

A Psychoanalytical Study of the Gothic Marine Locales in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*

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Abstract—This research uncovers the Gothic elements interwoven with the Sublime in the maritime context of Herman Melville's "*Moby Dick*". Using Freud's psychoanalytical frameworks, the study examines the novel's sublime aspects and the psychological depths they signify. It draws on Lacan's and Burke's theories on the conscious and unconscious mind and the contrast between the beautiful and the sublime. These elements suggest deeper insights into Melville's psyche, with characters like Ishmael reflecting his narrative. The conclusion posits "*Moby Dick*" as an intricate interlacing of Gothic and sea-faring motifs that penetrate the human psyche, set against the ocean's expanse. The narrative aboard the Pequod encapsulates the collective human psyche, presenting a tableau of collective yearnings, fears, and fixations. The enigmatic Moby Dick stands as a symbol of nature's grandeur and humanity's relentless pursuit of the unfathomable, with otherworldly occurrences enhancing the story's spectral quality. The story's heart lies in the psychological journey, mainly through Ahab's quixotic quest for the whale, a metaphor for the human penchant for chasing the unreachable. The narrative is laden with symbolism, with the whale as the centerpiece of nature's wonder and the human quest for meaning. The plot navigates through moral ambiguities and deceit, providing depth to its characters. Themes of isolation and desolation are woven into the dangerous yet mesmerizing whaling backdrop, rendering a narrative rich in complexity and allure.

Index Terms—psychoanalytical, nautical gothic literature, Herman Melville's "*Moby Dick*"

I. INTRODUCTION

Gothic and nautical literature, two seemingly disparate genres, intersect in myriad ways, yet these convergences should be explored more in-depth. Modern literature has begun to acknowledge the profound influence of the sea on the human psyche and cultural output. The vast expanse of the ocean is no longer viewed merely as a backdrop to terrestrial tales but as a powerful entity in its own right. Such recognition draws attention to the concept of the sublime — a phenomenon that underscores the nexus between the Gothic and emotions ranging from horror and terror to profound emotional exhilaration.

Central to this examination is the sub-genre of 'nautical Gothic literature.' Herman Melville stands as a pivotal figure in this realm, with works such as "*Moby Dick*," "*Benito Cereno*," "*Mardi*," "*Typee*," "*Omoo*," and "*Billy Budd*" providing rich tapestries of the maritime combined with the Gothic. These narratives are bound by the brine of the sea and imbued with elements that evoke astonishment and the sublime. This research endeavors to unearth the Gothic motifs embedded within the maritime milieu, particularly emphasizing their relationship with the sublime. At the heart of the analysis lies Herman Melville's "*Moby Dick*," a narrative filled with events and entities transcending human understanding. The exploration also includes a foray into the psychoanalytical dimensions inherently woven into the fabric of Gothic literature.

The Gothic genre is a rich tapestry of contrasts, often juxtaposing reality with the supernatural, reason with faith, and tangible fear with intangible superstition. It invokes themes of cultural anxiety, the uncanny, profound love, and the iconic haunted edifices emblematic of the Gothic style and narrative. This research delves into the melding of Gothic themes within nautical literature, journeying not from the safe shores of the known but venturing into the uncharted waters of literary exploration. Seminal works such as Melville's "*Moby Dick*" and "*Billy Budd, Sailor*" serve as the primary vessels for this exploration. These narratives, infused with elements from both Gothic and nautical literature, engage deeply with the sublime — a concept eloquently expounded upon by Edmund Burke in his 1757 work, '*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*.' Furthermore, the study embarks on a multifaceted journey, probing psychological depths within a Gothic framework while addressing themes spanning politics, history, culture, ecology, religion, and the age-old conflict of man versus nature. These diverse threads will be contextualized through various lenses of literary theory, encompassing psychoanalysis, post-modernist insights, and an evolved form of romanticism that extends the boundaries of traditional romantic sentiments to encompass the overwhelming sublimity of the vast, untamed ocean.

