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Take Me Out to the Ball Game:
The Function of Joe DiMaggio in Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*

Erik F. Cwik

EN490 The Text, the Critic, and the World

Dr. Thomas Hemmeter

7/12/2013

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7/12/13

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In the finale of Ernest Hemingway's 1952 novella, *The Old Man and the Sea*, the titular old man Santiago, who is "definitely and finally *salao*, which is the worst form of unlucky," pulls onto the shore of his Cuban village with the scraps of the giant marlin that was to be the savior of his fishing career and lies down to rest for, what is alluded to being, the final time (9). This suggestion of the old man's death is foreshadowed throughout the text as readers are given glimpses of the wrecked state of the fisherman's body early on in the story. He is described as:

thin and gaunt with deep wrinkles in the back of his neck. The brown blotches of the benevolent skin cancer the sun brings from its reflection on the tropic sea were on his cheeks. The blotches ran well down the sides of his face and his hands had the deep-creased scars from handling heavy fish on the cords. But none of these scars were fresh. They were as old as erosions in a fishless desert. (9-10)

The image being portrayed is not of a successful tradesman but, rather, that of someone who has long been worn down by the demands of his society and his need to earn monetary funds in order to survive. After going "eighty-four days" without catching a fish, it would seem that a change in career would be the pertinent decision for Santiago as a means of preventing further physical decline (9). But, Santiago is caught between two worlds: the U.S. economic and social

imperialism of Cuba and a world wherein one's name holds more value than that of the peso. Unable to fit within the capitalist system of his town, Santiago is exiled socially for the sole reason that he holds onto old world values. The old world values in question associate success with consistency and hard work while ignoring monetary gain; a person's success is dictated by victory bred from action and not wealth. Due to his maintaining of such traditional, non-capitalist values he fails to fully assimilate and therefore his physicality deteriorates. However, in Santiago's desire to clear his name from the pejorative of unlucky and to overcome the impossibility of maintaining the original values that determined his identity before U.S. involvement in Cuba, he buys into the U.S. originating cultural imperialism in the form of the motivational icon of "the great DiMaggio" (21). Santiago praises this icon throughout the novella.

Joe DiMaggio is a multifaceted figure throughout Hemingway's novella. He is a divinely inspirational religious figure for Santiago. He is a foreign body that represents capitalist success. He is a hope for real change after the repressive regime brought about by the previous Spanish colonizers. But, he is also a manipulated icon marketed by the cultural industry to bring about assimilation within the island nation of Cuba. Santiago's town changes from a fishing village to an industrialized satellite city of the market hub of Havana, leading Santiago to be casted aside as unlucky and undesirable when he is unable to produce a product to be sold. Thus, Santiago is ousted due to his town's shift toward capitalist values. However, Santiago is ultimately ruined as he fails to realize the importance of capital and focuses solely on attaining the level of heroics cultivated by the culture industry in the form of Joe DiMaggio.

The divine form of DiMaggio is initially perceptible through the repeated praises that Santiago devotes to him throughout the novella. These invocations contain all the dedication and

fervor that is usually seen in declarations of a religious nature. Since the fisherman calls for the strength of DiMaggio to aid him when he is in need of some inspiration, the relentless drive Santiago feels toward finally ending his fishing drought suggests divine inspiration. For instance, the day before Santiago embarks on the voyage that leads to the catch of the giant marlin, he is hopeful when conversing with his former-apprentice Manolin despite the apparent fiscal desperation of his life at this point. Such hopefulness is attributable to the fact that Manolin is reading Santiago the baseball section of “yesterday’s paper”. These day old news stories lose no relevance when recited to Santiago, as the act becomes a ritual analogous to a bible reading. As Manolin reads of the trials and tribulations of the Yankees and DiMaggio, the elder proclaims that one must “have faith in the Yankees” and “think of the great DiMaggio” when doubts arise (17). Despite any antagonism and troubles that Santiago and Manolin may face as they try to make a living, all will be fine if they are willing to remember the greatness of DiMaggio.

