

**THE STUDY OF SYMBOL**  
**IN HERMAN MELVILLE'S *MOBY DICK***

**THESIS**

**BY:**

**KHOSYATILLAH**

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**ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND CULTURE**

**THE STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF MALANG**

**2008**

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Presented to  
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Requirement for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra (S.S.)*

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**2008**

## APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that Sarjana thesis of Khosyatillah entitled “The Study of Symbol in Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*” has been approved by the advisor for further approval by the board of examiners as the requirements for the degree of Sarjana Sastra (S.S.) in English Letters and Language Department.

Malang, 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2008

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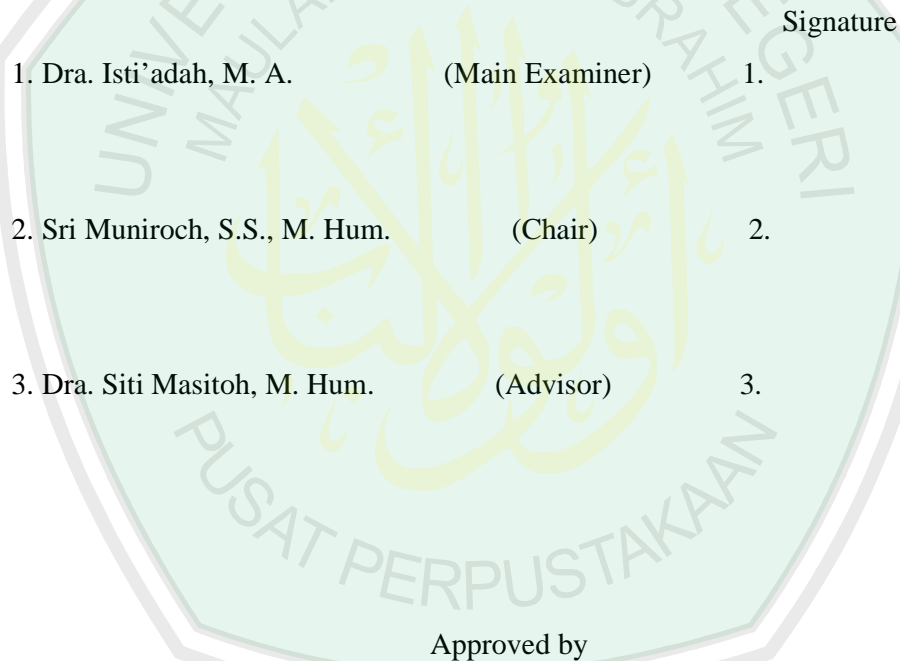
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## LEGITIMATION SHEET

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MOTTO

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

*"There is neither might nor power except with Allah."*



## DEDICATION

*In Token*

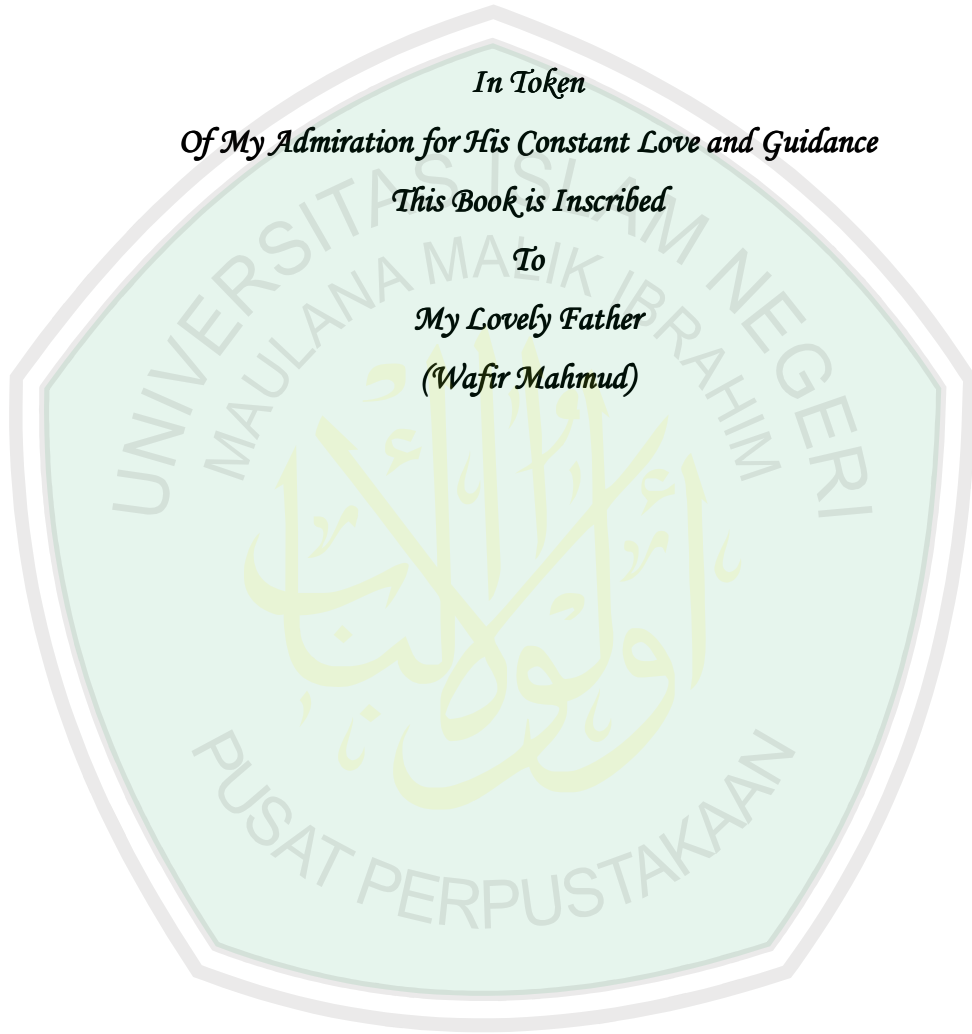
*Of My Admiration for His Constant Love and Guidance*

*This Book is Inscribed*

*To*

*My Lovely Father*

*(Wafir Mahmud)*



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Bismillahirrahmanirrahiim*

Proudly, I would like to express my best gratitude to our greatest Almighty God who has been giving me a drop of knowledge with a million power, peace and salutation be upon to the greatest reformer in Islam, Muhammad Saw, in which through his endless meditation that I am recognized as a true moslema.

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*Alhamdulillah rabbil alamiin.*

Malang,

The writer

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## ABSTRACT

**Khosyatillah.** 2008. *The Study of Symbol in Herman Melville's Moby Dick.*

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**The Advisor:** Dra. Siti Masithoh, M. Hum.

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This study talks about the discussion of symbolism in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. *Moby Dick* is one of Melville's novels, which contains a large number of symbols that has attracted many readers to analyze. *Moby Dick* is the story tells about the adventures of Ishmael, who sails on the whaling ship called Pequod, under Captain Ahab's command. Ishmael firstly believes that he has signed onto a normal whaling vessel, but then he soon knows that Ahab is actually obsessed with the chasing of a white whale that maimed him rather than guiding the ship in the simple pursuit of commerce. He is seeking one specific whale named Moby Dick, a great white whale which is infamous for his giant size and his ability to destroy the whalers who seek him. Captain Ahab begins to dislike and eventually loathe the white whale, when it costs Ahab his leg and his ship. Ahab's madness at the whale can only end with the death of the whale. All Pequod's crews die except Ishmael who alone survives by using Queequeg's coffin, and he becomes the narrator of this story.

As the matter of fact, *Moby Dick* is transformed from an adventure story of a whaling ship voyage into such a symbolic story, which has a more symbolical meaning. This novel is considered as Melville's masterpiece consisting of many significant symbols, thus, the researcher attempts to analyze it by using semiotic approach. In this case, the researcher conducts two problems of study; they are: what kinds of symbols are found in Melville's *Moby Dick*, and what the meanings of each symbol are.

Semiotic approach is an approach that studie of sign process (semiosis), or signification and communication, signs, and symbols. This approach is used to analyze symbols in Melville's *Moby Dick* by applying Charles Sanders Pierce's theory of symbols. The analysis is only focused on some characters and objects available in the novel.

Moreover, the result of this study finds that some symbols based on characters and objects are included in the kind of cultural symbol and private symbol. Some symbols based on characters are Ishmael as a cultural symbol of social outcast, Queequeg as a private symbol of purity, Ahab as a cultural symbol of madness, Elijah as a cultural symbol of fortuneteller, and Fedallah as a private symbol of the devil and the dark shadow of Ahab. Meanwhile, some symbols based on objects are the White Whale Moby Dick as a private symbol of an

unreachable goal, the ship Pequod and the Sea as private symbol of human life in the world, and the Coffin as a private symbol of both life and death.

In fact, there are many aspects that can be explored from this work; such as its metaphorical symbols, its allegorical symbols, or its metaphysical symbols. The researcher also suggests analyzing other Melville's works for the next research by using other literary approaches.



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Talking about a literary work, we may begin with the term literature itself to which it is related. To start, we may raise to ask such a basic question as what literature is. In fact, there have been various definitions of literature. Eagleton defines it as a kind of writing which represents an organized violence committed on ordinary speech (1983: 27). Additionally, Culler states that literature is a speech act or contextual event that elicits certain kinds of attention (1997: 27).

Literature is divided into three forms; namely, prose, poetry, and drama. Among of all these three kinds, the novel, which is included in prose, is the most expanded one to analyze. Contrasting to the short story, the novel has such a long and more complicated plot than the short story does. According to William Kenney (1966: 105), the novel is decidedly not meant to be read at a single setting. Because of its length, the novel is particularly suited as the short story is not to deal with the effect on character of the passage of time.

Furthermore, in a novel, the reader can find such imaginative characters and moments' portrayal, and may feel what the character has experienced, as though he involves in it. From these reasons above, the writer prefers to choose a novel and is interested in analyzing it.

There are a great number of awesome novels and well-known authors in the annals history of literature. But the writer would rather choose one of the

nineteenth century's great American fiction literatures, which rooted from the period of Romanticism (1820-1860). During this time, Herman Melville (1819-1891), one of the most famous American authors, had written many literary works in the form of both short stories and novels. *Moby Dick*, which was firstly published in 1851, is regarded as Melville's masterpiece. In fact, after being published, *Moby Dick* achieved a great success in the history of American literature.

*Moby Dick* tells about the adventures of Ishmael, as the narrator, who sails on the whaling ship called Pequod, under Captain Ahab's command. At the first time, Ishmael believes that he has signed onto a normal whaling vessel, but then he soon knows that Ahab is actually obsessed with the murdering of a white whale that maimed him rather than guiding the ship in the simple pursuit of commerce. He is seeking one specific whale named Moby Dick, a great white whale which is infamous for his giant size and his ability to destroy the whalers who seek him. Captain Ahab begins to dislike and eventually loathe the white whale, when it costs Ahab his leg and his ship. Ahab's madness at the whale can only end with the death of the whale. All crews of the Pequod die except Ishmael who alone survives by using his friend's coffin, and he becomes the narrator of this story.

*Moby Dick* is considered to be Melville's own experience. As a matter of fact, after traveling to England, Herman Melville seemed to grow in confidence of his writing abilities and began to compose *Moby Dick*. This novel was written by using his own knowledge of whaling. Indeed, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* hailed as a unique and extraordinary American literary work. Furthermore,

Melville is regarded as a highly successful author for mixing a tragedy, a romance, and a natural history with a great number of ideas of unique symbols.

Therefore, it can be viewed that there is no room for doubt that *Moby Dick* is the production of a genius man, who is unrivalled in his powers of language. Thus, based on all of these facts explained above, the writer chooses Herman Melville's masterpiece *Moby Dick*.

In fact, *Moby Dick* is probably one of the few characters from a fictional novel that has been portrayed in a model of toys, movies, or children's stories with a child friendly character. It is recreated in such a more accessible view for younger, but still it is a memorable story or an animated classic. In addition, the character of the whale is portrayed in a frightening character and it brings terror to the minds of the people who are at sea and witness it. So, it is not surprising that *Moby Dick* becomes the significant symbol of strength, toughness, and power.

It is suggested that Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* much employs symbolism. The most obvious one is the character of *Moby Dick*, which is also stated in its title. It is a clear proof that the whale character is crucial and it will foreshadow the readers that the major theme and a central part of the novel is talking about the whale and whaling industry. The story entirely discusses about the relations between men and whales and between men and nature. The crews of the *Pequod* wish to hunt whales. People think that whales are such stupid monsters and that they should be destroyed and hunted. Many people seek whales for special commerce; whale oil for the need of cosmetics, perfumes, and fuel of



lamps; therefore, whales are almost in extinction. The whalers are considered to be uneducated to respect and save the nature of our environment.

Furthermore, Melville, in this novel, explores some ideas about life, the existence of evil that leads to the destructive obsession, and fate. He writes these things in a lovely poetic language, highly rich symbols, and many types of religious dictions. In general, *Moby Dick* is a biblical novel, since its story is mostly taken from the Bible stories; such as the story of Jonah the prophet. In addition, *Moby Dick* is a book of amazing story. It can be read and enjoyed by many generations from various levels; young readers, historians, naturalists, and even literary students. Looking on its surface, it is an adventure story taken place on sea and talks about the whale. However, deep inside the story, the readers may find a very complicated study and the opposition of both good and evil, as well as the power of God and Devil from within. From all of those reasons above, the writer thinks that it can be very interesting to analyze this novel. Some scholars have been captivated to analyze it as well before.

Ralph Dumain, in his journal *Herman Melville's Moby Dick and the Contradictions of Modernity*, discusses about the modernity and the brilliant critique of it revealed by Herman Melville. Whaling industry, according to him, is one of the effects of modernity and the result of bourgeois society. He states:

I see Melville as one of the most profound and prescient thinkers on the contradictions of modernity...Melville the American autodidact should be seen as one of the most prescient and brilliant theorists of modernity...(Dumain, 2002).

Alan Champagne analyzes the symbol of the whale itself, Moby Dick. According to Champagne, the whale becomes a crucial creature, since it can destroy the whalers and, thus, bring terror to them.

In his article, *Symbolism in Herman Melville's Moby Dick*, he argues:

Moby Dick became the icon of strength, massive size, and durability (Champagne, 2006).

Again he says:

The whale was specifically designed to create an initial sense of curiosity, which is then gradually turn into a sense of fear and terror...(Champagne, 2006).

Another one is Hanif Asyhar (2005), in his thesis *Symbolism in Herman Melville's Moby Dick*. Asyhar has established an analysis of symbolism on the two main characters of Moby Dick and Captain Ahab. Moby Dick, according to Asyhar, comes to symbolize God's existence, and Ahab comes to symbolize a blasphemous figure.

Based on those three previous studies, the researcher wants to expand and give different interpretation in analyzing this novel authored by Herman Melville. However, the result of this analysis is different from all of them. The researcher analyzes the symbolism on some characters; such as Ishmael as a symbol of a social outcast, Queequeg as a symbol of purity, Ahab as symbol madness, Elijah as a symbol of a fortuneteller, and Fedallah as a symbol of the devil and the dark shadow of Ahab. Furthermore, some important objects are the Peqoud and the Sea as a symbol of life in the world, the White Whale as a symbol of an unreachable goal, and the Coffin as a symbol of both death and life.

## **1.2. Statements of the Problems**

Referring to the background of the study, the problems that will be discussed are as follows:

1. What kinds of symbols are employed in Melville's *Moby Dick*?
2. What are the meanings of each symbol?

## **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the problems stated above, this study is aimed at describing:

1. the kinds of symbols in Melville's *Moby Dick*.
2. the meaning of every symbol.

## **1.4. Scope and Limitation**

In this study, the researcher intends to analyze some symbols existed in the story. The symbols are including only some characters, both major and minor characters, and several objects. Ishmael, Queequeg, Ahab, Elijah, and Fedallah are some characters which describe their evocative names and symbolize their condition as well as their role or status in the story. Meanwhile, the Pequod and the Sea, the White Whale, and the Coffin are some objects which represent something else in the story. The researcher makes an attempt to explore how the characters evoke symbolical meanings and, thus, they play an important role in the whole story entirely.

