12

BICKFORD SYLVESTER

The Cuban Context of *The Old Man and the Sea*

In preparing a line-by-line, word-by-word scholarly commentary on *The Old Man and the Sea,* I discovered many aspects of the narrative thus far overlooked.[1] One pattern of neglected detail refers to workaday practicalities peculiar to the locale, and very often to local customs and habits of mind – to a general Cuban cultural consciousness. Here, as in many of his other works, Hemingway unobtrusively relies on such detail to account for his characters' motivation and to reveal what is actually being referred to in much of the dialogue. In other words, he requires his readers around the world to notice the specific cultural context of his narrative and to familiarize themselves with that context in order to follow what is literally happening in the plot.

This is an approach we accept as a matter of course in reading the works of other modernists – Joyce, Pound, or Eliot, for example. Yet it is a challenge posed so subtly by Hemingway's method that it has eluded us from the very beginning, in "Out of Season" (composed April 1923), his first narrative written in the style that was to make him famous. As I have pointed out ("Hemingway's Italian *Waste Land*" esp. 79–89), readers can understand that troublesome story only by learning something about the attitudes of provincial Italian villagers living on the Austrian border after World War I. And our failure to recognize Hemingway's challenge to "think in the head" of his various other foreign characters has accounted for many a canonized misreading or marginal understanding of his works. We have tended to forget that Hemingway is at bottom a travel writer, performing the traditional novelist's function of helping us measure ourselves by and against precisely described exotics.

Accordingly, readers have largely overlooked their need to seek a Cuban explanation whenever details puzzle them – or *should* puzzle them – in *The Old Man and the Sea.* In fact, the novel requires non-Cuban readers to do considerable homework if they are to register not only many literal details of the plot, but many layers of meaning-through-indirection. I will discuss

several illuminating examples of narrative details that appear extraneous, implausible, or erroneous, tempting us to dismiss them as incidental or to assume some loose symbolic significance. We will find, on the contrary, very literal, specific topical references, references we are invited to supplement by knowledge or research beyond the text. And in undertaking these assignments we will discover in each case information not only solving a puzzle, but exposing an unsuspected dimension of the narrative as a whole. Our findings throughout will suggest, I believe, the value of screening each narrative detail in Hemingway initially for its literal, topical implications before leaping to conclusions as to its symbolic import. Indeed, we will find that concrete, local applicability determines which of the potential literary, religious, mythic, or archetypal allusions potentially plausible in a given instance may in fact be central, and which secondary, peripheral, or irrelevant.

Near the beginning of *The Old Man and the Sea,* Manolin tells Santiago about the bad eyesight of the new fisherman the boy's father has apprenticed him to – a man who never went turtle spearing in the brilliant sunlight, the occupation that most commonly "kills the eyes" of local fishermen. "But," Manolin says to Santiago, who is much older than this new employer, "you went turtle-ing for years . . . and your eyes are still good." Santiago then makes the oft-quoted, obviously laden remark: "I am a strange old man"; and when the boy asks, "But are you strong enough now for the truly big fish?" Santiago replies, "I think so. And there are many tricks."

We have thought here of the tricks of the trade that the old fisherman will soon use to compensate for his waning physical strength in his struggle against the marlin, tricks that years of experience have taught him: the products of disciplined attention to a craft that for him is also a passion. We have known, too, that in Hemingway the word "strange" almost always refers to something defying conventional understanding, a mystery of nature. The word consistently refers as well to those rare people and creatures who understand the "strange" (i.e., paradoxical) logic that Hemingway most admires: the dedication to timeless principles of behavior at the expense of all concern for material success or survival. We know that Santiago is about to demonstrate this "strange" vision – this "trick," or psychological device for survival – during his ordeal with the great fish; and we assume we have grasped all the implications of his remark that he is a "strange" old man.

But when the boy asks him if he is strong enough for a big fish, Santiago's mind is still partly on how he had managed to preserve his eyesight during his years of turtle-ing. And he has a particular trick in mind, known to very

few readers. In the most common method of turtle-ing in the Caribbean, the hunter drifts in a small boat, peering beneath the surface for turtles to harpoon; as a result, the damaging tropical sunlight reflected by the water shines constantly into his eyes. Yet English ships exploring the Caribbean in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries often employed native Indians who avoided this hazard. These natives used remoras (sucker-fish) to locate turtles. The remora is a parasite, which attaches itself to a larger creature like a shark or turtle and eats the scraps drifting back when its host feeds. The native hunter simply captured a remora and put it in the water with a fishing line tied around its tail. When the fish attached its suction-cup dorsal fin to a passing turtle, the hunter could feel the extra pull on his line and had only to follow the line to the remora, quickly spear and boat the turtle, detach the hungry remora, and put it back in the water to find another host. The hunter never needed to scan the water for his prey. Apparently, Santiago's use of this technique accounts for his continuing good vision, in spite of his years spearing turtles. In this case, then, Santiago's appearance as "strange" – a natural rarity – really is a deception, the result of an insider's device, or trick, although later in the narrative, during his ordeal, he will use such triumphs of expertise over physical limitation to supplement his truly extraordinary, or "strange," emotional resources.

Only Cuban readers, of course, and only some of them, are likely to know at first reading about that remora on a leash. Yet the rest of us have been invited to find out exactly how turtle hunting in Cuba hurts the eyes (and in the process discover the traditional method for avoiding that damage). For readers can reasonably be expected to wonder how the "real old man" Hemingway later called this character can still have good eyesight (not symbolic, but physical eyesight) into his seventies, if long engaged in an occupation that "kills the eyes." Readers cannot reasonably be expected to make the automatic, initial assumption that Ernest Hemingway – of all writers – is taking poetic license. But of course that is what we have silently inferred, as we conveniently glossed over this incident, together with so many others like it in Hemingway's texts. And this oversight matters, because it has allowed us to form a false impression of Santiago. Santiago is truly "strange," truly inspiring, not because he is physically a freak of nature, or because he is emotionally "a saint rather than a man," as Norman Mailer insouciantly presumed (19). Santiago is strange because he is in every material sense "the real old man" Hemingway later called him. He is real like us, yet he behaves and thinks – with remarkable regularity – as we are able to behave and think only in our very best moments. And that is exalting to us, *because* he is human; he is possible.[2] A man his age who puts

himself through the physical and emotional ordeal we see this old man endure will in reality be likely to break "something in his chest" and be dying – as Santiago is, the text subtly specifies (Sylvester, " 'They Went Through This Fiction' " 75–78). And such a man, being human, will also experience despair when his resolution occasionally falters, as Santiago's does back on shore, until at the end Manolin/Parçifal revives the old Fisher King's "strange" disregard for material failure.

Allusions like the one to the remora trick are early indications of Santiago's human fallibility, put there to guide us away from seeing him as an icon rather than the convincing, imitable exemplar that he is. And that is an important function of his other endearing fallibilities. But these are traits readers can recognize only by minutely examining every apparently unaccountable detail of Santiago's portrayal, especially in the opening exchanges with Manolin, and by consulting reference books or other sources when still in doubt. Like Hemingway's travel narratives generally, *The Old Man and the Sea* is directed at readers who have either been to its locale, will ask someone who is from there, or will go to the history and geography books about that place and its people – readers who will do research, as we now know Hemingway did himself (Lewis 227–36; Reynolds throughout; Sylvester, "Persona" 26–30).

