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REALIZATION OF 'SELF' IN HEMMINGWAY'S "CODE HERO - HARRY MORGAN"

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ABSTRACT

Ernest Hemingway's protagonists share some specific qualities that define them as 'code heroes'. The code by which the protagonists live is related to dignity, courage, endurance, self-control, and grace under pressure. The protagonists of Hemingway, in the course of their steady evolution, overcome the harsh realities of life with their code. In the novel, *To Have and Have Not*, Hemingway presents the protagonist, Harry Morgan's, struggle for existence during the period of economic Depression in 1930s. He is an exceptional fisherman who owns a boat and occasionally arranges fishing trips for tourists to make some quick money. His elemental powers are physical strength and endurance. A tourist cheats Harry, and as a result he indulges in criminal and illegal activities. Finally, the protagonist dies while trying to feed himself and his family. In this paper, the hero's choice to confront violence with violence is explored in the light of Jung's 'shadow' archetype struggling to emerge into 'self'.

**Key Words:** Code hero, economic Depression, courage and endurance, archetypes, shadow and self.

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Ernest Hemingway's novel *To Have and Have Not*, published in 1937, illustrates the turbulent life of the protagonist, Harry Morgan, which is a continuous struggle between obeying the law and following his own instincts. The crux of the novel is Hemingway's open criticism of the fraudulent, exploitative, Depression-era capitalist mentality. Hemingway's criticism is recognition for the need of a fundamental expression of solidarity by the members of society. In *To Have and Have Not*, Hemingway's explicit criticism of the capitalist environment that prevailed during 1930s, contributes to an underlying, implicit call for a more culturally and economically cooperative society. An investigation into Hemingway's point of view on the exploitative economic behavior of the protagonist and his associates reveals that individual actions of men are insufficient for the progress of a cooperative type of community.

In this paper an attempt has been made to analyze the progress of the protagonist from the point of the view Carl Gustav Jung's psycho-analysis. According to Jung (1989), "Every person possesses a type of 'psychic inheritance', known as 'archetypes'. The number of archetypes that exist is unlimited" (9). However, Jung focuses mainly on some important archetypes such as anima, animus, mother, father, and shadow. "The

shadow is the suppressed archetype which always struggles to evolve fully such that the person realizes his/her true 'self' and transforms into father/mother archetypes respectively" (Jung: 14). In the novel, the protagonist struggles throughout his life to evolve from shadow archetype to father archetype by realizing his 'self' and by understanding the role of community in the life of an individual.

Harry Morgan lives at Key West in Florida with his wife, Marie and three daughters whose names are not mentioned and their ages are not told, either. In his former life he was a police officer in Miami, but when the novel begins Harry charts a fishing boat which he used to catch fish earlier. Reeling under the Depression, he finds it easy to earn money by renting the boat to tourists rather than fishing. He plies between Key West and Cuba while organizing fishing trips to tourist and also helps them in deep-sea fishing. His wife does not work and she takes care of the children while Harry runs his charter boat business and stays in Cuba. Of all the Hemingway's protagonists, Harry is the only hero who leads a family life. In fact, the code of commitment towards his family transforms him into a criminal from a simple fishing boat owner.

Although *To Have and Have Not* is Hemingway's least accomplished novel, it is still an interesting work that provides insight into his socio, political and economic views in the 1930s. In this novel, he projects a hero who is not only individualistic but also follows a code of strong masculinity which is absent in Jake Barnes and Frederic Henry, the protagonists in his earlier novels. Further, no American writer has picked Key West to represent the Depression but for Hemingway it was the place that he had best known during the 1930s along with the coastal areas of Cuba.

Another interesting feature of this novel is, Hemingway self-consciously inserts characters from various classes in order to present an overview of America. A careful examination of the novel reveals the emergence of a negative picture of life at all levels of American society. Indeed, it can be observed that in the first two novels the war plays havoc on the psyche of the characters, but in *To Have and Have Not* it is the economic exploitation which results in the psychic regression and debased moral values. While a majority of the characters are swept away in the flux of life, it is Harry Morgan who tries to exist by displaying courage, endurance, and responsibility towards his family.