II. RELATED LITERATURE

A. Herman Melville

Herman Melville, born on August 1, 1819, and passing away on September 28, 1891, was a notable American writer. Growing up in a once-affluent New York family that later faced financial hardships, Melville had limited formal schooling. In 1839, he took to the seas, leading to an adventure in the South Seas when he joined a whaler in 1841, eventually deserting the ship in the Marquesas Islands. This experience informed his early successful books, "Typee" (1846) and "Omoo" (1847). Despite his popularity, his later works, including the iconic "Moby-Dick" (1851), did not garner immediate acclaim. Melville penned several novels and stories like "Pierre" (1852), "The Confidence-Man" (1857), "Israel Potter" (1855), and tales such as "Bartleby the Scrivener" and "Benito Cereno". Post-1857, he pivoted to poetry until securing a customs inspector position in 1866. Late in life, he wrote "Billy Budd, Foretopman," which remained unpublished. Overlooked during his lifetime, modern critics now laud Melville as a seminal figure in American literature (Britannica, 2003).

B. Gothic and Nautical Novel

The term "Gothic" originated from the Germanic Goth tribes and was later associated with medieval architectural style featuring elaborate carvings. Gothic literature incorporated shadows to invoke mystery, aura, and darkness, aligning with the architectural themes (Jennie & Subramanian, 2019). In the 18th Century, "Gothic" described a barbarous and supernatural past, often used derogatorily for art and architecture that did not fit the neoclassical taste (Longueuil, 1923; cited in Botting, 2012, p. 13). However, the Gothic period is conventionally placed between the latter half of the 18th Century and the first half of the 19th Century, marked from Walpole's "Castle of Otranto" to Maturin's "Melmoth, The Wanderer," it is challenging to set definitive boundaries (Byron & Townshend, 2014, p. 197).

For Gothic Novel Features, The Gothic seeks to evoke extreme reactions like horror, terror, and dread, drawing upon the uncanny – which Freud described as evoking dread and horror (Freud, 1919, p. 19; cited in Sandner, 2004, p. 75). The uncanny, or "Freud's uncanny", touches upon the re-emergence of the suppressed familiar, challenging our sense of identity (Hogle, 2002, p. 7). The Gothic heavily focuses on atmosphere and settings, such as landscapes associated with Edmund Burke's concept of the Sublime, which relates to evoking powerful emotions like terror (Burke, 1757, p. 26; cited in Hogle, 2002, p. 28). Typical settings include castles, monasteries, and other gloomy or isolated places, often tied to the weather for atmosphere and metonymic expression of character emotions (Jennie & Subramanian, 2019). Key characters include the hero, heroine, male and female foils, and an evil force or being. Males often embody heroic and evil traits, while females range from damsels in distress to lethal predators (Rata, 2014).

As for the Nautical Novel Features, Nautical fiction centers on human relationships with the sea, incorporating settings like various types of ships and coastal communities (Pawar, 2022). Themes often focus on heroism, social hierarchies, religious suffering, and psychological struggles in the challenging sea environment. Stylistically, it demands an accurate depiction of maritime culture and marine terminology. It often blends with historical fiction, adventure tales, and psychological narratives based on nautical phenomenology and anthropology (Bobaru, 2022). Nautical Gothic explores the portrayal of the sea in literature, focusing on the mysterious and unknown depths.

In contrast, Nautical Horror adds a horrifying encounter with the non-human, considering it a subcategory of ecohorror (Alder, 2017, p. 1). The Nautical Horror genre deals with threats from nature in aquatic contexts, such as oceans, shores, and ships (Packham & Punter, 2017, p. 28). Nevertheless, Herman Melville's "Moby-Dick" has endured as a literary work of profound significance, highlighting themes that either endorse or critique the foundational principles of American democracy. Since its canonization in the mid-20th Century, scholars have honored it with the title of the "Great American Novel". Notably, post-World War II rhetoricians have resurrected Melville's allegorical elements, such as the Pequod and the White Whale, to make commentaries on the nation's objectives and trajectory during various pivotal national crises.