Another case in point is an indirect revelation of actual historical events that we must know about if we are to appreciate fully the symbolic parallels between Santiago and Joe DiMaggio, and the role of the champion in nature and society that these important parallels help define. The information is conveyed indirectly during the early dialogues between Santiago and Manolin, when they discuss an American League pennant race between DiMaggio's team, the New York Yankees, and the Detroit Tigers. This contest is taking place as they speak, in September of a year some scholars have assumed is based on a composite of DiMaggio's 1949 and 1950 seasons and is therefore a fictionalized representation of early fall in that time period. But C. Harold Hurley has recently discovered that the narrative specifies not only the year 1950, but the exact dates in September as well. And Hurley has discovered this narrative revelation by research into the topical, rather than the symbolic significance of the dialogue's details. His attention to such details as references to the numbers 84 and 85 has at last deciphered the specific relevance of this portion of the narrative.

We have wondered why the narrative presents eighty-four as the particular number of days Santiago has gone without a fish, so that the voyage he is about to undertake is his eighty-fifth attempt. And we have wondered why

his always-extraordinary confidence seems to be so especially buoyed by this number that he wants to play an eighty-five in the lottery. There has been wide speculation as to possible numerological implications, archetypal and/or Christian, and other symbolic or biographical explanations for Hemingway's choice (Hurley 103–15).

But these numbers have a much more literal and topical frame of reference. They refer to the pennant race the two discuss both before and after Manolin interrupts their conversation to go for bait and food for Santiago. And it will be instructive, for all of us who study his narratives, to observe Hemingway's oblique disclosure of the connection. We are to notice that before Manolin leaves, Santiago's confidence in DiMaggio's leadership and a Yankees pennant victory is stated as an assertion of faith. But when Manolin returns, Santiago tells him: "In the American League it is the Yankees *as I said*" (emphasis added), a reference (obvious, once we notice it) to some new, firm information confirming his earlier faith. Yet all Santiago has done while Manolin has been away is sleep and read "yesterday's" newspaper. ("You study it [the baseball news] and tell me when I come back," Manolin had told him.) We are prompted, therefore, to sift through international press coverage of the Yankees in September of the two years shortly before the novel's composition (1951), and in doing so we find Santiago's good news. His newspaper is that of Monday, September 11, 1950, reporting on the Yankees' game the day before that, Sunday, September 10. On that Sunday, Joe DiMaggio, after a long period of indifferent performance at bat, hit three home runs (a record in Washington's Griffith Stadium), leading the Yankees to their *eighty-fourth* win of the season. And although the Yankees' eighty-fourth victory coincides numerically with his own eighty-fourth fallow day, Santiago is encouraged by this numerical concordance. For he knows that the Yankees' eighty-fourth win brought them within half a game of tying with powerful Detroit Tigers in the very tight pennant race that year. Further, this tells him as a Yankees follower that the Yankees then had to win only one game of a doubleheader with the mediocre Washington Senators, scheduled for the next day, Monday the 11th, to secure a tie with the idle Tigers. And because DiMaggio's return to form put the Yankees in a position to pull even with their eighty-fifth win, Santiago has renewed confidence in the potential for success of his next voyage, which happens to be his eighty-fifth (Hurley 83–84). For he is preoccupied with permutations of numbers and statistics, not only like baseball enthusiasts everywhere, but as a Cuban characteristically habituated to the lottery. And readers familiarizing themselves with the charac-

teristic mentalities of baseball devotees and gamblers (both intimately known to Hemingway) will know that Santiago's manipulation of numbers here is typical and predictable.

Yet the numerical concordances are ancillary to a more objectively verifiable "tip of the iceberg" identifying DiMaggio's performance in Washington as the single event that confirms Santiago's faith in both DiMaggio and himself. Before we explore in detail Santiago's reaction to this game, then, we should observe how the event is obliquely specified by references to two other Yankee games on days immediately following. When Manolin returns from the Terrace with food for supper, he tells Santiago that the Yankees "lost today." We remember that "today" (present time at the beginning of the novel) is two days later than the event reported in "yesterday's paper." And readers realizing an invitation to read more baseball reports will find that the Yankees did lose a game on Tuesday, September 12, 1950. Next, readers enterprising enough to search for baseball references throughout the balance of the text will notice that during his "second day" at sea Santiago thinks about a Yankees/Tigers game being played at that moment. That is two days after the loss Manolin reported, and four days after the event so inspiring to Santiago. And a Yankees/Tigers game did take place on Thursday, September 14, 1950, four days after DiMaggio's Sunday game. Everything squares.[3] Conclusively, yet entirely by indirection, the narrative places itself in historical time. Almost by "calculus" and certainly by "three-cushion shots" (as Hemingway variously described his method of disclosure), DiMaggio's Sunday game is confirmed as the event Santiago has read of in his "yesterday's paper."[4]

To consider further the event Santiago "happily" cites to confirm his faith that "the Yankees cannot lose," DiMaggio's Sunday game was spectacular: a single event suitably matching in magnitude Santiago's outsize accomplishment, soon to follow. DiMaggio's stadium-record three home runs all traveled over four hundred feet in the spacious park; and they were, as well, part of a statistically "perfect" game (four at-bats, four hits, four runs, and four runs-batted-in). "The great DiMaggio was himself again," indeed. And in the week starting with this game, the Yankees did win their eighty-fifth victory in the doubleheader Monday, as Santiago expected – and their eighty-sixth as well, with DiMaggio contributing three of the eleven runs his team scored in those two games. DiMaggio went on, for the week as a whole, to hit six home runs in eight games, with a batting average of .467. In that single week, out of thirty at-bats he had fourteen hits, scored fourteen runs, and batted in thirteen runs: Statistically, one player accounted for twenty-seven runs, nearly half of his team's total output of fifty-eight. This

was an extraordinary feat, particularly for an "old man" in baseball terms at that time (at thirty-five DiMaggio was one of the older players in the league), hampered by multiple injuries, and with sportswriters calling for his retirement as they had before his comeback in 1949.

But what matters most for the novel is that when DiMaggio came alive his personal contributions led his team to win six of its eight games that week, and emerge in first place a half-game ahead of the Tigers, prepared to grind its way to an eventual pennant. Not until the end of the novel, when Santiago wakes up Saturday morning after his own extraordinary performance and reads "the newspapers of the [days] that [he] was gone" (September 13–15), will he himself learn more details of his aging fellow champion's resurgence at bat, a sustained performance matching his own at sea. But during this dialogue on Tuesday, the day before he sets out on his eighty-fifth attempt to catch a fish, Santiago has particular reasons for being personally reassured by his knowledge that "the great DiMaggio" has returned to form, and done so despite a fallow period associated with a number almost matching that of his current, eighty-four fishless days. For Santiago has earlier gone eighty-*seven* days without a fish. And if Santiago's power (his "luck") has earlier returned after eighty-seven days, it will certainly survive the present hiatus of eighty-four. That DiMaggio has made dramatic comebacks before (in 1949 especially), and has now followed with another even more dramatic, is doubly reassuring. To Santiago, DiMaggio's becoming "himself *again*" (emphasis added) includes the meaning "*once* again." It means that in champions (like DiMaggio and "*El Campeón*" Santiago) the mastery that makes them them*selves* will survive the onslaughts of time, not once but repeatedly – until at last that special quality brings them "alive" even "with their death in [them]" (as it does the marlin, the Mako shark, and Santiago himself at the narrative's end). And for this fundamental reason, the new resurgence by DiMaggio gives Santiago confidence in his next day at sea, or in an inevitable day of success soon after that – even without the numerical concordances he conceives.

