

The Social Image Crisis of Santiago and Captain Ahab: A Psychoanalytic Comparison between *The Old Man and the Sea* and *Moby-Dick*

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Abstract

The incredibly patient Santiago, the protagonist of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* and the stubborn and revengeful Captain Ahab in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* present an arresting similarity if their fate and fatal ending are observed. Both the protagonists are driven by their urge to triumph over their situations – Santiago from poverty and social shame, Ahab from obsession with vengeance. Both in the end lose the capacity for reasoning which leads them towards their doom. Their persona – the best fisherman of an area for Santiago and the best whale hunter in a community – gets hurt and drives them towards their demise. They both want to be the conquerors of the sea and finally are conquered by their desires. This research identifies both the characters in social image crisis. Drawing upon the works of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, the paper first analyses the personality levels and different drives in human beings. Then, how the drives motivate the two characters and their personas will be discussed. Overall, the paper criticizes the choices of the two characters in the light of psychoanalysis.

Keywords: Personality, Consciousness, Drives, Choices, Social shame, Crisis

Introduction

The Old Man and the Sea is a novella about Santiago, an old Cuban fisherman who has become the “salao, which is the worst form of unlucky” (Hemmingway, 2005, p. 1), of his community as he has gone eighty-four days without catching a single fish for his survival. Being an old and lonely fisherman, he is deserted by the community except for Manolin, the boy who used to be his companion in fishing until Manolin's parents place him in another boat because of the old man's long run of bad luck. Manolin is the only solace to Santiago as the boy loves him and tries to help him in all possible ways such as providing sardines to use as bait, offering meals, and motivating by reminding him of his old success. Santiago, once the best fisherman in the community turns into an unlucky man who failed to catch any fish for eighty-four days and tries hard to overcome his unlucky situation. He strives to restore his dignity of being the best fisherman he used to be. On the eighty-fifth day, the old man again goes to the sea to try his luck with hope and desperation. On this day “he drifts alone beyond the ordinary boundary of customary secure fishing” (Monira, 2016, p. 123). With a strong intention to fish well, he ignores his physical weaknesses and resists the temptation of taking rest and involves himself deeply in the sea and catches a small tuna though he marks that a Marlin, down is nibbling the

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bait and Santiago becomes ambitious about the big Marlin. In spite of the unmanageable weight and size of the Marlin, the aspiration for hunting the fish leads the old man towards a painful battle with the fish. He goes beyond his capacity to fulfil his desire of becoming the old self, the best fisherman in the community. He undergoes impediments such as cramps, nausea, sleep deprivation, and scars because he does not want to remain the "Salao" of the community and does not want to surrender to his fate, and in order to continue his notion he has to fight against the fierce sharks of the sea that stripped the fish of its flesh and reduced the Marlin into bones and skeleton. Devastated by the hardship the old man returned home empty-handed except for the skeleton of the enormous fish that earned him the respect he was searching for at the cost of his severe physical and mental sufferings. To analyze Santiago's psychological disposition that drives him to involve himself in a life-threatening situation is one of the objectives of this paper.

On the other hand, Captain Ahab of Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* or, *The Whale* deals with similar kinds of urges to triumph over his situation as Santiago. The revenge-obsessed Ahab is a monomaniacal ship captain who also becomes the victim of his desire to conquer the unconquerable. Ahab's obsession with vengeance drives him to face his utmost catastrophe. He fails to accept the truth that a whale has snatched his leg and made him crippled and to get his revenge he searches the sea for the whale to punish it. In pursuing his revenge, he loses his capacity for reasoning, and finally, the urge to maintain his persona makes him face his doom.

