

**Fearful Narrator: A Look at Problems of Reliability in  
the Storytelling Within *Moby Dick* and *At The  
Mountains of Madness* Upon the Emergence of The  
Supernatural**

by

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the elements of fear and the supernatural as seen through the lens of narrative and psychoanalytical theory focusing on the novels Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* and Howard Philips Lovecraft's *At The Mountains of Madness*. Special attention has been paid to the manner in which the main narrators of the books tell of the events that transpired by utilizing narrative theory to analyze the narrators' consistency in the flow of the narration. Psychoanalytical theory has been used to analyze the way in which the psyches of the narrators in these texts slowly deteriorate as they tell of the events that occurred in the narration of that particular point in their lives. A brief discussion on the history of the emergence of the supernatural horror novel is given to show how the elements of fear have transcended through time to the point that we are right now and fully to understand how these elements of the genre affect the narrative's ability to sustain believability.

## Resumen

Esta tesis explora los elementos del miedo y lo sobrenatural como son vistos por la percepción del uso de la teoría narrativa y psicoanalista enfocándose en como son representados en relación a las novelas *Moby Dick* y *At the Mountains of Madness*. Atención especial se ha dado a la forma en la que los narradores principales de los libros presentan los eventos que transcurrieron utilizando la teoría narrativa para analizar sus consistencias en el flujo de la narración. La Teoría psicoanalista fue utilizada para analizar la manera por la cual el síquico de los narradores en este estudio se deterioran lentamente mientras cuentan de los eventos que ocurrieron en la narración en ese punto en particular de sus vidas. Una breve discusión de la historia de los comienzos de la novela the horror sobrenatural es presentada para demostrar como los elementos del miedo han transcendido mediante el tiempo hasta el punto en el cual estamos ahora mismo y para comprender completamente como estos elementos del género afectan la habilidad narrativa para mantener la credibilidad.

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## **Chapter I: A Brief Historical Timeline on the Origins of Supernatural Horror Fiction**

The first instances of fear and the supernatural emerge from antiquity and are connected to human history through the use of fiction. The elements that these texts depict show events that have transcended through literature and history. This chapter focuses on how horror and the supernatural have evolved in history and literature to become elements of one another and of the changes they have passed through. Other elements that complement fear and the supernatural are the fantastic and the uncanny. The fantastic lends its characteristics of surreal elements and mythical creatures and situations to the plot of a story. The uncanny relates to the supernatural as something that presents itself as a possibility to real aspects of life.

Fear and the supernatural are elements that shape the outcome of the events in the novels *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness*. These events infused with the supernatural distort the narrative in these novels for the benefit of showing how they are represented respectively. The relationship between both authors, Herman Melville and Howard Philips Lovecraft, is that these authors although recognized in their timeline and genre of writing possess a quality to discern different aspects of society and the nature of humans and put them to extreme conditions that the characters have to surpass. In the case of Melville his trait was to have an individual who is done with society and explore a whole new side of life for his fulfillment, whereas in Lovecraft his perception of the human is negative to his/her outgrowth placing risk and dementia at the forefront of adventuring into uncharted lands.

The purpose for selecting *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness* for this thesis was the similarities in the narrators' style of narration where at the precise moment of action they interrupt the main narrative to other ideas and points of interest to them. These interruptions occur when the point of peril or fear emerges in them, thus giving the reader other points of venture that are not directly linked to the main narrative. The purposes for the interruptions were the main interest in how fear of the unknown and the supernatural force Ishmael and William Dyer to stray from the main narrative of their voyages.

Horror has been a part of human cultural expression since the dawn of time. Horror is understood by genre specialists to be the captivation or awe of a person when confronted with fearful images or ideas that might question the person's mortality or frailty in life. At other times it is basically caused by something that might terrify the person enough to take them to the brink of lunacy. Nevertheless it is widely known that fear for each comes in different packages: what is fearful to some might not be necessarily cause fear in others. Although horror is something that some are drawn to, there are others that shy away from any involvement with it. The horror story as a genre came to meld with different types of genres in literary movements creating a sublime effect within the tales. The topic of fear and the supernatural can be analyzed using psychoanalytical theory and narrative theory, in particular how these are used in the novels *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness*.