Meanwhile, for the rest of other discussions, including symbolism on other characters (such as Peleg, Bildad, Starbuck, Pip, Father Maple, etc) and objects

(such as the pipe, etc), metaphorical and metaphysical symbols, symbolism based on some other elements (including plot or setting) are not included in this study. The researcher hopes that some other topics above will be analyzed by other researchers who intend to study the same field in such an expanded way.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The researcher does expect that this study is going to provide such great contributions and significances both theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, this study is intended to expand the enrichment of literary knowledge, especially which are related to symbolism and semiotics. Particularly, this study is going to provide some beneficial contributions to the theory. Hence, this study will be useful for other students' starting point studies. Moreover, this study is aimed to be of much benefit to give reference for those who intend to study the same area. Indeed, through this research, the researcher hopes that other readers, especially the students of English Literature will be interested in reading and analyzing Melville's works. Furthermore, different from the previous studies, this study offers such different result in some aspects and focuses.

Practically, by learning semiotics, we may learn communication studies as well. We, as the members of the society, should communicate, and thus, should use language as the mean of communication. As a matter of fact, semiotics, in this case, does not only include language but can also be applied to any other important sciences; such as mathematics, architecture, or natural sciences. We live among systems of symbols and their meanings. In other words, everything in our

social life has potential meaning. Furthermore, by learning symbolism, we can understand symbols exist in our social life. In addition, from the analysis of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, the researcher is in hope that other students will be encouraged to take knowledge and values of the story which are enrolled by some characters of the novel.

#### **1.6. Definition of Key Terms**

In order to avoid a different perception in understanding this study, it is necessary for the writer to give some definitions of the key terms applied in this study:

1. **Symbol** is something, which is used to represent something broader in meaning.
2. **Symbolic** is the relationship between sign and object that have been formed conventionally.
3. **Symbolism** is the use of symbols to represent something, which is in the definition of literary device, is more complicated.
4. **Semiotics** is a study discussing of signs.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1. Semiotics

The approach of the study of symbolism is semiotic approach. Semiotics is the study of sign process (semiosis), or signification and communication, signs, and symbols, both individually and grouped into sign systems. Semiotics or Semiology (semiotic studies) includes the study of the meaning of something is constructed and understood. The term *semiotic* was at first from Greek (semeiotikos) means an interpreter of signs. It was firstly used in English by Henry Stubbes in a very precise sense to denote the branch of medical science relating to the interpretation of signs. Indeed, semiotics is not limited to language; rather it is far from it. Everything that involves communication, even non-deliberate, is something that semiotics can tackle. This science has been applied to animal behavior, social habits, architecture, poetry, mythology, and so on (Pierce, 1931, as cited in Chandler, 2002).

The two famous dominant figures who contribute this science are Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) and Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914).

Jeremy Hawthorn states:

The term semiotics was coined at the close of nineteenth century by the American philosopher Charles Sanders Pierce to describe a new field of study of which he was the founder, and semiotics traces its descent from this point. Semiology was coined by the Swiss Linguistician Ferdinand de Saussure, and in his posthumously edited and published *Course in General Linguistics* he defended the coinage as necessary for the naming of that new

science which would form parts of social psychology and would study “the life of science society” (1994: 182).

Based on Hawthorn’s statements above, it can be said that Pierce uses the term “semiotics” to define the use of signal studies. Pierce extends this discipline of science beyond human communication. Meanwhile, Saussure, as the father of modern linguistics, uses the term “semiology” and views it as the most important area belonging to the social sciences.

In general, the use of the terms semiotics and semiology is just the same. Both are used to refer to the notion of a science of signs. The only difference between both is that semiotics tends to refer to American Piercian terminology, and semiology is used to refer to European Saussurian terminology (Hawkes, 1932: 124).

Sign, in the term of a “science of signs”, is basically defined as anything that represents something else. Pierce (1931, as cited in Chandler, 2002) says that we, as a species to be driven by a desire to make meanings (Homo Significans), will surely make meanings through our creation and interpretation of signs. Additionally, signs, according to Pierce, take the form of words, images, sounds, acts, or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning. In other words, anything can be called as a sign as long as it can be interpreted as signifying something by someone.

In fact, there are various types of signs have been proposed. But, there are only two of them which are mostly elaborated in general. The two dominant models of what constitute a sign are those of the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the philosopher C.S. Pierce (Culler, 1975: 16). According to Saussure (1983,

as cited in Fowler, 1987), language is a system of signs that expresses ideas and, thus, the interrelationship among signs determines meaning. Saussure proposes two-part model of the sign (dyadic). He defines a sign as being composed of a 'signifier' or 'signifiant' (as image or form which the sign takes); and a 'signified' or 'signifie' (as concept or idea it represents).

The sign is the whole that results from the association of the signifier with the signified...A sign must have both a signifier and a signified. You cannot have a totally meaningless signifier or a completely formless signified (Saussure, 1983, as cited in Chandler, 2002).

Again Saussure states:

A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern. The sound pattern is actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer's psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. This sound pattern may be called a 'material' element only in that it is the representation of our sensory impressions. The sound may thus be distinguished from the other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind: the concept (Saussure, 1983, 1974, as cited in Chandler, 2002).

From Saussure's explanation, it can be known that a sign is not simply the name for a thing but a complex whole which links a sound-image and a concept. Thus, by offering these two aspects of sign, it enables us, for instance, to speak of those things which the English word "tree" and the Latin word "arbor" have in common as well as those things which differentiate them. In this example, the concepts are essentially the same, though the sound-images are different. By this terminology, it may thus be argued that the relationship between the signifying sound and the signified concept is arbitrary (Scholes, 1974: 15). In other words,



Saussure, in his theory of semiology, emphasizes the arbitrariness of the sign.. Moreover, Saussure also views language as a system of signs whose meanings are formed arbitrarily by conventional. Take for instance, the word *dog* (in English) or *kalb* (in Arabic); an animal which barks should be called a 'dog' by English people and 'kalb' by Arabian. Each nation arbitrarily uses those two words. In other words, there is no natural connection why it should be called do. A dog should be called a dog because English people, in their language group, agree that it is called a dog.

The second model of sign comes from the American philosopher, Charles Sanders Pierce. As a philosopher, he offers a complex relationship between signifier and signified, confronting nothing less than foundations of logic itself. Logic, in Pierce's view, can be seen as the science of signs (Hawkes, 1932: 126). As stated by Pierce:

Logic, in its general sense, is only another name for semiotic, the quasi-necessary, or formal, doctrine of signs. By describing the doctrine as "quasi-necessary", or formal, I mean that we observe the characters of such sign as we know, and from such an observation, we are led to statements, eminently fallible, and therefore in one sense by no means necessary (Pierce, 1986, as cited in Budiman, 2005).

Pierce goes further into the analysis of Saussure's theory; instead of offering the binary relationship of signifier and signified established by Saussure, Pierce constitutes a triangular model: sign-object-ground.

While Saussure envisages an extension to the science of signs, Pierce begins with a generalized system, which he sees as a branch of logic. And while Saussure works with binaristic, dyadic relations, Pierce puts everything in threes, even coining the term 'triadomany' for his

obsession...A sign is anything which related to a second thing its object in such a way as to bring a third, its interpretant, into relation to the same object; the interpretants is itself a sign, so the process recurs (Fowler, 1987: 216-217).

A sign, to Pierce, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respects or capacities. A sign thus stands for something (its object); it stands for something to somebody (its interpretant); and finally it stands for something to somebody in some respects (this respect is called its ground) (Hawkes, 1932: 126-127). In another definition, “something” is called the sign’s object; “somebody” is called its interpretant.

The triadic relationship established by Pierce is firstly; triadic relations of comparison or logical possibilities based on the kind of sign. These are the *qualisign*, a quality which acts as a sign once it is established; the *sinsign*, an actual thing or event which acts simply and singly (as indicated by the prefix sin) as sign; the *legisign*, a law that acts as a sign (i.e., not in the form of a single object but as the abstract working of a set of rules or principles: grammar operates as a recurring legisign in language). Secondly; triadic relations of performance involving actual entities in the real world, based on the kind of ground. These are the *icon*, something which functions as sign by means of features of itself which resemble its object; the *index*, something which functions as sign by virtue of some sort of factual or causal connection with its object; and the *symbol*, something which functions as sign because of some rule of conventional or habitual association between itself and its object. Thirdly; triadic relations of thought based on the kind of object. These are the *rheme* (or *seme*), a sign which

indicates the understood possibility of an object to the interpretant, should he has occasion to activate or invoke it; the *dicent* (or *dicisign* or *pheme*) which conveys information about its object, as opposed to a sign from which information may be derived; and the *argument*, a sign whose object is ultimately not a single thing but a law (Hawkes, 1932:127-128).

Based on those various classifications, Pierce divides the sign into ten kinds: (1) *Qualisign*, e.g. the word “harsh” in “harsh voice” symbolizes that someone gets angry or wants something; (2) *Iconic Sinsign*, e.g. map, photos, diagrams, etc; (3) *Rhematic Indexical Sinsign*, e.g. spontaneous cry; (4) *Dicent Sinsign*, e.g. prohibition board above the door; (5) *Iconic Legisign*, e.g. traffic sign; (6) *Rhematic Indexical Legisign*, e.g. the word “that” or “this” to refer to something or someone; (7) *Dicent Indexical Legisign*, e.g. the red lamp on ambulance as a symbol of emergence; (8) *Rhematic Symbol* or *Symbolic Rheme*, e.g. the picture of sign; (9) *Dicent Symbol*, and (10) *Argument* (Sobur, 2006: 42-43).

## 2.2. Symbol

The word *symbol*, as cited in *Random House Webster’s College Dictionary*, at first came from Old French, Latin, and Greek (*symbolon* means *to throw together*), which is rooted from the words *syn-* (together) and *bole* (a throw). It can be defined as something used for or regarded as representing something else, especially a material object representing something immaterial.

Therefore, symbol may include characters, objects, concepts, or any other concrete representations of ideas (2001: 1239).

Moreover, in the *World University Encyclopedia*, symbol is defined as:

Symbol, a term taken from the Latin *symbolum*, “sign”, meaning a sign which does not depict exactly but represents, which is not descriptive but has meaning through association, e.g., the cross of Christianity, the U.S. eagle, the heart for love, the olive branch for peace. Such symbols have always been especially common in all religion, but they appear also in the anonymous traditional folklore of all peoples and races...Certain communities are actually held together by a common use of identical symbols, i.e., signs with which only the members connect a certain meaning and sense. Symbols even play a role in private relations (1965: 4890).

Pierce and Saussure use the term *symbol* differently from each other. In Saussurian terminology, the term *symbol* is called *icon* in Piercian terminology. Eco emphasizes that Saussure called symbols what Pierce called icons (Pierce, 1982, as cited in Sobur, 2006). Symbol, according to Saussure, is a non-arbitrary sign. Meanwhile, in Piercian terminology, symbol is an arbitrary sign (Budiman, 2005: 41). In addition, Pierce defines symbol as:

A sign which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, is usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as a referring to that object (Aminuddin, 1995: 182).

A symbol is anything which represents something else in a completely arbitrary relationship. This principle of arbitrariness means that there is no natural relationship between the signifier and the signified. In other words, their relationship much depends on the observer, or more precisely, what the observer thinks about. For example, there is no exact reason why a rose could be called a

rose. It is only because we, in our language group, agree that it is called a rose. Its sequence of sound refers to the flower in the real world. In addition, Kenney in his book, *How to Analyze a Fiction*, describes:

A symbol is basically a kind of image, differing from other images in the use to which it is put (1966: 66).

The use of symbol is an attempt to evoke those many human experiences and areas that ordinary language cannot deal with. Indeed, by using the symbol, the level of meaning will be added in it as well as some concrete and objective reality. Furthermore, symbols are ideas, and whenever we use one, we are only pointing to the idea behind that symbol. It can include all words, sentences, books, and other conventional signs which exactly work in the same way in relation to the concept they serve. Additionally, a symbol has an important function in our real life that it enables us to reveal all sorts of things of ideas, feelings, and thoughts, which are not in the form of physical objects. We interpret symbols according to a rule or a habitual connection (Pierce, 1931, as cited in Chandler, 2002).

Symbol, in this case, is included in the category of sign. In Piercian terminology, sign consists three categories; *icon*, *index*, and *symbol*.

In the *icon*, the relationship between sign and object manifests a similarity or fitness of resemblance proposed by the sign, to be acknowledged by its receiver. For instance, a diagram or a painting has an iconic relationship to its subject as it resembles it. In the *index*, the relationship between sign and object is concrete, actual, and causal kind. For instance, a knock on the door is an index of someone's presence, the sound of a car's horn is a sign of the car's presence in the same mode, smoke is an index of fire, a weathercock is an index of the direction of the wind. In the *symbol*, the relationship between signifier

and signified is arbitrary. The utterance of the word “tree” is a symbol of the tree itself; its relationship to an actual tree remains fundamentally arbitrary or sustained only by the structure of the language in which it occurs, and which is understood by its interpretant, and not by reference to any area of experience beyond that (Hawkes, 1932: 128-129).

Based on Pierce’s classification of sign above, it can be explained in a simple definition. First, **icon** is a sign whose signifier bears a close resemblance to the thing or object they refer to. Take for instance, a photograph of someone is highly iconic since it really looks like him or her. Another example is such onomatopoeic words as whisper, crush, splash, cling, cock-a-doodle-doo, meow, etc. By simple definition, an icon looks like its signified. In fact, there is no real connection between an object and an icon of it other than its likeness (Budiman, 1999: 49).

Second, **index** is a sign whose signifier is associated with a particular signified. In other words, an index has a causal or sequential relationship to its signified. Indeed, an icon invents something visible that indicate something invisible. We may not see a fire, but we can see its smoke which indicates that a fire is burning. In similar, sadness cannot be seen physically, but we can perceive it and, thus, see the tears indicate it. Footprints on the ground, for instance, are an index that someone has passed it through. As a matter of fact, the connection between an index and its signified is logical and inseparable (Budiman, 1999: 50-51).

Finally, **symbol** is defined as a sign that has no natural relationship between the signifier and the signified and their meanings. In other words, a

symbol is formed arbitrarily by cultural conventional. Based on Pierce's terminology, a symbol can also be called as words, names, or even labels. For instance, the word "stick"; these five letters are not in the least like a stick, nor is the sound with which they are associated (Budiman, 1999: 108-109).

In order to understand the differentiation among icon, index, and symbol, take for instance "cat" as an object. In iconic mode; the picture of a cat, the painting of a cat, the photograph of a cat, and the statue of a cat are included in an icon. They are precisely iconic as they resemble it. Moreover, something that indicates something else through the sound, smell, and taste is indexical. In this case, sounds of a cat, smell of a cat, footprints of a cat are included in an index. Furthermore, a sign that can be uttered orally, or the meaning of a picture, smell, and a painting is a symbolical thing. Symbol, in this sense, includes the meaning of a cat's sound, or the meaning of the picture of a cat (Santosa, 1993: 14).

### **2.3. Kinds of Symbol**

As it has been mentioned before that symbol, according to Pierce, is a mode of sign in which the signifier does not resemble its signified but which is fundamentally arbitrary or purely conventional (by virtue of law). In other words, in accordance with Pierce's triangular model that the arbitrariness can only be found in one of the types of sign, namely symbol (Pierce, 1986, as cited in Budiman, 2005).

In general, symbol is classified in three kinds:

Firstly, universal symbols defined as symbols which are related to archetypes; e.g. sleep is a symbol of death.



Secondly, cultural or conventional symbols are those whose backgrounds are created by particular culture; e.g. Keris in Javanese culture is a symbol of sacred power. Finally, accidental or individual symbols which have been deliberately developed by particular persons, more often by an author in his works (Hartoko & Rahmanto, 1998, as cited in Sobur, 2006).