All these specific topical considerations explain why it "means nothing" that the Yankees have lost a game on the day he speaks. What matters is that a champion's ability to perform, once operative, is not affected (as another, merely talented performer's might be) by a lapse of confidence over one day's reverses (or eighty-seven such reverses), any more than over the realities of physical decline. For at bottom "what makes the difference" in a champion (and sustains those on his "team") is an ability, recognized by Colonel Cantwell in *Across the River and into the Trees* (232), to make "every day a new and fine illusion" – despite the disillusionment of many a

yesterday. And Santiago himself demonstrates this capacity as he speaks of faith, numbers, consonances, and luck – all of which has sounded to hasty readers like superstitious self-deception on his part (Rosenfield 50) and may appear to others as fond condescension on Hemingway's part.

On the contrary, the numerical consonances with DiMaggio's record make up one of several "informed" illusions (Baker, *Hemingway: The Writer as Artist* 273) or ritualized fictions Santiago relies upon, not because he believes in the literal content of the fictions, but because he does believe in a cause that requires him to act without hope of material success. And because he is both proud and humble enough to believe that human beings cannot act without hope of material reward, he finds ways of behaving *as if* he will succeed where he most knows he cannot (Sylvester, " 'They Went Through This Fiction' "). Despite his accurately portrayed Cuban fascination with numbers and chance, there is no evidence that Santiago believes, literally, in the cosmic significance of such easily (and obviously) manipulated "signs" as numerological consonances.[5] But there is ample evidence that he does believe in a vital connection among the species, depending on the fully extended behavior of rare individual members – creatures oriented to total commitment, without concern for practical success or personal survival.[6] That is the principle of action Santiago exemplifies as he kills the first shark to attack his fish, hitting it "with *all* his strength . . . *without hope but with resolution*" (emphasis added) – performing *as if* he could, by totally committing his resources, keep all the other sharks now coming from destroying his fish, yet fully aware that he cannot. That informed, sophisticated pretense is a "trick" far more rare and difficult than using the remora; it is a trick of the heart and mind, the "strange" way of seeing that Hemingway respected above all other human accomplishments.[7] It is the hard-won, complex vision required of the thinking "champions" in nature's scheme: the human beings in all walks of life who are able to go "far out beyond all people." Maintaining their efforts by every means necessary against their near-debilitating knowledge of the material cost, they inspire and sustain the human race at their personal expense.

As DiMaggio's team "cannot lose" in its struggle, then, neither will Santiago's team. Santiago's eighty-fifth day at sea, ending *his* slump with *his* record result, will in reality gain something precious, if not a materially tangible trophy, for the team he champions – the human species. For we will find that in his struggle with the great marlin Santiago reaffirms once again, as he has so often before, humanity's necessary connection with nature's order. In portraying the roles of Santiago and DiMaggio in the survival of their groups, therefore, Hemingway stresses in both cases the reliance of the

many upon the one. This is a theme not only reinforcing the novel's occasional comparison of Santiago to Christ, but commenting on the relation of all human champions to society.

In addition to the roles of the two champions, there is a larger similarity between the Yankees' overall struggle against the resolute Tigers team of 1950 and the old man's entire struggle against the great marlin and the sharks. It is a similarity making the "September stretch" (the closing weeks) of that year's pennant race a particularly apt demonstration of this novel's most central theme: that in the order of nature intensity equals vitality. The champions of each species featured in the novel act according to a natural principle of perpetual tension, thereby maintaining for the others in their species an attunement with nature. The taut fishing line, kept for two complete rounds of the sun stretched just beneath its breaking point, is an objective correlative of that principle, which is being enacted by the man and marlin at opposite ends of that line (Sylvester, "Extended Vision" 135). And the contest between the evenly matched Yankees and Tigers of 1950 exemplified that principle. During the week timed with the novel's action the Yankees did not surge ahead with DiMaggio's resurgence, to end the tension and anxiety they had experienced all along. Throughout the week of Santiago's ordeal and well into the next week, the lead edged back and forth repeatedly by grudging half-game increments (Hurley 91–92), the two teams locked in a sustained balance of forces like that of Santiago's twenty-four-hour "hand-game" with the "great negro from Cienfuegos." This arm-wrestling scene from dawn to dawn is the novel's second objective correlative of natural order.[8] It demonstrates as well the human community's vicarious participation in that order, as these two regional champions of two villages enact nature's principle of vital tension before their enthralled spectators in the tavern at Casablanca. Hemingway could hardly have synchronized his narrative with a sustained event in contemporary baseball more felicitously objectifying this principle and the intermediary role of human championship. For in this novel, as in the world's stadiums and arenas, it is not the material quarry but the intensity of the quest that is of ultimate value to the many of us who only watch and wait.[9]

Final evidence of the need to read the baseball allusions more carefully is our neglect of a broad and ironic cultural implication. For Cubans like Manolin and Santiago, baseball is perhaps as central to the consciousness – actually mythic – as it is for Americans in the cornfields of Iowa. It is typically Cuban for Santiago's imagination to embody its special vision of championship not only in lions from his Spanish memories of African voyages, but in a baseball player from the American *Gran Ligas*. When San-

tiago senses that Manolin is tired of listening to an old man's memories, he says, "Go and play baseball," acknowledging the national pastime. But although the American "big show" is a dream of glory for young Cubans like Manolin and his friends, it is essentially an inaccessible dream. Santiago mentions two successful players in the majors, Mike Gonzales and the dazzlingly talented Adolpho Luque, both of whom he, with justification, considers the greatest managers in baseball. Yet they manage in the Cuban winter leagues because, as Barbour and Sattelmeyer observe (43–44), "an unwritten law" prevented them from managing in the majors. That this is the point of Hemingway's reference to these two players becomes even clearer when we discover that the unwritten law was racial, barring Cubans whether of mixed race or not, that Gonzales and Luque were accepted because both, apparently, looked white, and that only two other Cubans – Rafael Almeida and Armando Marsans, also "light-skinned" (Burns and Ward 112) – ever played in the majors until well after the novel was composed in 1951. There is cultural commentary, then, as well as archetypal symbolism and artistic symmetry conveyed when Santiago, humbly yet proudly aware of his natural aristocracy, takes DiMaggio's resurgence as a personal omen. For although a young man as talented as today's Hispanic superstars may be playing among Manolin's friends in Cojimar, it is to a fisherman's son from San Francisco that Santiago must look for *El Campeón* of baseball.

Predictably, Spanish and Cuban historical and cultural contexts also interact in this novel, more pervasively; and these further demonstrate the primary role of topicality in specifying relevant symbolism. There is, for example, a profound thematic pattern that we have yet to glory in, because it can only be recognized by readers willing to become familiar either with Spanish history from a Cuban perspective, or Cuban history from a Spanish perspective. Much of the novel is directly or indirectly associated with the Virgin of Cobre. Near Cobre, a small town in southeastern Cuba, is the sanctuary of Our Lady of Charity, a small statue of the Virgin Mary. An image of the Virgin hangs on Santiago's wall, as it does in most Cuban houses; the text implies that his wife may, like many other Cubans, have made a pilgrimage to the shrine and brought back this picture. In 1916, Pope Benedict XV declared the Virgin the principal patroness of Cuba. She is, then, a figure associated with Cuba's national identity. Now according to legend, this statue of the Virgin Mary was floating on a wooden board off the coast of eastern Cuba in 1628, when it was found by two Indians and a Creole in a rowboat. And it is an ancient Spanish legend that the body of Saint James (Santiago) also appeared floating on the sea, in its case already

inside a boat, and was found off the coast of Spain, near Compostela, where it was said to have come from the Holy Land, even though the boat had no rudder or sail. Thus the legend of the patroness of Cuba parallels, in the Spanish New World, the far older legend of Santiago in old Spain.[10] And Hemingway has again found in history, this time cultural history, a parallel entirely relevant to his plot. For the New World legend of a mysterious boon, or blessing, discovered at sea, by humble Cubans in a rowboat, looks back to the seaborne gift of Saint James' remains off the coast of Spain, and looks forward to the modern Santiago's discovery – while at sea in a rowboat that loses its tiller – of a "great strangeness," or mystery, at the moment of the marlin's death (Sylvester, "Extended Vision" 133).