However, newspapers are the products that inspire assimilation in the text. Considering the fact that the marketing of the papers takes place in Cuba, a frequently U.S. occupied country, there is a slant toward pro-American ideals. This colonial culture industry market trend illustrates the way in which Santiago and Manolin are exposed to the capitalist ideals purveyed within the folds of the periodicals. The newspaper exists to earn money for its publishers; it is a functioning cog in a larger capitalist system. But simultaneously the newspaper is a bringer of messages from the United States. While Santiago and Manolin both frequently invest their money in the newspapers for the excitement of hearing the Major League Baseball scores, they are oblivious to their function within the capitalist market and their embrace of the worldview exhibited through the success of Joe DiMaggio

Although Santiago is unaware of the influence of the culture industry on his perceptions he actively perceives the baseball star as divine as a means of coping with his partial assimilation into capitalism. When times are tough and the fisherman needs a reason for why he has to subject himself to unrewarded, unprofitable labor on a daily basis it is easy for him to grasp a myth about Joe DiMaggio for the inspiration he needs for the baseball star stands as a sign. Often the myths signified by Joe DiMaggio's image will impose a rather superhuman light on the Yankee center fielder: making it seem as though the trials and tribulations DiMaggio undergoes are always of a much greater severity than Santiago could ever comprehend. While staying with the fish, Santiago ponders a recent injury that DiMaggio endured and is quick to note that he himself would not be able to handle it with as much poise:

But I must have confidence and I must be worthy of the great DiMaggio who does all things perfectly even with the pain of the bone spur in his heel. What is a bone spur? he asked himself. Un espuela de hueso. We do not have them. Can it be as painful as the spur of a fighting cock in one's heel? I do not think I could endure that or the loss of the eye and of both eyes and continue to fight as the fighting cocks do. (Hemingway 68)

Santiago is prone, due to the heroically portrayed stories of DiMaggio that are read to him in the local papers, to judge the Yankee's injury as being something he could not bear. Since the injury managed to disable Santiago's idol and inspiration, he is left to assume that a "bone spur" is something unworldly, something he could never fathom, as he states: "we do not have them here" (68).

The divine role that DiMaggio assumes for Santiago is linked to but also disconnected from the fisherman's pushing of himself physically to the edge in an attempt to live up to the

perceived unworldly heroics of the Yankee player. Because Santiago cannot conceive the intended values attributed to a culture industry he is unaware of the requirement of money in capitalist markets and he does not purchase even the bare necessities for life. At several points in the novella, Santiago is aware of his physical decline, caused by the singular pursuit of becoming an image imposed by the culture industry but infused with old world values, and still continues to fight on:

For an hour the old man had been seeing black spots before his eyes and the sweat salted his eyes and salted the cut over his eye and on his forehead. He was not afraid of the black spots. They were normal at the tension that he was pulling on the line. Twice, though, he had felt faint and dizzy and that had worried him.

(Hemingway 87)

Santiago's familiarity with reaching such a point of exhaustion is a rather strong suggestion that he is a part of a conflict between cultural ideologies wherein his physical health is pushed to the wayside. The health of the heroic image, is unworldly and requires no sustenance, but Santiago cannot rectify this with his true physical health which requires standard maintenance. Therefore, Santiago continually pushes on, telling himself that he can become the myth if he really tries: "I could not fail myself and die on a fish like this," he said. "Now that I have him coming so beautifully, God help me endure. I'll say a hundred Our Fathers and a hundred Hail Marys. But I cannot say them now" (87).

