

Get to Know Moby Dick

Moby Dick is a novel written by American writer Herman Melville of the 19th century. The story is based on his real experiences. After being a waiter, a sailor and suffering a lot on the sea, Melville finally returned home after five years' travelling and drew upon all his experiences to complete this great book.

The book is mainly about Captain Ahab's revenge against a giant mysterious white whale named Moby Dick, which bit off one of Captain Ahab's legs on a previous voyage. From then on, Ahab's heart was filled with hatred and thoughts of revenge. To carry out his revenge plan against Moby Dick, he gathered a group of shipmates on the whaler *Pequod* in a hurry, including the narrator of the story—Ishmael. On the quarter deck, Ahab successfully aroused the hatred of the crew towards Moby Dick and made them determined to hunt it to the ends of the earth. It took them a long time to find the whale before all the shipmates died in the fierce fight against the sea monster, except the narrator Ishmael, whose name means "the abandoned man" in *The Bible*.

The main character of the book is Captain Ahab, who is powerful, full of courage, never gives up his goal and has a strong will to take control, as is put into his own words: "I decide my own destiny." However, he also has his dark side, namely, he is sort of a revenge maniac, being cruel, stubborn, conceited and selfish, which can be seen through his desperate revenge against Moby Dick at all costs.

In my opinion, Captain Ahab is the symbol of strong human power while Moby Dick symbolizes the nature power, both of which are balancing forces against each other. Any attempt to break the balance is doomed, as is one of the running rules in the nature. The book successfully draws my attention to the proper relationship between man and his environment—the nature.





A Movie Review on *Moby Dick* (2012)

高二9班 周璇

Moby Dick is a movie worth watching. It tells a story of sailing in which the protagonist Captain Ahab is a tragic hero of excessive self-reliance, isolation and mania for revenge. He hates a white whale named Moby Dick, which cruelly bit off his leg on a previous voyage. Captain Ahab wants to capture this white whale and finally dies on its back after 3 days' desperate hunting.

I like the movie because of two points. First, I like its video technology which makes me feel as if I were personally on the scene. Due to its frequent using of jittering lens, I always have a sense of being with Captain Ahab on the whaler *Pequod* on the tossing sea. In the next place, the story is full of metaphors. For example, the name Ahab suggesting the insidious vengeance king in the Old Testament forecasts the doomed failure of Captain Ahab.

Captain Ahab is a very complex character, sort of a paradox. On the one hand, he is brave, self-reliant and persistent, which is revealed through his courageous quest for Moby Dick; on the other hand, he is selfish, conceited and revengeful when we think of his desperate hunting for Moby Dick at the cost of all his shipmates' dear life.

Finally, *Moby Dick* is a movie that I would like to recommend as it presents not only a wonderful story but also plenty of knowledge about sailing, whaling and whales.

Symbolism in *Moby Dick*

高二8班 赵雨彤

Moby Dick is a highly symbolic work. Many things or acts that have symbolic meanings in this book have successfully drawn my attention.

In the first place, the white whale itself has been read as a representative of good and evil like Captain Ahab. In addition, it has also been seen as a metaphor for the elements of life that are out of our control.

Second, the whaler *Pequod's* quest to hunt down Moby-Dick is widely viewed as allegorical. To Ahab, killing the whale becomes the ultimate goal in his life. Therefore, the whale can represent our goals in life.

Furthermore, Ahab's vengeance against the whale is similar to man's struggle against fate. Just think about the question: What exactly will Ahab do if he succeeds in his quest? Having accomplished his ultimate goal, what else is there left for him to do? In my opinion, the author Herman Melville may be implying that people in general need goals in life, yet he also warns that such a goal can be destructive if it is pursued at all costs.

Finally, Ahab's pipe is widely looked upon as the riddance of happiness in Ahab's life. By throwing the pipe overboard, Ahab signifies that he no longer can enjoy simple pleasures in life; instead, he dedicates his entire life to the pursuit of his obsession, the killing of the white whale, Moby Dick.

There are many good examples of symbolism in this great work, which I think needs further attention and interpretations.

这学期，我们看过的几部电影均是由西方文学名著改编而来，追根溯源都是纯粹的西方文学基因的外显，于是我们有必要以其特有的思维和处事方式去认识其内涵。

无论是小说还是电影，自然环境都是极重要的表现对象，也是必不可少的基本要素。从这些渗透在各个细节的环境渲染中（如切换视角时的宏大背景的展现，或是在铺陈情节时对某个自然景观物的特写等），我们可以一窥西方人、西方文化在面对大自然时的态度。