The novel is narrated through the words of Ishmael. Apparently, he is a minor character in the novel but miraculously he becomes the only survivor who tells the story. Ishmael perceives the terror of Ahab at the first glance and his words foreshadow the ominous end of the ship, *Pequod*, and its crew. Captain Ahab is the captain of the ship *Pequod*. Apparently, the ship starts its journey for a long time to hunt whales to collect the expensive oil as a means of survival for the crew but later on it is revealed that Ahab has something else in his mind. Ahab, the great captain or a whale hunter has lost his leg in fighting a white whale named *Moby-Dick* and is incapable of forgetting his loss. He cannot perceive the fact that the attack by a whale can simply be explained as self-defence. The great white whale does not attack anyone at first rather he attacks those who used to chase it or try to harm it. So, technically whatever misfortunes have befallen the whale hunters in several times are the creations of their own.

Ahab wants to annihilate *Moby-Dick*, so does *Moby-Dick*. The war between Ahab and *Moby-Dick* is not a war between man and animal, but a fierce fight between animals for survival, which symbolizes the live-or-die principle in

the animal world. In this war fought according to the law of the jungle, Ahab has lost one of his legs, and becomes the loser of the existential competition (Guo, 2009, p. 139).

In spite of accepting the fact that the whale is only protecting itself, Ahab considers the whale as the embodiment of evil and tries to hunt it down. His obsession with revenge makes him believe that he is fighting for the cause of humanity but his actions prove him as a heartless fellow who fails to show compassion to anyone or anything. In the process of serving humanity, Ahab takes himself away from humanity. He becomes the reason for his crew's destruction and becomes the reason for his own downfall. He becomes the victim of his own desire for vengeance. He wants to be the conqueror of the sea but ends up being the slave of his desire to carry on his persona of being the best captain of the neighbourhood. Both Santiago and Ahab are ultimately subdued by their aspirations, which include a desire to rule over their situation.

2. Theoretical Discussions

The study initially examines the personality levels and various impulses in people, according to the works of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung. According to Freud, the repetition of any kind of destructive behaviour discloses the presence of some psychological difficulties. This psychological problem influences a person in many ways for some time without the person's knowing it. Besides, most of the time the person cannot realize that the psychological difficulty influences a person's behaviour and has significant control over the person. So, the unconscious is the primary concern to analyze a person's psyche. "The notion that human beings are motivated, even driven, by desires, fears, needs, and conflicts of which they are unaware- that is, unconscious- was one of Sigmund Freud's most radical insights, and it still governs classical psychoanalysis today" (Tyson, 2006, p. 12). The unconscious hides the emotions, emotional or painful experiences, fear, unfulfilled desire, conflicts, etc., and the unconscious drives a person to his later actions. Both Santiago and Ahab nurture fear of humiliation, fear of abandonment and desires to uphold their lost position in their unconscious and these elements in their unconscious indirectly lead them towards their final actions.

Freud suggests three components of the human psyche such as the id, the ego, and the super-ego. The Super-ego reflects the internalization of cultural and societal rules in the human psyche that aims for perfection. It can be described as a certain form of conscience that is unable to accept any imperfection. Both Santiago and Ahab are incapable of accepting any imperfection that leads them towards their doom.

Again, a philosopher and psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung originates the term "Persona". The persona connects an individual with his surroundings by reflecting the role that the person is performing in life. This way one starts to compromise between one's innate psychological composition and society's expectations. As a result, the persona directs the individual to adapt to the demand of society. Thus, the individual wears a mask according to the demand of society by hiding the actual nature. The individual complies with the expectations of society and considers it to be his sole duty. He cannot escape from the idea to maintain his persona or to meet the societal standards.

Jung proposed that, while the unconscious was important, the self was also influenced by social norms and the world around it. The human psyche, postulated Jung, draws upon a set of 'primordial images' that are often cross-cultural, and have been existent for a long time in the collective imagination of the human race itself. Jung was suggesting that the human imagination draws upon images and ideas of myths and legends that occur across cultures and time-spans. These images he termed archetypes, and they emerge from a collective unconscious common to all mankind and are not restricted to a particular individual or self (Nayar, 2010, p. 71).