To maintain the cultural integrity of "Moby-Dick," a holistic interpretation of Melville's American allegory is imperative. Payton (2022) emphasizes this importance by undertaking a study dissecting the advantages and drawbacks of a perpetually relevant text, highlighting the lack of scholarship concerning the novel's significant conclusion where the Pequod meets its demise. Such examinations provoke thought on the continued resonance of a 19th-century text with contemporary America. Adding to this rich tapestry of interpretations, Adams (2022) draws a connection between Jacques-Louis David's Neoclassical painting, "Oath of the Horatii" (1784), and the pivotal swearing-in scenes in "Moby-Dick," suggesting Melville's engagement with diverse aesthetic modes. Meanwhile, Harris (2021) observes a proto-environmentalist message in "Moby-Dick," emphasizing Melville's intricate weaving of aesthetic theory, Goethe's Theory of Colors, and notions of the sublime from thinkers like Burke and Kant.

Further enriching our understanding, Zanolli (2021) offers insights into Melville's use of Christian symbolism to critique the American societal framework of the 19th Century. Echoing themes of nature and defiance, Santhakumar (2020) delves into Captain Ahab's struggle against natural laws and the broader environmental narrative. In contrast, Fabijanić (2019) introduces the "rhetoric of fear," a technique Melville might have borrowed from 18th-century Gothic novels, highlighting human duality.

In the realm of symbolism, Yadav and Yadav (2019) analyze character and object-based symbols within the novel, highlighting the enigmatic nature of the white whale. Dahl (2019) observes "Moby-Dick" as a tool for American nation-

building and myth-making, while Jarjanazi (2019) juxtaposes Melville's Captain Ahab with Hemingway's Santiago, exploring the role of pride in their narratives. Arroyo (2018) engages in a comparative analysis of evil as depicted in "Moby-Dick" and McCarthy's "Blood Meridian," finding parallelisms between antagonists across both novels. Cesar (2018) further accentuates the gothic essence of "Moby-Dick," mainly through the enigmatic Captain Ahab. Finally, in exploring broader literary themes, Dharani and Selvaraj delve into the theme of the Sublime in "Moby-Dick," highlighting its depth and richness.

C. Freudian Theory

Sigmund Freud, a pivotal figure in psychology and the father of psychoanalysis believed that early childhood experiences deeply influence personality development. Born in Moravia in 1856 to a younger mother and a significantly older, strict father, Freud's childhood shaped his theories, particularly the Oedipus complex (Lowmax, 2007). Freud's psychoanalytic theory emphasizes the long-lasting impact of early emotional experiences on personality. He proposed three primary personality constructs: the Id (driven by immediate gratification and the "pleasure principle"), the Ego (guided by the "reality principle" and rational thought), and the Superego (representing conscience developed in early childhood). The Ego balances the demands of the Id and Superego, similar to a charioteer controlling horses (Freud, 1989; Lapsley & Stey, 2017). He also divided the mind into the conscious (awareness of current thoughts and feelings), the preconscious (easily retrievable memories), and the unconscious (deep-seated instincts, drives, and emotions related to trauma). According to Freud, the unconscious significantly influences behavior, likened to the most prominent, submerged portion of an iceberg (SIBI, 2020). To cope with internal conflicts and anxieties, the Ego deploys defense mechanisms like repression (pushing distressing memories into the unconscious), denial, projection, displacement, and more. Freud believed repression lies at the heart of neurotic behavior and is an essential concept in his theory (Billig, 2006; Zhang, 2020). Freud also described psychosexual stages of development, suggesting children undergo five stages (oral, anal, phallic, latent, and genital) where the libido focuses on different body parts, leading to distinct challenges and potential fixations. These stages, centered on various pleasures and potential conflicts, significantly shape personality development (Benveniste, 2015).