In order to get into deep understanding about those three kinds of symbol, Arthur Asa Berger (2000, as cited in Sobur, 2006) has explained all three of them in turn. First of all, universal symbols are those whose association are commonly recognized or accepted by societies and cultures naturally and universally. These symbols are related closely to everybody's experiences which are found in all men's physical environment. Light, for instance, is a symbol of knowledge, hope, and vitality, or flower is a symbol of a woman, youth, and beauty. In addition, universal symbols are mostly used in our daily life. For instance, a road sign with a cross on it symbolizes a cross road, or skull and crossbones on a medicine bottle symbolizes poison.

Moreover, cultural or conventional symbols are words we learn to represent something. It is created by certain people in some degrees of precise time and place. Conventional symbol is suggested to be a symbol which has a deep meaning in its usage. In other words, it is ultimately created by people due to an agreement in their environment. Take for instance, a house is a conventional symbol of togetherness, comfort, security belonging. Or a dog is a symbol of friendship, loyalty, and championship by some western people. Furthermore, cultural or conventional symbols are commonly used in religion to direct the belief towards the real meaning of religious values. A cross, for Christian people,



is not merely the plain wooden beams on which Christ was crucified, but it becomes a sacred cross for which Christ's redemption is wished. In addition, the lamb, for example, also becomes the symbol of the sacrificial death of Christ. Indeed, many cultural or conventional symbols become traditional symbols, since they are originally rooted from folklore; thus, they more often differ from country to country.

Finally, accidental or individual symbol is a symbol created by particular persons or specific individuals privately. For example, French country, for some lovers, is regarded as a symbol of love. Mostly, an author, or more exactly a small group of writers, makes their own private symbol to associate particular concepts with an object, an action, or an event. Indeed, we can define an accidental symbol as a private symbol which is invented by an author or a writer to be applied in a story he has written.

#### **2.4. Previous Study**

As a matter of fact, Herman Melville's *Moby dick* is widely regarded as the greatest symbolic novel. In addition, Melville has hailed a great success as one of the prominent author in the history of literature. Therefore, there are such numerous generations from various levels as naturalists, historians, and even literary students have analyzed this work.

Ralph Dumain is one of them. He writes an analysis of *Moby Dick*, *Herman Melville's Moby Dick and the Contradictions of Modernity*, as an adaptation of introduction and part one of his paper draft. Melville, according to Dumain, is one of the profound thinkers on finding the modernity in relation to

the primitive and struggling between the sacred and secular in bourgeois society viewed in the characters of Ishmael, Queequeg, and Ahab. Domain, indeed, argues that *Moby Dick* ultimately consists of religious and metaphysical symbolism.

In his analysis, he has found such crucial metaphysical symbols as white color of Moby Dick can represent a variable meanings of the Christian purity, the demonism of deified nature, and even of atheism; the central symbolical theme of the conflict between sacred and secular understandings of the universe. In short, Dumain concludes that *Moby Dick* is a unified package story of the sacred, the secular, and paganism, the quest for meaning, modernity, enlightenment, metaphysics, puritan Christianity, natural treatment, and alienation all together.

The researcher chooses Dumain's analysis as one of her previous studies, since he, indeed, does unifying a package of scientific analysis in relation to social critique. As a result, he has found that Melville is not only a prolific author but also one of the most brilliant theorists of modernity.

Alan Champagne has also done an analysis, entitled *Symbolism in Herman Melville's Moby Dick*. He only focuses on the analysis of one important character that is the white whale. In accordance with Champagne's analysis, the whale itself, for instance, is designed to become an ultimate symbol of a frightening creature, which is able to bring terror as well as a sense of fear to the mind of Ahab and other crews who witness it.

Another analysis is established by Hanif Asyhar (2005), the student of faculty of letters of Gajayana University, in the same title *Symbolism in Herman*

*Melville's Moby Dick*. By using semiotic approach, Asyhar attempts to analyze symbols on Moby Dick and Captain Ahab, as the two main characters. Both of them are regarded as a private symbol, which is created by Melville in such a particular meaning. *Moby Dick*, the whale, according to Asyhar, represents the existence of God. Moby Dick is such a powerful creature, which reflects to the characteristic of God. His great power cannot be controlled by human being. Moreover, Captain Ahab is described as a symbol of blasphemous figure. He is obsessed with the killing of the whale. Due to this obsessive revenge, Ahab is regarded as a devil who wishes to fight god's power. Indeed, Asyhar's analysis provides a great contribution for the researcher in the help of applying the study of symbolism in the novel. Therefore, this previous study is aimed to be the researcher's starting point study to continue and, thus, to expand her analysis upon Melville's *Moby Dick* symbolism.

In this study, the researcher analyzes the same novel, *Moby Dick*, by using semiotics approach based on Charles Sanders Pierce's theory. Differs from those three previous studies above, the researcher attempts to focus on symbolical meanings on some characters, including major and minor characters, and objects available in the novel. Thus, due to the different theory and analysis, the researcher is in hopes that this study is the unique one among other previous studies.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1. Research Design

Since a literary study consists of literary theory and criticism, this study uses both. Criticism is an academic activity which should be viewed as the expression of the researcher's point of view of what is happening in the text of *Moby Dick* written by Herman Melville. In this case, the researcher attempts to conduct a discussion on literature including the analysis, the description, as well as the interpretation of a literary work by paying special attention to the concept of symbolism. The researcher, in this study, applies Charles S. Pierce's theory of symbolism. The writer uses symbolism as a device of literary criticism, since Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* consists of many symbols which are really interesting to explore.

In addition, to prepare the discussion in this study, a semiotic approach is used by the researcher as its literary approach. This approach will be used to analyze symbols in the novel authored by Herman Melville by applying the theory of signs and symbols. In applying the semiotic approach, the analysis is focused on studying the concept of symbolism portrayed in some characters and objects. After finding out some symbols related to some characters and objects, the researcher, for the next step, decides what kinds of symbol they are and analyzes their meanings in turn.

### **3.2. Data Sources**

The data source used by the researcher in this study is the novel itself, *Moby Dick* or *The Whale* which was published by Penguin Popular Classic in 1994 in England. It consists of 536 pages and contains 135 chapters and an epilogue. *Moby Dick* is authored by one of the foremost American Authors, Herman Melville. This novel had been written by Melville from August 1850 to August 1851, which was composed by using his own knowledge of the whale. *Moby Dick* was published firstly in two editions; British Edition, entitled *The Whale* that came out on October 18, 1851, and The American Edition, which came out on November 14, 1851.

### **3.3. Data Collection**

The data in this research are taken from Melville's *Moby Dick*, which are related to the concept of symbolism. For the data collection, the researcher needs reading process. In this case, both skimming and scanning are used in collecting process. The researcher does skimming, for the first step, to find out general information related to the research. Furthermore, for the next step, the researcher does scanning to find out specific one.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

After getting so much data and collecting them, the researcher analyzes all of them as the next step. To analyze the data, the researcher does categorizing, interpreting, and concluding.

The first step is categorizing. In categorizing, the researcher puts the data in two categories based on the characters and the objects. They are Ishmael, Queequeg, Ahab, Elijah, and Fedallah as the characters, and the ship and the sea, the white whale, and the coffin as the objects. The second step is interpreting. In this step, the researcher makes an attempt to explain the meaning of each symbol for the purpose of understanding the data in such a particular way. For the last step is concluding. In this case, the researcher draws conclusion concerning the kinds of symbols and their meanings found in Moby Dick.



## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the researcher analyzes the symbols found in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. This analysis is aimed at answering the problems of the study proposed in the previous chapter. It focuses on the symbols and their possible meanings available in the story.

*Moby Dick* is not only an ordinary novel based on the author's own experiences at sea but also a deeply symbolic story of the meaningful knowledge of life. The novel contains many symbols, used by the author through the use of images and events related to life in general and the universe, the death, and morality in particular.

In this chapter, the researcher attempts to present her analysis of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* by applying some symbols based on some characters and objects. In this sense, some characters are including Ishmael, Queequeg, Ahab, Elijah, and Fedallah, and some objects are including the White Whale Moby Dick, the ship Pequod and the sea, and the coffin. In analyzing the novel, the researcher presents the data one by one in accordance with those groups then analyzes the kind of symbol and its meaning directly.

#### 4.1. Characters

Symbol can be revealed not only from things such as a flower, a book, or a skull, but also from the name of the character. It is as found in Melville's *Moby Dick*:

##### 4.1.1. Ishmael

Ishmael is the only narrator of the 1851 novel *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville. The readers may know the story of the ship Pequod voyage through his experiences and views. Ishmael plays an important role as an omniscient narrator, thus, the readers may know the story entirely through his eyes, including the origin of the White Whale. It can be found in chapter 32, when he talks about Cetology or the science of whales. He states:

Nevertheless, though of the real knowledge there be little, yet of books there are plenty; and so in some small degree, with cetology, or the science of whales. Many are the men, small and great, old and new, landsmen and seamen, who have at large or in little, written of the whale. Run over a few: The authors of the Bible; Aristotle; Pliny; Aldrovandi; Sir Thomas Browne; Gesner; Ray; Linneaus; Rondeletious; Willoughby; Green; Artedi; Sibbald; Brisson; Marten; Lacepede; Bonneterre; Desmarest; Baron Cuvier; Frederick Cuvier; John Hunter; Owen; Scoresby;...But to what ultimate generalizing purpose all these written, the above cited extracts will show. Of the names in the list of whale authors, only those following Owen ever saw living whales; and but one of them was a real professional harpooner and whaleman, I mean Captain Scoresby. On the separate subject of the Greenland or Right Whale, he is the best existing authority (Melville: 137-138).

In this quotation, the readers may know that, dealing with Ishmael's intelligence, he explains what cetology is. He says that cetology is the science of



whales, and the subject has been lengthily handled by numerous authors including Aristotle, Linnaeus, Pliny, Owen, and Captain Scoresby the best existing authority on the Greenland Whale. Again Ishmael adds:

There are only two books in being which at all pretend to put the living Sperm whale before you; and at the same time, in the remotest degree succeed in the attempt. Those books are Beale's and Bennett's; both in their time surgeons to English South-Sea whale-ships, and both exact and reliable men (Melville: 138).

Through this quotation, Ishmael adds that there are only two books by Beale and Bennett, who are surgeons to English whale ships, that pretend to put the living Sperm Whale as their subject and succeed at the task. In addition, Ishmael finally defines a whale as a smaller, spouting and horizontal tailed fish (Melville: 140). From all of those quotations above, the readers may know Ishmael's great knowledge about whales and whaling ship; therefore, they also may consider him as a smart experienced sailorman.

Besides, Ishmael also represents a strong believer of Christian and a tolerant fellowman of other different religious rituals. He says:

I was a good Christian; born and bred in the bosom of the infallible Presbyterian Church. How then could I unite with this wild idolator in worshipping his piece of wood? But what is worship? Thought I...Now, Queequeg is my fellow man. And what do I wish that this Queequeg would do to me? Why, unite with me in particular Presbyterian form of worship. Consequently, I must then unite with him in his; ergo, I must turn idolator (Melville: 67-68).

From this quotation, the readers think that Ishmael is such a tolerant Christian fellowman. It can be viewed from what and how he behaves on his bed fellow, Queequeg, who has different faith. Despite Ishmael's strict Christian

upbringing, he attempts to approach a different religious interpretation. Indeed, Ishmael also can get along with Queequeg and get friendship relation with him and that they ultimately become bosom friends.

In Melville's *Moby Dick*, Ishmael becomes a central character. In the first chapter of the novel, Ishmael introduces himself in the opening sentence with the famous line "Call me Ishmael." He states:

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen, and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find my self growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul...(Melville: 21).

From this quotation above, it can be said that Ishmael is a common man who is really interested in going shore to see the watery part of the world. He tells the readers that he often seeks a sea voyage whenever he gets sad and grim, and suffers from a damp, drizzly November in his soul. He adds:

But I have swum through libraries and sailed through oceans; I have had to do with whales with these visible hands; I am in earnest; and I will try (Melville: 139).

In this quotation, Ishmael states further that he is keen on sailing on the ocean and has a great passion for being a seaman. By journeying out on the ocean, he has found that the sea is a more beautiful and peaceful place than anywhere else on land. Hence, he has experienced about sea world. Again he adds:

Now, when I say that I am in the habit of going to sea whenever I begin to grow hazy about the eyes, and begin to be over conscious of my lungs, I do not mean to have it inferred that I ever go to sea as a passenger. For to go as passenger you must need have a purse, and a purse is but a

rag unless you have something in it...I never go as a passenger; nor, though I am something of a salt, do I ever go to sea as a commodore, or a captain, or a cook...when I go to sea, I go as a simple sailor...Again, I always go to sea as a sailor, because they make a point of paying me for my trouble, whereas they never pay passengers a single penny that I ever heard of...finally, I always go to sea as a sailor, because of the wholesome exercise and pure air of the forecandle deck (Melville: 23-25).

This quotation above explains that Ishmael has the habit of going to sea whenever he begins to “grow hazy about the eyes”. Moreover, he does not go to sea as a passenger, nor a commodore, nor a captain, nor a cook, but as a common sailor. He prefers going to sea as a sailor, since it does not need much money and thus, he may not need to pay but be paid. Furthermore, Ishmael does so as it affords him to some exercise and pure sea air.

Looking back to the historical background, the name Ishmael originally appears in both Christian and Islamic tradition. In Islamic tradition, Ishmael is regarded as a legitimate son of Abraham and he is established as one of the prophets. Meanwhile, in Christian tradition, Ishmael is considered to be an illegitimate son of Abraham with his maidservant, Hagar. According to Christian history, Ishmael is dismissed and refused from his home and family because of his step-brother, Isaac. Thus, based on this history, the name Ishmael suggests that he is a loner and an outcast, since he has no particular family.

Related to this novel, it can be proved through the story of how Ishmael, as the narrator, describes himself in such a way. In the early part of the novel, Ishmael asks the readers to simply call him by his nickname “Ishmael” rather than mentions his last name (Melville: 21). Moreover, Ishmael tells further:

...I never go as a passenger; nor, though I am something of a salt, do I ever go to sea as a commodore, or a captain, or a cook. I abandon the glory and distinction of such offices to those who like them. For my part, I abominate all honorable respectable toils, trials, and tribulations of every kind of whatsoever. It is quite as much as I can do to take care of myself, without taking care of ships, barques, brigs, schooners, and what not (Melville: 23).

Through this quotation, Ishmael attempts to confirm his independent ways by telling us that he does not seek any special rank aboard ship and would not want to be either a cook or a captain. Furthermore, he tells that he has enough responsibility to take care of himself. In other words, he wants to show the readers that he is such an independent man, since he used to live alone. In addition, one more proof is also depicted in the Epilogue of the story that the narrator, Ishmael, is a loner by nature. It is stated:

It was the devious-cruising Rachel, that in her retracing search after her missing children, only found another orphan (Melville: 536).

The last line of the ending of the story also gives such a consistent relation to the background of the narrator's life. This quotation tells us that the only crew of the ship Pequod who survives is Ishmael, in which if he does not live, we will have no story. He is picked up by the whaling ship Rachel after searching for its own missing children, and the ship Rachel only finds "another orphan". This statement shows that the orphan stated above is the narrator, Ishmael. He is called as an orphan, in which seems to emphasize that he has no relatives other than one individual mankind.

Considering the above information, it can be said that the character of Ishmael is such an intelligent narrator who is lonely by nature. Thus, the

researcher concludes that Ishmael is symbolizing a social outcast. Additionally, this symbol is included in the kind of cultural symbol, since the name of Ishmael originally created by certain people due to an agreement.

Originally Ishmael is a figure whose name is revealed in the Bible, the Torah, and the Holy Quran. He is considered to be the son of Abraham with Hajar by Christian, Jewish, and Muslim believers. Both Jewish and Christian people regard Ishmael as an alienated man, since he was born as an illegitimate son of Abraham by his wife's servant, Hajar. Meanwhile, in accordance with Muslim people that Ishmael is viewed as a significant figure. He is one of the prophets in Islamic tradition and even his name appears several times in the Holy Quran as the remembrance of his obedience to God. In addition, Ishmael was well known as a good son that his father Abraham commanded to sacrifice and told to have rebuilt the Kaba in Mecca. However, regardless of different idea about Ishmael, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim people believe that Ishmael is the ancestor of Arabian people. In this case, Melville tends to use the name Ishmael privately in his novel based on Jewish and Christian traditions that has a negative view of Ishmael as an outcast socially.