Santiago's hesitation to pray to the Christian God figure is due to his inability to conceive concepts that are attributable to western ideology. While Santiago recognizes that the Christian God figure is representative of the mythical stature that he wishes to achieve, he is aware of the fact that this same figure exists on a plane unreachable by humans. Therefore, why would

Santiago risk losing what could be the savior of one's dream of mythical status in order to pray? His thoughts and prayers unfailingly drift solely between the status of the giant marlin and baseball. As Santiago, himself, states after bludgeoning a shark that attempts to consume the marlin:

I must think, he thought. Because it is all I have left. That and baseball. I wonder how the great DiMaggio would have liked the way I hit him in the brain? It was no great thing, he thought. Any man could do it. But do you think my hands were as great a handicap as bone spurs? I cannot know. I never had anything wrong with my heel except the time the sting ray stung it when I stepped on him when swimming and paralyzed the lower leg and made the unbearable pain. (103-4)

Instead of thinking that he has any relationship left with the God he promised to pray to not long before, Santiago's thoughts instead drift back to Joe DiMaggio.

The manner in which he fears disappointing the Yankee player is certainly not unlike the way in which a Christian may fear sinning in the eyes of God. He will again makes note of the supernatural, divine superiority that he believes Joe DiMaggio to have as the bone spur is still seen as something of incomparable pain. This continually emphatic worship of DiMaggio serves to highlight the fact that the baseball star has become the new mythical God figure in Santiago's life. From reading about the culture industry produces tales of the Yankees, how they win, how they triumph over the Tigers and the Indians, and how they are unworldly heroes; the dogma of the church of the great DiMaggio has become thoroughly established into his worldview. This is a god figure that is also human while also transcending the physical world. Santiago, in the mythical image of Joe DiMaggio, finds a figure who is divinely inspiring and unworldly while

still existing on the human plane; the dream of becoming a mythical image akin to DiMaggio is not perceived as impossible to Santiago.

Despite being otherworldly in a divine sense, the image of Joe DiMaggio in *The Old Man and the Sea* is a culturally foreign presence. He is a means for the United States to make their culture seem more appealing to the inhabitants of Cuba. The foreignness of DiMaggio becomes representative of the benefits of the U.S. cultural and economic systems and, thus, inspires assimilation amongst the populace of their colony.

The United States would have much to gain from assimilating citizens of Cuba into their economic project. It grants a whole other market through the selling of periodicals and products, while simultaneously exploiting Cuba's resources. The effects of this assimilation are clear early on in the novella as the capital city of the island nation, Havana, becomes the market hub:

The successful fishermen of that day were already in and had butchered their marlin out and carried them laid full length across two planks, with two men staggering at the end of each plank, to the fish house where they waited for the ice truck to carry them to the market in Havana. (Hemingway 11)

Instead of the fishermen selling their own products within their own town they ship the products to the capital city as that is where the money is made. The fishermen are aware of the incentives that are gained through doing business in Havana where their product is preserved and manipulated for shipment throughout Cuba and to the United States in the form of economic imperialism. The natives now work as pieces of a greater capitalist project while only being aware that money is what is needed to survive.

Santiago's small village pales in comparison to the industrialized city of Havana. Even if the natives are unaware of their assimilation into the U.S. American system of business they are

able to discern that financial success lies in such a city. Industrialization has crept into Santiago's village as the fishermen who catch sharks are depicted as taking "them to the shark factory on the other side of the cove where they were hoisted on a block and tackle, their livers removed, their fins cut off and their hides skinned out and their flesh cut into strips for salting" (Hemingway 11). Factories are an integral component of such a system of fishery. Despite the efficiency factories grant, it is important to realize the foreignness signified by the "factory." Industrialization did not begin in Cuba. It began in Europe and flourished in countries like Great Britain or the previous colonizer of Cuba: Spain. The factories in Santiago's village exemplify the assimilation that has transgressed as nations have taken hold of Cuba's economy and way of life. Factories modernize and mechanize production and, thusly, become a creation that is focused solely on the end goal of stripping the human element with the intent of saving time and money. The dehumanization present in such a notion mirrors the manner in which Santiago hopes to strip his image of mortal weakness in the pursuit of the mythological image. Santiago becomes a factory, ignoring standard human desires, focused on creating an image that is beyond the mortal human.