D. Burke's Theory of the Sublime

The term "supreme" originates in the Latin word "sublimes," which implies loftiness and elevation and plays a pivotal role in Romantic aesthetics. The earliest discourse on the Sublime is attributed to Longinus' work, with Freud's 'Uncanny' presenting a modern interpretation of the concept (Bloom & Hobby, 2010). Longinus' "On the Sublime" is a cornerstone in literature, where the Sublime is visualized as a majestic rhetorical effect and a mental process, capturing the essence of "extasis", which conveys displacement or profound transportation (Faflak & Wright, 2012, p. 57). The resurgence of this work in the sixteenth Century facilitated its popularization, leading the term 'sublime' to encompass profound thoughts, sentiments, and grandeur in various contexts (Faflak & Wright, 2012, p. 55). Edmund Burke's "A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful" (1757) is a seminal work of the eighteenth Century that delves deep into defining the elusive Sublime. Burke, a significant figure of his era, was primarily influenced by Longinus. In his work, he distinguishes between the experiences of the sublime and the beautiful across diverse artistic expressions. Burke's inclination towards the overwhelming nature of the Sublime greatly influenced English and Continental Romanticism and left an indelible mark on notable personalities like Ann Radcliff and Immanuel Kant (Maunder, 2010, p. 45). Burke's shift from classical formalism to romanticism is evident in "A Philosophical Enquiry," challenging the conventional idea of art requiring sheer clarity and endorsing the significance of boundlessness and imagination (Burke, 1812). He pioneered the distinction between the sublime and the beautiful, with the former evoking sensations of vastness, mystery, and grandeur, while the latter is associated with delicacy, love, and pleasure (Maunder, 2010, p. 442). Burke's analysis posits beauty as socially inclined, balanced, and feminine, whereas the sublime is individualistic, powerful, and masculine (Faflak & Wright, 2012, p. 60). This distinction contrasted prior beliefs, such as Hume's, which regarded sublimity as an elevated form of beauty (Skarsten, 1956, p. 120).

Burke delves into the various triggers for the sublime, explaining that sublime sensations can emerge from terrifying experiences without immediate danger, dark and ambiguous concepts like eternity and infinity, and unpredictable and perilous power, with God as the apex. Emptiness, vastness, and the concept of infinity are significant, as is predictable continuation, the proper proportions in architecture that give an illusion of continuity, and the growth potential. Monumental structures, like Stonehenge, and vast quantities like stars are examples of the Sublime. Various sensory elements, ranging from colors to sounds, can also evoke the sublime, although Burke finds some sensory experiences, especially certain smells and tastes, more off-putting than the sublime. The idea of the sublime spans from ancient wisdom to intricate human feelings, highlighting its profound influence on art and philosophy (Faflak & Wright, 2012).

III. METHODOLOGY

The study will employ the interpretative methodologies of Lacan and Freud, particularly in analyzing the exotic and sublime elements of the novels. Freud's theory of the conscious and unconscious mind is central to the analysis, exploring the Sublime to differentiate between the beautiful and the sublime, which was central to Edmund Burke's.

This framework will analyze gothic elements in the settings as visible markers (akin to the tip of an iceberg), symbolizing deeper, hidden psychological layers of Melville's life experiences. For instance, characters such as Ishmael in "*Moby Dick*" can be interpreted as facets of Melville's psyche, reflecting his personal growth and challenges.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Herman Melville's novels, particularly "*Moby Dick*," are renowned for intertwining gothic literature with maritime elements. This study delves explicitly into blending the supernatural or sublime with the nautical environment, making it a distinctive setting for exploring the depths of the human psyche.