In the novel, Hemingway presents the actions of the hero, Harry Morgan, in relation to other characters with whom he makes business deals. The protagonist gets frustrated due to the dishonest behavior of Mr. Johnson, a customer who cheats him by not paying the rent for the boat. This in turn drives Harry to have recourse to extreme action. The following reflection by the protagonist reveals how the exploitative and selfish behavior of others was contagious in the depression era period: "I was broke. I'd lost five hundred and thirty dollars of the charter... and the day before I turned down three thousand dollars to land three aliens on the keys" (*To Have and Have Not* : 19). A little later he says, "I was damned if I was going home broke and starve a summer in that town. Besides I've got a family... Hell, I didn't have enough money to put in gas" (19). Under these circumstances, Harry is forced to involve in criminal activity for making money, though this kind of behavior is a detrimental contribution to society.

That night Harry accepts to smuggle twelve Chinese men in his boat from Cuba to the USA, the illegal activity which he rejects earlier. The most defining moment in the novel occurs when Harry kills Mr. Sing, who is the dealer for the Chinese men. He then leaves the twelve Chinese back in Cuba. Harry thinks that it is better to kill a seasoned criminal like Mr. Sing rather than killing twelve people. This act of killing brings in a big change in the attitude of the protagonist. It is important to note that Hemingway affirms Harry is acting on his own individualism. Through the protagonist, Hemingway wants to reveal that when there is chaotic situation, sometimes the best way to combat exploitative behavior is to fight back with violence. Harry's actions were definitely against the law, but to an extent they were validated because Harry was acting on his own instincts which he believed to be right. Conditioned by the other criminals he had dealt with, he could not think further than redeeming Mr. Sing. From this point onwards the protagonist exhibits his masculine ideals of individualism and toughness, the hallmarks of Hemingway code to solve the problems which he confronts in his life.

The episode of killing Mr. Sing appears unnecessary but this is the only way how the protagonist can overcome his 'shadow' archetype. As Harry expresses at the beginning of the novel, if he does not kill Mr. Sing, he will be killed by Mr. Sing on any other day or he has to work as dictated by Mr. Sing. Edmund Wilson (1965) rightly explores the American psyche of the period when he says, "What is most valid in *To Have and Have Not* is the idea that in an atmosphere (here revolutionary Cuba) in which man has been set against man, in which it is always a question whether your companion is not preparing to cut your throat, the most sturdy and strong and straight forward American will turn suspicious and cruel" (187). It is quite obvious that the behavior of people is conditioned by political and economic upheaval which in turn creates tension in social relationships.

The killing of Mr. Sing gives a new insight into the character of the protagonist. Prior to that incident, Harry reveals that he smuggled liquor but never indulged in killing or violent activities. Unlike the two earlier protagonists of Hemingway, Jake Barnes and Frederic Henry, the protagonist in *To Have and Have Not* exhibits masculinity in his approach towards life. This new tendency continues in the subsequent novels of Hemingway, but the masculinity is disciplined in the later novels as the protagonists use it for higher achievements. Further, in *To Have and Have Not* the 'shadow' archetype of the protagonist is in repressed state despite the problems he was facing in the Depression period. But when he is cheated, the insecure 'shadow' archetype gives way to violence that normally happens in the case of any normal human being. Marx and Hillix(1963), the two psychologists, working on Jungian theory, explain the reasons for violence as they say, "With regard to violence and the observation there of, the 'shadow' archetype is pivotal. This archetype is thought to integrate our prehuman, and hence, premoral impulses. In other words it is related to our animal instincts" (76).

In a last desperate effort, Harry gears up himself to transport three Cuban revolutionaries who have robbed a bank and want to join their fellow-revolutionaries along with their loot. He steals back his confiscated boat but customs officers detect it soon. He then hires a boat 'Queen Conch' for the trip. Now Harry is fully aware that the Cuban revolutionaries mean to kill him when they reach the island, and with courage and boldness he devises a plan to kill them instead. His intentions are clear when he tells his wife, "Listen, Marie go on up to the upstairs trap and bring me the Thompson gun and look in that wooden box with the shells and see all the clips are filled" (89).