Here, the study attempts to portray how both the characters attempt to uphold their persona. Santiago and Ahab, both involve themselves in risking their own life for sustaining their persona.

3. Santiago's Troubled Life and the Struggle to Overcome the Situation

Hemingway delineates the struggle of human life against the unconquerable forces of nature through the sufferings of Santiago. In spite of knowing that a man is bound to be doomed, man aspires to triumph over his situation. He is driven by the urge to maintain his persona. Man, often fails to accept his shortcomings and the resistance steers him to go beyond his capacity and becomes the victim of fate and he is guided by his unconscious. Humans are motivated, even driven, by anxieties, fear, desires, conflicts, and needs that they are ignorant of. Driven by the fear of remaining "salao", Santiago's unconscious leads him to challenge the unconquerable nature. He ventures to be undefeated as he used to be at a young age. He had gone eighty-four days without catching a fish and now he is determined to overcome his bad luck by stretching himself to the extreme level of his capability. The internalization of cultural and societal rules in the human psyche which strives for perfection is reflected in Freud's super-ego. Super-ego can be compared to a form of conscience that is unable to accept any flaw. The old man is driven by his super-ego that is unable to accept the imperfection of being old and weak. He

considers himself the same fisherman he used to be in the past years and is unable to accept the changes that nature brought to him. His “fear of abandonment” (Tyson, 2006, p. 16) drives him to exploit his strength to the fullest in order to take the tremendous Marlin. The Marlin can earn him respect and rescue him from his present unlucky condition. “Fear of abandonment- the unshakable belief that our friends and loved ones are going to desert us (physical abandonment) or don’t really care about us (emotional abandonment)” (Tyson, 2006, p. 16) leads Santiago to become insecure about himself that creates the urge to prove himself to the community. He remains hopeful despite being old and weak.

Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same colour as the sea and were cheerful and undefeated (Hemingway, 2005, p. 1).

The aspiration of overcoming poverty and social shame does not allow him to leave his hope and it drives Santiago to go beyond his limits.

‘Eighty-five is a lucky number,’ the old man said. ‘How would you like to see me bring one in that dressed out over a thousand pounds?’ (Hemingway, 2005, p. 7).

Santiago demonstrates the urge to triumph over his situation by not submitting himself to reality because of his desire of becoming the conqueror of the sea but eventually, he is conquered by his desire of maintaining his persona. The persona connects an individual with his surrounding environment by reflecting the personality that the person is performing in life. In this manner, compromises are made between one's intrinsic psychological makeup and societal standards. As a result, the persona instructs the individual to conform to the expectations of society. The person conceals his true personality by donning a mask in order to meet the expectations of society. Here, in *The Old Man and the Sea* Santiago’s attempt to maintain his mask leads him to his physical and mental sufferings.

Santiago’s ‘self’ is influenced by social standards, norms, and the world around him. Living in a Cuban fishing community, he aspires to catch and collect fishes where respect and dignity lie in being active as a fisherman. Despite his old age, he cannot forget his profession in order to maintain his persona. He constantly convinces himself to be strong against all adversities. That is why he never allows himself to lose his hope as he struggles to maintain his persona. He appreciates DiMaggio, a champion of baseball as the inspiration of his life. At the time of the old man’s hardship, “he finds himself in the same image of being a champion and a master of his craft” (Monira, 2016, p. 129). He hides the photo of his wife as it reminds him of his loneliness and he does not want to lose his mental strength. In

any way, he negates his limitations and convinces himself to become the worthy one. Here the psychology of Santiago is driven by the cultural norms that are working as a collective unconscious in Santiago that make him choose to move forward.

As a process of overcoming poverty, Santiago sails again on the eighty-fifth day. He longs for the company of Manolin, his apprentice who was forced to leave him by his parents after forty days as the old man is considered unlucky in the community. Despite his fragile health, he searches for his livelihood. Initially, he becomes able to grab an 'Albacore', of nearly ten pounds but despite being satisfied with his catch he becomes ambitious for the marlin that is nearly six hundred feet down in the cold and dark water. He stimulates himself by saying "today is eighty-five days and I should fish the day well" (Hemmingway, 2005, p. 26).