Horror and terror narratives provoke the feelings of the person interacting with the tale, or as Fred Botting remarks, "terror activates the mind and the imagination, allowing it to overcome, transcend even, its fears and doubts, enabling the subject to move from a

state of passivity to activity” (Botting 74-75). It is the movement from the state of comfort towards discomfort; the person who is interacting with the tale of horror and terror longs for tranquility. The frightful essence that the horror story and terror narrative have their force in is in the narration of events, while the accuracy of the story’s details takes hold of the reader, which is when the true effect of the tale has its biggest impact and purpose.

Horror, although not remarked as something important in the first known texts of humanity, is known to be prevalent in many classic pieces of literature, as well as a factor that is socially and culturally implemented. Some critics of the genre have occasionally talked about horror narratives and novels as being irrelevant to cultural acceptance and thus distanced themselves from such texts overall. Nevertheless, within the pages of *Beowulf* we have fantastic heroes and creatures that during their historical moment evoked fear in the audience because they seemed unreal or supernatural. In such a storyline, the reader is interested in more information about the events and how they are developed over time. Interests arise in a sub-plot with similar characteristics or like the one they have read in that story. But just when the resolution would have the evil creatures that cause fear be vanquished by a hero of light then there is the end, what comes next? One might ask that question in regards to more stories with the same topic, only to find themselves distanced from their initial interest, since no two supernatural stories carry the same type of development.

The same can be said with the classic epic poems such as the *Eneid* and the *Odyssey* where the heroes have to struggle through a number of perils that caused fear and terror before they reach happiness. However the horror story did not find its origins

in the classic epic poem form because horror was not considered a genre, but rather an element of the novel or the epic tale. It was a sub-genre, as are romance, action, comedy or tragedy. Horror became an important element of the story and was seen as part of these genres and something that had to be overcome, as a stepping-stone, by the main character or characters in the story.

The origin of the horror story as a genre itself began in the eighteenth century. It was given its title during the nineteenth century with the rise of the Gothic Novel or the Gothic Movement. Although many scholars link the Gothic to Romantic literature their approach to the way that the literature was being written was different. The Gothic had Medieval elements of writing while Romantic literature looked at the dark side of the human nature to become an exploration of the self. Some texts mixed supernatural elements of nature with how the natural order of life occurs and presents the way in which the two are mixed in possible events. There were writers known for their supernatural horror literature who wrote of the supernatural and the elements of horror with more details that could question the supernatural as something possible in life such as Matthew ‘Monk’ Lewis, Ann Radcliffe and Horace Walpole. They used elements such as haunted houses, spectral apparitions and possessions in lush and vivid detail. Or as James Watts observes:

While *The Castle of Otranto* clearly helped to establish the vocabulary of character-types and plot motifs which later writers exploited, it is nonetheless important — despite the superficial similarities between subsequent Gothic works — to be aware of the different ways in which these common elements were deployed. (Watt 4)

Coleridge, who is associated with the Romantic Movement, is known to have touches of the supernatural in his writing and his views of nature drew upon the use of supernatural and otherworldly characteristics that were used in the Gothic. Scholars claim that “his special function was to achieve wonder by a frank violation of natural laws and the ordinary course of events in poems of which ‘the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural.’ And in “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” “Christabel,” and “Kubla Khan,” Coleridge opened up to poets in the modern world the realm of mystery and magic...” (NABL 12).

