

# A Great Prophecy of the Historical Development of Human Society: Moby Dick

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**Abstract.** Moby Dick is a profound American fiction which leaves readers endless space to investigate. Literary critics find the essential value of it from different angles. The connection between the text and social phenomenon is the core part we should think about. It is this kind of connection that shows us the profoundness of the writer's thoughts and social values of the work. Critics argue that Moby Dick is a mirror of American society in the middle of the 19th century. The ship "Pequod" is a representation of the country of America. The plot and the characters in the book are reflections of the social problems of a developing nation. However, the social values of the book are not constrained to the reflection and analysis of American society only. The story shows the feature of a period that may share a similar background with other countries and nations. Viewing from the historical perspective of the development of a nation, I argue that the experience of "Pequod" subtly predicts certain periods that some nations have been through in a certain historical period, including the political and social confusions in Russia and Germany in the Second World War. The situations of these countries during that period share common ground with the experience of "Pequod". Also, we can all find a leader as "Ahab" and people who unconsciously become the "sailors" of him at that time. Firstly, same as Ahab who lost one leg to Moby Dick, The Soviet Union and German were undergoing hardships and were threatened by other countries—German was going through aftermaths of the First World War and the Soviet Union's socialist ideology received hostility from Western countries. Secondly, Ahab treats Moby Dick as a devil. The leaders in German and Russia also tend to go beyond the line and overstate the power and evilness of their enemies. Thirdly, Hitler and Stalin have all the qualities to make a popular leader just like Ahab does. They are wise enough to know the desires of the citizens. We can think of the coin in Ahab's hands as the temptation of wealth, but we also can assume it as all the fancy promises politicians have made to their people. Finally, through the angel of centralization of power, we can find that ship "Pequod" is not the only the place of autarchy. To be more specific, the ship "Pequod" is a representation of the whole human being. It shows us the whole human society. I would argue that in a world now full of the environmental and financial crisis, America is the "Captain Ahab" with its overlord status over other nations. And we, with the "coin" of temptation for more material content and unknown outer space resource, are heading to a way that we never get to be back. This paper will analyze the book based on the prediction it has made for the historical development of human society.

**Keywords:** *Melville, Moby Dick, imperialism human society, reflection, prophecy Ahab, Gold coin*

## 1. Reflection on the American Society in the 19th Century

*Moby Dick* is viewed as a mirror of American society in the middle of the 19th century. The ship "Pequod" is a representation of America. The plot and the characters in the book reflect America's society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. I believe it reflects the US's society from the following aspects: Economy, politics, military, and religion.

### 1.1 Economy

America in the 19th century was a paradise of pioneers. This period witnessed great prosperity in the economy—movements like Westward Expansion and Gold Rush have pushed American to a booming era. People started to move to the West. More and more roads were established than ever before. People also explored their fortune in the sea. As Melville depicted in the story:

“Go and gaze upon the iron emblematical harpoons round yonder lofty mansion, and your question will be answered. Yes; all these brave houses and flowery gardens came from the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans. One and all, they were harpooned and dragged up hither from the bottom of the sea. Can Herr Alexander perform a feat like that?” (*MD* 18; ch. 6).

However, the wealth of the country was controlled by a minority of people. The capitalists took the largest share of social wealth. In *Moby Dick*, the Old Captain Peleg and Captain Bildad is the principal owner of the ship. However, other sailors are the subordinate in the ship, which also reflects their equivalent status in the society—the subordinate class in American society.

## 1.2 Politics

“Call me Ishmael.” Starting with this line, *Moby Dick* shows us a character that is tired of social reality and chooses to sail his life on the sea. When society is lacking in democracy and social justice, he is the one who looks for it.

*The Declaration of Independence* was published in 1776. It advocates that democracy and freedom are the foundation of a newly established country. Citizens felt inspired and hoped to change their lives. However, the confliction between autarchy and democracy has never stopped. In the Independence War, Washington alleged that “All men are created equal”. But the truth is the equality only turned out to serve a few proportions of the citizen. The hierarchy in the then American society echoes to what is depicted in *Moby Dick*. On the ship of “Pequod”, people come from different places all over the country, which can be seen as a tiny condensed society. The society on the ship is no different from the world outside. There is a core leader—Captain Ahab. Then right under his leadership, there are the chief mate, second mate, and the third mate. There is a strict division of rights on the ship. The scene of their mealtime is quite a picture of their relationship. Captain Ahab sits on the left-hand seat, while the other three sailors sit down in turns according to their status and wait until the captain to share food. They eat cautiously and try to avoid any noise to avoid any disturbance to the captain to enjoy his meal.