Santiago realizes that the Marlin would be a huge catch for him but at the same time, it would be utterly difficult to seize the gigantic marlin. Santiago's desperation is portrayed by his words "God help him to take it" (Hemingway, 2005, p. 27). He desperately wants the Marlin to take the bait so that it can be entangled with the line and Santiago can grab the fish. The fish is desperate for its life and Santiago is desperate to take it to shore though managing such an enormous fish is beyond his capacity. Santiago's formidable urge to triumph over the fish as well as his situation drives Santiago to go past his limitations.

'Fish', he says softly, aloud, 'I'll stay with you until I am dead (Hemmingway, 2005, p. 35).

'Fish' he said, I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends (Hemmingway, 2005, p. 36).

Santiago is a man of tremendous willpower and even after getting hurt he never imagines giving up. He endures the cramps in his hand, he eats the raw tuna to fulfil the need of his body and tries to stay strong. Even he feels sympathy for the fish and unifies himself by addressing the fish as his brother. Here the relationship of humans with the animal world is delineated through the kind words of Santiago. He feels sympathy for the fish but still, he is aware of the fact that he is going to kill the fish no matter what comes in his way. He is determined to kill the fish as he needs to prove his worth in front of his community as well as to himself. In proving his worth, he does not bother himself with his own injury or life threat. Even despite being not religious, he entertains the idea of praying to God for help in catching the fish to attain his desire.

'Be patient hand, he said. 'I do this for you.'

I wish I could feed the fish, he thought. He is my brother. But I must kill him and keep strong to do it (Hemingway, 2005, p. 40).

'God help me to have the cramp go,' he said. 'Because I do not know what the fish is going to do.'

But he seems calm, he thought, and following his plan. But what is his plan, he thought. And what is mine? Mine I must improvise to his because of his great size. If he will jump I can kill him. But he stays down forever. Then I will stay down with him forever (Hemingway, 2005, p. 41).

'I am not religious,' he said. 'But I will say ten Our Fathers and ten Hail Marys that I should catch this fish, and I promise to make a pilgrimage to the Virgin of Cobre if I catch him. That is a promise' (Hemingway, 2005, p. 44).

Santiago does not entertain the idea of leaving the hardship and danger. "He chose to fish, to stay and to endure. He had opportunities to walk away but he did not. His choice of catching a giant fish the Marlin caused to a dreading confrontation which causes physical and mental sufferings to Santiago" (Adhikari, Miah, 2018, p. 117). He chooses to endure all the struggles to maintain the image he is holding and to maintain his persona in the community and becomes the prey of his desire.

'I'll kill him though,' he said. 'In all his greatness and his glory' (Hemingway, 2005, p. 45).

Although it is unjust, he thought. But I will show him what a man can do and what a man endures (Hemingway, 2005, p. 46).

Santiago tries to get inspiration from his idol, the great DiMaggio. He encourages himself by thinking "I must have confidence and I must be worthy of the great DiMaggio who does all things perfectly even with the pain of the bone spur in his heel" (Hemingway, 2005, p. 47). Santiago also negates the idea of imperfection and ignores his physical sufferings to be called worthy.

'It is not bad,' he said. 'And pain does not matter to a man' (Hemingway, 2005, p. 60).

He felt faint again now but he held on the great fish all the strain that he could. I moved him, he thought (Hemingway, 2005, p. 66).

'Fish,' the old man said. 'Fish, you are going to have to die anyway. Do you have to kill me too?' (Hemingway, 2005, p. 66).

Finally, Santiago manages to control the marlin but nature turns back against him as the sharks attack the marlin and Santiago's other battle starts with the fierce sharks. He fails to keep the sharks away from the marlin and the sharks tear the fish into pieces. He tries to protect the marlin but realizes his mistake that he has taken his journey of killing the marlin too far.