Moreover, the relic, or boon from the sea reposited at Santiago del Prado, Cuba, at the shrine of the Virgin is regarded as a spiritual endowment to the Cuban people, as the seaborne relics at Santiago de Compostela are regarded as a spiritual gift to Spain. And Santiago, the modern fisherman, brings ashore the skeletal relics of *his* "strange" encounter, skeletal remains that spiritually enrich those among the people of modern Cuba who are still capable of appreciating his values and accomplishment. As we will later consider in some detail, Santiago lives in a divided community, a village turning from the craft passion of the old Cuba to a new materialism. But those supporting national pride and old values are sustained by Santiago's circular sea journey in his wooden boat. Their traditional values will last now, in their hearts, until their next champion, Manolin, reenacts the age-old fertility rite, risking everything to maintain the vital contact between the human community and the mysteries of nature – the contact that preserves the community's sense of wonder, despite the encroaching materialism.

The historical quests contribute, as well, to another formal nicety of the work – a pattern of circles or cycles in the structure of the narrative as a whole. There are the cyclical sea journeys of Santiago's youth, from his native Canary Island to the African beaches, where he experienced an epiphany – a mystical sense of identification with young lions, nature's champions – that recurs in his consciousness throughout the narrative. Later there are the circular sea journey and epiphany of Santiago's old age, now as a Cuban. The repetition brackets his life, making it a circle, and at the same time envelops and makes the plot, about a circular voyage and life, become itself a circle. All of these cycles and circles are there for the reader to associate with the annual, cyclical pilgrimages of the Spanish and the Cuban people – to and from the shrine of Santiago in Spain, to and from the shrine of the Virgin of Cobre in Cuba.

Such historical and cultural parallels as these, together with the con-

sciousness of North America represented by the baseball allusions, make *The Old Man and the Sea* a Cuban book, then, in far more than setting. In particular, the Spanish-Cuban concordances unify the novel by celebrating those native and European ethnic forces unifying Cuban culture: ethnic bonds that for centuries held together the Hispano-Caribbean tradition disintegrating in modern Cuba. I have no doubt that Hemingway had these cultural parallels (and more) in mind when he donated his Nobel prize medal to the sanctuary of *La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre,* a Cuban national symbol (Stoneback, "From the rue Saint-Jacques" 13). It was a medal awarded largely because of this novel. And Hemingway called his offering "a tribute of love to the people of Cuba" – as is Santiago's sacrifice within Hemingway's novel, as is, of course, the book itself. Thus Hemingway's gift of his medal is a crowning artistic touch, a final reticulation, outside his text, of that integration of fiction and history that *is* his text.

We turn now to the most arresting narrative fact disclosed through topical details beyond common knowledge. The novel requires readers (even Cuban readers)[11] to do considerable homework if they are to register the surprising narrative fact that "the boy" Manolin is actually a young man of twenty-two, rather than a child somewhere between twelve and fourteen, as we have supposed. His age is unmistakably, if obliquely, specified by Manolin himself when he compares his family life to that of the American baseball player Dick Sisler. "The great Sisler's father was never poor," he says. "And he, the father, was playing in the Big Leagues when he was my age." When *who* was Manolin's age, Dick Sisler or his hall-of-fame father, George? The answer is that it is the father who was Manolin's age, just as our English, word order–oriented ears prompt us to choose, as we respond to the noun nearest the pronoun. Yet Hurley, the only other commentator to do the research this line requires, has assumed it must be the son, *Dick* Sisler, who was Manolin's age when his father was playing professionally. For the great George Sisler was twenty-two when he began his professional career, and retired when his son Dick was ten. Thus, as Hurley correctly deduces (97), Manolin must be either at least twenty-two or no more than ten, depending upon how we parse Hemingway's sentence. And because like most of us Hurley cannot immediately think of Manolin as considerably *older* than has been assumed, he understandably asserts that the young fisherman must be ten, somewhat younger than has been assumed.

However, if we continue our investigation even further, alerted by certain apparent implausibilities, we discover that it is a physical impossibility for Manolin to be only ten years old. At the same time, we find that the clues

formerly leading readers to think of Manolin as a child are – in the context of the boy's native culture – entirely consistent with young manhood. And finally, we realize that as we think of Manolin as a young adult, other details of the narrative fall into place to form an unsuspected level of socio-economic comment in the novel.

To take the physical evidence first, surely very few adult readers of either sex can imagine themselves carrying from Santiago's boat to his shack a box the size of a large garbage can, filled with coiled fishing line weighing probably over 150 pounds and at the very least 100 pounds. Yet readers careful enough to work out the weight and size of Santiago's lines are required to think of a boy twelve to fourteen doing just that – while somehow managing to juggle the old man's gaff and harpoon. Accordingly, when such readers *also* become aware that they must choose between ten and twenty-two for Manolin's age, their decision is foregone.[12]

Of course, only readers familiar with the local equipment described can be expected to approximate these formidable dimensions immediately. But the rest of us really should become suspicious enough at some point to check on the extent of the boy's burden, even without having researched the historical evidence restricting his age. For the narrative's description of the line's thickness, composition, and enormous length is so meticulous that it eventually calls attention to itself, tempting us to compile the various specifications challengingly scattered throughout the text. Also, specifications for the lines' total length are given in two sets of figures to mark their importance, as is the evidence of the baseball dates. And when we compile them, we find that the old man carries in his boat 660 fathoms of line.[13] That is just short of 4,000 feet (three-quarters of a mile or thirteen football fields end-to-end) of "coiled, hard-braided brown" line, or "cord" "as thick around as a big pencil" (to all of my consultants a description exactly fitting lines five-sixteenths of an inch in diameter). Called "Catalan *cordel*" in the text, this Spanish line of the period was made of natural, rather than synthetic fiber. For general readers its composition is carefully, if indirectly, designated as such: After fishing, the old man takes "the heavy lines home as the dew was bad for them," because natural fibers rot, while synthetics do not. And readers consulting specialists will find that natural-fiber line is heavier than modern synthetics, even synthetics with sufficient specific gravity to sink in salt water, as Santiago's lines do. Specifically, *cordel* was made of a bast fiber, a material still used, although rarely, to make fully comparable lines in the United States. We can therefore learn that 660 fathoms of any such line – braided and five-sixteenths of an inch in diameter – weighs one-hundred-and-sixty pounds after a portion has been in the water.[14] As

the text stresses, these are "heavy lines." And the bulk I mentioned is verified by commercial fishermen who daily use hand-coiled line of this length and diameter.