#### **4.1.2. Queequeg**

Queequeg is one of the harpooners of the ship Pequod. He is a skilled harpooner and an aborigine from New Zealand of an island of Kokovoko and once becomes a prince. The narrator, Ishmael, says:

Queequeg was a native of Kokovoko, an island far away to the west and south. It is not down in any map; true

places never are...His father was a High Chief, a King; his uncle a High Priest; and on the maternal side he boasted aunts who were the wives of unconquerable warriors. There was excellent blood in his veins-royal stuff; (Melville: 70).

In this quotation, the narrator attempts to explore the biographical background concerning Queequeg. It is stated that Queequeg is an aborigine from Kokovoko Island whose father is a King. Therefore, he has royal heritage as a son of King in his native island. However, his particular heritage is relatively unimportant to the story, since he is more suitably representing a foreigner.

Ishmael says:

Lord save me, thinks I, that must be the harpooner, the infernal head-peddler. But I lay perfectly still, and resolved not to say a word till spoken to. Holding a light in one hand, that identical New Zealand head in the other, the stranger entered the room, and without looking towards the bed, placed his candle a good way off from me on the floor in one corner, and then began working away of the knotted cords of the large bag I before spoke of as being in the room (Melville: 39).

Here, Ishmael describes his fear for the stranger, Queequeg, when Ishmael meets him for the first time. Ishmael does not feel comfort and safe when the innkeeper tells him that he should share a bed with Queequeg. Again, Ishmael exclaims further:

...Good Heavens! What a sight! Such a Face! It was a dark, purplish yellow color, here and there stuck over with large, blackish looking squares. Yes, it is just as I thought, he is a terrible bedfellow; he's been in a fight, got dreadfully cut, and here he is, just from the surgeon...and completely independent of the squares of tattooing...there was no hair on his head-none to speak of at least-nothing but a small scalp-knot twisted up on his forehead (Melville: 39-40).

Through this quotation, again, Ishmael describes Queequeg in such a horrible description. He says that Queequeg seems frightening with a dark tattooed skin, deeply brown and burnt face; making his white teeth dazzling by the contrast, and such a bald purplish head with no growing hair at all, which looks like a mildewed skull. Moreover, Ishmael feels uncomfortable, since this harpooner appears dangerous. It is once told by the innkeeper, when Ishmael asks about Queequeg, with whom he will share a bed. As it is stated in the following quotation:

“Landlord!” said I, “what sort of a chap is he—does he always keep such late hours?” it was now hard upon twelve o’clock. The landlord chuckled again with his lean chuckle, and seemed to be mightily tickled at something beyond my comprehension. “No,” he answered, “generally he’s an early bird—airley to bed and airley to rise—yes, he’s the bird what catches the worm—But tonight he went out a peddling, you see, and I don’t see what on airth keeps him so late, unless, may be, he can’t sell his head.” “Can’t sell his head?—what sort of a bamboozingly story is this you are telling me?” getting into towering rage, “Do you pretend to say, landlord, that this harpooner is actually engaged this blessed Saturday night, or rather Sunday morning, in peddling his head around his town?” “That’s precisely it,” said the landlord, “and I told him he couldn’t sell it here, the market’s overstocked.” (Melville: 36).

In this quotation, the readers may think that Queequeg is such a savage man with cannibalistic behavior. The innkeeper tells Ishmael that Queequeg usually sells human heads on the streets. Moreover, Ishmael considers him to be an uncivilized man as well. Some facts, which depict Queequeg’s uncivilized manners, are as told by Ishmael:



Throwing aside the counterpane, there lay the tomahawk sleeping by the savage's side, as if it were a hatchet-faced baby. A pretty pickle, truly, thought I; abed here in a strange house in the broad day, with a cannibal and a tomahawk! (Melville: 45).

This quotation describes Queequeg's awkward manner, which always brings his tomahawk during sleeping. It is obviously strange for Ishmael as his bedfellow, and makes him really worried about being killed by Queequeg. Again, Ishmael describes:

He commenced dressing at top by donning his beaver hat, a very tall one, by the by, and then-still minus his trowsers-he hunted up his boots. What under the heavens he did it for, I cannot tell, but his next movement was to crush himself-boots in hand, and hat on-under the bed; when, from sundry violent gaspings and straining, I inferred he was hard at work booting himself; though by no law of propriety that I ever heard of, is any man required to be private when putting on his boots. But Queequeg, do you see, was a creature in the transition state-neither caterpillar nor butterfly. He was just enough civilized to show off his outlandishness in the strangest possible manner. His education was not yet completed. He was an undergraduate. If he had not been a small degree civilized, he very probably would not have troubled himself with boots at all; but then, if he had not been still a savage, he never would have dreamt of getting under the bed to put the on (Melville: 45-46).

Ishmael, through this quotation, explains that the patterns of behavior demonstrated by Queequeg are unconventional. It is described when he dresses himself by first putting on his boots, neither his shirts nor his trowsers, under the bed. Furthermore, Queequeg, as it is stated by Ishmael, has not yet completed his undergraduate education. Indeed, Queequeg is a creature in a transition state "neither caterpillar nor butterfly". In other words, he is a creature in the state of



metamorphosis, showing him to be a man in the state of transition. In addition,

Ishmael tells further about him:

At that time in the morning any Christian would have washed his face; but Queequeg, to my amazement, contented himself with restricting his ablutions to his chest, arms, and hands. He then donned his waistcoat, and taking up a piece of hard soap on the wash-stand centre-table, dipped it into water and commenced lathering his face. I was watching to see where he kept his razor, when lo and behold, he takes the harpoon from the bed corner, slips out the long wooden stock, unsheathes the head, whets it a little on his boot, and striding up to the bit of mirror against the wall, begins a vigorous scrapping, or rather harpooning of his cheeks (Melville: 46).

The narrator, Ishmael, adds information concerning with Queequeg and his outlandish manner. Queequeg, in this quotation, is depicted that when he takes a bath in the morning, he only washes his chest, arms, and hands and not his face. Additionally, he shaves by using his harpoon, seeming to harpoon his cheeks.

Later on, Ishmael shows the readers the queer behavior of Queequeg in the next chapter. It is in the breakfast time, when Ishmael goes to the bar-room, which is full of boarders who are nearly all whaleman. It is told:

But as for Queequeg-why, Queequeg sat there among them-at the head of the table, too, it so chanced; as cool as an icicle. To be sure I cannot say much for his breeding. His greatest admirer could not have cordially justified his bringing his harpoon into breakfast with him, and using it there without ceremony; reaching over the table with it, to the imminent jeopardy of many heads, and grappling the beefsteaks towards him (Melville: 48).

This quotation describes the situation during breakfast time, when Queequeg sits at the head of the table. It is considered to be strange behavior when he brings his harpoon to the breakfast table and uses it during the meal.

Another reason why Queequeg is considered as a foreigner among other crews is because of his different faith. In fact, he is the only Non-Christian man among other characters; he worships a wooden idol named Yojo. Ishmael states:

...at first I almost thought that this black manikin was a real baby preserved in some similar manner. But seeing that it was not at all limber, and that it glistened a good deal like polished ebony, I concluded that it must be nothing but a wooden idol, which indeed it proved to be (Melville: 41).

Again, he states:

In bed we concocted our plans for the morrow. But to my surprise and no small concern, Queequeg now gave me to understand, that he had been diligently consulting Yojo-the name of black little god-and Yojo had told him two or three times over, and strongly insisted upon it everyway, that instead of our going together among the whaling-fleet in harbor, and in concert selecting our crafts;...I have forgotten to mention that, in many things, Queequeg placed great confidence in the excellence of Yojo's judgment and surprising forecast of things; and cherished Yojo with considerable esteem, as a rather good sort of god,...next morning early, leaving Queequeg shup up with Yojo in our little bedroom-for it seemed that it was some sort of Lent or Ramadan, or day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer with queequeg and Yojo that day;...(Melville: 81).

In the first quotation, Ishmael explains that Queequeg's God is in the form of a wooden idol. It is made of wood and glistened like polished ebony and is not at all limber. Moreover, in the next quotation, it is told that Queequeg asks Yojo, the name of his black little God, to prepare to select his craft. He always demonstrates to consult to his black God Yojo in every action he does. Queequeg also has special day called Ramadan or day of fasting, in which Queequeg can pray all long day with no interruption.

As a matter of fact, because of his different faith from other crew of the Pequod, Queequeg is discriminated by others. In chapter 13, it is told that Queequeg gets such a bad treatment from other people on the ship Pequod.

But there were some boobies and bumpkins there, who, by their intense greenness, must have come from the heart and centre of all verdure. Queequeg caught one of these young saplings mimicking him behind his back. I thought the bumpkin's hour of doom was come. Dropping his harpoon, the brawny savage caught him in his arms, and by an almost miraculous dexterity and strength, sent him high up bodily into the air; then slightly tapping his stern in midsomerset, the fellow landed with bursting lungs upon his feet, while Queequeg, turning his back upon him, lighted his tomahawk pipe and passed it to me for a puff. "Capting! Capting!" yelled the bumpkin, running towards that officer; "Capting, capting, here's the devil." (Melville: 74).

In this quotation, as the narrator, Ishmael tells that when he and Queequeg are on the schooner to board to Nantucket, a local bumpkin mocks Queequeg, who responds by pushing him back. The bumpkin complains to the captain that Queequeg is the devil. Furthermore, Queequeg is also alienated by other crew, including by one of the captains of the ship. He is almost refused to sign in on the ship Pequod. Ishmael tells:

...Captain Peleg in his gruff voice loudly hailed us from his wigwam, saying he had not suspected my friends was a cannibal, and furthermore announcing that he let no cannibals on board that craft, unless they previously produced their papers.

"What do you mean by that, Captain Peleg?" said I, now jumping on the bulwarks, and leaving my comrade standing on the wharf.

"I mean," he replied, "he must show his papers."

"Yea," said Captain Bildad in his hollow voice, sticking his head from behind Peleg's, out of wigwam. "He must show that he's converted. Son of darkness," he added,

turning to Queequeg, “art thou at present in communion with any Christian Church?”  
“Why,” said I, “he’s a member of the First Congregational Church.” Here be it said, that many tattooed savages sailing in Nantucket ships at last come to be converted into the churches (Melville: 99).

The quotation above tells that Captain Peleg gruffly tells Ishmael that no cannibals such as Queequeg can go aboard unless he previously produces his papers. Ishmael tells Captain Peleg that Queequeg is actually a member of the First Congregational Church. However, both Captain Peleg and Captain Bildad are suspicious. Therefore, Ishmael finally states that Queequeg belongs to the same ancient Catholic Church as all the crew has. In addition, Captain Peleg is also skeptical that the assumption that Queequeg cannot be Christian is true. It is, in fact, due to his unusual name and the mispronunciation of his name as “Qouhog” (Melville: 101).

As a matter of fact; however, the assumption that Queequeg is an uncivilized man is not actually apt, since, as it has been stated before that he is a person in the state of transition. In other words, he is neither fully part of a savage character nor fully accepted into civilized one. Some strangest possible manner of Queequeg that has been mentioned above should more precisely be considered to be his lackness. In the middle of the story, Ishmael much idolizes Queequeg. He states:

Savage though he was, and hideously marred about the face-at least to my taste-his countenance yet had a something in it which was by no means disagreeable. Through all his unearthly tattooings, I thought I saw the traces of a simple honest heart; and in his large, deep eyes, fiery black and bold, there seemed tokens of a spirit that would dare a thousand of devils...Queequeg was George

Washington cannibalistically developed...thrown among people as strange to him as though he were in the planet Jupiter; and yet he seemed entirely at his ease; preserving the utmost serenity; content with his own championship; always equal to himself...wild he was; a very sight of sights to see; yet I began to feel myself mysteriously drawn towards him (Melville: 64-65).

In this quotation, the narrator seems to explore the idea that within the uncivilized manner of Queequeg, there is a greater sense of honor and civility. When Ishmael meets Queequeg at the first time as his bedfellow in the Spouter Inn, he is terrified and fears of him. But, here, Ishmael soon comes to realize that despite Queequeg's ugly face, he has simple honest heart. Ishmael even compares him to George Washington. It is in fact as well that Queequeg has not consorted at all with other people at the Spouter Inn, yet he seems fully at ease and preserves his utmost serenity.

Indeed, Ishmael soon makes a real friendship relation together with Queequeg. Ishmael learns that Queequeg is a brave man who has a great courage. Dealing with Queequeg's bravery, it can be known when he saves the greenhorn from drowning, who firstly mocks Queequeg. As it is explained in the following quotation:

For three minutes or more he was seen swimming like a dog, throwing his long arms straight out before him, and by turns revealing his brawny shoulders through the freezing foam. I looked at the grand and glorious fellow, but saw no one to be saved. The greenhorn had gone down shooting himself perpendicularly from the water. Queequeg now took an instant's glance around him, and seeming to see just how matters were, dived down and disappeared. A few minutes more, and he rose again, one arm still striking out, and with the other dragging a lifeless form. The boat soon picked them up. The poor bumpkin was restored. All hands voted Queequeg a noble trump;

the Captain begged his pardon...He did not seem to think that he at all deserved a medal from the Human and Magnanimous Societies. He only asked for water-fresh water-something to wipe the brine off; (Melville: 75-76).

The heroic story of Queequeg is described in the quotation above. It happens when there is a bumpkin who mocks Queequeg as the devil creature and complains to the Captain that he should not sign in on the Pequod. But then, when the bumpkin is swept overboard, Queequeg saves him from drowning. Thus, due to his bravery, he deserves to get an appreciation from the Captain. The Captain intends to give him a medal for his action, but Queequeg refuses any appreciation for his bravery. He even behaves with dignity, magnanimous, and great humility after doing so. In fact, Queequeg is endowed with the heroic character qualities. Furthermore, he is also a figure who faces any discrimination with bravery and great confidence. Hence, the description that Queequeg is an admirable character in the story is precisely true. In spite of getting bad treatment and being regarded as an uncivilized man by other crew, he proves himself to be more civilized than originally assumed. The assumption that Queequeg is a savage comes from the story of the innkeeper at the Spouter Inn and not from any direct behavior.

Thus, for Ishmael, his friendship relation with Queequeg, in fact, takes an active role and gives a positive influence on Ishmael's life. Ishmael much learns that he should not judge someone else on outward appearance solely. In this case, Queequeg, who becomes presumably a savage, is in actuality a friendly man who has an honest heart.

Finally, from all of those facts about Queequeg, the researcher assumes that Queequeg is, all in all, an honorable honest man. Therefore, in the story, his

character comes to symbolize purity for his pure heart. This kind of symbol is included in private symbol, since the name of Queequeg is only available in Melville's *Moby Dick*. In other words, it is only Melville who uses this name as a symbol; Melville creates the name of Queequeg and uses it as one of the characters in his novel. Queequeg is made by Melville as an awkward name in spelling, which indirectly depicts the characteristic of Queequeg himself as a strange man in his outward appearance, and he is described as queer as his own name.

#### 4.1.3. Ahab

In *Moby Dick*, Ahab is the Captain leader of the Ship Pequod after Captain Peleg has been retired for many years. The character of Ahab is introduced in the chapter 16 through Captain Peleg. When Ishmael asks about him for the first time, Peleg answers:

"Aye, aye, I thought so. Captain Ahab is the Captain of this ship."

"...clap eye on Captain Ahab, young man, and thou wilt find that he has only one leg."

"What do you mean, Sir? Was the other one lost by a whale?"

"Lost by a whale! Young man, come nearer to me; it was devoured, chewed up, crunched by the monstrousest parmacetty that ever chipped a boat!-ah, ah!" (Melville: 84-85).

