DREADFUL AND DOUGHTY TRAVERSE IN ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

Dr. A. Kalidass

Associate Professor of English
V.H.N.S.N College (Autonomous), Virudhunagar

Abstract

The nautical fiction contains the story of a hero who attempts an adventure in the ocean or sea. The novel The Old man and The Sea possess the quality of the nautical fiction. The Novel is written in 1952 and it is considered as a remarkable novel of Hemingway. It is a simple story on the surface, but it is a tale with much deeper message and impact that transcends time and place. The story deals with an epic struggle between an old experienced fisher man and the greatest catch of his life. This paper describes how the protagonist of the novel suffers in the hands of natural disasters like the storm, starvation and dehydration. This paper also highlights how far a human being struggles for his livelihood amidst torment and also explains the conditions of fishermen who suffer endlessly in order to survive in the world. Apart from the sufferings and torments a fisherman exists by overcoming his miseries of hardships. It mainly deals with positive determination and self interfaces to go ahead in the life. It also focuses on the valiant and meaning life of the protagonist of the novel.

Keywords: *doughty, traverse, pervasive, harpoon, gaff, tiller, repercussion*

The nautical fiction comprises the story of a hero who attempts an adventure in the ocean or sea. The settings of nautical fiction vary, including merchant ships, liners, naval ships, fishing vessels, life boats, along with sea ports and fishing villages.The development of nautical fiction follows the development of the English language novels.

Ernest Hemingway is considered as the Nautical Fiction writer. He has a passion towards making adventure and taking risks in his life. His experiences in sea make him to record in the form of writings. Most of his works are based on his experiences faced during his voyages and fishing. The huge success of *The Old Man and The Sea*, published in 1952 was a much needed vindication. Philip Young comments:

Hemingway, taking a view of that failed novel which occasionally over rode his concern for his sea story, went way out and hooked his great prize, a book to keep a man all winter, but then the critics ate away at it until there was nothing left. He was still the master of many tricks and still up to bringing in the great novel. (26)

The most significant aspect of the novel deals with the environment of Santiago who lives with a struggle and pain.

We can't always choose our circumstances but we can choose how we respond to what life throws at us, and there is power when we realize our ability to alter our destiny. (Grylls 278)

The novel begins with the situation that Santiago has been without catching a fish for eighty four days. On the eighty-fifth day he catches a very big Marline. He struggles for three days to kill that fish. After killing the fish he ties it at the side of the boat as the fish is bigger than the boat. While returning towards harbour due to the smell of marline's blood a group of sharks are attracted towards the dead fish. They eat the whole flesh of the Marline. In the end of the story after a fierce fighting, Santiago returns to the harbour only with the big carcass of the fish Marlin.

The environment of the fisherman Santiago is found to be difficult in his place. Santiago seems to have sympathy towards the birds and animals on the sea. Santiago seems to have sympathetic feelings towards all creatures he meets during histime on the sea. He regards the flying fish as his principal friends on the ocean. He is also sorry for the turtles that are killed by other fisherman. He does not like to kill turtle because turtle's heart beats for an hour after it has been butchered. The old man thinks that his heart too is like that of turtle. The old man is not like a commoner who has no feelings for animals and consider it as worthless as compared to human beings.

Man struggles against the forces of nature with all the strength at his command in order to assert his existence.