Philip Young, who did compute the lines' length, suspected out of general common sense that a "young boy" could not carry three-quarters of a mile of heavy line – "unless, as we are not told, the lad was actually a giant" (274–75). What we are told, of course, is that the lad was actually a powerful young man of twenty-two. And had that disclosure registered on Young, he would not have had to conclude, as he did, that Hemingway must simply have been fudging probability (274–75).

Yet to my knowledge only Young, after all, has responded to the careful description of Santiago's lines, worked out their length, and been given sufficient pause at least to comment, however precipitously, on the ostensible implausibility.[15] And the reason, I suspect, is that all of us have been distracted from conceiving of Manolin as full-grown, principally because his subservience to his father's demand that he leave Santiago for another fisherman is convincingly childlike to us, and because the references to him as "the boy" become almost a repetend.

Manolin's unquestioning subservience strikes us differently, however, when considered in the light of Cuban custom, especially at that time. In 1970, Lowry Nelson's socioeconomic study, *Rural Cuba,* described a family patriarchy still modeled on that of feudal Spain and strict to a degree that would not occur to American or European readers (174–200). Authority was slowly shifting, in some respects, from the family to the individual and the community. But a son's life, regardless of his age, remained dictated by his father until he married and actually set up housekeeping under a separate roof. This subservience was so complete, for example, that a single man did not, in his father's presence, practice the male ritual of smoking.

And during the period described in the novel there was in Cuba an abundance of such chronologically adult, yet patriarchally controlled men. According to UN demographic statistics (Schroeder 57), in 1953 (only three years later than the novel's action) 88.1 percent of Cuban males between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four were unmarried, and presumably remained dominated by their fathers. Thus in 1950, Manolin's resigned comment about his father, "I am only a boy and I must obey him," and Santiago's agreement that this is "quite normal" both faithfully represent the Cuban attitude toward a vast majority of young men. As for the term "boy," an illuminating indication of what the word means to Manolin himself is a reminiscence by Marcos Puig the Younger, chief among the young Cubans Hemingway had in mind while portraying Manolin. One day, in 1932,

Hemingway had come upon Puig and his father (whom Hemingway named as a model for Santiago) as they were bringing a large marlin alongside their small skiff. And when interviewed later about this encounter with Hemingway, Puig remarked: "I was still a young boy then" (Machlin 137). He was in fact at least twenty-two.[16] Thus Hemingway's first impression was not of a child, but of a young man exactly the earliest credible age for Manolin of the two possibilities absolutely established by the Sisler allusion. And Puig's reference to himself as "a young boy," despite his chronological age, says much about the attitudes of the fishing villages Hemingway was drawing upon in this novel. I am indebted to Allen Josephs for pointing out, moreover, that another acknowledged local model for Manolin – Manolito, a friend of Hemingway's son Gregory and presumably Gregory's age – was twenty-two when the novel appeared. Santiago, of course, refers to himself as "a boy" when he was a seaman "before the mast" at Manolin's age, hardly plausible for a ten-year-old, we note, but just right for a young man of twenty-two. And this is not surprising, when we remember perhaps the most important point of all: that in Latin America the Spanish word *muchacho,* one of the words for "boy" used in Spanish translations of the novel, applies to young males up to their early twenties, as does – in Spain – the word *chico,* also used in translations of the work.

But even apart from these primary cultural reasons for the appellation in this novel, it is characteristic of Hemingway to use "boy" in its international colloquial sense when referring to young adults in many of his works. In Hemingway's canon generally, in fact, "the boy" refers frequently to a male undergoing the very last stage of initiation into the complexities of adulthood.[17] And that, finally, is at once the social and the mythic significance of Manolin's physical and mental maturity in *The Old Man and the Sea.*

At the social level, Manolin's devotion to Santiago, and his parents' demand that he be apprenticed to a more consistently productive fisherman, reflect a major division in the local economic community. It is a conflict between progress and tradition, between craft passion and exploitation – in short, between the old Cuba and a new Cuba that Hemingway saw emerging in the 1940s. Manolin's father has opted for progress. The fisherman he chooses for his son is a middle-aged man, but his minimally competent, cautious methods yield a steady profit. Thus he is associated with the "younger fishermen" who are motivated only by the money they have been making by supplying shark livers for the booming "cod liver oil" industry in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s. These mechanized fishermen represent the decline of the old Cuban fishing culture and the beginning of an exploitative fishery. Actually, in their use of buoys and floats, they are the

precursors of the disastrous "long-line" fishery that spread across the Atlantic immediately after this novel was published, and which threatens, some claim, to render all billfish extinct in all oceans by the year 2000. That is the dire prediction recently urged upon suppliers of fuel for these ships by a forthcoming documentary funded by the American Billfish Foundation. The warning demonstrates Hemingway's prescience in sensing the severe consequences of the practice he singled out for attack.

It is this far-reaching struggle between old and new, between true vocation and market-mindedness, that Manolin's adult status functions most importantly to reveal in the novel. Manolin has obviously been a satisfying character when "read" as an endearingly precocious child, attuned to Santiago's values by innate endowment alone. But when we respond to all of the evidence in the narrative, we recognize a realistically portrayed young acolyte, consciously struggling to maintain an adult compromise between his inborn idealism and a cultural paternalism he accepts (as a man) and yet (as a man) resents. With this in mind we can appreciate what Manolin really means when he says of his father's and his employer's attitudes toward him: "It is as though I were inferior." We have assumed that this is simply a child's chafing at being treated condescendingly. But we make sense of more of the novel when we realize that Manolin's father and employer dismiss his opinions because they think he is a misguided young idealist, foolishly drawn to an impractical, outdated way of life. We have a Cuban version of the American or European Babbitt, convinced that his son has foolishly fallen among priests or artists. And it is for this specific, topical reason that Manolin's father has forced him to work for a man "almost blind," metaphysically as well as physically, by Manolin's and Santiago's vocational standards.

Those standards are high, indeed, because for Santiago and Manolin craft passion reflects a sense of participation in natural order, a participation portrayed in both mythical and religious terms in the novel. The practical men against the idealists become the materialists against the mystics. The myth of the Fisher King is dominant in the novel. And as a young adult, Manolin fits into his role in that myth much more effectively than we have been able to recognize, hampered as we have been by our image of him as a child. For only an adult can be a fully credible Parçifal-figure to Santiago's Fisher King/grail keeper: a pure and potent young knight whose belief rejuvenates the aged master's failing resolution toward the end. Specialists tracing that pattern elsewhere in Hemingway's canon will find that the rejuvenating tyro is always a young adult.

In this novel social interaction shades into myth, then, and thence into

religion (and vice versa). Manolin is only one of a circle of young men in the community who are devoted to sustaining Santiago, the pure craftsman, scorned though he may be by the dominant new materialists. The names of this cadre of what might be called political supporters in the community's *ethical* conflict associate them with Christ's *spiritual* disciples: "Perico" and "Pedrico" (both forms of "Peter"); Martin (as in Saint Martin), and so on. The name "Manolin," of course, is a diminutive of "Manuel," the Spanish form of "Emmanuel," the redeemer. And from the cadre of young adults, the one with this name will assume the secular and spiritual roles of the town's aged Christ-figure, Santiago, who lies dying at the end.

All of these young fishermen are thus identified with the fishers of men. And here Manolin's maturity intensifies the power of yet another set of allusions. There are several parallels to the Gospels of Saint Matthew and Saint Luke that can now be more fully glossed and appreciated as we recognize Manolin as a young man passing into full adulthood. Particularly revealing is the parallel between the novel and Matthew 4:21–22. James is in a boat with his father Zebedee and he and John "leave their father" to follow Christ. These are not children, but men, choosing – exactly as does Manolin at the end – to defy a biological parent and follow a surrogate father, in order to reject a utilitarian mode of fishing – and living – for one with spiritual dimensions.