Philip Melling, in his article "Cultural Imperialism, Afro-Cuban Religion, and Santiago's Failure In Hemingway's 'The Old Man And The Sea,'" states that Santiago feels a drive to "replicate the actions of an American hero whose baseball exploits were the stuff of adventure in the local tabloids" (1). However, while this heroic influence is a source of heavy inspiration for Santiago, it also eventually leads to his dehumanization as he is left half-dead after his failed attempt in achieving his dream of success through the catching of a giant marlin. This negative, even deadly, outcome is due to the fact that, while DiMaggio initially seems like a positive, motivational influence on Santiago, in reality the Joe DiMaggio that he knows is an entity that

has been carefully planned and implanted into his mind through cultural imperialism in the form of Major League Baseball.

This image of Joe DiMaggio, that the fisherman praises so highly, is a “carefully nurtured [...] creation of the movies, radio programs, newsreels, and mass circulation newsprint which, during the post-war period, became an integral feature of the new diplomatic landscape of the United States” (Melling 7). DiMaggio has been molded by the cultural leaders of the States into a perfect example of how the culture industry can utilize mass deception to create “a god-like figure who popularizes the imperial project of conquering others through forces of will” (15). In creating such a figure, the culture industry has managed to conjure-up a public entity that appeals to Cuba, and the rest of Latin America, while simultaneously making Americanization more attractive.

Such calculated manipulation of culture influences is a commonly witnessed occurrence when a capitalist entity attempts to expand its global market in the form of the impoverished denizens of Latin America (Santiago, Manolin, etc.). Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno, in their essay, “The Culture Industry as Mass Deception,” point out how the “cycle of manipulation and retroactive need” that comes about in capitalist societies, like that of the United States, takes over cultures through controlling what they are exposed to (1242). Since the people inhabiting Cuba prior to the nation’s becoming a U.S. colony, and many decades before the writing of *The Old Man and the Sea*, were repressed under the rule of Spanish colonialists, the retroactive desire for the American dream would be an appealing notion for them. Instead of being forced to act as slaves and live under a segregated Spanish system the Cubans could trick themselves into believing that anything is obtainable with the hard working and motivational attitudes associated with the United States American personae.

Keenly aware of the potential appeal of baseball to Cuba's populace, and seeking to expand its market, the United States saw the national interest in baseball as a means of both manipulating Cubans into subservient inhabitants of their colony while also expanding the global market of, not just American Baseball, but all things American. In doing so, they introduced a product, in the form of the New York Yankees, which has a history of winning, with Joe DiMaggio acting as the figurehead to the populace of the colony. As a figurehead, DiMaggio would have enough appeal that he could carry a promise; a promise for success akin to that felt by Santiago when he shipped off for the final time: stating "I feel lucky today" (Hemingway 27).

Hemingway's choice of utilizing the New York Yankees as the team that is the focus of Santiago's idolatry is a very revealing one. This is due to the unique fiscal advantage that this baseball club has had during its tenure in the Major Leagues. The club has been frequently derided by critics as representing the "'evils'—big money, big player salaries, [and] mediatization" (Ritzer 278). That is to say that the club represents a cultural entity that seeks to intermingle itself in all aspects of society while reaping the resulting profits. Whether or not this is true most likely is a result of one's own personal baseball preferences. However, the fact that the team was and is a successful enterprise and inspiration to many fans is pertinent to the character of Santiago as he attempts to mirror their success while ignoring the reliance of such success on capital.

This draws one back to the ideas of Adorno and Horkheimer, with the team deceiving the masses as they supply the public with a product that, while painted as a team for the people, really is just that: "a product" constructed of "ready-made clichés to be slotted in anywhere" (1244). In appearing to represent success in the face of adversity, posturing itself as a consistent champion, and being from the most populated American city, the team embodies the ability of

the everyman to gain consistent success through hard work. This is merely a façade with the ultimate goal of gaining fans and, with them, monetary gains. The players are inevitably “exploited” as well as they become simply tools for the business in the form of marketable products. A famous Yankee, such as Mickey Mantle, became not known and loved for who he was as a person but rather who the press and the Yankee organization made him out to be. This allowed him to be loved and admired by many due to “the physical adversities he had to overcome in order to continue playing” in his later career (Ritzer 278). And yet, such a clichéd tale of success was only made public as it could win over those facing adversity worldwide: such as Santiago.