Indeed the protagonist is an example of father archetype, who is fully aware of his commitments towards his family. Obviously, Harry's ideal for violence can be understood from Jung's evaluation of father-complex. As Jung (1989) says, "The potentialities of the archetype, for good and evil alike, transcend our human capacities many times, and a man can appropriate its power only by identifying with the daemon. The fateful power of father – complex comes from the archetype, and this is the real reason why the *consensus gentium* puts a divine or daemonic figure in place of the father. The personal father inevitably embodies the archetype, which is what endows his figure with its fascinating power. The archetype acts as an amplifier, enhancing beyond measure the effects that proceed from the father" (77). Based on this assumption, it can be understood that though Harry's actions appear against the law or immoral but they should be judged from the point of view of the protagonist.

In the novel, Hemingway establishes the fact that Harry Morgan has been victimized by the prevailing patterns of an industrial society. The only thing that prevents him from digging in the sewers with his friends on relief is his determination to make a more dignified living for himself as a charter fisherman. When that fails he turns an outlaw rather than compromise his simple sense of his own dignity and masculinity. So, before going on his trip with Cuban revolutionaries, he ponders over the reason for his actions. Harry reflects, "Where's the money coming from to keep Marie and the girls? I've got no boat, no cash, I got no education. What can a one-armed man work at? All I've got is my *cojones* to peddle" (103). It is precisely for this reason as he got *cojones* to peddle, he doesn't think of other choices available to him.

In Hemingway's system, *cojones* is a symbol of courage. According to his code, courage must prevail whatever might be its cost. In addition to this, according to Lawrence R. Broer(1973), "*Cojones* is Hemingway's

Spanish symbol for manliness and integrity... The concept of *cojones* is the foundation upon which the ideal constitution of Hemingway's future heroes is built" (82). As Harry Morgan emerges as a symbol of courage and integrity, Philip Young(1966) states that the book is "Packed with praise for his *cojones*" (126). So, Harry tries to struggle alone, following the individualistic code of a matador. Before his final trip he thinks, "It would be better alone but I don't think I can handle it alone. It would be much better alone" (74). Harry's insistence on doing things alone, in his own way, according to the dictates of his own conscience reflects the spirit of Spanish people, which Hemingway presents with great dexterity in his next novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Besides, Harry, unlike all his predecessors, possesses an admirable confidence. At a certain point, in the course of an intimate chat with his wife, Harry asserts, "I got confidence. That's the only thing I have got" (89). This confidence is an important and a purely new code that is clearly visible in Harry as well as the protagonists of Hemingway's later novels.

While the protagonist prepares himself for the trip of his life, Hemingway introduces the sub-plot featuring a portrait gallery of people who 'have' and at the same time 'have not'. Though this sub-plot is designed to give depth to the theme of the novel, it also helps to strengthen the image of the hero not only letting him see through the appreciative eyes of a number of different people, but also by contrast with other characters in the novel. As Carlos Baker(1952) says, "By many carefully planned devices, Harry Morgan's stature is raised to dimensions just short of heroic" (221). These other character are a pseudo writer of novels, Richard Gordon, his wife, an unsatisfied woman, Helen Gordon, Professor MacWalsey, Dorothy Hollis, the ageing movie star and some war veterans.

One of the Cuban revolutionaries, the young, idealistic, Emilio argues that the goals of revolution justify unpleasant means. Emilio tells Harry that he hates terrorism and never liked the methods that have been used to raise money for the revolution. He says, "But there is no choice. You do not know how bad things are in Cuba" (116). Indeed, Emilio believes that they have little choice but to try to change the government, at any cost. He further tells Harry, "I love my poor country and I would do anything, anything to free it from this tyranny we have now. I do things I hate. But I would do things I hate a thousand times more" (117). This is in direct contrast to the protagonist's ideals of code. Harry was never in doubt in his approach towards life. He believed in his masculine code and used violence as a means to achieve ends. He never hates any work which he undertakes for feeding the family.