By this quotation, the researcher thinks that Ahab is a tragic figure, since he is surrounded by the story of the whale that loses his one leg. Later on, Peleg describes Ishmael further about Ahab in details. He says:

"...He's a queer man, Captain Ahab-so some think-but a good one. Oh, thou'lt like him well enough; no fear, no



fear. He's a grand, ungodly, god-like man, Captain Ahab; doesn't speak much; but, when he does speak, then you may well listen. Mark ye, before warned; Ahab's above the common; Ahab's been in colleges, as well as among cannibals; been used to deeper wonders than the waves; fixed his fiery lance in mightier, stronger foes than whales...Ahab of old, thou knowest, was a Crowned King!"

"And a very vile one..."

"...he is-a good man-not pious, good man...but a swearing good man...he was never very jolly...he was a little out of his mind for a spell...he lost his leg last voyage by that accursed whale, he's been a kind of moody-desperate moody, and savage sometimes; but that will all pass off..." (Melville: 92-93).

The quotation above depicts who Captain Ahab actually is. Peleg tells Ishmael that Ahab is a queer man, but a good one, more specifically a grand-ungodly, god-like man. Moreover, he is a kind of moody and never very jolly. Peleg also compares him to Ahab of old, the Crowned King of Israel, who is a very vile one. Thus, the character name of Ahab may refer to the characteristic of that Old King, who turns vile. In other words, the name of Ahab makes him be suggested to be a similarly conflicted leader to the Old King Ahab. From this Peleg's information about Ahab's name, it foreshadows who Ahab actually is and what he will do later on in the story. From this information, Ishmael thinks that Ahab seems to be so mysterious, long before he meets Ahab face by face.

As a matter of fact, Ahab seems still so mysterious for other crew of the ship Pequod. He stays unseen even after the ship has boarded for several days. However, in chapter 28, Ahab finally appears on deck one day. Ishmael tells:

...Captain Ahab stood upon his quarter deck. There seemed no sign of common bodily illness about him, nor of the recovery from any. He looked like a man cut away from the stake, when the fire has overrunningly wasted all



the limbs without consuming them, or taking away one particle from their compacted aged robustness...you saw a slender rod-like mark, lividly whitish...whether that mark born with him, or whether it was the scar left by some desperate wound, no one could certainly say (Melville: 129).

This quotation tells that Ishmael has seen Ahab standing on the quarter deck, bearing no signs of illness and looking like a man cut away from the stake. There is a rod-like mark on his face that appears branded upon him, which more seems to be a scar left by an extreme accident. Furthermore, Ishmael adds:

It had previously come to me that this ivory leg had at sea been fashioned from the polished bone of the Sperm Whale's jaw...His bone leg steadied in that hole; one arm elevated, and holding by a shroud; Captain Ahab stood erect, looking straight out beyond the ship's ever-pitching prow (Melville: 130).

The quotation above gives information that Ahab stands on an ivory leg, which is fashioned from the bone of a Sperm Whale's jaw. His ivory leg is a significant aspect of his character as a cruel and inhuman figure, since he uses part of other creatures' body that is Sperm Whale's jaw for his false leg. Besides, it also shows that his false leg made of Sperm Whale's jaw is a reminder for Ahab to take revenge on the whale, which has taken one of his legs away. In this case, Ahab answers in such a harsh tone when Starbuck asks him about the whale, which bites his leg, on which he will take revenge. It is stated:

"Captain Ahab," said Starbuck, who, with Stubb and Flask, had thus far been eyeing his superior with increasing surprise, but at last seemed struck with a thought which somewhat explained all the wonder. "Captain Ahab, I have heard of Moby Dick-but it was not Moby Dick that took off thy leg?" "Who told thee that?" cried Ahab; then pausing, "Aye, Starbuck; Aye, my hearties all round; it was Moby Dick

that dismayed me; Moby Dick that brought me to this dead stump I stand on now. Aye, aye.” He shouted with a terrific, loud, animal sob, like that of a heart-stricken moose; “Aye, aye! It was that accursed white whale that razed me; made me a poor pegging lubber of me for ever and a day!” Then tossing both arms, with measureless imprecations he shouted out: “Aye, aye! And I’ll chase him round Good Hope, and round the Horn, and round the Norway Maelstrom, and round Perdition’s flames before I give him up and this is what ye have shipped for, men! To chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out...” (Melville: 166).

In this quotation, Starbuck asks Ahab if it is Moby Dick who takes Ahab’s leg, and Ahab admits as such. Ahab says that Moby Dick has brought him to be a flawed man, who has only one right leg, and made him suffered for ever and a day. Thus, he wants to chase that white whale over all side of earth and will never give it up. In this quotation also, Ishmael describes how Ahab answers Starbuck’s question in such a terrific, loud, animal sob, like that of a heart-stricken moose, which indicates that Ahab really gets angry with Moby Dick and thus, shows his ambition to take revenge on it.

On the whaling voyage, Ahab attempts to persuade all his crew to join him murdering the white whale. He is even going to give a great amount of money whosoever of them kills the white whale. He tells:

“All ye mast-headers have before now heard me give orders about a white whale. Look ye! d’ye see this Spanish ounce of gold?”-holding up a board bright coin to the sun-“it is a sixteen dollar piece, men. D’ye see it? Mr. Starbuck, hand me you top-maul...” “Whosoever of ye raises me a white-headed whale, with three holes punctured in his starboard fluke-look you, whosoever of ye raises me that same white whale, he shall have this gold ounce, my boys!” (Melville: 165).

In this quotation above, Ahab tells the crew that whichever one raises Ahab a white-headed whale with a wrinkled brow and a crooked jaw will have an ounce of gold. Indeed, when Starbuck seems to refuse to take vengeance against the white whale, Ahab insists on taking vengeance against it. The following quotation support this idea:

“I am game for his crooked jaw, and for the jaws of Death too, Captain Ahab, if it fairly comes in the way of the business we follow; but I came here to hunt whales, not my commander’s vengeance. How many barrels will thy vengeance yield thee even if thou gettest it, Captain Ahab? It will not fetch thee much in our Nantucket market.”

“Nantucket market! Hoot! But come closer, Starbuck; thou requirest a little lower layer. If money’s to be the measure, man, and the accountants have computed their great counting-house the globe, by girdling it with guineas, one to every three parts of an inch; then, let me tell thee, that my vengeance will fetch a great premium here!”

“Vengeance on a dumb brute! cried Starbuck, “that simply smote thee from blindest instinct! Madness! To be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous.”

“...That inscrutable thing is chiefly what I hate; and be the white whale agent, or be the white whale principal, I will wreak that hate upon him.” (Melville: 166-167).

Through this quotation, it can be known that Moby Dick does not only hurt Ahab’s left leg but also his heart and mind. For Ahab, chasing Moby Dick will represent his personal satisfaction and a means of getting peace life, since he has claimed that Moby Dick is “Chiefly what I hate”. As a matter of fact, the white whale is a great, powerful creature. In this case, Dr. Bunger, the ship’s surgeon of the Samuel Enderby which passes during the ship Pequod’s journey, warns Ahab not to chase Moby Dick. Dr. Bunger says:

“...Do you know, gentlemen, that the digestive organs of the whale are so inscrutably constructed by Divine Providence, that it is quite impossible for him to completely digest even a man’s arm? And he knows it too. So that what you take for the white whale’s malice is only his awkwardness. For he never means to swallow a single limb; he only thinks to terrify by feints...There would be great glory in killing him, I know that; and there is a ship-load of precious sperm in him, but hark ye, he’s best let alone; (Melville: 419-420).

Bunger, in this quotation, states that the white whale never means to swallow a single limb of other humans, but he only wants to give warning to anyone who desires to chase him. However, the white whale is a formidable opponent for human beings. Therefore, it seems an awkwardness to kill it, and Bunger warns Ahab that the whale is best left alone.

Moreover, Starbuck also warns Ahab concerning his desire to kill the white whale Moby Dick. He states:

“Vengeance on a dumb brute! cried Starbuck, “that simply smote thee from blindest instinct! Madness! (Melville: 167).

In this quotation above, Starbuck tells Ahab that his obsession with the white whale Moby Dick is a kind of madness, since taking vengeance against such a great, formidable creature as the white whale is an impossible pursuit, and it certainly will bring a tragic end.

Dealing with Ahab’s madness, that is his desire to fight against the white whale, he himself realizes it. He says:

“...what I’ve dared, I’ve willed; and what I’ve willed, I’ll do! They think me mad-Starbuck does; but I’m demoniac, I am madness maddened! That wild madness that’s only calm to comprehend itself!” (Melville: 171).

Or when Ahab tells Pip:

“Weep so, and I will murder thee! Have a care, for Ahab too is mad...” (Melville: 499).

The first quotation above demonstrates that Ahab has a sense of self-awareness concerning his supposed madness. He even calls himself “madness maddened”. However, he thinks what he has dared and willed, and what he will do. The second quotation depicts that Ahab is actually a man who realizes that he is a madman and thus, often regrets his fault to kill the white whale and in some sense tries to suppress it, but cannot change his behavior.

Furthermore, Starbuck also even calls Ahab a blasphemy figure. He states:

“...To be enraged with a dumb thing, Captain Ahab, seems blasphemous.” (Melville: 167).

Starbuck, in the quotation above, tells that Ahab’s obsession seems blasphemous for his action is an attempt to secure a sense of divinity. In other words, Ahab seems to think that he can do anything just like God, including chasing the dangerous white whale, and thus, it is kind of an insult to God. Even, Ahab claims himself as God. The narrator says:

Ahab seized a loaded musket from the rack (forming part of most South-Sea-men’s cabin furniture), and pointing it towards Starbuck, exclaimed: “There is one God that is Lord over the earth, and one Captain that is lord over the Pequod-on deck!” (Melville: 449).

The narrator describes Ahab, in the quotation above, that Ahab compares himself to the Lord. He means that “Captain that is lord over the Pequod-on deck” is he himself. In other words, it seems that he has power over the Pequod as God

has power over the earth. In addition, he talks to his servant, Fedallah, that he is immortal just as God is, and thus, no one can kill him. Ahab states:

“...I am immortal then, on land and on sea,” cried Ahab, with a laugh of derision; “immortal on land and on sea!” (Melville: 469).

In the quotation, Ahab imagines himself as immortal; indicating his arrogance and blasphemy. Yet, as the matter of fact, Ahab’s attempt to vengeance against Moby Dick cannot possibly be achieved. Indeed, because of his own madness, Ahab is brought to the tragic death during the pursuit of Moby Dick. And because of his great ambition in the pursuit of Moby Dick, Ahab risks the lives of his ship’s crew.

All in all, from all of the information above, the researcher concludes that Ahab character in this novel comes to symbolize madness. And this symbol is included in cultural symbol. Looking back to the historical background, the name of Ahab originally comes from Israel, since Ahab is actually the name of the King of Israel and he is the son of one of the successors. Moreover, Ahab’s name is also revealed in both the Old Testament and the New Testament as the Crowned King of Israel, who was very vile. In this novel, Melville uses the character of Ahab as an attempt to comparing Captain Ahab to the Old King Ahab of Israel. In other words, Melville tries to make the character of Captain Ahab be suggested to be a similarly leader in his novel to the Old King Ahab.

## Elijah

In *Moby Dick*, Elijah is one of the minor characters who plays as a stranger. Elijah is introduced firstly in the chapter 19. When Elijah meets Ishmael, he asks:

“SHIPMATES, have ye shipped in that ship?”  
Queequeg and I had just left the Pequod, and were sauntering away from the water, for the moment each occupied with his own thoughts, when the above words were put to us by a stranger, who, pausing before us, leveled his massive forefinger at the vessel in question. He was but shabbily appareled in faded jacket and patched trowsers; a rag of a black handkerchief investing his neck. A confluent small-pox had in all directions flowed over his face, and left it like the complicated ribbed bed of a torrent, when the rushing waters have been dried up (Melville: 103).

In the quotation above, the figure of Elijah is described by Ishmael as a stranger who looks like a beggar shabbily dressed in faded jacket and patched trowsers with a rag of a black handkerchief covering his neck. He has a flowing small-pox over his face, making him seem to be disgusting man. In his first appearance, Elijah suddenly appears close behind Ishmael and Queequeg. Ishmael tells their first encounter with Elijah. As it is stated in the following quotation:

“Have ye shipped in her?” he repeated.  
“You mean the ship Pequod, I suppose,” said I, trying to gain a little more time for an uninterrupted look at him.  
“Aye, the Pequod-that ship there,” he said, drawing back his whole arm, and then rapidly shoving it straight out from him, with the fixed bayonet of his pointed finger darted full at the object.  
“Yes,” said I, “we have just signed the articles.”  
“Anything down there about your souls?”  
“About what?”  
“Oh, perhaps you hav’n’t got any,” he said quickly. “No matter though, I know many chaps that hav’n’t got any,-



good luck to 'em; and they are all the better off for it. A soul's a sort of a fifth wheel to a wagon." (Melville: 103).

From the quotation above, it is told that when Ishmael and Queequeg have just left the ship Pequod, Elijah suddenly approaches and passes and asks them whether they have signed the articles. In this case, Elijah attempts to toy with Ishmael and Queequeg through his question: "Anything down there about your souls?" Elijah firstly only asks them in a conversation and then he offers only puzzles of his question's meaning. In other words, in such a puzzled way, Elijah lets both Ishmael and Queequeg wonder at his question.

When Ishmael seems to be disturbed by his appearance and tries to leave him, Elijah stops him and invests a question again. Ishmael tells:

"Stop! cried the stranger. "Ye said true-ye hav'n't seen Old Thunder yet,-have ye?"

"Who's Old Thunder?" said I, again riveted with the insane earnestness of his manner.

"Captain Ahab."

"What! The Captain of our ship, the Pequod?"

"Aye, among some of us old sailor chaps, he goes to by that name. ye hav'n't seen him yet, have ye?"

"No, we hav'n't. He's sick they say, but is getting better, and will be alright again before long."

"All right again before long!" laughed the stranger, with a solemnly derisive sort of laugh. "Look ye; when Captain Ahab is all right, then this left arm of mine will be all right; not before." (Melville: 103-104).

In the quotation above, Elijah the stranger interrupts both Ishmael and Queequeg and asks if they have met Old Thunder that is Captain Ahab. Ishmael answers that Captain Ahab is ill, but Elijah says that Captain Ahab is fine and his left arm is all right. He adds:

"That's true, that's true-yes, both true enough. But you must jump when he gives an order. Step and growl; growl



and go-that's the word with Captain Ahab. But nothing about that thing that happened to him of Cape Horn, long ago, when he lay like dead for three days and nights;...But hows'ever, mayhap, ye've heard tell about the leg, and how he lost it; aye, ye have heard of that, I dare say. Oh yes, that everyone knows a'most-I mean they know he's only one leg; and that a parmacetti took the other off." (Melville: 104).

Elijah, in this case, seems to know more about Captain Ahab. Here, Elijah tells Ishmael and Queequeg that the Captain of the ship, Ahab, has lost one of his legs and that a Sperm Whale has taken the other off. However, Ishmael seems to be bored by Elijah's appearance; however, Elijah insists on delivering something to him. It is told in their conversation below:

"Ye've shipped, have ye? Names down on the papers? Well, well, what's signed, is signed; and what's to be, will be; and then again, perhaps it won't be, after all. Anyhow, it's all fixed and arranged a'ready; and some sailors or other must go with him, I suppose; as well these as any other men, God pity 'em! Morning to ye, shipmates, morning; the ineffable heavens bless ye; I'm sorry I stopped ye."  
"Look here, friend," said I, "if you have anything important to tell us, out with it; but if you are only trying to bamboozle us, you are mistaken in your game; that's all I have to say."  
"And it's said very well, and I like to hear a chap talk up that way; you are just the man for him-the likes of ye. Morning to ye, shipmates, morning! Oh! When ye get there, tell 'em I've concluded not to make one of 'em (Melville: 104-105).