## 1.3 Military

In *Moby Dick*, the big white whale symbolizes evil. People believe that the whale breaks the peacefulness in the sea. “Pequod”, the ship in the story, symbolizes a strong army sailing far away from the land with the mission to destroy the big whale. The whale is overwhelmingly powerful so it arouses people’s desire to conquer it. This is a reflection of fighting against authority. the US is a nation paying great attention to its ownership to the sea. “Pequod” is a symbol of the American Navy. On one hand, technically, “Pequod” is well equipped with advanced facilities, for instance, navigational instruments, sea charts and so on. On the other hand, people on the ship are the combination of various nationalities, which is similar to the constitution of the American Navy.

“In Melville’s time, it does not matter where you come from, as long as you are faithful to the American national flag, you are accepted as a soldier of the country. When thousands of foreigners reach out their hand for vote case, it is not hard for them to get the chance to fight on the warships of the country” (my translation).

The determination of the captain, professionally trained sailors and strict disciplines all showed that the “Pequod” symbolizes American Navy at that time.

## 1.4 Religion

Harpooner Queequeg, a non-Christian, got despise on the ship because of his different choice of religion, which reflects the importance of religious belief in the US’s society. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the development of the economy, more and more people came to America from other countries. Needless to say, immigrants’ religion came together with them. But here comes the problem of how Americans will deal with the challenge since Christian was exclusive at that time. Nazarenes firmly believes that Christian is the greatest religion in the world and cannot be replaceable. But the reality that a large number of people start to convert to other religions reminds them of the fact that change and concession are going to happen. *Moby Dick* also shows Melville’s profound thoughts about the

condition of religion in America. Through the experience of Harpooneer Queequeg, Melville shows us two opposite attitudes in American's mind towards other religions. When Queequeg shows his extraordinary skills, Captain Peleg feels shocked and says:

“Quick, I say, you Bildad, and get the ship's papers. We must have Hedgehog there, I mean Quohog, in one of our boats. Look ye, Quohog, we'll give ye the ninetieth lay, and that's more than ever was given a harpooneer yet out of Nantucket.” (*MD* 48; ch. 18).

However, Capitan Bildad says:

“Son of darkness, I must do my duty by thee; I am part owner of this ship, and feel concerned for the souls of all its crew; if thou still clingiest to thy Pagan ways, which I sadly fear, I beseech thee, remain not for aye a Belial bondsman. Spurn the idol Bell, and the hideous dragon; turn from the wrath to come; mind thine eye, I say; oh! Goodness, gracious! Steer clear of the fiery pit!” (*MD* 49; ch. 18).

Eventually, Queequeg lives peacefully on the ship and gets along well with other sailors for his kindness. *Moby Dick* gives us a clue of the religious attitude that Americans had in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and shows us a picture of people with different religions living together in one society like a melting pot.

## **2. Reflection on German and the Soviet Union in the Second World War**

The social values of the book are not constrained to the reflection and analysis of American society only. Its meaning goes far beyond the analysis of a certain country or a particular nationality. Other countries and nations may find a similar experience in the story as the ship has gone through. The experience of “Pequod” is a metaphor of what some countries may face at certain periods, especially during the war period. What Pequod has undergone is a symbol of the political and social conflicts between German and the Soviet Union during the Second World War. Also, the leader of Ahab on the ship, whose sailors are equivalent to soldiers in the army, is a shadow of leaders in two countries. *Moby Dick* reflects the relationship between German and the Soviet Union in the following four aspects.

### **2.1 Strong Enemy Outside the Country**

In *Moby Dick*, Captain Ahab gains empathy for losing his leg and drowning himself in grief. It is possible that if he did not lose his leg to the big white whale, he would be a good-tempered and understanding captain. He would take advice from co-workers on the ship. and treasure the sailors' lives. But all the assumptions will not come true. We could not change the fact that he is an angered and depressed Capitan with a prosthetic. The big lost takes him down and he is full of anger. He is desperate to take revenge. We can understand his sorrow from narratives of Captain Peleg:

“He I know that he was never very jolly, and I know that on the passage home he was a little out of his mind for a spell; but it was the sharp shooting pains in his bleeding stump that brought that about, as anyone might see. I know, too, that ever since he lost his leg last voyage by that accursed whale, he's been a kind of moody- desperate moody, and savage sometimes;” (*MD* 44; ch. 16).