The predominant backdrop of the story, the vast ocean, brings forth an aura of isolation, eeriness, and danger, hallmarks of Gothic literature. The Pequod, a whaling ship, serves as the principal setting, described hauntingly through Ishmael's perspective. Passages like "...And still as Ahab glided over the waves the unpyting sharks accompanied him..." (Melville, 1851, pp. 528-29) vividly illustrate the sea's treacherous, isolating nature, emphasizing the novel's gothic tone. In fact, "*Moby Dick*" is rife with otherworldly components. The white whale, *Moby Dick*, stands out, represented as a near-supernatural force. Its whiteness instills dread, as seen in "It was the whiteness of the whale that above all things appalled me..." (p. 178). However, the supernatural does not end there; the novel is imbued with prophetic dreams, ghostly images, and the belief in the whale's mystical nature. Quotes like "Was it not so, O Don Miguel? Thou Chilian whale, marked like an old tortoise with mystic hieroglyphics upon the back!" (p. 194) further the sense of the ethereal. Many characters in the story believe in omens and destiny, adding another layer to the novel's supernatural undertones. Ahab's obsession, illustrated by "All that most madden and torments... were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in *Moby Dick*." (p. 175) has shades of predestination, elevating the narrative to a gothic pedestal. Perhaps the most intricate aspect of "*Moby Dick*" is the exploration of the human mind, a hallmark of gothic literature. The relationship between Ishmael and the whale, the former's obsession, is not about revenge but a deep curiosity and mystification, as suggested in "What the white whale was to Ahab... remains unsaid" (p. 178). "*Moby Dick*" is a tale that transcends mere adventure and delves deeply into the supernatural and spiritual dimensions. This is evident in incidents such as when Ahab is described walking on the deck post-breakfast when most captains would be taking a stroll, reminiscent of country gentlemen enjoying their gardens "There most sea- captains usually walk at that hour, as country gentlemen, after the same meal, take a few turns in the garden" (p. 153). The novel's fascination with the supernatural does not end there. References to ancient sculptures in the cavern-pagoda of Elephanta, where every conceivable human vocation is said to have been prefigured ages before their inception, only underscores this as being said "Now, by all odds, the most ancient extant portrait anyways purporting to be the whale's,, were prefigured ages before any of them actually came into being" (p. 250).

The novel also presents the enigmatic white whale with an almost otherworldly aura, and the characters' prophetic dreams add to this atmosphere. Moments like the sailors resting under pea-jackets "Seeing a light, we went down, and found only an old rigger there, wrapped in a tattered pea-jacket. He was thrown at whole length upon two chests, his face downwards and inclosed in his folded arms" (p. 97) or "in starting on the voyage with such a devil for a pilot" (p. 101) intensify the story's gothic and supernatural ambiance. However, death's shadow looms large over the novel. The brutal whaling industry, with its stark images of whale slaughter and the engulfing darkness of a thunderstorm (p. 399). Sometimes, the portrayal is graphic, from the very act of hunting and killing a whale to the poignant reflections on mortality, such as Ahab's reflection on childhood innocence and his torment by saying "Oh, immortal infancy, and innocence of the azure! Invisible winged creatures that frolic all round us! Sweet childhood of air and sky! How oblivious were ye of old Ahab's close-coiled woe!" (p. 502). Descriptions of death and decay in the whaling industry are stark, as illustrated by Ahab's concealed madness despite appearing sane and collected after a tumultuous voyage "But, as in his narrow-flowing monomania, not one jot of Ahab's broad madness had been left behind" (p. 176).

In terms of Isolation, Madness, and Despair, the sea in "*Moby Dick*" is not just a vast expanse of water; it is a mirror to the human soul reflecting isolation, madness, and despair. This is epitomized by Ahab, whose obsession with the white whale drives him to the brink. The sheer power and eternity of nature, compared to humankind's fleeting existence, is depicted when birds fly over a yawning abyss while the relentless sea rolls on just as it did millennia ago (p. 533). The novel is replete with characters grappling with inner demons, thoughts like the terrifying vastness of whiteness (p. 186), and reflections on the madness of men outdoing any folly of beasts (p. 362). Obsession, another prevalent theme, is exemplified by Ahab's unyielding pursuit of the white whale, even if it takes him to the very jaws of hell (pp. 532, 156). The sea offers adventure and confinement that accentuates the feelings of isolation, making characters yearn for its vastness when overcome by grim thoughts (p. 7) or lose themselves in its mesmerizing, almost divine beauty (p. 221).

The novel, "*Moby Dick*," encapsulates the essence of isolation and confinement through its characters who are trapped aboard the Pequod. This sense of isolation is evident in passages such as, "The sea had jeeringly kept his finite body up, but drowned the infinite of his soul..." (p. 391) and "Ahab stood before him..." (p. 483). Furthermore, the sentiment of detachment from society and fellow beings is amplified in the lines, "Yes, yes, round the Cape of Good Hope is the shortest way to Nantucket..." (p. 469). Throughout the novel, there are multiple instances where characters experience isolation, whether it is being stranded on a ship, stuck in a whaleboat, or abandoned on an island. The

excerpts, "But wherefore it was that after having repeatedly smelt the sea..." (p. 11) and "...how could I know there was any peculiar ferocity in that particular whale..." (p. 72) convey this sentiment effectively.