'They must have taken a quarter of him and of the best meat,' he said aloud. 'I wish it were a dream and that I had never hooked him. I'm sorry about it, fish. It makes everything wrong.'

'I shouldn't have gone out so far, fish,' he said. 'Neither for you nor for me. I'm sorry, fish' (Hemingway, 2005, p. 80).

The old man "now only brings home the bone or the skeleton of the fish, while he is exhausted after he has fought against the sharks" (Pratiwi, 2018, p. 4995). Santiago catches the marlin and fights with the sharks to prove his capability and establishes his worth in the community according to the community's evaluation standard of a fisherman's worth. "In the life-and-death struggle between people and fish, the old man was proud. He considered the solemn and stirring battle with nature as the necessary and essential thing to maintain human dignity" (Han, 2015, p. 198). Here, Santiago tries to go beyond his limitations by triumphing over his situation as he is suffering from a social image crisis. No matter, in what way he tries to prove his worth to his community, his urge to become the conqueror leads him to lose his capacity for reasoning and he becomes the victim of his desire. Eventually, he faces the destructive punishment of nature to maintain his social image and persona. "If people have been destroyed, what is the significance of being not defeated?" (Han, 2015, p. 199).

4. Misfortune that Drives Ahab towards the Fatal End

Similar to Santiago, Captain Ahab of *Moby-Dick* or, *The Whale* experiences the urge to overcome his circumstances. The vengeful Ahab of *Moby-Dick* or, *The Whale* is the ship captain of the whaling ship *Pequod* who also suffers as a result of his obsession with subduing the impossible. Ahab must confront his worst disaster because of his fixation with vengeance. He refuses to believe that a whale actually has taken his leg and rendered him disabled, so he goes in search of the whale in the water to exact revenge. He loses his ability to reason as a result of seeking revenge, and when he eventually loses to the whale, the desire to uphold his character, he meets his end.

Ahab is first formally introduced in the 28th chapter of the Novel though he is mentioned in other characters' words. Ahab's description is described in the

words of the narrator of the novel, Ishmael. Ishmael has the first glance of Ahab on the deck after some days of sailing on the ship, Pequod. Ahab “looked like a man cut away from the stake” (Melville, 2012, p. 122). Ahab seems to be a mysterious person who creates a shiver of terror in Ishmael at first glance.

So powerfully did the whole grim aspect of Ahab affect me, and the livid brand which streaked it, that for the first few moments I hardly noted that not a little of this overbearing grimness was owing to the barbaric white leg upon which he partly stood (Melville, 2012, p. 123).

Ishmael notices the huge scar on Ahab’s face and the ivory leg as the replacement for his lost leg. Ishmael’s words illustrate Ahab as a character who holds strength, power, and determination. His ivory leg and its placement are also described in an elaborate way to establish the significance of the leg in Ahab’s life. This ivory leg is the replacement for Ahab’s original one that he has lost to *Moby-Dick*. This ivory leg is a reminder of his flaw. Ahab’s super-ego fails to accept the flaw in his body. Ahab’s obsession to maintain his persona does not allow him to accept imperfection. Besides, it is impossible for him to get back his lost leg and overcome his flaw. So, he wants to take revenge on the dumb brute by hunting it down so that he can get the pleasure of winning against his enemy and satisfy his urge to triumph over his situation.

I was struck with the singular posture he maintained. Upon each side of the Pequod’s quarter deck, and pretty close to the mizen shrouds, there was an auger hole, bored about half an inch or so, into the plank. His bone leg steadied in that hole; one arm elevated, and holding by a shroud; Captain Ahab stood erect, looking straight out beyond the ship’s ever-pitching prow. There was an infinity of firmest fortitude, a determinate unsunderable wilfulness, in the fixed and fearless, forward dedication of that glance. Not a word he spoke; nor did his officers say aught to him; though by all their minutest gestures and expressions, they plainly showed the uneasy, if not painful, consciousness of being under a troubled master-eye. And not only that, but moody stricken Ahab stood before them with a crucifixion in his face; in all the nameless regal overbearing dignity of some mighty woe (Melville, 2012, p. 123).