The image of Capitan Ahab could be found in the context of the Second World War. In 1919, Germany was defeated by Triple Entente and is forced to sign the paper *Versailles Treaty*. The paper had a severe impact on both the economy and military: Germany lost 13% of its territory and 12% of its population. Their national defense army was reduced to the number of ten million. Moreover, Germany was restricted in building up the Air Force. *Versailles Treaty* is a great strike on Germany because it only takes the rights of the winner of the war into consideration and lets the loser stay outside of the discussion. The *Treaty* made German feel injustice. It gradually led to a strong wave of emotion of avenge nationwide. Besides, Germany fell into financial crisis of 1929. The vulnerable nation was facing a serious financial condition. The whole country was at the verge of collapse. People in the country suffered a hard life. After the acceptance of the *Versailles Treaty*, Germany was in great debt. At the same time, France sent the army to take possession of many areas belonged to Germany. However, with the domestic troubles going from bad to worse,

Germany is too weak to fight back against France. As a result, inflation attacked Germany and its currency system broke down. The whole country was falling apart. Adolf Hitler, the leader of Nazi Germany, ascribed the disaster to *Versailles Treaty*, Hebrew and Communism.

To the US, the Soviet Union is a newly established combat that advocates Communism. As a new-born political system, the Communist Soviet Union was not accepted by other countries. Before the Second World War, European countries declared that it was better to stand with Adolf Hitler, a German politician and leader of the Nazi Party, than with Joseph Stalin. European countries showed little acknowledgement to the Soviet Union. They were also afraid that the ideology of the socialist system would spread too widely to threaten their leadership. Firstly, Stalin aimed to work with adjacent countries in fight against Capitalism and to establish a Communist union. However, people in Western countries do not live up to his expectation. Instead, the Soviet Union was isolated from other countries and was treated as a big threat to them. The whole Western world was hostile to the Soviet Union which surely put it in a hard position.

## **2.2 Exaggeration of the Evilness and Power of Antagonist**

The horror part of *Moby Dick* is about its evilness. According to Captain Ahab, the world is controlled by a wicked wit. And this evil wit moves and operates through the things that we can see and touch. As for him, the white whale is a representation of the evil spirit. But all the evilness of the white whale is imagination from Ahab. It comes from a strong desire to conquer the whale. In Chapter 13, Stubb has a strange dream. In the dream, he tells himself that if you are slapped by a hand, it is humiliation. But if you are kicked by a fake leg, it is no big deal. This reflects how Ahab is being obsessed with revenge—to kill the whale. On the third day of the chasing after Moby Dick, Starbuck tries to wake Ahab up: He shouts at Ahab: ““Oh! Ahab,” cried Starbuck, ‘not too late is it, even now, the third day, to desist. See! Moby Dick seeks thee not. It is thou, thou, that madly seeks him!’” (*MD* 320; ch. 135).

Similarly, Adolf Hitler is an extreme support of racialism. He advocates that Hebrew is the biggest enemy of Germany. He holds the opinion that Hebrew is the enemy of the whole world, the origin of all the evilness, the root of all the disaster and also the destroyer of human society. This belief becomes the theoretical foundation of the advocacy of genocide. Hitler was determined to eradicate Jewish. At the end of the First World War, Germany was defeated and forced to sign the *Versailles Treaty*. Like many other nationalist German, Hitler did not believe the fact that German lost the war. On the contrary, they blamed it to the betrayal of Jewish. Besides, at that time, the Communist revolution broke out and a great number of Jewish were involved in leading the revolution, which gives Hitler another reason to define Hebrew as the traitor of the country.

During a conflictive historical period, it would be ordinary for leaders to think of getting rid of the powers which were contradictory to their core ideology, especially for a country established through revolution, the opponent would usually be labelled as “counter-revolutionary”. However, the over-indulgence of seeking for enemies would cause some problems. Because of the complexity of the movement, the scope of “enemy” was broadened, which hurt many innocent people. We never know the number of unjust cases happened during the period; neither would we know the number of innocent people was killed. We could only know that as a political movement, its dimension is wide, and its harm is deep, and its time is long. It is the darkest period in Stalin’s leadership. But as a way to consolidate the power of the state, its repercussion lasts till the end of the war.