There is a distinction between the Gothic novel and the Gothic Romance. The Gothic as a genre that included the novel and the romance added a further noticeable quality and gave rise to give what is described by Bonamy Dobrée in the introduction to *The Mysteries of Udolpho* as a “phase of the Romance writing as that of the horror novel” (Dobrée viii). Ann Radcliffe stated that she did not write horrors just terrors, a claim supported by Bonamy Dobrée: “Her distinction would seem to gain support from the *New English Dictionary*, where terror is defined as ‘intense fear, fright, or dread’, while horror is ‘compounded of loathing and fear; shuddering with terror and repugnance’” (ix). This definition of the terms is in Radcliffe’s defense of her writing, which is not attributed to terror when we look at the elements of what this terror is and the fear that is evoked in the readers. We find that by definition terror is a disturbance of the normality of understanding and helps to distinguish genre writing. As Noel Carroll declares, “In my definition of horror, the evaluative criteria-of dangerousness and impurity- constitute what in certain idioms are called the formal object of emotions” (Carroll 28). Terror and horror are associated with the Gothic and the use of supernatural elements in novels such

as *The Monk* or *The Castle of Otranto*, which have Medieval characteristics. The emotions of the readers are to be tampered with and make readers realize that this event that alters their understanding and relevance to the reading at the beginning it will undoubtedly show its relevance to the literary piece as it progresses. Through the development towards the end, the supernatural event will leave the reader guessing about whether the events in the fiction could or could not happen.

James Watt suggests, in his book *Contesting the Gothic*, that when looking at the elements of the Gothic Romance and the supernatural a way of explaining Gothic fiction is the language that the genre has and the origins from where the language is coming from to give the genre its own feel (Watts 4). The Gothic Romances and Gothic fiction have been influenced by medieval lore in terms of pilgrimage stories. Pilgrimage stories go through a process of a journey where the characters are met with supernatural creatures, events and humans. These elements of the narrative share the focus of the supernatural found in the Gothic. The point is not on just contesting the characteristics or influences from other eras or genres but of the manner that the Gothic Romance distinguished itself and evolved from its older counterparts.

The Gothic Romance began to be seen more for its ability to stay within a set type of description and setting rather than branching out into other ventures. The novels of this genre had a recurring formula to strike fear into their readers but never articulated by the critics. The popularity of this type of literature began to grow as it was marketed but mainly had its influence on “women and lower classes” (Watt 5) and was disapproved of by critics mainly because it appealed to the senses.

The characteristics of the Gothic have been in different views and positions to appeal to what is shown in the novels. As is remarked by Watt, the Gothic was not focused on the reception to become a genre but rather to expose the styles of writing from different writers and their work during the era (Watt 6). The Gothic as a genre was expanding in the writing community to become something more than just a tale with scary antics and to have more substance in writing styles and techniques. This evolved from the use of the spooky house setting to other settings such as roads with journeys filled with elements of the supernatural tampering with nature to evoke new senses of fear.

In regards to the uses of the supernatural in the Gothic Romance, there are assumptions of how the horror story emerged and integrated the supernatural within it. Towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Romantic Movement emerged with a commanding influence through its use of the elements of horror and the supernatural. Edgar Allan Poe set an innovative way for this new style of storytelling with his writing that exploited normal human life, as well as how characters interacted with what the world had to offer. This style of writing brought forth taboo subjects shunned by many writers who only briefly touched upon these topics such as schizophrenia and the supernatural. Edgar Allan Poe later on introduced a new style of story to the reader and a new way to how horror stories are told.

Poe was described by Howard Phillips Lovecraft as “the father of modern horror” (Lovecraft 133) not just because of the way that he writes on the theme of supernatural fiction, but also because he introduces normal people as narrators. These narrators are transformed into characters that are feared and rejected by other people. This brings a

notorious aspect that makes people uneasy upon knowing that in reality these types of people are common in society. With Poe more noticeable elements on the construction of the horror story were taking shape and other American writers soon followed his craft.

Empry Elliot in *The Columbia History of The American Novel* attests that:

Americans had the most success adapting the form of the novel...the gothic which specialized in such human foibles as superstition and delusion, as well as human anxieties over hidden corruption, and uncertain, if not outrightly malign motivation....characters whose respectable, seemingly normal outer lives mask savage, abnormal inner ones. The gothic thus became the perfect form for expressing the fears that American society, with concomitant ideologies of liberalism and individualism, not only had continued the abuses of hierarchical social structure but also had actually opened the way to even greater treacheries: self-made, self improved, self confident, and self determined men abusing power, subverting authority, undermining order. (22)

Poe instilled this type of social fear in his readers to a point where he dominated the genre of Gothic fiction and managed to spread the style into the most common aspects of society and proved that the supernatural relates to the natural.

Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote in a similar manner, but brought the force of morals within his stories, beginning a new trend in the genre. Hawthorne's stories take normal people in society such as church goers and law abiding citizens, and expose their hidden motivations in such a society as not being true with how society is seen to the naked eye. But it was Poe who was inherently interested in exploiting the social aspect of horror, the mindset of his characters, and his readers by using supernatural elements. In doing so Poe

would stretch the boundaries of the possible to see how these otherworldly possibilities in his stories would rub off on the comprehension and rationale of his readers by exploiting society's maliciousness with his unnamed characters as an example to carry out his point of people in society without pointing fingers at particular individuals, but towards people who mirror those characteristics in society. Poe, according to Lovecraft:

knew that the function of creative fiction is merely to express and interpret events and sensations as they are, regardless of how they tend or what they prove – good or evil, attractive or repulsive, stimulating or depressing – with the author always acting as a vivid and detached chronicler rather than as a teacher, sympathizer, or vendor of opinion. (Lovecraft 133)

Poe also projected the other side of human sympathetic nature by presenting situations that contained:

happenings which attend pain rather than pleasure, decay rather than growth, terror rather than tranquility, and which are fundamentally either adverse or indifferent to the tastes and traditional outward sentiments of mankind, and to the health, sanity, and normal expansive welfare of the species. (Lovecraft 134)

Poe set the way for the emergence of horror fiction and his style would influence writers interested in the genre for writing stories of the morbid and the macabre. Poe's view of the world in an extravagant and deteriorating lifestyle triggered many of the fantastic short stories that were penned by him. In terms of Melville's style of writing in relation to horror he had grim events narrated as in *Moby Dick* describing situations with decapitated heads and supernatural elements. Melville also presented the horrors of human behaviors that are tied in with societies. Thus Melville shaped out his mythos in

terms of the whaling industry and the problems that whalers have. In the narrative we are presented with the hunt of the white whale while given diverse issues in relation to the outgrowth of a human who completely detached himself from the world of social constraints to experience the world. The literature pertaining to horror as a genre was taking shape and by presenting issues that were mostly taboo or not accepted by current society as being normal or humanly possible horror was becoming more and more prevalent in description. This style of literature was being sought out by readers and writers for the representations of supernatural elements and situations of natural versus the unnatural because of their possibility in society.

There were others influenced by Poe. Groups who were influenced by him were Decadent writers such as Oscar Wilde in Victorian England and French writers such as Charles Baudelaire. The type of writing done by the Decadent school of literature had its specialty in exposing the most notorious aspect of humanity as well as denouncing the notion of nature as good, for they believed that all things in nature and humanity have some corruption to them. They also denounced the idealization of nature and the intrusion of the social aspect, for they did not care for the sanctity of acceptance, but rather wanted the nature of the libertine. These writers had a link to the medieval in regards to the characteristics of having monstrous social situations that were reflected in the style of writing in the Decadent school of literature. These writers also included issues that questioned the appropriate standards of behavior in society. More than issues of society they questioned how the horrors of society are something of a change from the standard of the early gothic characteristics relating to horror and fear. History was seen as a representation of events that were infused by the macabre and the absurd in some writers'

craft. The emergence of social problems in society were written about by the Decadent School chiefly spearheaded by the libertine lifestyle or, as it was later called, the Dandy way of life.

During the early twentieth century there were a number of writers who were serious about the genre to develop the horror story while trying to distance themselves from the graphic libertine lifestyle that the Decadent School exalted. Their focus was mainly on the grotesque, or that which relates to the ugly or distorted, and/or the unreal, the strange or imaginary, rather than extreme lifestyles for impacting horror on the reader. In the wake of this focus came the writings of Howard Phillips Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith, who paved the way for the distinction of the modern horror story from the previous schools that indulged in the writing of the horror story. These writers focused on the supernatural as something that interrupts the normality of events rather than on the way that the Decadent School fashioned their style of writing a horror story or a tale. In the same manner these writers distanced themselves from the style of the Decadents by incorporating elements of the otherworldly. Such writers were Arthur Symons with mystical and spiritual poetry, Ernest Dowson with elements of death and reunion and Ion Luca Caragiale using inland mythology and taboo subjects. By tracing back the history of the Gothic story and the Romance, horror writers added to the traditional sounds and shadow images in a mysterious place to a modern view of the horrors in society by adding new horrors such as fierce creatures from outer space or slumbering bacteria in the air to cause uneasiness of judgment that would cause shock or uneasiness to the reader.