In this quotation, Elijah repeats his question whether Ishmael has signed the ship. On the other hand, Ishmael does not seem to like Elijah and thinks that he only attempts to bamboozle both Ishmael and Queequeg. Again, Elijah sees Ishmael and Queequeg when they approach the ship to go abroad. When Elijah states "what's signed is signed; and what's to be will be; and then again, perhaps

it won't be, after all", it seems that he wants to say that if Ishmael has signed on the ship, it means that he has sold his soul by agreeing to undertake three years voyage on the Pequod. Moreover, Ishmael tells:

It was nearly six o'clock, but only gray imperfect misty dawn, when we drew nigh the wharf.  
"Avast!" cried a voice, whose owner at the same time coming close behind us, laid a hand upon both our shoulders, and then insinuating himself between us, stood stopping forward a little, in the uncertain twilight, strangely peering from Queequeg to me. It was Elijah.  
"Going aboard?" (Melville: 108).

It is told in the quotation that when the Pequod schedules to sail, in the gray predawn mist, Elijah suddenly emerges close behind Ishmael and Queequeg. Elijah asks them if they are going aboard, then he tries to detain them. Here, Elijah challenges Ishmael to find anyone on the ship, but in fact, he cannot find it. It is said:

"Very dim, very dim," said Elijah, "morning to ye."  
Once more we quitted him; but once more he came softly after us; and touching my shoulder again, said, "see if you can find 'em now, will ye?"  
"Find who?"  
"Morning to ye! morning to ye!" he rejoined, again moving off. "Oh! I was going to warn ye against-but never mind, never mind-it's all one, all in the family too;-sharp frost this morning, ain't it? Good-bye to ye. Shan't see ye again very soon, I guess; unless it's before the Grand Jury." And with these cracked words he finally departed, leaving me, for the moment, in no small wonderment at his frantic impudence (Melville: 109).

From this quotation, Elijah seems to warn both Ishmael and Queequeg that by signing on Ahab's ship, they certainly have signed away their souls. In this case, Elijah has such a specific purpose as preventing Ishmael and Queequeg from going aboard. When Elijah says "Good-bye to ye. Shan't see ye again very soon, I

guess; unless it's before the Grand Jury", it seems that it is his farewell as if they will not meet each other. Elijah intends to warn Ishmael not to go sailing on the Pequod, but Ishmael insists on boarding the Pequod and ignores Elijah's statements. Indeed, when he and Queequeg board, he finds everything quiet. Ishmael tells:

At last, stopping on board the Pequod, we found everything in profound quiet, not a soul moving. The cabin entrance was locked within; the hatches were all on, and lumbered with coils of rigging (Melville: 109).

From Ishmael's statement above, it can be known that a sense of quiet situation and nearly silent ship are created within the story. Ishmael seems to be aware of the unusual circumstances on the ship, but he still insists on going sailing. Indeed, Ishmael thinks now that Elijah speaks the truth, and thus, he has proved all Elijah's puzzle statements.

In this sense, Elijah has a small but significant role in the novel. He appears in only two chapters of the novel, but much serves his importance as a fortuneteller, since he can foretell tragedy that will happen on the Pequod. Although he emerges looking like a stranger; however, he reinforces his fortuneteller like character by giving a warning to the narrator, Ishmael, long before he begins going aboard on the Pequod.

Overall, from all of those statements above, the researcher argues that Elijah, in Moby Dick, comes as a symbol of fortuneteller, since Elijah can predict what event will go on next on the story. His emergence in the story gives a foreshadowing to the readers. In addition, this symbol is included in a kind of cultural symbol. This is due to the fact that the name of Elijah is rooted from the

name of a prophet in Israel. He emerges in some Holy Books; such as the Bible and the Holy Quran.

In Jewish and Christian traditions, it is told that Elijah is a prophet who gives a warning to Ahab, the King of Israel, and to people of Israel not to forsake God. Thus, based on this historical background, Melville seems to invest the name of Elijah in his novel to refer to the figure of Elijah the prophet of Israel, who also warns Captain Ahab throughout the story and other characters not to join Captain Ahab's voyage.

#### **4.1.4. Fedallah**

In *Moby Dick*, Fedallah is a harpooner on Ahab's boat. He is firstly introduced in chapter 48, when Ahab asks him to lower his boats into the sea. The narrator describes:

The figure that now stood by its bows was tall and swart, with one white tooth evilly protruding from its steel-like lips. A rumpled Chinese jacket of black cotton funereally invested him, with wide black trowsers of the same dark stuff. But strangely crowning this ebennes was glistening white plaited turban, the living hair braided and coiled round and round upon his head...Ahab cried out to the white-turbaned old man at their head, "All ready there, Fedallah?" (Melville: 216).

In this quotation, Fedallah is described as a queer figure in appearance with a rumpled black cotton Chinese jacket and wide black trowsers. He is tall and swart physically with one protuberant white tooth between his lips, and braided and coiled hair with a turban round his head. As a matter of fact, Fedallah seems

to be so mysterious for other shipmates, since he is hidden on board till he emerges with Ahab's crew later on. The narrator tells:

...hair turbaned Fedallah remained a muffled mystery to the last. Whence he came in a mannerly world like this, by what sort of unaccountable tie he soon evinced himself to be linked with Ahab's peculiar fortunes; Heaven knows, but it might have been even authority over him; all this none knew. But one cannot sustain an indifferent air concerning Fedallah. He was such a creature as civilized, domestic people in the temperate zone only see in their dreams, and that but dimly; but the like of whom now and then glide among the unchanging Asiatic communities, especially the oriental isles to the east of the continent—those insulated, immemorial, unalterable countries, which even in these modern days still preserve much of the ghostly aboriginalness of earth's primal generations, when the memory of the first man was a distinct recollection, and all men his descendants, unknowing whence he came, eyed each other as real phantoms, and asked of the sun and the moon why they were created and to what end; (Melville: 229-230).

The character of Fedallah is introduced in this quotation as a mysterious man; becoming Ahab's accomplice. He is a mixed of cultures, from an indistinct Asiatic culture and different from the dominant Western tradition. He is created as a civilized domestic person and a member of the Asiatic and Oriental isles. Indeed, for Ahab, Fedallah is more than just a skilled harpooner; instead, Fedallah is regarded as his trusted advisor. It is when Ahab has dreamt of the hearse one night, and then he asks for Fedallah's suggestion concerning his dream. The narrator tells:

Ahab and all his boat's crew seemed asleep but the Parsee; who crouching in the bow, sat watching the sharks, that spectrally played around the whale, and tapped the light cedar planks with their tails..."I have dreamed it again," said he.

"Of the hearses? Have I not said, old man, that neither hearse nor coffin can be thine?"

"And who are hearsed that die on the sea?"

"But I said, old man, that ere thou couldst die on this voyage, two hearses must verily be seen by thee on the sea; the first not made by mortal hands; and the visible wood of the last one must be grown in America."

"Aye, aye! A strange sight that, Parsee:-a hearse and its plumes floating over the ocean with the waves for the pallbearers. Ha! Such a sight we shall not soon see."

"Believe it or not, thou canst not die till it be seen, old man."

"And what was that saying about thyself?"

"Though it come to the last, I shall still go before thee thy pilot."

"And when thou art so gone before-if that ever befall-then ere I can follow, thou must still appear to me, to pilot me still?-Was it nit so? Well, then, did I believe all ye say. Oh my pilot! I have here two pledges that I shall yet slay Moby Dick and survive it."

"Take another pledge, old man," said the Parsee, as his eyes lighted up like fire-flies in the gloom-"Hemp only can kill thee."

"The gallows, ye mean. I am immortal then, on land and on sea," cried Ahab, with a laugh of derision;- "Immortal on land and on sea!" (Melville: 468-469).

It is told in this quotation that Ahab awakens and tells Fedallah that he has dreamt the hearses again that night. Fedallah then responds that those hearses cannot be his possession. Moreover, Fedallah also tells him that he has to take up another pledge when he pledges to slay the White Whale Moby Dick and survive it. Furthermore, Fedallah says that the gallows only can kill Ahab, and thus, it makes Ahab laugh considering himself to be immortal on land and on sea. In this case, Fedallah's ability to foretell Ahab's fortune is shown in this chapter. Fedallah, in fact, influences Ahab's behavior indirectly that he conceives of himself as immortal. Here, Fedallah builds Ahab's arrogance to defeat Moby Dick that cannot possibly be achieved.

In addition, for some other crew of the ship Pequod, Fedallah is regarded to be the devil, since according to them; Fedallah has supported Ahab and led him to attempt a pursuit against Moby Dick. In fact, Fedallah has given bad influence to Ahab's figure. This idea is supported by the following quotation:

“Did you never hear that the ship which but once has a Sperm Whale's head hoisted on her starboard side, and at the same time a Right Whale's on the larboard; did you never hear, Stubb, that that ship can never afterwards capsize?”

“Why not?”

“I don't know, but I heard that gamboge ghost of a Fedallah saying so, and he seems to know all about ship's charms. But I sometimes think he'll charm the ship to no good at last. I don't half like that chap, Stubb. Did you ever notice how that tusk of his is a sort of carved into a snake's head, Stubb?”

“Sink him! I never look at him at all; but if ever I get a chance of a dark night, and he standing hard by the bulwarks, and no one by; look down there, Flask”- pointing into the sea with a peculiar motion of bot hands-  
“Aye, will I! Flask, I take that Fedallah to be the devil in disguise. Do you believe that cock and bull story about his having been stowed away on board ship? He's the devil, I say. The reason why you don't see his tail, is because he tucks it up out of sight; he carries it coiled away in his pocket, I guess...” (Melville: 315).

The quotation above tells that there is superstition that a ship, which has a Sperm Whale's head on one side and a Right Whale's head on the other, will never capsize. This rumor comes from Fedallah, whom Flask calls “ghost of a Fedallah”. In this sense, the two shipmates, Flask and Stubb, do not like Fedallah and are suspicious of him that he will lead the ship to no good at last, since Captain Ahab has taken Fedallah's advice. Therefore, the shipmates call Fedallah as “the devil in disguise”. Additionally, they also think that Ahab, in some sense, has sold his soul under the influence of Fedallah. In other words, Ahab has sold



his soul to devil through a compact with Fedallah and through his plan to defeat Moby Dick.

Overall, according to some statements above, the researcher finally argues that the character Fedallah in Moby Dick symbolizes the devil in the guise of a man and the dark shadow of Ahab. This is due to the fact that Fedallah exerts an influence upon Captain Ahab to support Ahab's great mission in chasing Moby Dick. In addition, this symbol is classified into private symbol. As a matter of fact, the name of Fedallah is only used by Melville in his novel. In other words, Melville invests Fedallah in his novel privately and uses it as one of his novel's characters. Indeed, Melville intends to create the character of Fedallah in attempt to investing a symbol of something else in such a certain way.

#### **4.2. Objects**

Symbol in Moby Dick is not only revealed in the form of the character's names but also in the form of objects; such as the White Whale, the Pequod and the Sea, and the Coffin.

##### **4.2.1. The White Whale Moby Dick**

To begin with, we may know firstly what White Whale is. In this case, the White Whale itself is a Sperm Whale that has a white hump. Concerning with the White Whale, Ishmael explains its species in Cetology or the science of whales. He states:

He is, without doubt, the largest inhabitant of the globe;  
the most formidable of all whales to encounter; the most



majestic in aspect; and lastly, by far the most valuable in commerce; he being the only creature from which that valuable substance, spermaceti, is obtained (Melville: 141).

In the quotation above, Ishmael discusses a scientific discourse on the study of whales, especially Sperm Whales, in an attempt to know their particular characteristics. The White Whale is included in the species of Sperm Whale, which no doubt becomes very famous for its great size and power. Moreover, this species also becomes the most wanted for its most valuable substance it produces, that is spermaceti oil.

In this novel, the White Whale refers to Moby Dick by using different name. As it is stated below:

“Captain Ahab,” said Tashtego, “that White Whale must be the same that some call Moby Dick...it is Moby Dick ye have seen-Moby Dick-Moby Dick!” (Melville: 165-166).

In this quotation, Tashtego asks Ahab if the White Whale is the one called Moby Dick, and Ahab admits so. Moby Dick is easy to be found for it has special features. Ishmael states:

For, it was not so much his uncommon bulk that so much distinguished him from other Sperm Whales, but, as was elsewhere thrown out-a peculiar snow-white wrinkled forehead, and a high, pyramidical white hump. These were his prominent features; the tokens whereby, even in the limitless, uncharted seas, he revealed his identity, at a long distance, to those who knew him. The rest of his body was so streaked, and spotted, and marbled with the same shrouded hue, that, in the end, he had gained his distinctive appellation of the White Whale; a name, indeed, literally justified by his vivid aspect, when seen gliding at high noon through a dark blue sea, leaving a milky-way wake of creamy foam, all spangled with golden gleamings (Melville: 184).

From this quotation, it can be known that the White Whale has some special features; a peculiar snow-white wrinkled forehead, and a high, pyramidal white hump, which make it distinguished from other Sperm Whales. Moby Dick, in this sense, is so streaked, spotted, and marbled in the rest of its body.

Concerning with its whiteness, the narrator says:

Aside from those more obvious considerations touching Moby Dick, which could not but occasionally awaken in any man's soul some alarm, there was another thought, or rather vague, nameless horror concerning him, which at times by its intensity completely overpowered all the rest; and yet so mystical and well nigh ineffable was it, that whale that above all things appalled me... Though in many natural objects, whiteness refiningly enhances beauty, as if imparting some special virtue of its own, as in marbles, japonicas, and pearls;... that as an essence whiteness is not so much a color as the visible absence of color, and at the same time the concrete of all colors;... and of all these things the Albino Whale was the symbol (Melville: 189-197).

In the quotation above, Ishmael attempts to define Moby Dick through its whiteness. Ishmael tells that, in fact, in many natural objects, whiteness refines and enhances beauty, as in pearls. But instead of defining the white color as purity or innocence, Ishmael holds whiteness to refer to the visible absence of color. Thus, the whiteness of Moby Dick holds no definitions or internal meanings. In other words, the symbolical meaning of its whiteness depends on other's perception. For some other crew of the ship, for instance, the white color of Moby Dick represents its sacredness, for it is difficult to be chased.

Moreover, Ishmael attempts to describe pictorial delusions about whales, which is rooted from its earliest history of whales from Hindu, Egyptian, and Grecian. Ishmael states:

It may be that the primal source of all those pictorial delusions will be found among the oldest Hindoo, Egyptian, and Grecian sculptures...Now, by all odds, the most ancient extant portrait anyways purporting to be the whale's is to be found in the famous cavern-pagoda of Elephanta, in India...But go to the old galleries, and look now at a great Christian painter's portrait of this fish; for he succeeds no better than the antediluvian Hindoo...Then again, there is an imposing quarto, written by one Captain Colnett, a post Captain in the English navy, entitled : A Voyage round Cape Horn into the South Seas, for the purpose of extending the Spermaceti Whale Fisheries." In this book is an outline purporting to be a "Picture of a Physeter or Spermaceti Whale, drawn by scale from one killed on the on the Coast of Mexico, August, 1793, and hoisted on deck."...Then, again, in 1825, Bernard Germain, Count de Lacepede, a great naturalist, published a scientific systemized whale book, wherein are several pictures of the different species of the Leviathan...But the placing of the cap-sheaf to all this blundering business was reserved for the scientific Frederick Cuvier, brother to the famous Baron, in 1836, he published a Natural History of Whales, in which he gives what he calls a picture of the Sperm Whale. Before showing that picture to any Nantucker, you had best provide for your summary retreat from Nantucket. In a word, Frederick Cuvier's Sperm Whale is not a Sperm Whale, but a Squash (Melville: 258-261).

Here, Ishmael discusses about whales in such a more intellectual way. In which Ishmael traces the hints of its earliest history from Hindu to Grecian sources, by taking note of their inability to catch the whale in reality. It is told that the most ancient extant portrait purporting to be a whale comes from India. Later on, the Christian painter's portrait of the fish, and there's an imposing quarto by Captain Colnett and also, in 1825, a book by a great naturalist, Bernard Germain,

which all feature several pictures of the incorrect species of Leviathan. In addition, Frederick Cuvier depicts the Sperm Whale, which much more looks like a Squash. All of them, in fact, fail in picturing whales and the presumed knowledge of them. Hence, this case contributes to the idea that the whale is such a mysterious and an indefinable creature for it is uneasy to be revealed by those who see it.