Additionally, the sense of isolation from society is evident when the crew of the Pequod embarks on their extended whaling expedition. This sentiment resonates in "To be sure, it might be nothing but a good coat of tropical tanning..." (p. 26) and "We felt very nice and snug..." (p. 55). Madness is another significant theme in the novel, epitomized by Captain Ahab's zealous hunt for the white whale. This obsession is portrayed through the lines, "All that most madden and torments..." (p. 175) and "He looked like a man cut away from the stake..." (p. 118). Similarly, profound despair pervades the narrative, especially in the portrayal of Ishmael, the lone survivor of the Pequod's catastrophic journey, as indicated by "The sea had jeeringly kept his finite body up..." (p. 391) and "...how appalling to the wounded whale..." (p. 337). Ahab's insatiable hunger for vengeance against the white whale is palpable in "Towards thee I roll, thou all-destroying but unconquering whale..." (p. 532) and "Ahab's quenchless feud seemed mine..." (p. 169). His madness is further underlined in, "Talk not to me of blasphemy, man..." (p. 157).

The overarching themes of madness and obsession are reiterated by the captain's relentless chase of the whale, leading him and the crew to insanity. This is underscored in "...like another Ixion I did revolve..." (p. 533) and "Oil, my captain, my captain!" (p. 525). The inherent isolation experienced aboard the Pequod accentuates the novel's unsettling atmosphere. The crew, away from civilization, depends entirely on each other for survival. Melville encapsulates this in, "That inscrutable thing is chiefly what I hate..." (p. 157) and "...I quietly take to the ship..." (p. 7). The pursuit of the white whale drives some of the characters to the brink of insanity, and the novel explores the thin line between obsession and madness. This can be seen in "I know that he was never very jolly; and I know that on the passage home, he was a little out of his mind for a spell; but it was the sharp shooting pains in his bleeding stump that brought that about, as any one might see." (p. 81) and "I am madness maddened! That wild madness that's only calm to comprehend itself!" (p. 161).

As for Symbolism in "*Moby Dick*", the white whale stands as a potent symbol, representing both the grandeur of nature and the ruinous nature of human obsession. For instance, on page 533, the text says, "Now small fowls flew screaming over the yet yawning gulf; a sullen white surf beat against its steep sides; then all collapsed, and the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago". This passage encapsulates the timeless and overpowering force of nature. Moreover, Ahab's relentless pursuit of the whale, as depicted on page 532, becomes emblematic of humanity's insatiable thirst for meaning and understanding in a vast and often inscrutable universe. Eventually, the narrator's insights are evident, especially regarding Queequeg's rituals during Ramadan, described on page 84. The remarks indicate a blend of curiosity and ignorance, highlighting the novel's recurring theme of cross-cultural interactions.

Contrary to the overt symbolism, deception weaves subtly throughout the narrative. For instance, on pages 92-93, a character tries to feign having a profound secret, symbolizing human tendencies to deceive and be deceived. Melville often uses desolation as a backdrop, emphasizing the solitude and vastness of the sea. For instance, on page 203, the sailors on the Pequod find themselves amid the ocean's vast expanse, emphasizing man's insignificance and solitude in the face of nature. Similarly, the quote on page 400 uses the imagery of a Catskill eagle to represent the soul's highs and lows amidst life's vastness.

Additionally, the novel does not stop depicting the blurred lines of morality. On page 532, Ahab's vengeful words toward the whale reflect his internal torment and the novel's intricate moral landscape. Additionally, the narrative plays with the concepts of good and evil, questioning traditional notions. This is evident in quotes like "Better sleep with a sober cannibal than a drunken Christian" (p. 29) and "There are certain queer times and occasions in this strange mixed affair we call life when a man takes this whole universe for a vast practical joke" (p. 216).