With the potential for appeal that DiMaggio and the Yankee organization has as a symbol in mind, Santiago’s dehumanization and possible death, following his slow decline, results from cultural deception in the form of the New York Yankees and their all-star roster seems ever more plausible. Since the players, acting as inspirational figures, would be quite apt to rouse Santiago into pushing his boat out to sea everyday despite the consistent drought of fish and resulting poverty that his trade has allotted him. It is clear that the element of delusion is heavy for Santiago. Considering “he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish” and “after forty days without a fish [Manolin’s] parents” had chosen not to allow their son to work with him due to the severity of his fishing famine, it is apparent Santiago lost his erstwhile protégé due to a lack of production at his trade (Hemingway 9). Bearing in mind the importance that Santiago places on his relationship with Manolin, it seems daft, almost silly, for him to continue with fishing. After all, Manolin could very well be the person who keeps the myth of Santiago alive after the fisherman’s death. It would therefore seem logical for Santiago to hold onto his protégé as his myth could live on within Manolin. But, it is easy to forget that Santiago is a man living

with an illusory dream in mind: a dream of success, New York, and the Major Leagues. After all, as Jackson J. Benson states, in his article “Ernest Hemingway: The Life as Fiction and the Fiction as Life”:

Perhaps day-dreaming like alcohol becomes an addiction because it seems to make us feel better and more competent than life usually does, and maybe for the artist it is addicting because instead of the chaos and *nada* of life, the day-dream can give form and meaning to experience. (349)

In other words, why wouldn't Santiago want to follow a world-famous athlete when the prospect of dreaming about having what this far-off figure has would be preferable to anything the old man could ever imagine? Why not dream of AL Pennant flags and World Series rings when all one has to come home to is a meager abode with a hammock and day-old newspapers? The cultural imperialists of America have recognized Santiago's vulnerability, the desire to become a myth, and have delivered the dream. A dream which, when striven for, paradoxically causes the elder fisherman to lose the potential barer of his tale.

Some critics, however, disagree with the claim that Santiago serves as a representation of the negative outcomes that stemmed from U.S. cultural imperialism. This doubt is attributable to the fact that many authors, such as Jeffrey Herlihy in his article “‘Eyes the Same Color as the Sea’: Santiago's Expatriation from Spain and Ethnic Otherness in Hemingway's ‘The Old Man and the Sea’,” claim that recognizing baseball as a main vessel of negative cultural influences within the novella is a misconception. Using Philip Melling's aforementioned article as an example, Herlihy espouses the viewpoint that considering baseball as a “tool of the capitalistic system which ‘developed an empire and acquired new lands through a process of pacification and control’” is a great misunderstanding. Herlihy asserts that “baseball in the colonial and post-

colonial Caribbean was more than a pastime; in fact, profits from the first professional Cuban baseball league were funneled to guerilla groups fighting for Cuban independence against Spain” (32). He claims baseball, though commonly acknowledged as “America’s game,” was really more of a means for Cubans to resist the repressive Spanish colonists that enslaved the island prior to U.S. intervention.

Since baseball was commonly associated with America, an adoption of it as Cuba’s national game, coupled with the rejection of Spanish sports such as bullfighting and soccer, acted as a sort of silent protest against the Spanish colonizers. In other words, if one is to side with Herlihy, then the claim that baseball is “America’s game” needs to be amended since it does not take into consideration the fact that Cubans made the game their own, adopting it with a fervor and dedication unseen before in the burgeoning world of baseball. To put it succinctly, it was Cuba’s pastime before the United States’.