Moreover, the first view of Ahab presents him as a fearful, ominous person who used to control his crew in a strong-handed manner with terror and threats. His gestures and expressions say all about his resolute way of leading his ship. Ahab can now be seen frequently on the deck. The more the ship is moving far away from the land, the less Ahab sleeps. He becomes uneasy and restless to attain his

desire of taking revenge. Apparently, he leads the whale hunting ship in order to hunt whales and get oil but his actual intention is revealed after reaching the deep sea far away from the land.

Ahab has maintained terror and control over his crew and finally, he summons his crew and announces gold as a prize for the person who can inform him about the great white whale. He describes the white whale and it is revealed that Ahab is searching for Moby-Dick, the mightiest white whale which has snatched his leg. Burning with vengeance Ahab encourages his fellow men to search for the whale. The crew cheers to their captain's decision except for Starbuck who realizes the futility of following the whale by ignoring a whaling ship's actual duty. Ahab is blinded by his vengeance and fails to reason. "He wants to destroy it at any cost, and accordingly searches for it. Ahab skillfully transforms the aim of other crew – except Starbuck and Ishmael – from a generic hunt to an entrenched chase against Moby Dick" (Islam, 2017, p. 70). He becomes furious at the mention of the name Moby-Dick and his only aim of this voyage is to kill the whale.

'Aye, Starbuck; aye, my hearties all round; it was Moby Dick that dismasted me; Moby Dick that brought me to this dead stump I stand on now. Aye, aye,' he shouted with a terrific, loud, animal sob, like that of a heart-stricken moose; 'Aye, aye! it was that accursed white whale that razeed me; made a poor pegging lubber of me for ever and a day!' Then tossing both arms, with measureless imprecations he shouted out: 'Aye, aye! and I'll chase him round Good Hope, and round the horn, and round the Norway Maelstrom, and round perdition's flames before I give him up. And this is what ye have shipped for, men! to chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out. What say ye, men, will ye splice hands on it, now? I think ye do look brave' (Melville, 2012, p. 164).

Ahab's intention is expressed in his words. He is in the whale hunting profession for many years at the same time he is capable of killing any whale except Moby-Dick. His inability of killing the great whale creates dissatisfaction in him and he considers it as an embodiment of evil. He fails to realize that nature has trained every creature to work in self-defence. The great white whale snatched Ahab's leg in self-defence that creates fury in Ahab and he fails to reason. Ahab suffers from image crisis and cannot accept his defeat. As a result, he wants to prove his worth as a whale hunter and wants to maintain the persona that leads him towards his fatal end.

Moby-Dick is larger than a normal sperm whale and it has a reputation for

destructiveness that causes difficulty for the hunters who wish to hunt it but Ahab's determination to follow the whale proves himself as a mad monomaniac captain who fails to perceive the need of his crew. Though he allows the crew to search for other whales for oil but still his main intention is to hunt the great white whale. Whenever he meets any ship on his way, his first question used to be "Have ye seen the white whale?" (Melville, 2012, p. 240). Ahab's lunacy about his vengeance on a dumb brute evidently can be seen from his encounter and behaviour with other ships. Ahab is driven by his fear of losing his respect in front of his community. His unconscious depicts the white whale as an embodiment of evil and Ahab considers chasing the white whale as his duty to mankind and he believes that he is serving humanity. Ahab's fear of abandonment and desire to get revenge led him to ignore the reality that in the process of destroying evil he destroys himself. According to Bloom "Ahab is suffering from a disease of his moral powers, not his reason" (Bloom, 2008, p. 120).