The exploration of the Unknown "*Moby Dick*" dives deep into the ocean's mysteries and the intricacies of its characters. Emblematic of this is: "It was a clear steel-blue day...as Samson's chest in his sleep." (p. 501) and "Heaven have mercy on us all...sadly need mending." (p. 82). However, the eerie is omnipresent in the novel. Prophetic dreams and the whale's unpredictable appearances exemplify this. This is illustrated by the following: "It was not a great while after...turns in the garden" (p. 153). Melville presents grotesque imagery, from the whale's anatomy to sailors' transformed bodies. This is captured in: "So powerfully did...barbaric white leg upon which he partly stood." (p. 119) and "It was the whiteness of the whale...appalled me" (p. 178). Indeed, the novel embodies the sublime, portraying the ocean and whale with awe. This is evident in: "He [the whale] piled...hot heart's shell upon it." (p. 175) and "The sea had jeeringly...defiance" (p. 391). Further, the ethereal sentiment resonates in: "Why, thou monkey...part of every shore the round globe over." (p. 152) and "Towards thee, I roll...last breath at thee" (p. 532). The ocean and whale are also depicted as sublime: "And still deeper the meaning... the pursuit of his profession" (p. 203).

Terror lurks throughout, with characters gripped by the sea's unpredictability. This is articulated in: "And still deeper the meaning... the key to it all." (p. 9) and "Then all collapsed...rolled five thousand years ago" (p. 533). In addition, violence punctuates the narrative, especially during the whale hunt. This is showcased in: "The harpoon was darted...in its depths!" (p. 532) and "And thus the work proceeds...assuaging the general friction" (p. 289).

V. CONCLUSION

"*Moby Dick*", Herman Melville's magnum opus, stands as a quintessential blend of gothic literature and maritime narrative. The vast, unpredictable expanse of the ocean, intertwined with the eerie ambiance of isolation, creates an unparalleled setting for exploring the human psyche's depths. The ocean is not merely a backdrop. It is a living, breathing entity, mirroring the human soul's complexities. This vastness, combined with the isolation experienced aboard the Pequod, intensifies the novel's gothic tone. The Pequod becomes a microcosm of society, revealing human desires, fears, and obsessions. Such profound emotions find their expression against the sea's omnipresence, the eternal force of nature. Supernatural elements punctuate the narrative. The white whale, *Moby Dick*, embodies both the awe of the natural world and the consuming nature of human obsession. Its elusive and ethereal nature, coupled with its daunting whiteness, accentuates the novel's otherworldly atmosphere. However, this supernatural aura does not end with *Moby Dick*. Prophetic dreams, omens, and ghostly apparitions intensify this aura, immersing readers into a realm that teeters between reality and the ethereal.

A dominant theme, the exploration of the human psyche, runs deep. Characters grapple with their inner demons, confronting the blurred lines between sanity and madness. Captain Ahab's relentless pursuit of the whale is emblematic of the human tendency to chase the unattainable, even at the cost of one's sanity. This obsession mirrors broader human desires and the lengths one might go to achieve them.

Symbolism, too, is rife. The white whale stands as a symbol of nature's grandeur and the insatiable human quest for understanding. The Pequod's journey, filled with encounters that border on the sublime, grotesque, and eerie, is a testament to the novel's intricate tapestry of themes. Furthermore, the book sheds light on ambiguous morality, questioning traditional notions of good and evil. The narrative's blurring of these lines and its exploration of deception lend depth and complexity to the characters and their interactions.

Desolation and isolation are palpable throughout. With its unpredictable tides and storms, the vast ocean emphasizes man's insignificance in the face of nature's might. This vastness, juxtaposed with the crew's confined existence aboard the Pequod, accentuates feelings of solitude and confinement. Fear and dread weave through the narrative, punctuated by profound reflection and violence. The brutal realities of the whaling industry contrasted against the ocean's ethereal beauty, making for a compelling narrative.

As such, "*Moby Dick*" is considered a masterful blend of gothic elements set against the maritime backdrop. Its intricate exploration of the human psyche, set against the ocean's vastness, makes it a timeless classic. The novel's multifaceted themes, from isolation and madness to the ethereal and sublime, make it a profound study of human nature and the relentless force of the natural world.

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