Rob Ruck, in his historical tracing of Cuba/Baseball relations in *Raceball: How the Major Leagues Colonized the Black and Latin Game*, lends weight to Herlihy’s claim that baseball was a symbol of Cuban nationalism as opposed to one of American, capitalist-colonists as he states that the game became an integral “part of [the Cuban] struggle for independence”. Ruck goes on to assert that the adoption of the game was due to the sport having become “the symbol of ‘American’ modernity and democracy as the Cubans sought to end colonial rule”. This embracing of the American game is notable as it coincided with an increased presence of U.S. forces in Cuba. According to Ruck, the relationship between the United States and Cuba was quickly growing to the point that, after the “Ten Years’ War”, Cuba’s “economy and infrastructure became tied to the United States” while the Spanish influence dwindled (2). Civil rights achievements that came out of the island nation’s new relationship with the United States

seemed to signal that Cuba was moving in the right direction as the U.S. ended the Spanish use of Afro-Cubans as slaves. But the minor successes that were garnered from this new affiliation were eventually overshadowed by the repressive regime that the United States would go on to install in Cuba.

This regime was initiated with the instituting of the “Platt Amendment, which made Cuba a virtual protectorate and gave the United States the right to intervene to maintain internal order and supervise the republic’s foreign affairs”. With the establishment of this document, it was beginning to become apparent that the once liberators had instead become a second wave of colonists. What made this treachery ever more duplicitous is the fact that it was all done under the guise of the freedom of democratic system and the capitalist dream of earning one’s successes: things formerly impossible with the oppressive Spanish rule. Upon realizing they had been duped by the wealthier nation, many Cubans realized that they had basically “traded one master for another,” a realization that was manifested in the U.S. backed regime of the corrupt President of Cuba, Fulgencio Batista (7).

The deception continued as Cubans who were optimistic in the belief that U.S. baseball could act as a sport practiced without racial boundaries, a symbol of new liberation amongst both lighter and darker skinned Cubans. However, the darker skinned Cuban athletes would not find such acceptance within the confines of the American system of baseball. Many Americans instead believed that “the U.S. influence in Cuba was part of the ‘white man’s burden’” and figured that, while Cubans could benefit from baseball, Afro-Cubans would be fine “as long as they stayed in Cuba or stuck to the Negro Leagues when in the United States” (11). The escape from the Spanish colonists had only brought a different set of rules and segregations for the Cubans. In truth, the very same team that Santiago feels such a kinship towards, the 1950’s

Yankees, “was well-known for its opposition to players of color and notorious for its refusal to field a multi-ethnic squad” (Melling 8).

Therefore, Herlihy’s claim that Melling and others have ignored the fact that baseball has been a presence in Cuba long before Hemingway’s writing of *The Old Man and the Sea* is partially true. Yes, baseball *was* a prominent entity before the establishment of the Major Leagues in the U.S.. But, it was only through a desire to become more American that the Cubans adopted the sport in the first place. While the sport did help Cuba distance itself from the Spanish, Melling’s claim that the U.S.’s introduction of the sport into the island nation had ulterior motives still holds water as the aforementioned negative outcomes and reasons: racism, cultural manipulation, and a desire for new markets for baseball still are historically existent regardless of how long baseball was practiced in Cuba prior to their execution. One could argue that baseball was a pure sport and therefore innocent of the claims that it caused Cuba to fall prey to United States imperialism. But, even if the sport itself is not responsible, it was still utilized for the very purpose of changing the viewpoints of Cubans to those of the leaders of the States.

Since it has been established that the American culture industry has imposed cultural imperialism as a means to underhandedly alter the mindsets of Latin American habitants, such as Santiago, it should also be made clear how this system has managed to swindle so many colonial states. In order to elucidate the power wielded by the culture industry one must return to Adorno and Horkheimer’s article, “The Culture Industry as Mass Deception.” This article asserts the notion that the U.S. culture industry’s ability to fool the Cuban populace is attributed to the control of “style” (1245).