Ahab's desperation to search for the great white whale turns him into an inhuman creature. He has come on the voyage to search for Moby-Dick and fulfil his revenge. He does not tolerate any interference in his way. Even he does not hesitate to risk the safety of Pequod or his crew. He overlooks storms or the news of dead people who have been killed by Moby-Dick. He fails to consider the whale as a part of nature and its actions as self-defence. Rather, to satisfy his desire he convinces himself that the whale is the incarnation of evil. "He also considers that he is the only human being on earth who has the ability to hunt the whale" (Islam, 2017, p. 71). Here Ahab takes the burden to maintain his persona. He convinces himself as the conqueror of the sea who can expand himself at any level to serve humanity but he forgets his limitations and he becomes intolerable to his limitations. He cannot stand the fact that a whale was able to make him lose his leg. As a result, he has become a monomaniac, mad, insane captain. Even Starbuck reminds Ahab of his insanity again and again. "Starbuck posits himself against Captain Ahab who demonstrates excessive courage, and thus accelerates his own and other shipmates' destruction" (Islam, Ahsanuzzaman, 2017, p.4). He tells Ahab "let Ahab beware of Ahab; beware of thyself, old man" (Melville, 2012, p. 479). Starbuck's words depict the picture of Ahab's madness that he nurtures to maintain the persona of the best whale hunter and Ahab considers himself undefeated and immortal. Nothing can prevent him from killing the whale. Even to maintain his persona he ignores the basic demand of humanity. His inhumanity reaches its height when he refuses to help in searching a lost boat of the ship Rachel where the son of Rachel's captain is also boarding. When he gets the news of the great whale, he does not want to waste the slightest moment in helping humanity. His only aim is to satisfy his desire to be the conqueror of Moby-Dick as well as the sea.

Finally, Ahab's search comes to an end and he cried "There she blows! there she blows! — there she blows! There again! — there again!" (Melville, 2012, p. 547). At once Ahab gave orders to lower the boats. He becomes restless as his search for the whale comes to an end. His enemy whom he desperately wants to kill is in front of him and he is confident that he is able to fulfil his desire to take revenge as he considers himself to be superior to the whale and nature. He is bound to hunt the whale in order to conquer and he is convinced that he can attain his goal. Forgetting the limitations of human beings, he at once moves forward to kill the whale and risking his life and the life of his crew members.

Down top-gallant-sails! Stand by three boats. Mr. Starbuck, remember, stay on board, and keep the ship. Helm there! Luff, luff a point! So; steady, man, steady! There go flukes! No, no; only black water! All ready the boats there? Stand by, stand by! Lower me, Mr. Starbuck; lower, lower, — quick, quicker!" and he slid through the air to the deck (Melville, 2012, p. 547).

Captain Ahab's "disease of greatness involves sufferings" (Bloom, 2008, p. 128). He at once attacks the whale and in return the whale defends itself. With great horror, Ahab and all the crew members except Ishmael perishes in the sea. Ahab becomes the slave of his insanity and he chases the whale for three days without considering the opinions of others. His only intention is to triumph over the white whale takes place but he fails to realize the futility of fulfilling his revenge or maintaining his persona. The fatal battle between men and nature destroys the life of all the members of the crew with the great captain Ahab. Thus, he becomes the victim of his own desire that leads him towards his demise.

5. Conclusion

Ernest Hemingway's Santiago of *The Old Man and the Sea*, and Herman Melville's Captain Ahab of *Moby Dick* or, *The Whale* are similar to a great extent if their tragic conclusion is compared. Both the characters are driven by their unconscious desires, anxiety and fear of social shame. The desire to overcome their circumstances drives both protagonists: Santiago out of poverty and social shame, and Ahab out of a fixation with vengeance. Both ultimately lose their ability to reason, which brings them both closer to their destruction. Their reputation in their community is damaged, which propels them to their doom. They are ultimately subdued by their urge, which includes a desire to rule the sea. Finally, both characters are conquered by their desires to maintain the persona that drives them towards their ruin.

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