We should not see a contradiction between Gospel and novel simply because in leaving their father for Christ the disciples seem to be exchanging "old" ways for "new," whereas in the novel the special young men abandon the new for the old. For both Christ and Santiago represent the *truly* "old thing" that informs Pedro Romero's craftsmanship in *The Sun Also Rises:* the heightened awareness of participation in nature's mysteries that in *The Old Man and the Sea* is called the "great strangeness." In this regard, Santiago is to Manolin as Montoya (guardian and tutor of that "strangeness" in *The Sun Also Rises*) is to Pedro Romero (who is nineteen and called a "boy").

Had we space here, we could reexamine Manolin's total characterization, and observe that it is uniformly consistent with his maturity. We have, however, seen enough to appreciate some of the dimensions foregrounded by his adult status. And we should ask ourselves why – if those dimensions are important – Hemingway has portrayed Manolin's immediate person and personality so ambiguously that millions of us have been allowed to see him as an early adolescent and be profoundly moved by this restricted response to the novel. Singularly, none of his physical characteristics is described, as Santiago's are; and except for carrying the line, he does or says

no one thing that in his culture defines – directly and by itself – either late childhood or early manhood. That is how Hemingway makes our response depend entirely on the way we read the larger contexts we have been observing in the narrative. And here Hemingway has offered different kinds of rewards for different levels of reading. On the one hand – hinting on the cultural ambiguities of "boy" and of Manolin's deference – there is the immediate warmth of some of the most appealing romantic archetypes: Santiago as ancient youth; Manolin as wise child – Wordsworth's "father of the man," another young lion sporting "upon the shore," yet (unlike Wordsworth's child) strange in his sober acceptance of "earthly freight" ("Ode: Intimations of Immortality," epigraph and ll. 166, 126). And against these seductive attractions, profound in themselves, Hemingway offers the darker complexities we have been noticing, appropriately accessible only through an arduous process of explication requiring something of the human qualities affirmed by the novel itself: resolution, tenacity, and an initiate's understanding of the varied communities of interest abounding in the practical world. Indeed, when we respond to the full implications of the narrative, we *become* initiates as we read – in the very process of deriving realities disclosed fragmentally, as they are in life – the process required of us by the works of James and Conrad, two of Hemingway's masters in this particular creation of form as content. Of course, this level of response is the "right" reading aesthetically, because it takes into account much data otherwise inconsistent within the novel. Hemingway's achievement does not support an interpretive indeterminacy valorizing whatever associations the work may prompt in us, nor could the notion be less applicable than it is to the works of this author. In seeing Manolin as an early adolescent we have been deeply satisfied – but by what amounts to a paranovel, a closely related yet different aesthetic construct we have created out of the mythic content latent in the plot. And our response has screened out the refinement and complexity of the material's darker, more universal implications.

Yet such a restricted response is in no way unique to *The Old Man and the Sea*. In Hemingway's major works we are increasingly revising canonized interpretations that are qualified or radically corrected by newly recognized narrative facts glossed over for decades by readers distracted by his calculated ambiguity.[18] In fact, this "trick," this tour de force of narrative ambiguity, allowing a work to speak with some validity to two or more readerships and to different levels of experience within individual readers, may well be Hemingway's artistic triumph – the best-kept secret of his celebrated iceberg theory. That would certainly explain his refusal to go beyond veiled hints to correct limited readings. And in this novel that ambi-

guity functions with precision. For social complexity, the very dimension most readily and widely agreed to be neglected in the work as we have usually read it, is exactly what comes to our attention as we recognize Manolin's adult conflict and the underlying opposition between the Virgin and the marketplace in his shore world.

For example, I had assumed, with Friedman (284–85), that when compared to *The Bear,* Faulkner's remarkably similar treatment of nature mysticism, *The Old Man and the Sea* failed to cope adequately with the social dimension of human life. In part 4 of *The Bear* social realities convincingly mitigate the glories of Ike's transcendent iconoclasm. Against this, Santiago's supposedly unmixed sublimity has seemed to beg questions about the real conflicts between individualism and human community. However, when we realize the central role of community division in the structure of *The Old Man and the Sea,* we see that the universe of this novel is far from the socially evasive, "cozy" cosmos some have labeled it (Weeks 191). "I live in a good town," Santiago says, thinking of his supporters. But the struggle going on there between an old and new Cuba belies all charges of "sentimentality" (Toynbee 87) in the novel's worldview or in Santiago's. The conflict between craft passion and materialism ashore matches the division between noble predators and opportunistic scavengers in the sea, integrating the human community into the immemorial natural scheme.

Just as Santiago's opposition by the cowardly scavenger sharks is the additional ordeal he must bear at sea for going "far out" where the greatest marlin are found, so his human opposition – those whose passivity and greed are threatened by his stringent code – is the added burden he has borne on shore for his inflexible honor. Actually, the course of Santiago's recent life and of his impending death are even shown to be determined in part by the intense reaction of other *people* to the values he represents. Thinking Manolin a child, we have not noticed that without his aid the old man would have been unable to continue fishing and find his great marlin. Manolin's parents have not kept him from carrying the lines and arranging many of the charitable donations of food, bait, and services by the old man's other admirers. But it is because his parents' hostility has taken Manolin out of Santiago's boat that the old man undergoes, without the relief that might have saved him, the physical ordeal that ruptures his lungs. "If the boy were here. . . . Yes. If the boy were here. If the boy were here." The invocation has many implications. But one of them is a comment on the human community's discomfort with those rare individuals upon whom the survival of the many depends. In his boat, the taut line from the marlin snubbed over his shoulder, Santiago is "the towing bitt" between the human and the

natural worlds. Yet he must bear with that weight the antipathy of the passive majority. Blinded by practical expediency, it fears those who go "beyond all people" to preserve civilization's identification with a world larger than society – the perspective crucial to the sense of wonder that gives human life its color.

Manolin is crying each time he withdraws from Santiago's bedside in the novel's closing scenes, until we leave him quietly watching the old man sleep once more. This time Santiago will dream again of the lions, as he could not upon his return – until reminded by his dialogue with Manolin that they must both act *as if* Santiago would be going out again. For the old man's approaching death, and a champion's commitment to "pull until he dies" as does the great fish, are the true subjects of this dialogue (Sylvester, " 'They Went Through This Fiction' " 474–76). Thus Manolin's tears are not a child's tears of grief and loss, but of those emotions compounded by adult remorse, as he sees the result of the suffering he has contributed to by accepting social and parental pressures and letting Santiago go out alone. They are also tears of wonder at the final price Santiago has paid for his choice to go out "too far." For it is the price Manolin will someday pay for the choice he now makes – the choice every "boy" makes when he becomes fully a man – to honor the values central to him, whatever the cost. And there is the immediate price. "What will your family say?" Santiago asks. "I do not care," Manolin answers, and with that forgoes his touching attempt to find a considerate compromise between his parents' conventional limitations and his commitment to his high vocation. Santiago's suffering has made him see, bitterly, that the time had already come to go with the old man again. Now it is too late, too late merely to serve; on this day Manolin himself becomes *El Campeón* of the values his parents most scorn. We need not overspecify his thoughts to know that his tears reflect all these considerations during the brief rite of passage into complete manhood we observe in the concluding dialogue with his dying mentor. His grief is part of the champion's burden the old man must at last leave entirely to the young man – as he had the weight of the fishing lines. Having carried those "heavy" lines now becomes symbolic as well as tangible evidence of "the boy's" readiness,[19] as he waits reverently that afternoon to take up the full burden of championship. He perpetuates a sacrifice older than the torero's, than Christ's, than the Inuit hunter's vow: "I who was born to die shall live that the world of men may touch the world of animals." And it is reenacted in Santiago's very real Cuban village in 1950 – as always everywhere – by the few for the many, even the many who scorn their efforts.