## **2.3 A Leader with Great Eloquence and Persuasion**

Just like Captain Ahab, both Hitler and Stalin have the power and skills to become a good leader. They are eloquent, powerful, and smart. They would make people obey and conduct their plans. The most important thing is that they insist to keep their political ambitions to colonize the whole nation.

As the Captain of “Pequod”, Ahab has all features to become a good leader. Firstly, he is good at manipulating people’s ideas. He is skillful in using language, which controls sailors’ emotion. The scene selected here shows how he manages to do so:

“Vehemently pausing, he cried:

‘What do ye do when ye see a whale, men?’

‘Sing out for him!’ was the impulsive rejoinder from a score of clubbed voices.

‘Good!’ cried Ahab, with a wild approval in his tones; observing the hearty animation into which his unexpected question had so magnetically thrown them.

‘And what do ye next, men?’

‘Lower away, and after him!’

‘And what tune is it ye pull to, men?’

‘A dead whale or a stove boat!’” (*MD* 87; ch. 36).

Secondly, he knows how to make a promise. In chapter 36, he takes a Spanish ounce of gold out, holding up it to the sun and says: “Look ye! d’ye, see this Spanish ounce of gold? (*MD* 88; ch. 36). To achieve his own goal to chase and destroy the big white whale, he needs help from all the members on the ship. He knows what will make them excited and for what they are willing to risk their lives—money. So, he promised that the one who finds the white whale would be rewarded a golden coin. It works on the sailors on the ship: “Huzza! huzza!” cried the seamen, as with swinging tarpaulins they hailed the act of nailing the gold to the mast. (*MD* 88; ch. 36).

Thirdly, as a leader, he has prestige and reverence. Although there is disagreement about chasing after Moby Dick, Ahab convinced them by his strong and solid persuasions. It shows us the fact that he has the power to conquer people to realize his aim.

“He grasped the three levels, radiating lances at their crossed center; while so doing, suddenly and nervously twitched them; meanwhile glancing intently from Starbuck to Stubb; from Stubb to Flask. It seemed as though, by some nameless, interior volition, he would fain have shocked into them the same fiery emotion accumulated within the Leyden jar of his own magnetic life.” (*MD* 90; ch. 36)

Similarly, Adolf Hitler plays the same role as Ahab in Germany during the Second World War. Hitler is equivalent to Captain Ahab on the ship. From 1930 to 1933, conditions in Germany went from bad to worse. The financial crisis sharpened conflicts among different social classes. People were extremely critical of the old social system and the government, hoping to be saved by a new leader. Hitler knew the situation. On one hand, he held up the flag of the national Communism. It is similar to the scene where Ahab holds up the gold to attract sailors to work for him. Hitler is good at making promises to the whole country which helps him gain considerable support from desperate citizens who wanted to get rid of poverty and chaos. Hitler soon became a political hero who was supported by the whole nation. He knew the essential skills to play this role, which was like how Ahab plays the role of Captain. On the other hand, Hitler advocated that the Nazi Party was not a party belonged only to a certain class of society. He made the ordinary people in Germany believe that the party belonged and worked for them. He tried to please the middle class and people from a lower position in society to get more supports across the country. His efforts paid off. During a depressing time when people are waiting for a new era to come, leader like Hitler would easily win many people’s heart. I believe a similar situation would happen in other countries besides Germany. People trust him because the desperate situation makes them believe that his promises will surely come true in the near future.

The Soviet Union was facing trouble both at home and from abroad during the Second World War. Domestically, because of a new social system, the nation would face many tries and failures when making new regulations and policy. Consequently, people tended to feel uncertain about the future of the country. However, Stalin constantly promised people that the nation was heading to a world where they could live a life with abundant supplies. In the ideal society, people do not need to work for money, and they can enjoy their jobs and life. It will be a community in which people share all the benefits. There will be no trade because goods are shared by the community and usually supply would exceed needs. Stalin made great efforts to comfort people in the Soviet Union,

in order to let them work for the future dream life. However, out of the country, the Western countries saw the Soviet Union as a potential enemy. And they were searching for any opportunity to remove Communism from the Soviet Union and made it a Capitalist country. For this, Stalin did a good job on publicizing Communism. He stated that Communism was not constrained in the nation but a trend for all the countries across the world. He made people in the Soviet Union firmly believe that all the countries were just going to end up being the same as them. I think we don't need to discuss any deeper about Communism and its impact on the whole world. We need to focus on the way how Stalin used political ideology to encourage people so that people in the Soviet Union were full of passion, prepared to build a brand-new country, and start to change the rest of the world.

