from the interpretations thus far, is the symbol of Life. In the same way, Santiago is the symbolic representation of man in general, with all his emotions, ideas, virtues and follies. But what takes him far is his never-say-die spirit. Santiago, is not the character who is firm in his belief all throughout. There are times when we find his belief shaking at the altar of reality. One such instance can be seen when he is on the sea alone struggling to find and kill the giant marlin.

You are killing me, fish, the old man thought. But you have a right to. Never have I seen a greater, or more beautiful, or a calmer or more noble thing than you, brother. Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills who.

(Hemingway, *Old Man 71*)

Even after getting hold of the giant marlin, the plight does not end for the old man. Soon, the blood flowing from the marlin's body attracts the sharks and they attack him. If the marlin was symbolic of the treasures of life, the sharks symbolizes the troubles that life offers in the course of attaining one's goal. Sometimes in life, the problems may take away all the treasures from us. But that should not in any way harm our moral. Through Santiago, the novelist portrays this idea. Santiago, though manages to kill the marlin, cannot bring the giant fish ashore in its entirety. The sharks attack and eat up all the flesh and the old man is left only with the skeleton of the fish. This, from the apparent eyes, may seem to be a failure. But Hemingway does not refer to it as a sign of failure. For him, as is shown through his protagonist, the struggle matters more than the ultimate outcome. Santiago remains as spirited as before and herein lies his victory. Towards the end of the novel, after the eating up of the marlin by the sharks, we find Santiago in a state of disappointment. But his spirit is still undefeated.

He spat into the ocean and said, "Eat that, galanos. And make a dream you've killed a man."

(Hemingway, *Old Man 92*)

One of the highlighted lines of the novel, which represents the idea of the sea-journey as the journey of life can be found when the old man on the sea alone waiting for his ultimate prize- the giant marlin.

"Don't think, old man," he said aloud. "Sail on this course and take it when it comes."

(Hemingway, *Old Man 80*)

The line serves as an important message for every one of us. We should not think too much and worry about what life has to offer in future. We, again, should not also keep on complaining about the troubles or problems of life. Rather, we should embark upon the journey and look for opportunities to capitalize on. And whenever life provides us with treasures of opportunities, we must grab them with both hands.

In fine, *The Old Man and the Sea* is one novel which is filled with a number of symbolisms, both in the form of characters as well as through objects and events. And sea, as the backdrop of the novel, serves as the most important symbol right

throughout. Hemingway has used the sea as the symbol of life and through his protagonist and his effective weaving of the storyline, manages to depict this just about perfectly. In fact, it is the sea-symbolism which glorifies the novel and the real message is brought forth only through this symbolic study of the novel.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation highlights the use of sea as a symbol in the three novels by three of the greatest American sea novelists, namely Fenimore Cooper, Melville and Hemingway. Throughout the dissertation, the central focus is on bringing out instances i.e. passages from text which would serve the purpose of highlighting the use of sea-symbolism. What the study of the three texts have done is that it has shown how symbolism works in the writings of various writers who are divided by age and by style but manages to use the symbols in the most appropriate way to interpret their ideas.

In Chapter One i.e. the frame chapter of the dissertation, the link between symbols and literature over the course of time is highlighted. The chapter gives us an insight into the history of symbolism in literature, dealing mainly with the symbol of sea. Sea symbolism in sea-literature is the central attention of the chapter. In American literature, sea novels are very much popular and are widely acclaimed for their use of symbolism. Sea in American sea-novels is often considered to be the symbol of life as well as of regeneration. Life, with all its uncertainties, is equivalent to the sea which is also symbolic of those uncertainties. This is why writers of literary works use this symbolic comparison to highlight the very meaning of life. The symbolism is being used by American writers quite effectively in literature, particularly by the novelists like James Fenimore Cooper, Herman Melville and Ernest Hemingway. And it is in the subsequent chapters that we see individual analysis of the three texts of these three writers, namely, Cooper's *The Red Rover*, Melville's *Billy Budd* and Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. The chapters help us in looking at the various perspectives of sea as a setting and a symbol in their writings.

Chapter Two of this dissertation showcase Cooper's art of using sea as a symbol. In his novel, *The Red Rover* we see sea representing mystery and adventure. Sea is also presented by Cooper as a world of harmony, in contrast to the life at land which is shown as a world of chaos. The novel wonderfully portrays the mystery and adventure that sea offers and in a way, carries with itself. Cooper manages to depict it by showing certain incidents happening aboard the ships in the sea. *The Red Rover*, who as shown in the novel, is a sea-pirate and this is enough to give hints to the readers about the play of mystery and danger in the novel. The pirate's activities and others' quest to catch hold of him is enough to give the novel a sense of thrill.

The third chapter looks at the presence of sea-symbolism in Herman Melville's famous short novel *Billy Budd* There are multiple instances of sea symbolism in the novel. And this chapter brings forth these multiple sea-symbolisms through quotations and discussions. In this novel, we find sea not only as the general symbol of life and continuity but also sea as a career of innocence and evil.

Hemingway's critically acclaimed novel *The Old Man and the Sea* is the subject of analysis of Chapter Four. This chapter expresses the common idea of representation of life through sea. We find that the novel uses sea as the symbol of life. How sea has been used as a symbol in several parts of the novel as well as how it continues to have a symbolic presence throughout the main plot, is showcased through this chapter here. The chapter almost helps us in understanding the fact that the significance of sea almost gives it the status of a 'character'.

From our discussions regarding the use of sea as a symbol in these three writers, the traces of multiple use of the sea-symbol is very much evident. The first and foremost symbol in most of the sea novels is, of course, the sea itself. The sea can be a symbol of the life, the living as well as of regeneration. The serenity of the sea may indicate peace, whereas the violent nature of the sea may symbolize death and destruction. Sea, in sea novels, has always been there as a symbol of life with all its uncertainties. In both the sea and in life, there are a number of possibilities that lie hidden from the common eye. Among these possibilities there are some gifts which are to be treasured while there are some problems which are to be defeated or from which we have to come out. Apart from being the symbol of life, sea can be used as symbols in other ways also. It symbolizes mystery, adventure, uncertainty, hope etc. It also symbolizes the eternal time as well as time in general.

In fine, the dissertation highlights the presence of sea symbolism in the writings of three of the greatest sea-novelists in American literature. Through the examples of Cooper, Melville and Hemingway's works we get an idea about the wide range of possible ways that sea can be used symbolically in a sea-fiction. The dissertation brings out sea-symbolism in the selected novels through close reading which helps readers to get an idea about the use of sea-symbolism in these great American sea-novels.

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