Recognizing this human portion of nature's paradoxical scheme in *The*

Old Man and the Sea is a good place to begin in combating our persistent tendency to reduce and distort Hemingway's complex portrayals of the human condition. His reliance throughout this novel on a subtly evoked Cuban consciousness so long overlooked should also caution those who proclaim that interpretive criticism of Hemingway's work has run its course. Contemplating the wealth of implication we are directed to construe from the quotidian topicalities of this short novel, we think of Keats's summation of the romantic aesthetic: "Pack every rift with ore." It is unlikely that we have sufficiently explicated any of Hemingway's narratives. He was "a strange old man." "And" – as Santiago reminds us in this work – "there are *many* tricks" (emphasis added).

We can expect new dimensions of Hemingway's artistry to keep surfacing, on and on, as we increasingly acknowledge his modernist method and turn more readily to the library and other sources of information clarifying the narrative facts that govern his metaphors and symbols. We have only to read his works with the attention to topical and historical specificity that he exercised as he wrote.

NOTES

1. The illustrations cited in this discussion are from the book *Reading Hemingway:* The Old Man and the Sea, forthcoming from the Southern Illinois University Press in a series of scholarly commentaries on Hemingway's major works.

2. For an alternate view of Santiago's human qualities, see Brenner throughout.

3. The evidence is conclusive even without the added hint that Dick Sisler would personally affect the outcome of the National League race that year – as readers know he did in 1950, with a home run to win the pennant for Philadelphia (Monteiro 273; Barbour and Sattelmeyer 285; Hurley 78).

My summary of Hurley's derivations points up a notable feature of Hemingway's strategy here: Hemingway presents two sets of evidence, each partially establishing the historical dates of the action, which together are conclusive. We can begin with the early dialogues or with the later reference to the Tigers game (as does Hurley) – whichever catches our attention first. Either way, the sets of evidence verify each other, ruling out coincidence, error, and inadvertence. Also, the repetition gives readers a second chance, nudging them to notice the baseball dates and realize their importance. We will observe Hemingway using this strategy again to stress the importance of the fishing lines' size and weight (see n. 13).

4. The doubleheader when Santiago expects the Yankees to have recorded their eighty-fifth victory is Monday the 11th; we meet Santiago and Manolin on the evening of Tuesday the 12th, the day the Yankees lose a game; Santiago's voyage begins in the predawn hours the next morning, Wednesday the 13th; during the second day of his voyage, he thinks of a Yankees/Tigers game taking place on

Thursday the 14th; he arrives back in his village in the early hours of Saturday the 16th; Manolin wakes him later in the morning of the 16th, and that afternoon watches him sleep again as the narrative ends. See Hurley's chronology (80–82). That Santiago's week is thus set in historical time gives the novel the artistic advantages of a roman à clef, a device Hemingway exploited in his canon as a whole (see my "Persona" 21).

5. Hemingway makes Santiago's manipulation of numbers so patently forced that we are required to see the old man as either superstitious (Rosenfield 50) or profound (see n. 7). Hemingway could more easily have had Santiago go without a fish for eighty-three days (tying Zane Grey's record: for this record, see Hurley 104, 114 n. 2). Santiago's and DiMaggio's resurgences would then both be associated with the number 84; there would be no need to look ahead ingeniously to a potential tie and a potential fish in order to match eighty-fives. But Santiago's coupling of DiMaggio's eighty-fourth win with his own *first* win in eighty-four outings would have remained an illogical "apples-and-oranges" comparison. And in requiring not only Santiago, but every fully oriented reader to juggle numbers all the more, the narrative stresses the irrelevance of logic in what is, after all, an elaborate pretense.

6. See my "Extended Vision" (131–32 et passim) for opposition as necessary to life in the natural world of the novel.

7. In Hemingway's earlier works this intellectual device (familiar to him in Conrad) functions as does Wallace Stevens' concept of a "supreme fiction" (to take one of many modernist examples). It provides a rationale for what Stevens refers to in "Harmonium" as "belief without belief / Beyond belief" in a skeptical century.

8. The seemingly implausible duration of this match is not "poetic license" (see n. 15). I am indebted to my colleague B. L. Grenberg, veteran of such a marathon match and witness to another in the wilds of British Columbia, for explaining that if we assume times-out to urinate, the duration is fully credible for the very reason that the marlin can endure forty-eight hours against the boat: The young Santiago was much stronger than his opponent (who, we note, needed constant rum and cigarettes, while Santiago got no service because he needed none). Comfortably in control, Santiago chose to prolong the match out of human respect for his opponent's dignity, as the fish (for biological reasons) chooses to tow the negligible weight of the skiff slowly and steadily, rather than easily break the line: "He could ruin me by jumping or by a wild rush. But . . . he is following his plan and I am following mine." It is as a coefficient of Santiago's great power and his fellow champion's great pride and resolution that the struggle lasted and became timed with the elements to symbolize natural order. (His opponent's resolution was genuine and proud, because until Santiago instantly pinned him when the referee was about to call a tie, he had not known that Santiago was holding back. Until that moment, Santiago had used only the shifting force needed to maintain balance, slacking off when his opponent had to in order to endure, stiffening as his opponent surged.)

9. I am much indebted to Professor Hurley for looking up statistics beyond those in his study, and for graciously discussing them with me as I applied them in this parallel between the Yankees/Tigers struggle and Santiago's and in other extensions of his findings.

10. In important studies of Catholicism in Hemingway's works, Stoneback

glances perceptively at these allusions to the Virgin and Saint James, seeing them in their proper relation to Hemingway's career-long use of the pilgrimage: "From the rue Saint-Jacques" (13, 15); '"On the Road" (489); '"Review" (98).

11. Fuentes, for example, sees Manolin as a "child" (241), perhaps because Fuentes is unaware of the importance of location: "The novel could . . . have taken place in Java or the Mediterranean" (238).

12. Nor is there any doubt that Hemingway's sentence referring to the ages of Dick and George Sisler was written specifically to set verifiable, if indirect parameters for Manolin's age. For when the scriptwriters for the movie of the novel changed Manolin's line to read, "The great Sisler's father . . . played in the big leagues when he was sixteen," Hemingway wrote in "The boy was not accurate here" (Fuentes 247). His laconic comment makes clear his wish to have these interpreters of his sentence focus on the issue of George Sisler's age at the beginning and end of his well-known career, together with Dick Sisler's date of birth, get those figures right on their own (*he* would not explicate his art), and deal with the implications.

13. Because I have summarized Hemingway's two-part revelation of the baseball dates, other readers deserve the pleasure of explicating for themselves this example of the strategy.

14. For specifications I am indebted to Andrew K. Barker of the Rocky Mount Cord Co.; for the composition of *cordel* to Anthony Farraz, president of Brownell and Co.; for diameter, bulk, and practical details to Ron Schatman (who handlined for marlin) and Jack Casey, both of the American Billfish Foundation.

