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Annotated Bibliography

Adler, Joyce Sparer. *War in Melville's Imagination*. New York: New York University Press, 1981. 1-185. Print.

This book, as the title indicates, deals with war. Adler writes specifically about war within Melville's various writings. Although Adler writes some aspects of actual war, in regards to *Moby Dick*, the war within Melville's mind is more a representation of the "ungraspable life itself" (56). Adler further declares that, "the war-or-peace theme of his [Melville's] earlier works became transformed, not only finding symbolic expression, but also expanding into an all-encompassing philosophy of life" (56). In other words, *Moby Dick* the novel is a representation of Melville's war within himself. I don't think Melville's troubled mind is caused by such a simple concept as war or peace as Adler claims. Adler understands that Melville is obviously struggling with something far deeper such as the "all-encompassing philosophy of life" (56). I intend to argue (with ample evidence from the novel) that Melville is struggling within himself because he is torn between two enticing, yet opposing sides. Melville is Christian yet sees the hypocrisy of Christendom. He sees the evils in the world, yet understands the potential benefit of socializing with a horror. Melville, through the lens of Ishmael, is torn between not only war and peace but all binaries. Melville is essentially the epitome of neutrality. This concept of neutrality is the base of my conclusion as I see it; it is also the base of the conclusion of *Moby Dick*. As such, I intend to utilize this source to support my conclusion.

Martin, Robert. *Hero, Captain, and Stranger*. London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986. 1-139. Print.

This book breaks down Melville's most influential literary achievements and the why and how behind them. *Moby Dick* represents the pinnacle of Melville's "extraordinary accomplishment" (67). I intend to use this book, or a portion of it, to reiterate my thesis regarding the necessity and purpose of binary opposition. The book discusses Melville's use of binary opposition and the purpose thereof, which I can use to reinforce my argument. The book also supports my conclusion that although binary extremes in either direction can be dangerous they are necessary. One of the binaries the book covers that I was aware of, but never considered in my paper until now was the binary of Ahab vs. Ishmael. The book dives a little deeper into the differences between the two. It discusses elements such as their respective journeys. Ahab for example embarks on an "almost paradigmatic journey of purpose," whether that purpose is for revenge or solely the hunt for whales as a ship owner is debatable. On the other hand, Ishmael appears to be on "a journey without an apparent goal. It comes about of a sense of discontent and melancholy but is not directed toward the achievement of anything" (69). Martin also explains that, "it is through the opposition of the two elements that Melville establishes his fundamental structure" (69). I intend to utilize this source to establish credible evidence to my claim. Martin writes extensively of Melville's use of opposition to illustrate myths of western culture such as the search for a lost Eden or Golden Land and the quest for knowledge and power. These two myths exemplify the base of Melville's ramblings. Although at face value they don't appear to be

opposite one another, Eden represents the return to innocence whereas knowledge is arguably the opposite.

Schultz, Elizabeth, and Haskell Springer. *Melville and Women*. Kent: The Kent State University Press, 2006. 1-286. Print.

One of the most subtle binaries found in the novel *Moby Dick* is the representation of women and men. *Moby Dick* is obviously about men, and many argue its pungently phallic oriented views dominate the novel. However, Schultz and Springer claim that “the novel’s sense of longing focuses more specifically on the maternal. An ample amount of examples are provided to backup their claim, from multiple exclamations from Ahab about mothers and women to the effects of them on the lives of the crew. One interesting example of implicit maternal connection is the *Pequod*’s monkey-rope of chapter 72. Its use on the *Pequod* is for “linking men together for life or death, [which] brings an image of intimate human connectedness into the scene of carnage and also forward to the life-sustaining ‘umbilical cord of Madame Leviathan’” (183). In comparison to a sentimental text such as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, this novel seems overly masculine. Among its masculinity, however, there are various indications of “sentimental fellowship” which is contrary to the typical romantic hero of the nineteenth century and is actually more feminine in nature. There are some interesting insights in this book; however, I feel that I may have a difficult time attempting to tie this to my thesis. Although there are some examples I know I could use, the idea doesn’t seem to be as strong as the other sources.

Stein, Suzanne. *The Pusher and the Sufferer an Unsentimental Reading of Moby-Dick*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000. 1-99. Print.

“The quest for truth’ is the presumptive basis of his [Melville’s] novel” (20). This book goes into detail about what Melville’s true purpose is. As stated, the quest for truth appears to be Melville’s ultimate goal. I don’t remember the exact quote off hand but Melville states that we are like oysters observing sunlight through the thickest of water thinking it the thinnest of air. In other words he feels like although there may be a true source of knowledge it is either unattainable or distorted. The imagery of oysters in water is revealing as to how Melville feels about humankind. Oysters have no ability of their own to rise from the deep into the light. But not only can they not escape their world on their own, they think they can see clearly. As humans we often feel similarly without even recognizing it. Melville points out this as a human flaw that inflicts man. Stein reiterates the importance of obtaining knowledge but the trouble with assuming knowledge. Or rather, many think they know, or have the truth but are really just like those oysters. Melville seeks a platonic truth and unfortunately never appears to reach it; but he, unlike most, recognizes what he lacks. Stein asserts that there are forces that push, and there are forces that pull. Just as weights help strengthen muscles, so too the forces the push and pull strengthen man. She claims the possibility that the search for truth is merely the vessel to make one stronger.