## **2.4 Centralization of Power**

Last but not least, we can find that three leaders are all self-centered and will do whatever to consolidate their power. Captain Ahab is bigoted and stubborn. He is obsessed with his revenge for the white whale. The difference of opinions on the ship means nothing to him. He insists on chasing for Moby Dick in spite of the danger in the sea. In order to destroy Moby Dick, he does not consider the lives of sailors. On the way of looking for the whale, three companions constantly try to persuade him to give up. They think being mad at a whale which does not share human feelings is not sane: "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." (*MD* 89; ch. 36). However, Ahab would never listen to their opinions because he only insists on his ideas.

This phenomenon can also be found in Germany under Hitler's rule. After successfully becoming the leader of the government, Hitler soon devoted himself to the authorization of power. He congregated members in the government under to form the Nazi Party. To get full control of the country, he technically combined the positions of the president with the premier. All the governors, including the army officer and judiciary were expected to devote themselves to Hitler only. They were forced to declare loyalty to Hitler publicly and formally. In this way, Hitler had fulfilled his aims and became the center of political rights across the country. His position as president allowed him to control all the constitutions in Germany except the church and the army.

When it comes to the issue of centralization, we must mention Stalin. Many historians have argued that Stalin is a dictator. Some people may think that his dictatorship is a must because the Soviet Union was undergoing a period of war and poverty. It is true that at that time, the condition in the Soviet Union was tough and difficult for the government to handle. So, the centralization of power might work in a relatively efficient way. Also, we cannot deny that what Stalin had done established a foundation for the development of the economy in the Soviet Union. History had witnessed a great change in the country. Yet, we have to objectively point out that he is surely being extreme on grasping the power. In economy, he spared no effort to advocate a planned economy. There are many discussions in the government about how to build Communism in the Soviet Union. It was supposed to be a free and beneficial discussion. Yet, Stalin made it serious and attacked his opponent with high-tension punishments, which suppressed discussions and suggestions among the Party. After defeating his opponent in the government, the Soviet Union headed for a highly centralized country. Uniformity is emphasized economically, politically and culturally. And the degree of centralization is unprecedented.

## **3. A Prophecy of the Historical Development of the Whole World**

As mentioned above, the social value of *Moby Dick* is not constrained to the reflection of American society. It shares many similarities with other nation's conditions in a certain historical period. As far as I am concerned, the story subtly predicts the historical development of human society in a whole, I will unfold my argument in the following parts.

In Chapter 14, sailors come from different countries, such as China, France, Holland, Portugal, Spain and so on. The ship *Pequod* represents the whole human being society, and the fate of the ship predicts the future of human beings.

### **3.1 Dangers on the Sea**

The scene of bad weather and dangers in the sea reflects the current world we are living in. Nowadays, we are facing various crisis in many aspects, such as greenhouse domino effect, ecological crisis, economic crisis, shortage of resource and population explosion. This is the situation faced by the ship *Pequod*. Especially in these recent years, there are so many disasters happening around the world. We would easily find that our life is occupied by the news of earthquakes, flood and so on. We find ourselves living in a world that is never as peaceful as it used to be. The environment is not friendly to us anymore. The revenge of nature has already begun, and we cannot blame it on nature. It is human beings that we should blame. The changing of nature threatens our lives. Our life is like sailing on the sea with all the storms and uncertainty around.

### **3.2 The Well-Equipped Ship**

The past years have witnessed the great development of technology and facilities across the world. We lead a life that is much easier and more efficient than ever before with the assistance of facilities such as computers. We have our lingerie done by a machine; we fly to other countries as birds; we get information all over the world without going outside. Our society is like a well-equipped ship and is ready to sail in the sea. The same situation could be found on “*Pequod*”:

“Everyone knows what a multitude of things- beds, sauce-pans, knives and forks, shovels and tongs, napkins, nut-crackers, and what not, are indispensable to the business of housekeeping. Just so with whaling, which necessitates three-year' housekeeping upon the wide ocean, far from all grocers, costermongers, doctors, bakers, and bankers.” (*MD* 52; ch. 20)

Besides facilities on the ship, the software is advanced too. They have a determined leader Ahab with wisdom and courage although sometimes he is a bit stubborn. At the same time, chief sailors on the ship are smart. They pay attention to recruiting skillful sailors and don't let Queequeg share a large profit. It is similar to policy and regulations made by governments in different countries. In order to develop their economy, governments all encourage innovation and benefit those who stand out in a field.