As it is stated before that the Sperm Whale is really famous for its great size, it happens when the two shipmates, Starbuck and Stubb, cut a hole in the whale's body for the insertion of a hook above the nearest of two side-fins, and the crew heaves the whale up, nearly toppling the ship. Ishmael describes this event:

And now suspended in stages over the side, Starbuck and Stubb, the mates, armed with their long spades, began cutting a hole in the body for the insertion of the hook just above the nearest of the two side-fins. This done, a board, semicircular line is cut round the hole, the hook is inserted, and the main body of the crew striking up a wild chorus, now commence heaving in one dense crowd at the windlass. When instantly, the entire ship careens over on her side; every bolt in her starts like the nail heads of an old house in frosty weather; she trembles, quivers, and nods her frightened mast-heads to the sky (Melville: 296).

This quotation describes the greatness of the whale. Ishmael depicts its great size in relation to the ship; when the workers try to cut into the corpse of the whale, it almost destroys the ship Pequod. This event lets the readers imagine how great the whale is and that a living whale can do to the ship. Concerning with the whale size, Ishmael, again, details information related to it. He adds:

Reckoning the largest sized Sperm Whale's tail to begin at that point of the trunk where it tapers to about the girth of

a man, it comprises upon its upper surface alone, an area of at least fifty square feet. The compact round body of its root expands into two broad, firm, flat palms or flukes, gradually shoaling away to less than an inch in thickness...At its utmost expansion in the full grown whale, the tail will considerably exceed twenty feet across. The entire member seems a dense webbed bed of welded sinews; but cut into it, and you find that three distinct strata compose it; horizontal; those of the middle one, very short, and running crosswise between the outside layers. This triune structure, as much as anything else, imparts power to the tail...Five great motions are peculiar to it. First, when used as a fin for progression; second, when used as a mace in battle; third, in sweeping; fourth, in lobtailing; fifth, in peaking flukes. First: being horizontal in its position, the Leviathan's tail acts in a different manner from the tails of all other sea creatures. It never wriggles...Second: It is a little significant, that while one Sperm Whale fights another Sperm Whale only with his head and jaw, nevertheless, in his conflicts with man, he chiefly and contemptuously uses his tail...Third:...In the whale the sense of touch is concentrated in the tail;...Fourth: stealing unawares unbent from the vast corpulence of his dignity, and kitten-like, he plays on the ocean as if it were a hearth. Fifth: As in the ordinary floating posture of the Leviathan the flukes lie considerably below the level of his back, they are then completely out of sight beneath the surface;...this peaking of the whale's flukes is perhaps the grandest sight to be seen in all animated nature (Melville: 359-362).

Through this quotation, Ishmael explains that the largest Sperm Whale's tail is at least fifty square feet. There are three parts composing its tail: upper, middle, and lower. Moreover, it has five characteristics; firstly, it never wriggles; secondly, when it conflicts with a man, it uses the tail chiefly; thirdly, the whale's sense of touch is centered in its tail; fourthly, it often uses the tail to play "kitten-like" in the sea; and finally, its peaking flukes, in which its grandest sight to be seen in all animated nature.

Indeed, the purpose of Ishmael explaining this significant detail of the White Whale's body is that to enable us to know how much power it produces to attack the hunters. Ishmael seems to demonstrate the particular greatness of Moby Dick as a formidable opponent, and hence, the hunters will surely face their death if they insist on chasing Moby Dick. Again, Ishmael adds:

...a Sperm Whale of the largest magnitude, between eighty-five and ninety feet in length, and something less than forty feet in its fullest circumference, such a whale will weigh at least ninety tons; so that, reckoning thirteen men to a ton, he would considerably outweigh the combined population of a whale village of one thousand one hundred inhabitants...In length, the Sperm Whale's skeleton at Tranque measured seventy-two feet long; for in the whale, the skeleton loses about one fifth in length compared with the living body...this vast ivory-ribbed chest, with the long, unrelieved spine, extending far away from it in a straight line, not a little resembled the hull of a great ship new-laid upon the stocks, (Melville: 429-430).

Ishmael adds in this quotation that a Sperm Whale's size is about eighty-five and ninety feet in length, and less than forty feet in its fullest circumference. Its weight is at least ninety ton. And its vast, ivory-ribbed chest resembles the hull of a great ship. This quotation above is primarily stated by Ishmael to give some facts concerning with the Sperm Whale. Ishmael informs that a whale is an equal match for a whaling ship, in this sense is the ship Pequod, in size and weight. Thus, from this significant information, the readers can imagine that the actual fight against Moby Dick will certainly place the ship Pequod in great danger, since it faces a formidable opponent, the White Whale Moby Dick, which will not only endanger Captain Ahab but also the ship crew entirely.

As a matter of fact, Moby Dick, in this novel, becomes an ultimate object of the cruel chase. The shipmates of the ship Pequod commanded by Captain Ahab obsessively wish to take revenge and chase it. During three days, Ahab and all his crew look for Moby Dick on the sea and hunt it.

On the first day of the chase, Ahab says that the whale must be near at that night. No one of the shipmates sees Moby Dick, but Ahab insists on preparing the chase. However, Ahab eventually views Moby Dick and soon he orders his boat crew and leads him. Ahab's boat reaches Moby Dick's open mouth and scrolled jaw, and struggles with it. Ahab's boat is about to sink when Moby Dick attacks his boat, but Ahab soon moves his boat to Stubb's boat and rushes back toward the Pequod. After getting failed to catch Moby Dick, Ahab stays on deck watching over the living Moby Dick. Despite that fact that he fails chasing Moby Dick that night, Ahab does not seem to give up. He orders Starbuck to look for Moby Dick again in the next morning (Melville: 509-517).

In this first chase, it is portrayed that Moby Dick is not an appropriate match for Moby Dick, since it possesses great power and portion. However, Ahab seems to insist on hunting it and hopes that he and his crew will eventually get it.

On the second day of the chase, all ship crew work together to find Moby Dick again. The ship crew commanded by Ahab, sail on the boat to come upon Moby Dick. It comes toward them and suddenly attacks Ahab and even breaks his ivory leg. In this second chase, Fedallah, Ahab's harpooner, becomes a victim in this mission. This makes Starbuck realize and tells Ahab that Moby Dick cannot



be possibly captured. Ahab; however, ignores Starbuck's advice and keeps on continuing his chase (Melville: 517-525).

This second chase results the same with the first. Ahab, in this case, seems to be an arrogant captain, since he ignores other crew's opinions. The ship crew can no longer deliver their voice, as all are guided by one single vision and mind of Ahab. In other words, nobody can oppose him, even Starbuck is powerless to oppose him; he cannot advise him that his action is merely endangering his fate and the crew entirely.

Finally, on the third day of the chase, Starbuck seems to give up advising Ahab. He thinks that Ahab has disobeyed God by doing so. The crew gets panic, until Ahab sees the whale's spout once more time. Ahab sets out on a third attempt against Moby Dick. Starbuck sees sharks, but when he wants to call Ahab to come back, Ahab has left and cannot hear him. Moby Dick can be reached closely by Ahab and his crew, and it seems "combinedly possessed by all the angles that fall from heaven". When Ahab reaches Moby Dick, he can see the corpse of his servant, Fedallah, attached to the whale. Ahab soon attaches his harpoon to the whale, but in pain, the whale turns Ahab's boat over. For this matter, Ahab orders his crew to return to the ship. But on the other hand, Moby Dick attacks his ship, and thus, makes it begin to sink. On the ship, Ahab throws his harpoon toward the whale, which is attached to the rope. Tashtego tries to nail the flag to the ship, but it goes down with the ship as well (Melville: 525-535).

In the final day of the chase, Ahab does not give up to fight against Moby Dick. Despite the fact that he cannot surely oppose Moby Dick, he keeps on trying



to fulfill his desire; taking revenge to Moby Dick which has taken off his leg. In fact, Moby Dick is a strong, formidable opponent for human, and thus, cannot be reached easily. Ahab's desire to kill Moby Dick eventually causes him die in such a tragic death and effectively carries his ship and his crew down.

Overall, from all the data above, Moby Dick represents as a private symbol of an unreachable goal for the ship crew, since it cannot be defeated by people. It is regarded as a private symbol, since it is only Melville who names and calls the White Whale Moby Dick. Through the characters of his novel, Melville calls Moby Dick to refer to the great white whale, which is used to symbolize Ahab's main unreachable goal in the novel. Even, the whiteness of the whale itself is specially featured and is inevitably created by Melville to come to symbolize something broader in meaning.

#### **4.2.2. The Ship Pequod and the Sea**

In *Moby Dick*, the Pequod is the ship that crew of whaling sails on under the command of Captain Ahab. The narrator, Ishmael, explores information concerning its historical name. He tells:

Pequod, you will no doubt remember, was the name of a celebrated tribe of Massachusetts Indians, now extinct as the ancient Medes (Melville: 82).

Ishmael tells in this quotation that the Pequod is named after a celebrated tribe of Massachusetts Indians. This tribe does not survive any longer and comes to extinction because of the white men's survival. Again, Ishmael adds:

She was a ship of the old school, rather small if anything; with an old fashioned claw footed look about her. Long

seasoned and weather-stained in the typhoons and calms of all four oceans...Her venerable bows looked bearded...her masts stood stiffly up like the spines of the three old kings of Cologne. Her ancient decks were worn and wrinkled...but to all these her old antiquities, were added new marvelous features, pertaining to the wild business that for more than half a century she had followed, old Captain Peleg, many years her chief-mate, before he commanded another vessel of his own, and now retired seaman, and one of the principal owners of the Pequod,-this old Peleg, during the term of his chief-mateship, had built upon her original grotesqueness, and inlaid it, all over, with a quaintness both of material and devices, (Melville: 82).

Here, Ishmael adds information about the Pequod. It is a ship of the old school, rather small and with an old fashioned claw-footed look. Its ancient decks look worn out and wrinkled. It possesses uniqueness and antiquities for its marvelous features to go sailing for over half a century. The first Captain of this ship was once Captain Peleg, but now retired after many years. Furthermore, Ishmael also tells the construction of the ship Pequod. He describes:

She was appareled like any barbaric Ethiopian emperor, his neck heavy with pendants of polished ivory. She was a thing of trophies. A cannibal of a craft, tricking herself forth in the chased bones of her enemies. All round, her unpannelled, open bulwarks were garnished like one continues jaw, with the long sharp teeth of the Sperm Whale, inserted there for pins, to fasten her old hempen thews and tendons to. Those thews ran not through base blocks of landwood, but deftly traveled over sheaves of sea-ivory...it was of a cannibal shape, some ten feet high; consisting of the long, huge slabs of limber black bone taken from the middle and highest part of the jaws of the Right Whale (Melville: 82-83).

From this information, we know that the ship Pequod is adorned with pendants polished ivory. Almost all parts of the Pequod body are covered with the whale's bones, including its bulwarks, which are garnished with the long sharp

teeth of the Sperm Whale. In addition, the ship Pequod is about ten feet high, which consists of such long, huge slabs of black bone, taken from the Right Whale's jaw. Indeed, the Pequod is considered to be a prestigious ship among the shipmates it is stated by Flask:

“Did you never hear that the ship which but once has a Sperm Whale's head hoisted on her starboard side, and at the same time a Right Whale's on the larboard;...that that ship can never afterwards capsize?” (Melville: 315).

From this quotation, it can be known that the ship, which has a Sperm Whale's head on one side and a Right Whale's head on the other, will never capsize. Because of this superstition, the Pequod is considered to have good luck.

The ship Pequod is a whaling ship, which will go sailing on the sea for about three years, under the command of Captain Ahab. As the matter of fact, the crew of the ship Pequod consists of many people from many different status and nationalities. For instance; the narrator Ishmael is both a schoolteacher and a sailor from Massachusetts, Ahab is a Quaker from Nantucket, Queequeg is a harpooner from New Zealand, and Fedallah is a Persian harpooner, etc. In this sense, the sea, on which the ship Pequod sails, becomes constantly the scene. In other words, the sea becomes the place where the events of the story take place.

Overall, the idea of the ship's voyage sailing on the sea gives a representative of the world or the life, which consists of large experiences and is full of fears and sorrows. Therefore, it can be concluded that the ship Pequod sailing on the sea, which is composed of many different crew from various nationalities, is a private symbol of the world where all the creatures live in.

The Pequod and the Sea is considered to be a private symbol for Melville is the only author who uses the name of Pequod to refer to Ahab's ship. In fact, the name of Pequod is originally the name of a Native American tribe in Massachusetts that does not long survive due to the arrival of white men and thus, comes to extinction. In this case, comparing to the life, Melville attempts to reveal the message that this life will come to an end as the Pequod comes to an extinction.

#### **4.2.3. The Coffin**

In this novel, the coffin belongs to Queequeg. He orders the carpenter to build it when he gets serious ill, seizing with fever. It is stated:

Poor Queequeg!...it somehow proved to him, poor pagan, where, strange to say, for all the heat of his sweatings, he caught a terrible chill which lapsed into a fever; and at last, after some days' suffering, laid him in his hammock, close to the very sill of the door of death. How he wasted and wasted away in those few long-lingering days, till there seemed but little left of him but his frame and tattooing. But as all else in him thinned, and his cheek bones grew sharper, his eyes, nevertheless, seemed growing fuller and fuller; they became of a strange softness of luster; and mildly but deeply looked out at you there from his sickness, a wondrous testimony to that immortal health in him which could not die, or be weakened (Melville: 451).

It is stated that Queequeg begins to suffer from a fever and approaches to death. He wastes away and his eyes seems getting fuller and fuller. He thinks of being buried in a hammock, since death is drawing near. Then, the coffin is built by the carpenter for Queequeg's final bed. It is stated:

Now when this strange circumstance was made known aft, the carpenter was at once commanded to do Queequeg's

bidding, whatever it might include. There was some heathenish, coffin-colored old lumber aboard, which, upon a long previous voyage, had been cut from the aboriginal groves of the Lackaday Island, and from these dark planks the coffin was recommended to be made. No sooner was the carpenter apprised of the order, than taking his rule, he forthwith with all the indifferent promptitude of his character, proceeded into the forecastle and took Queequeg's measure with great accuracy, regularly chalking Queequeg's person as he shifted the rule (Melvil: 452-453).

Here, the carpenter is ordered to do Queequeg's bidding. It is made of some heathenish, coffin-colored old lumber, which has been cut from the aboriginal groves of the Lackaday Islands. The carpenter measures Queequeg for his coffin accurately. Queequeg wants to be buried like his ancestors, being floated down a river in a canoe. It is also stated:

Leaning over his hammock, Queequeg long regarded the coffin with an attentive eye. He then called for his harpoon, had the wooden stock drawn from it, and then had the iron part placed in the coffin along with one of the paddles of his boat. All by his own request, also, biscuits were then ranged round the sides within: a flask of fresh water was placed at the head and a small bag of woody earth scrapped up in the hold at the foot; and a piece of sail-cloth being rolled up for a pillow, Queequeg now entreated to be lifted into his final bed, that he might make trial of its comforts, if any it had. He lay without moving a few minutes, then told one to go to his bag and bring out his little god, Yojo. Then crossing his arms on his breast with Yojo between...he murmured at last, and signed to be replaced in his hammock (Melville: 453).

This quotation states that after a coffin-canoe is made, Queequeg leans over his coffin. Then, he gets in his coffin with his harpoon, his paddles of his boat, his biscuits besides him, fresh water placed at his head, his small bag, and a piece of sail-cloth for his pillow. Moreover, Queequeg asks for his little God Yojo to accompany him. He seems laying in his coffin quietly, without moving

for a minutes. But, when every preparation for his death is made, Queequeg suddenly returns to health.