Of course, since the Yankees’ appeal has generated a massive fan base across the U.S., and into its colonies, it could be said that the team has an immense amount of style; they are a

stylish team with a vast, global appeal. But what does style really mean and why is it such a determinant as to who controls what is popular and influential? In the words of Adorno and Horkheimer, style is something that “unconditionally posits the real forms of life as it is by suggesting that fulfillment lies in their aesthetic derivatives” (1245). It is a force which profligates a gospel of superficiality, not unlike the promises that the U.S. offered to Cuba in the form of baseball, a gospel that stresses only the dreamlike aspects of capitalism and U.S. Americanism. The disparity between such idealistic superficialities and Santiago’s meager fishing town is clear; the sport has brought a false message.

The victories that are won by the teams, the huge salaries earned by the star players, and their penthouse suites have no correlation at all to one such as Santiago. One would be hard pressed to actually find similarities between the two apart from the old man’s assertion that DiMaggio’s father was a fisherman as well. While Santiago is a poor, solitary, worn out, man who lives in a shack, DiMaggio is a wealthy, nationally loved, superstar who lives in a metropolis. Due to the overwhelming power that comes with controlling style, or the ability to dictate what is appealing to the masses, the chasm of a cultural divide between DiMaggio and Santiago is lost on the elder fisherman. While DiMaggio gives Santiago the motivation necessary to push his skiff out every morning and the desire to try and fit in with the capitalist system, rising up like the great Joe DiMaggio, the tragedy lies in his failure to realize he has fallen victim to the “culture industry’s” ultimate goal: “obedience to the social hierarchy” (1245).

Santiago will never realize that he has been deceived by this hierarchy as it is a system that is wholly aware of the hopelessness of his situation while also encouraging him to proceed with false instillations of hope. It is this false hope that the culture industry utilizes to control the masses. For as long as he has hope that he may succeed, Santiago can and will wear himself to

skin and bones trying to become a mythical image. He has been caught up in the aforesaid “circle of retroactive need” wherein the culture industry’s control of what he has been exposed to has led him to desire the mythological status of DiMaggio and strive for it relentlessly (Horkheimer and Adorno 1242). So much so that the circle seems to get smaller every time he goes out to fish and wear his body out further. The culture industry has implanted a desire into Santiago’s mind and as its attainment rises in importance his care for personal maintenance fades. The cycle seems to be closing in on him much like the marlin does as it tries to evade capture by his weathered hands: “But the fish kept on circling slowly and the old man was wet with sweat and tired deep into his bones two hours later. But the circles were much shorter now and from the way the line slanted he could tell the fish had risen steadily while he swam” (Hemingway 87). As the fish was unable to avoid capture by the elder fisherman, so too is Santiago unable to avoid being caught by the cycle of want that has been imposed upon him.

This cyclical notion of entrapment proves to be the one thing that Santiago actually does demonstrate success in: falling prey to the delusions imposed on him. But, as Philip Melling states, even if Santiago has failed to catch his fish:

“he has done so in an epic quest, one that allows him to live briefly in the shadow of Joe DiMaggio. If he goes ‘too far’ outside the circle prescribed by DiMaggio it is only because, as he tells himself, baseball is his sustenance and does not want to ‘think’ beyond it (*OMATS* 106). Santiago shares DiMaggio’s ‘pain’; his movements are restricted, his hands torn and bloodied from the fight. (22)

Santiago has become so misled by the cultural influences that the United States have imposed on him in the form of Joe DiMaggio that he is willing to die to live up to the heroic dreams that said influences create.

Instead of being concerned with catching fish for his own sustenance, Santiago's sole reason for wanting to catch the giant marlin is due to his belief that "[he] must be worthy of the great DiMaggio who does all things perfectly" (Hemingway 64). While DiMaggio is a fellow human, the manipulation of his image by the culture industry has led to his becoming more of a god than a man for Santiago. But there is no promise of an afterlife in this god-illusion and there are no extra innings either. Being manipulated into throwing his own life away in order to attain the American dream of success, akin to that of DiMaggio's, Santiago ends up as an enduring example of the dangers of creating cults of personality in order to influence other cultures.