在《白鲸记》中，亚哈船长不惜付出生命代价对白鲸进行疯狂复仇，或是大副面对白鲸时的犹疑与畏惧，以及影片最后展示出的全体船员（除伊斯梅尔外）全部葬身大海的结果，都是象征着西方文化的人与大自然的激烈冲突的一种外在表现。在赞美水手们的英勇与批判船长的狭隘与偏执的同时，一个必然的心理充斥着我们的头脑，即对海洋与白鲸所象征的大自然的恐惧，甚至是敌对。历史衍生是此种心理形成的关键因素。

冲撞源于对未知的恐惧，这是一种微妙的、源于我们潜意识中的、与生俱来的心理。蒙上双眼的我们在走路时总会小心翼翼地挪步，便是对未知恐惧的典型例子。人类面对大自然时的心态与之类似。而东西方文明的演化之不同，也使这种心理在西方的烙印更深，外露感更强。与中华文明早期的定居式农业生产相比，印欧民族来到欧洲这片大陆便是凭借不断的开拓与远征。我想，热衷冒险与探索的基因，在远古时期便扎根于西方社会，并影响了西方数千年。当历史的车轮前进至古希腊罗马时代，海洋文明这种新的生产形式的介入，使人类在自然面前更显渺小。在电影《白鲸记》中，多次出现宽广无垠的大海，对于拥有现代化世界观的我们，当然偏向于欣赏它的博大，它的优美与灵动；然而大海对于生活在十九世纪的赫尔曼·麦尔维尔来说，却充满了恐怖与凶险。诡秘莫测的大自然在当时无疑是站在人类的对立面。

当然，大自然也并非对人类毫无价值。从最表面来看，大自然可以为人类带来经济收入，人类可以通过捕鲸自食其力，挣钱养家。但从自然中汲取资源的同时，相关的风险也慢慢出现，并发展成为人类与自然的第二个矛盾，即与自然合作的风险与阻力。在电影中，亚哈船长腿部的受伤、全体船员葬身大海，都是小说作者及电影制片人愤恨而无奈的情感表达。在全球化日益发展的今天，人类与自然的矛盾也逐渐成为趋向于全球化的热点问题，受到更多国家与文明社会的关注，对这个问题的答案的探索从未停歇过。

当然，我想《呼啸山庄》中凯西与林顿的结合，也象征着自然与人文的融合之必然。这是对未来的预示，微妙而令人憧憬。



观《白鲸记》(2012)有感

《白鲸记》是19世纪美国小说家赫尔曼·梅维尔在1851年发表的一篇海洋题材的长篇小说。这部航海故事也是美国最伟大的小说之一。

故事的情节很简单：在鲸油的巨大需求催生出捕鲸业的年代，一个名叫亚哈的老船长在一次出海捕鲸中被一条凶残聪明的白色巨鲸莫比·迪克咬断了一条腿，从此他变成了心中只有复仇意识的偏执狂。他的船几乎辗转了所有能到达的地方，终于与莫比·迪克相遇。亚哈和莫比·迪克展开了激烈搏斗，但最终船毁人亡，只有一位头一次出海的少年侥幸存活，为后人留下了这个故事。

看了这个电影后，亚哈船长偏执的追求给我留下了深刻的印象。这个老人虽然满怀仇恨，但在电影中他依靠着假腿站立在颠簸的甲板上的画面，深深地刻入了我的脑海。即使是在惊涛骇浪之中他都目视前方、从不动摇，这种英雄般的执着令我敬畏，但他为报私仇不顾全船人的生命、无视船员的提醒和恳求，这种独断专行的性格也把亚哈塑造成了一个矛盾复杂的形象，表现出亚哈是一个美与丑、善与恶同时存在的个体，这样却令他更加真实。

此外，我有一个疑惑：亚哈和莫比迪克的斗争象征什么？是象征着人对理想的追求、哪怕撞得头破血流都在努力靠近可能永远都无法实现的梦想？还是代表了人与自然的搏斗？人类总想征服自然，却不知自然是无法征服的。又或者是要表现复仇之心的毁灭性？一个被复仇所蒙蔽双眼的人最终会成为一头怪物，美好的品质会渐渐凋零，周围的人也会被拖入深渊。

而且，我觉得这部电影还存在着一种对当时社会状态的批判。我认为亚哈无谓的追求报仇象征着对捕鲸业的一种批判，白鲸的反击是对人类肆意杀戮的控诉，悲惨的结局预示了过度杀戮会遭致报应。

但这部电影所带来的不仅仅如此。《白鲸记》，它的一半是深渊，另一半却是光明。亚哈虽然偏执，故事的结局虽然是悲剧，但是亚哈和捕鲸船上的每一位船员的壮举，激励着后人为了理想不畏艰险，勇往直前，前赴后继。

总之，这部电影带来的东西太多了。这场残酷的战争没有所谓的正派和反派，但是我们要确实反省，如何和我们生存的大自然相处，与周围的生物打交道。电影中白鲸的血依旧历历在目，让我久久不能平静。