In this case, from this information above, the coffin comes to symbolize death, since Queequeg wants it to be made for his final bed when he is about to die. On the contrary, on the next chapter of the story, when there is a sailor who mounts the mast of the ship but falls from it and drowns, and the other sailors cannot save him, since they lose their life-buoy, Queequeg offers his coffin as a replacement of the life-buoy. It is stated:

An thus the first man of the Pequod that mounted the mast to look out for the White Whale, on the White Whale's own peculiar ground; that man was swallowed up in the deep...The lost life-buoy was now to be replaced; Starbuck was directed to see to it; but as no cask of sufficient lightness could be found...therefore, they were going leave the ship's stern unprovided with a buoy, when by certain strange signs and innuendos Queequeg hinted a hint concerning his coffin. "...are all my pains to go for nothing with that coffin? And now I'm ordered to make a life-buoy of it. It's like turning an old coat; going to bring the flesh on the other side now..." (Melville: 491-492).

In this quotation, when Queequeg offers his coffin to replace the life-buoy, the ship's carpenter complains about his duty to change the coffin into the life-buoy. He says that it seems to turn an old coat, since it is queer to do. Thus, the idea of the use of the coffin as the life-buoy to save sailor contrasts well with the use of the coffin as Queequeg's final bed before. In addition, the coffin is also used as the life-buoy for Ishmael. As it is stated in the last part of the Epilogue, Ishmael tells:

...the coffin life-buoy shot lengthwise from the sea, fell over, and floated by my side. Buoyed up by that coffin, for

almost one whole day and night, I floated on a soft and dirge-like main (Melville: 536).

Through this quotation above, the readers know that in the end of the story, when the ship Pequod sinks, Ishmael survives buoyed by Queequeg's coffin and remains for a whole day and night floating. In fact, the notion of turning a coffin as a symbol of death into a buoy as a symbol of life contrasts strikingly. Therefore, based on the data above, it can be said that the coffin in Moby Dick can represent as a private symbol of both life and death.

It seems to obvious that the coffin is included in the kind of private symbol, since commonly the coffin symbolizes death only, but in fact, Melville uses it in his novel to come as a representative of both life and death alternately. In the beginning of the story, the coffin comes to symbolize Queequeg's death but in such a morbid way it replaces Ishmael's lifebuoy in the end. Therefore, it can be said that it is only Melville who submits the coffin represent both death and life together in one complete story.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

After analyzing the kinds of symbols and their meanings, in this chapter, the researcher would like to present conclusion and suggestion to this study as the last chapter. This chapter is divided into two parts. Firstly, the researcher presents the conclusion of the kinds of symbols found in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* based on both characters and objects. Finally, the researcher presents the suggestion concerning with this study.

#### 5. 1. Conclusion

Based on the result of the analysis, the researcher draws conclusion concerning the kinds of symbols and their meanings found in *Moby Dick*. Some symbols are based on some characters; such as Ishmael, Queequeg, Ahab, Elijah, and Fedallah, while the objects; such as the White Whale Moby Dick, the ship Pequod and the sea, and the coffin. Related to the theory of symbolism, there are three kinds of symbols; they are: natural symbols, conventional symbols, and private symbol. In this study, the researcher concludes that some symbols based on some characters and some objects found in Melville's novel are some included in the kind of cultural symbol and the rest of them are in the kind of private symbol.

Cultural or conventional symbol is symbol which has a deep meaning and is created by certain people in their environment. In this case, some symbols



which are included in cultural or conventional symbol are Ishmael as a cultural symbol of a social outcast, Ahab as a cultural symbol of madness, and Elijah as a cultural symbol of a fortuneteller.

Meanwhile, for the rest of them are included private symbol, they are Queequeg as a private symbol of purity, Fedallah as a private symbol of the devil and the dark shadow of Ahab, the White Whale as a private symbol of an unreachable goal, the Pequod and the Sea as a private symbol of the world where all the creature live in, and the coffin as a private symbol of both death and life. This is due to the fact that Herman Melville, as the author of the novel, uses some symbols in his work privately. He develops those symbols in such a particular meaning and only Melville who uses those kinds of symbols.

First of all, Ishmael in Moby Dick comes to symbolize a social outcast. As the narrator, Ishmael describes himself as one individual man. He is both a school teacher and a sailor, who has no particular families and friends. It can be proved that in the early part of the first chapter, Ishmael says “call me Ishmael”, which, in other words, he asks the readers to simply call him by his nickname “Ishmael”. In this sense, it shows that he has no particular family name or last name, and thus, it indicates that he is not a member of any particular family.

Moreover, Ishmael tells us that he is such an independent way who can take care of himself. Indeed, he used to live alone and whenever he feels alone, he often seeks a sea voyage. Ishmael is keen on sailing and has a great passion for being a seaman, since for him, sea world is a more beautiful and peaceful place than anywhere else on land. In the end of the story, Ishmael is the only character

who survives and saves from the ship sinking. In addition, in the last part of the epilogue, it is told that he is picked up by the ship Rachel and is found as another orphan. This gives such a consistent proof that the orphan, Ishmael, has no relatives other than one individual mankind.

Then, Queequeg comes to symbolize purity. In the first part of the story, Queequeg is described as an uncivilized man for his unconventional and outlandish manner; such as he always dresses himself by first putting on his boots, neither his shirts nor his trowsers, under the bed. Moreover, when he washes himself in the morning, he only washes his chest, his arms, and his hands and not his face, and always shaves by using his harpoon. These facts seem to emphasize that Queequeg is such a strange uncivilized character. Furthermore, he is considered as a savage man, since according to the innkeeper, Queequeg often sells the heads. In addition, Queequeg is depicted as a frightening figure as well, who has dark tattooed skin, deeply brown and burnt face, and such a bold purplish head with no growing hair at all.

Queequeg is alienated by other shipmates of the Pequod for his different faith of non-Christian belief. However, he is the most generous character among others. In fact, within his uncivilized manner, he has a greater sense of honor and civility. It can be seen when Queequeg saves the greenhorn from drowning on the ocean, who firstly mocks him. He refuses any appreciation for his bravery and behaves with good character. Most of all, despite his ugly outward appearance, Queequeg has a simple honest heart which much describes his pure heart as well.

Moreover, Ahab symbolizes madness in this novel. Ahab is the captain of the ship Pequod. He is described as an insane captain for his crazy desire to kill Moby Dick, the White Whale that has taken off one of his legs. During the whaling voyage, Ahab tries to persuade all his crew to chase Moby Dick and take revenge upon it. Indeed, because of his error obsession, it drives him to be error mentally. He even claims himself to be God, who can act and do whatever he wants, including taking revenge to Moby Dick. In this sense, Ahab compares himself to God and calls himself as God-like being; therefore, he is regarded to be a symbol of madness.

Elijah, in this novel, symbolizes a fortuneteller. Elijah is a minor character, who emerges as a stranger man. This is due to the fact that Elijah much looks like a beggar, who shabbily dressed in faded jacket and patched trowsers with a rag of a black handkerchief covering his neck. Moreover, Elijah has a flowing small-pox over his face, making him to be a disgusting man.

In the first appearance, when Elijah meets Ishmael and Queequeg, he warns both of them not to join Ahab's whaling voyage. He says that by signing on the voyage, they consequently have signed away their souls. Elijah also can foretell Ahab's fate; he seems to talk of a prediction concerning with Ahab's death in the end of the story. As a matter of fact, Elijah plays an important role as a fortuneteller. His appearance in the story has a purpose to bring a warning for both Ishmael and Queequeg before the voyage even begins.

Furthermore, Fedallah comes to symbolize the devil and the dark shadow of Ahab. He is a harpooner on Ahab's boat. He appears as a queer figure in

appearance with a rumpled black cotton Chinese jacket and wide black trowsers. He is described as a tall and swart man physically with one white tooth between his lips, and braded and coiled hair with a turban round his head.

As Ahab's accomplice, Fedallah resembles Ahab in several ways. He seems to be as strange and mysterious as Ahab does. Fedallah is hidden on board when the ship Pequod even begins to sail on; he appears with Ahab's crew later on. Therefore, other shipmates call him as Ahab's dark shadow. For Ahab, Fedallah is more than just his skilled harpooner; instead, Fedallah is regarded as his trusted advisor, since Fedallah is an informant of a variety information concerning with Ahab and his plan to hunt Moby Dick.

In addition, Fedallah is regarded as the devil in disguise, since he has influenced Ahab to take revenge upon the White Whale Moby Dick. In this case, Captain Ahab has taken Fedallah's advice and in some sense, has sold his soul under the influence of Fedallah. In other words, Fedallah exerts an influence upon Captain Ahab to support his great mission in chasing Moby Dick. Ahab has sold his soul to devil through a compact with Fedallah and through his plan to defeat Moby Dick.

The White Whale symbolizes an unreachable goal in this novel. The White Whale, which is called Moby Dick, is a legendary whale that becomes the object of a wild and cruel chase. Moby Dick, in this novel, is the whale that has taken off Ahab's leg. The shipmates of Ahab's Pequod cruelly want to kill Moby Dick, since Ahab desires to take vengeance against it. However, despite the efforts of the crew, it can never be defeated. Moby Dick cannot still be reached easily by

people. As a matter of fact, *Moby Dick* seems to possess strong power and brings a sense of sacredness; and thus, it serves as a power of God that is unconquerable by people.

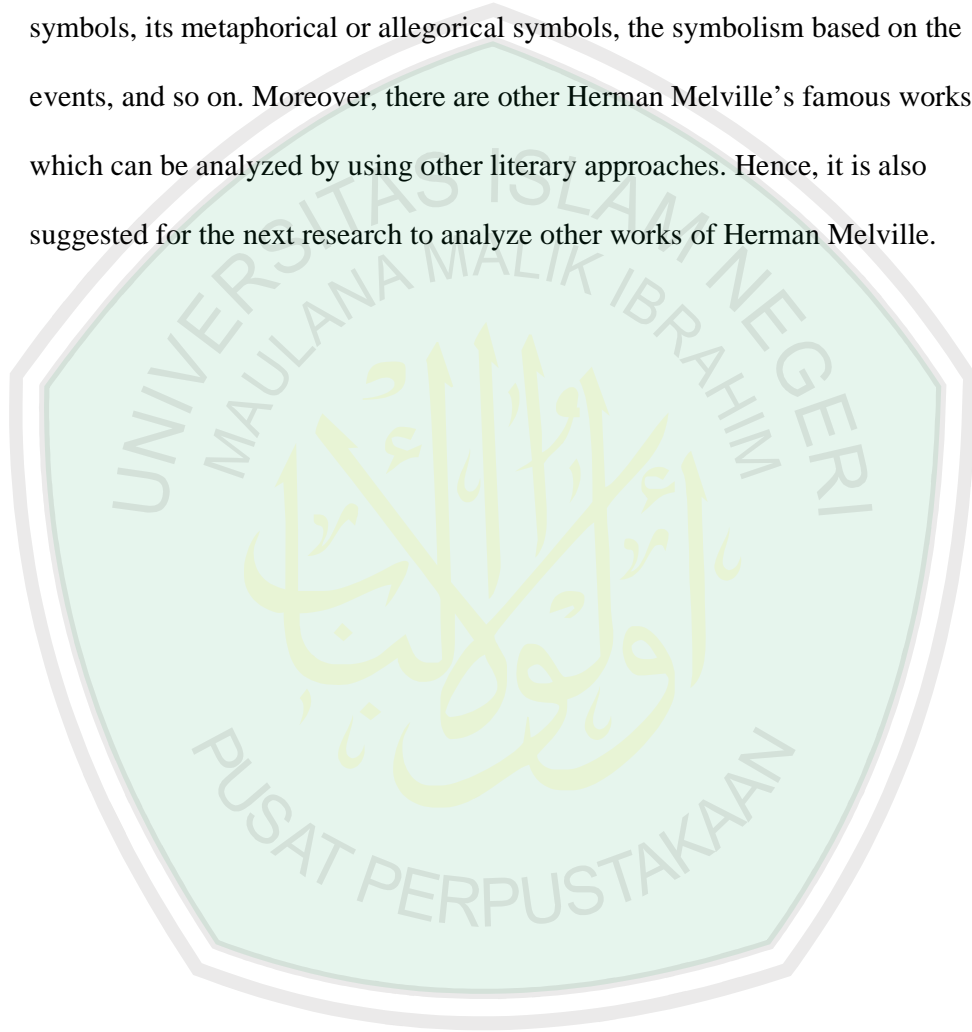
In addition, the ship *Pequod* and the Sea comes to symbolize human life in the world. The ship *Pequod* is a whaling ship used by the narrator, Ishmael, and other crew to go sailing on the sea for about three years commanded by Captain Ahab. The ship *Pequod* consists of many different crews from many different status and nationalities. In this novel, the sea becomes the central idea, since it foreshadows the background of the scene. Most of all, the *Pequod* consisting of many different crews that sails on the sea symbolize the life where people struggle and play their role in this world. The sea, thus, represents the obstacles that must be overcome by people in their lives in order to understand the meaning of life itself.

Finally, the coffin, in this novel, becomes an object which symbolizes the opposite thing of death and life. At the first time, the coffin comes to symbolize death for Queequeg. It has been built when Queequeg gets serious ill. He has the carpenter made it for his last rest. Then, the coffin comes further to symbolize life for Ishmael. It becomes Ishmael's life buoy when the *Pequod* sinks and it saves Ishmael as the narrator.

## **5.2. Suggestion**

This study is only concerned with the symbols and their meanings found in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* based on some characters and objects. In fact, there

must be many weaknesses and limitations dealing with this analysis; therefore, some suggestions for further study are given in this section. There are still many other things that can be explored from this work; for instance, its metaphysical symbols, its metaphorical or allegorical symbols, the symbolism based on the events, and so on. Moreover, there are other Herman Melville's famous works which can be analyzed by using other literary approaches. Hence, it is also suggested for the next research to analyze other works of Herman Melville.



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## APPENDIX

### KEY FACTS

**Full title** · Moby-Dick; or The Whale

**Author** · Herman Melville

**Type of work** · Novel

**Genre** · Epic, adventure story, quest tale, allegory, tragedy

**Language** · English

**Time and place written** · between 1850 and 1851, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and New York City

**Date of first publication** · 1851

**Narrator** · Ishmael, a junior member of the Pequod's crew, casts himself as the author, recounting the events of the voyage after he has acquired more experience and studied the whale extensively.

**Point of view** · Ishmael narrates in a combination of first and third person, describing events as he saw them and providing his own thoughts. He presents the thoughts and feelings of the other characters only as an outside observer might infer them.

**Tone** · Ironic, celebratory, philosophical, dramatic, hyperbolic

**Tense** · Past

**Setting (time)** · 1830s or 1840s

**Setting (place)** · aboard the whaling ship the Pequod, in the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans

**Major conflict** · Ahab dedicates his ship and crew to destroying Moby Dick, a white sperm whale, because he sees this whale as the living embodiment of all that is evil and malignant in the universe. By ignoring the physical dangers that this quest entails, setting himself against other men, and presuming to understand and fight evil on a cosmic scale, Ahab arrogantly defies the limitations imposed upon human beings.

**Rising action** · Ahab announces his quest to the other sailors and nails the doubloon to the mast; the Pequod encounters various ships with news and stories about Moby Dick

**Climax** · In Chapter 132, “The Symphony,” Ahab interrogates himself and his quest in front of Starbuck, and realizes that he does not have the will to turn aside from his purpose.

**Falling action** · The death of Ahab and the destruction of the Pequod by Moby Dick; Ishmael, the only survivor of the Pequod’s sinking, floats on a coffin and is rescued by another whaling ship, the Rachel.

**Symbols** · Ishmael as a cultural symbol of social outcast, Queequeg as a private symbol of purity, Ahab as a cultural symbol of madness, Elijah as a cultural symbol of fortuneteller, and Fedallah as a private symbol of the devil and the dark shadow of Ahab, the White Whale Moby Dick as a private symbol of an unreachable goal, the ship Pequod and the Sea as private symbol of human life in the world, and the Coffin as a private symbol of both life and death.

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Hereby, I certify that the thesis I wrote to fulfill the requirement for Sarjana Sastra (S.S) entitled “The Study of Symbol in Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*” is truly my original work. It does not incorporate any materials previously written or published by another person, except those indicated in quotation and bibliography. Due to the fact, I am the only person responsible for the thesis if there is any objection or claim from others.

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