I see no chance that the lines' formidable weight is either unintentional or extraneous. Even a smaller line – one-quarter inch in diameter, the size of a *standard* pencil – would weigh over a hundred pounds after fishing, enough to make readers think hard about how heavy it would be for an early adolescent, let alone a ten-year-old, to carry. We can see, then, why Manolin "always" helps the elderly Santiago, who could not otherwise continue fishing, and why Manolin helps him carry "*either* the . . . lines *or* the gaff and harpoon and the sail" (emphasis added), a point Hemingway stressed in correcting the film script (Fuentes 246). The pair has regularly made separate trips, sharing the great weight of the lines on one trip and that of the remaining gear on the other. It is an all-the-more crucial narrative fact, then, that on the night and morning before Santiago's final trip Manolin is able to carry the wet lines, gaff, and harpoon to the shack and back to the boat, leaving Santiago only the mast and sail. The shifting balance of the burden shared by this twentieth-century squire and his knight prefigures the approaching end of Santiago's championship and the beginning of Manolin's at the novel's end.

15. It is unwise to assume, as does Young, that in a Hemingway narrative "allegory overwhelms reality." As instances of actual inadvertence (Donaldson, "The Case of the Vanishing American") are very rare, so are instances of facile poetic license. Thus even when an error of fact can be established, we should suspect a functional reason, rather than the indifference to reality Weeks and Young assume. In *The Old Man and the Sea* there are several genuine errors of fact, thought by some to reflect the aging Hemingway's flagging discipline (Weeks throughout). However, most errors Weeks cites are based upon incomplete scientific knowledge at the time. (So are Hemingway's erroneous assumptions that a male striped marlin might approach the

size of Santiago's fish – over 1,500 pounds – when only females do, and that a marlin that large might be found in the Atlantic, when we now know they are not.) And the other genuine errors Weeks mentions are examples of what Stoneback calls, in Hemingway's early works, "anachorism [that which is out of place] and anachronism" used calculatedly to signal the "unstated patterns . . . of a work" ("From the rue Saint-Jacques" 7). They nudge initiated readers toward truth beyond fact (Sylvester, "Extended Vision" 138) – truth that would be missed by uninitiated readers, unaware of anything wrong. But truth *through* fact is overwhelmingly the rule in Hemingway's narratives.

16. We can reasonably establish from information about Hemingway's activities at the time (Baker, *Hemingway: The Writer as Artist* 228; Fuentes 241, 419) that the incident occurred no earlier than 1932; and Puig is described as "in his late forties" in 1957 (Machlin 137).

17. In *A Farewell to Arms* Frederic Henry, in his twenties, is referred to as a boy by a variety of men and women. Donaldson (*Force of Will* 152–53) cites ten instances. (In Henry's case, of course, the label does serve to remind readers of his inappropriate innocence and irresponsibility. But the irony is effective precisely because the speakers often intend the label as it applies to young men generally.) In *Across the River and into the Trees,* Colonel Cantwell speaks of the nineteen-year-old Renata as "Boy, daughter, or whatever it is." He also remembers himself as "a boy" when he was wounded in the wear at nineteen – as does the man Ernest Hemingway in his letters: "When I was a *young boy* I was always getting shot at" (emphasis added).

18. In bibliographies of Hemingway studies for the past decade interested readers can find, for example, references to such necessary new readings of *The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms,* "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," *Across the River and into the Trees,* and several of the major short stories. There are now in press or in preparation discussions of indirectly presented narrative facts hitherto overlooked or misapplied in *For Whom the Bell Tolls, Islands in the Stream,* and more short stories. The personal and artistic reasons for Hemingway's subtlety and indirection are increasingly scrutinized. For an analysis of current findings, see my "Persona" (esp. 25–34).

19. See the conclusion of note 14 above.

WORKS CITED

Baker, Carlos. *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969.

Hemingway: The Writer as Artist. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956.

Barbour, James, and Robert Sattelmeyer. "Baseball and Baseball Talk in *The Old Man and the Sea.*" *Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual 1975:* 281–87.

Brenner, Gerry. The Old Man and the Sea: *Story of a Common Man.* Boston: Twayne, 1991.

Burns, Ken, and Geoffrey Ward. *Baseball: An Illustrated History.* New York: Knopf, 1994.

Donaldson, Scott. *By Force of Will: The Life and Art of Ernest Hemingway.* New York: Viking, 1977.

"The Case of the Vanishing American and Other Puzzlements in Hemingway's Fiction." *Hemingway Notes* 6 (Spring 1981): 16–19.

Friedman, Norman. *Form and Meaning in Fiction.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1975.

Fuentes, Norberto. *Hemingway in Cuba.* New York: Carol, 1984.

Hemingway, Ernest. *Across the River and into the Trees.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950.

A Farewell to Arms. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.

The Garden of Eden. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1986.

The Old Man and the Sea. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.

Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters, 1917–1961. Ed. Carlos Baker. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1981.

The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938.

Hurley, C. Harold. *Hemingway's Debt to Baseball in* The Old Man and the Sea: *A Collection of Critical Readings.* Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1992.

Lewis, Robert W. "Hemingway in Italy: Making It Up." *Journal of Modern Literature* 9 (1982): 209–36.

Machlin, Milt. "Hemingway Talking." *Conversations with Ernest Hemingway.* Ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1986, 130–42.

Mailer, Norman. *Advertisements for Myself.* New York: Berkley, 1959.

Monteiro, George. "Santiago, DiMaggio, and Hemingway: The Ageing Professionals of *The Old Man and the Sea.*" *Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual 1974:* 273–80.

Nelson, Lowry. *Rural Cuba.* New York: Octagon, 1970.

Reynolds, Michael. *Hemingway: The Paris Years.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.

Rosenfield, Claire. "New World, Old Myths." *Twentieth Century Interpretations of* The Old Man and the Sea: *A Collection of Critical Essays.* Ed. Katherine T. Jobes. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968, 41–55.

Stoneback, H. R. "From the rue Saint-Jacques to the Pass of Roland to the 'Unfinished Church on the Edge of the Cliff.' " *The Hemingway Review* 6 (1986): 2–29.

_____. "Hemingway on the Road to Roncevaux: The Pilgrimage Theme in *The Sun Also Rises.*" *VIII Congreso de la Société Rencesvals.* Pamplona: Institucion Principe de Viana, 1981, 481–89.

_____. "Review of *Santiago: Saint of Two Worlds.*" *The Hemingway Review* 12 (1992): 93–98.

Sylvester, Bickford. "Hemingway's Italian *Waste Land:* The Complex Unity of 'Out of Season.' " *Hemingway's Neglected Short Fiction: New Perspectives.* Ed. Susan Beegel. Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1989, 75–98.

_____. "Hemingway's Extended Vision: *The Old Man and the Sea.*" *PMLA* 81 (1966): 130–38.

———. "The Writer as l'homme engagé: Persona as Literary Device in Malraux and Hemingway." *North Dakota Quarterly* 60 (1992): 19–38.

———. " 'They Went through This Fiction Every Day': Informed Illusion in *The Old Man and the Sea.*" *Modern Fiction Studies* 12 (1966–67): 473–76.

Toynbee, Philip. "Hemingway." *Encounter* 17 (October 1961): 86–88.

Weeks, Robert P. "Fakery in *The Old Man and the Sea.*" *College English* 24 (1962): 188–92.

Young, Philip. *Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1952.