Despite his disgust with revolution, it seems that Harry's sense of class solidarity is real but limited. He observes that powerful political and economic forces are exploiting the poor working men of Key West, but instead of joining a common fight against these forces, he wants to make sure that his family should not suffer. He thinks, "My family is going to eat as long as anybody eats" (90). His first concern is always himself and his family. Because of his fierce individualism, Harry rejects collective action and depends on his masculine code. The protagonist indulges in violence for the benefit of himself and his family and hence appears as selfish. However, Harry's approach can be considered 'psychological altruism' rather than 'psychological egotism'. As the famous psychologists Sobers and Wilson(1999) point out, "The psychological egoist claims that we ultimately care about our own welfare even at the expense of others. While there is concern about one's own benefit and if it won't negatively affect anyone, the term 'self-interest' is more fitting" (227). But it is important to note that killing a person can never be considered altruism. At the same time killing a person, who is trying to kill others indiscriminately can be justified because "the ultimate desires are not egoistic but altruistic" (Henson: 47).

Finally, Harry gets courage to retaliate all alone. He sneaks away and grabs his hidden Thompson gun. He first shoots Emilio, the young Cuban revolutionary in the head. He quickly turns and shoots at the two Cubans resting at the cabin of the boat. Then, he spots the murderous Roberto's shadowy movements and shoots him cold dead. Harry moves to shut off the engines so gas won't be wasted, but one of the Cubans at the cabin, who is still alive, shoots Harry in the abdomen. Harry is severely injured but gets and shoots back, killing the Cuban. Harry can only manage to turn off the engines as he couldn't stand and steer the boat. He lays on the floor awaiting some help. As he bleeds, he feels weak and gradually the injury causes him internal

hemorrhage. Harry cannot move, and he fears for Marie's and his daughters' well-being if he dies. He thinks, "I wonder what Marie will do? May be they'll pay her the rewards. She'll get along, I guess. She's a smart woman" (120-21).

Harry lies alone in the boat and finally the coast guard spots it. He is almost in a state of delirium and he mumbles a few words which the coast guard finds difficult to understand and finally he dies.

Indeed, Harry Morgan is an extreme example of the individual who believes in self-reliance. His unyielding individualism ultimately leads to his death. Harry's final mumble as he lies dying has been interpreted by critics in different ways. In the novel, before he dies, Harry says, "One man alone ain't got. No man alone now." He stopped. "No matter how a man alone ain't got no bloody fucking chance." To this, the narrator adds the comment: "It had taken him a long time to get it out and it had taken him all of his life to learn it" (155). Interpreting these words, Philip Young (1966) explains, "It seems that Harry and Hemingway have learned a political lesson – the individual cannot make it alone and must commit himself to cooperative action" (102). Another critic Carol Baker (1952) explores, "Harry has not rejected individualization and self-reliance, but he has learned that the self-reliant individual stands no chance against the various forms of modern man" (102). Arthur Waldhorn (1972) explaining the meaning says, "It is no militant cry for revolutionary union, this is the despairing sigh of an independent businessman forced into an unwanted partnership... Instead of howling outrage, Hemingway manages only an irascible grunt" (162).

In fact, the image of 'snake' as envisaged by the protagonist is nothing but the image of his 'shadow', representing his masculine code. As long as the protagonists' masculine code was in operation, he was dominated by the unconscious state. But the fatal wound (symbolic castration) makes him realize his 'self'. The 'aloneness' of masculine code, or violence or the 'shadow' is to which Harry refers to in the last words. What the protagonist wants to convey is, individual effort may be not be enough where everyman is dependent on other. At the same time he wants to rationalize his 'self', which can happen only when the wicked 'shadow' is killed. With the death of the 'father archetype' in Harry, Hemingway introduces a totally different, stronger protagonists or 'fathers archetypes' in his subsequent novels. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The Old Man and The Sea*.

The final episode of the novel which results in the death of the protagonist fully reveals Harry's shrewdness. In spite of facing a grave danger, Harry hides his submachine gun, smartly pushes the gun of a revolutionary into the sea, and integrates himself with Emilio to get sympathy. He even concealed from friends his knowledge of the specific job including Albert Tracy. Harry displays the hard-boiled toughness in shooting the revolutionaries. He plans carefully and executes it meticulously. But an error in judgment costs him his life. He ignorantly assumes that his assailant, the shoulder-wounded Cuban, is dead. Throughout his suffering Harry never complains. Even though, he is sure of his death, he did not panic. He wants to fight till the end and look for a chance. Harry tells himself, "Take it easy. That's what I got to do. Take it easy. I've got to take it as easy as I can. I've got sort of a chance" (121). Harry displays remarkable courage and stoical endurance even at the doorsteps of death.