Santiago's fated dehumanization and death as a result of U.S. cultural imperialism is unavoidable; once he sets his mind on success he will not be deterred even if it means his death. As he proclaimed to the marlin: "I'll stay with you until I am dead" (52). At one point Santiago even asks himself: "Do you believe the great DiMaggio would stay with a fish as long as I will stay with this one?" (68). The answer he supplies himself to this question is obvious; of course DiMaggio would stay that long for the DiMaggio that Santiago knows is not just Joseph Paul DiMaggio from Martinez, California but a superman from the land where the streets are made of gold and all dreams are possible.

In the end, as Santiago realizes that the marlin is "headed north," towards America, he remains ignorant to the fact that he himself has been heading in that direction for a long time (53). In actuality, it would seem that he would welcome a journey to the Promised Land that America has become to him and the many others who inhabit the colonies of the United States. Perhaps he could finally meet the man who became his inspiration, his idol, and his god. But since Santiago is not apt to fully embrace capitalism, to the point of having his life dictated by the exchange of money, he is unable to make it to this world of promise. However, there is a

success to this rejection of currency as he does not allow himself to be fully assimilated.

Santiago does not let himself become part of the capitalist system and therefore retains his individuality. He remains an individual who participates in a daily struggle to be something greater than a wealthy human who has nothing but funds to gauge his success.

Santiago is caught up in one facet of capitalism: the desire to achieve bigger and better things no matter the cost. But, at the same time, he is indifferent to another trait of capitalism: the attaining of currency and the purchasing of goods. This is where the influence of Joe DiMaggio seemingly turns into a destructive element for the elder fisherman as it ends up costing him his physical wellbeing. Being so inspired, or deceived, into thinking that constant hard work in the face of adversity, as DiMaggio is marketed to represent, Santiago has decided to work through the poverty and the starvation with that singular goal of becoming the headline, becoming the myth. No longer does he work to survive, as the only thing that seems worth the hardship is the glory of the battle and the victory. This clash between capitalism and old world romantic views creates the duality of Santiago's character that dictates his actions throughout the novella. He is a man that wishes to succeed and make a name for himself while simultaneously having no interest in the gain of capital. Santiago recognizes the heroism and deification that may transgress in a capitalist system if one is favored by the media and also successful. But, since Santiago ignores the presence of money as the reason for the celebrity of those he reads about in the newspapers, such as Joe DiMaggio, he is unable to sustain his way of life as he partially assimilates into American culture.

A partial assimilation, such as that of Santiago's, shows that while a colonizing culture may be able to sway inhabitants of their colony, sometimes the influence does not cover all aspects of life. Santiago receives the messages brought forth by the tales of Joe DiMaggio. He

is inspired to become the next great American success story. However, he is not fully assimilated as he has little to no desire for product or capital. The newspapers Santiago reads deify DiMaggio on a consistent basis but mention little on the salary of the player. Therefore, the fisherman is oblivious to how much of the player's fame and heroism is due to monetary incentives and his receiving of "the highest possible salary" during his playing days (Ritzer 278).

Santiago does not allow himself to be fully assimilated into the foreign culture. He rejects the monetary aspects of capitalism but still holds onto the pride and self-serving nature of proving oneself to be successful. The image of DiMaggio, in inspiring Santiago, teaches the old man that he can succeed through physical effort. But since the monetary wealth that goes into the success and popularity of the Baseball star is unheeded by Santiago he is unable to truly emulate his hero. Mark Twain once claimed that baseball is "the very symbol, the outward and visible expression of the drive and push and rush and struggle of the raging, tearing, booming nineteenth century" (Ruck 1). Santiago engages in this struggle. But as he is unable to control the uncertainty of his line of work and is enraptured by the heroic images from the north he is unable to survive within the confines of the economic system. Santiago dies achieving his goal of successfully capturing a fish to be proud of but is unable to make it in the new post-colonial world where being successful is reliant more on the weight of the wallet than the weight of the catch of the day.

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