### **3.3 Sailors of Different Backgrounds**

On the ship of “*Pequod*”, the sailors come from different nations and areas. They have different backgrounds; they hold different ideologies; they even speak different languages. However, they for a team on the ship and being wealthy is their common aim. In reality, we are on the way to globalization. Companies develop their businesses outside their countries. For example, a car has its parts made in different countries. People try to learn a foreign language so that communication would be easier. Globalization is for the improvement of business all over the world, which brings a more efficient producing process. It is also good for the development of human beings as a whole body. So, that is why people with different backgrounds try to cooperate.

However, it does not mean that we are in a world of Communism. We can find diversity all the time. The world is a big cake, and different countries have different shares of it. Wealthy people from some developed countries are able to travel and enjoy the beauty of nature. But there also people from underdeveloped areas that cannot even afford a pair of shoes. Things are the same on the ship of “*Pequod*”:

“It turned out to be Captain Bildad who along with Captain Peleg was one of the largest owners of the vessel; the other shares, as is sometimes the case in these ports, being held by a crowd of old annuitants; widows, fatherless children, and chancery wards; each owning about the value of a timber head, or a foot of plank, or a nail or two in the ship. People in Nantucket invest their money in whaling vessels, the same way that you do yours in approved state stocks bringing in good interest.” (*MD* 40; ch. 16)

Thus, Pequod is a representation of a globalized world where there are people from different backgrounds, diversified of ethnicity and religion.

### **3.4 Temptation and Wealth**

In recent years, human beings are getting trained to set their foot on the outside universe, for example, astronauts are keen on the exploration of Mars. After people have been to the moon, it is another great plan for humans to explore another planet. Human beings are trying hard to investigate the unknown world and sometimes we could not find a reason for our curiosity. I might say that it is the desire of conquering and perusing wealth in the universe that drives us to do so. Besides, it is undeniable that we already sense that the earth that we are living on is running out of its resources to support our large amount of consumption. We are eager to find a substitute. It is like the Spanish ounce of gold on the ship Pequod, which drives sailors to own and obtain it:

“It was the whalemens who first broke through the jealous policy of the Spanish crown, touching those colonies; and, if space permitted, it might be distinctly shown how from those whalemens, at last, eventuated the liberation of Peru, Chili, and Bolivia from the yoke of Old Spain, and the establishment of the eternal democracy in those parts.

That great America on the other side of the sphere, Australia, was given to the enlightened world by whaleman. After its first blunder-born discovery by a Dutchman, all other ships, long shunned those shores as pestiferously barbarous; but the whale-ship touched there. The whale-ship is the true mother of that now mighty colony.” (*MD* 60; ch. 24)

The longing for wealth and success makes people want to conquer the world, even though it is full of danger and mystery. That’s also why sailors on the ship agree to chase after the big whale with the command of the Capitan Ahab.

### **3.5 Captain Ahab: A Symbol of the US on the World Stage**

If the whole world is like the ship “Pequod”, then it is not difficult for us to link Capitan Ahab to the US as they share the same role and status on the stage of the world. With its highly developed economy and strong military equipment, the US fully deserves to be a leader in the world. Capitan Ahab in *Moby Dick* represents a number of features that the US have in aspects of leadership.

Firstly, they all have the power to make people obey their rules. America is powerful in many aspects including economy, military, and education. It surpasses other countries in the abovementioned factors. Secondly, both Ahab and the US are all good at promoting their political ideologies with hiding their real intention. The role of the US is like a policeman of the world. It claims to maintain safety and peace of the world as part of his missions. However, if we investigate closely, we would find that both Ahab and the US are trying to gain absolute control over others. Thirdly, they both conduct their power in an authoritarian way—the US is good at controlling economy and technology as they way Ahab behaves on the ship.

## **4. Conclusion**

According to what we have discussed, I would conclude that globalization makes the world like a ship of Pequod in *Moby Dick*. the US plays the role of Captain Ahab and other countries serve as the role of sailors on the ship. In the “sea” of the financial crisis and environmental disasters all over the world, human beings are obsessed with material resources from the outer space; we devote ourselves to the development of high technologies and expect to gain more wealth. But the danger we are facing with are the same as what happened on Pequod.

*Moby Dick* is a meaningful book triggers many reflections. The significance lies in that it warns human beings who are obsessed with pursuing wealth and success. We need to reconsider what is the path of our future, as the ship has to stop and re-navigate, in order to avoid the disaster waiting ahead of us.

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