Indeed, of all the protagonists of Hemingway, Harry Morgan has attracted a great deal of negative criticism rather than positive. Very few critics have expressed solidarity with the actions of Harry. Elliot Paul says, "Harry Morgan, the hero of *To Have and Have Not*, has the qualities which characterized the builders of the nation in happier days. He is courageous, ambitious and proud... He is poor but resourceful, and instead of choosing a moderate and conservative path he wants to take greater risks for greater gain" (John K.M. McCaffery. Ed. *Ernest* 111). Lawrence R. Broer(1973) points out, "Harry is the first major Hemingway protagonist to act out dramatically the author's vision of majestic life and death of the matador"(80). Carlos Baker(1952) exploring the character of Harry, aptly says, "Harry Morgan emerges as a heroic and morally indefatigable figure, standing out like a stoic statue above the heads of his associates, gifted with qualities and abilities and determinations to which none of his companions can lay equal claim" (80). Earl Rovit (1963) takes a balanced view of Harry and analyses, "Harry Morgan is one of Hemingway's most brutalized characters. As tutor or father image, he is, on the one hand degraded in speech patterns, utterly lacking in dignity, and

morally unscrupulous; on the other hand, his elemental power is indicated by his physical strength and endurance" (71). In the present paper an attempt has been made to bring out the heroic qualities of the protagonist as mentioned by the above critics along with the code followed by him.

However, a majority of the critics point out the weakness in Harry Morgan's character and consider him a criminal rather than a hero. Arthur Waldhorn(1972) says," Harry Morgan is a frustrated loner, a bankrupt entrepreneur" (161). Another critic Alfred Kazin comments, "The Hemingway hero in *To Have and Have Not* was now a composite exaggeration of all the Hemingway heroes, yet nothing in himself" (John K.M.McCaffery. Ed.1950: 201). Philip Young(1966) remarks, "*To Have and Have Not* is an anomaly in the development of Hemingway's prose, for it is one of his very few full-length works in which the hero does not appear. Although Morgan has a very few points of resemblances to the hero, and is usually mistaken for him, he is really not our man. He has neither the background, the troubles nor the personality" (100). Delbert Wylder (1969) completely rejects Harry and says, "Harry Morgan is not a hero; he is an anti-hero" (98).

The above critical reception on Harry Morgan tries to denounce him as a hero due to the absence of qualities required for a hero. In fact, Harry exhibits exceptional courage, stoical endurance, resourcefulness and self-reliance, while most of the characters in the novel fail to keep up their commitments. Harry is the only person fully committed to his ideal of providing comfort to the family. The protagonist is beset on every side by forces that make it impossible for him to earn an honest living and threaten the dignity and masculinity from which he draws strength and pride. But Harry is conscious of a code of behavior by which he wants to combat the world's injustice instead of acquiescing to it. At the beginning of the novel he was by and large a law abiding citizen who was reluctant in indulging in criminal activities. Later, he resorts to violence and uses it as a means of survival when the law fails him from people like Mr. Johnson.

The protagonist is an example of the archetypal hero in the sense that he is primitive, fiercely proud and independent, who relies on his masculine code. He rejects the path of docility and compromise that brings him catastrophe resulting in his death. But for Harry Morgan death is preferable to surrendering to the powers of modern society that try to dominate him and deprive him of dignity and honour. Pervading the novel is the sense that Harry would like to cooperate with those around him but the economic exploitation never allows him to do so. As he can find no consolation in the ravaged lives of those around him, he turns to the excessive individualism for strength and courage. The protagonist could not get the solidarity and cooperation from society which is needed to counter hunger, exploitation, and frustration. So, he becomes increasingly resentful and recklessly defiant and gives way to violence that eventually ends his life. However, the protagonist realizes at the end that human solidarity and interdependence are the foundations of the society.

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