Very much influenced by the Decadent and the writings of Edgar Allan Poe, Howard Phillips Lovecraft developed even further the notion of what would become modern horror stories. But Lovecraft himself had another view and went on to invent the Weird tale, which comprises supernatural entities that surpass the common knowledge of what is possible in nature and the mind, taking into consideration the creation of worlds using the dreamscape to his advantage and the possibility of entities causing conflict in the natural world. With the Weird tale, Lovecraft set out to combine new possibilities with the traditional form of writing supernatural horror, pushing the boundaries of the imagination.

In contemporary literature horror and the link to the supernatural are still seen in the tales of Stephen King and Clive Barker. Stephen King opts for the more traditional horror style of Poe. Stephen King's use of detective elements in his novels and stories leaves the audience guessing the mystery up to the end where all is clarified. King adopted a slightly different style of writing horror by leaving some tales halfway completed in details towards the end where all details and mysteries are cleared. Clive Barker took the supernatural to new heights by delving into the manifesto that Lovecraft wrote for future horror writers. Barker wanted to create much more than just the traditional sense of writing horror stories and therefore created a mythos of his own taking into account the supernatural and the unknown in modern contemporary society. With the variety of styles in Modern Horror writers of the genre could take advantage of what other writers before them did not have the opportunity of enjoying. Just as the horrors of the past went on to become classic contributors to the horror genre, modern writers have relied on classic styles for causing fear.

In horror narratives there are elements of writing that make this genre unique. These elements are found in the use of supernatural and the relation to fantastic qualities that the authors include in their writings. This link between the fantastic and the supernatural is a bond that holds them together in terms of the otherworldly aspects of their content, not to mention the possibilities of creativity. In the following section the fantastic and the elements that are found within the style will be examined and linked to how these terms were adapted to the horror story.

### **The Fantastic and Supernatural in Literature:**

In his introduction to the book *Fantastic Literature: A Critical Reader*, David Sandner defines Fantastic literature as “the modern literature of Nostalgia and the impossible” (Sandner 7). This suggests that the fantastic is that which might not be possible in reality but could be imagined. Fantastic literature, though a very complex term to define, has its roots within the classic tales of literature and oral history that mixes possible encounters yet are exaggerated as they are told. Or as Tzvetan Todorov states in his essay *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* “the fantastic is that hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event” (Todorov 136). The Fantastic has characteristics and terms that help define it as a genre, such as the power of the imagination and the sublime. The sublime as explained by Longinus in his work *On Sublimity* is defined thus: “Sublimity is a kind of eminence or excellence of discourse. It is the source of the distinction of the very greatest poets and prose writers and the means by which they have given eternal life to their own fame” (Longinus 138). Yet writing the sublime is not easy for it must appear at the very precise moment in a work or else all that

was proposed to be of greatness and/or excellence fails to astonish the mind of the reader: “...produced at the right moment, tears everything up like a whirlwind, and exhibits the orator’s whole power at a single blow” (Longinus 138). In Immanuel Kant’s work *Critique of Judgment: Book II Analytic of the Sublime* (1790), there is a definition that is clearer than that which Longinus offered and strengthened its relationship to the aesthetics of beauty:

The Beautiful in nature concerns the form of the object, which consists in [the object’s] being bounded. But the sublime can also be found in a formless object, insofar as we present unboundedness either [as] in the object or because the object prompts us to present it, while yet we add to this unboundedness the thought of its totality. So it seems that we regard the beautiful as the exhibition of an indeterminate concept of the understanding and the sublime as the exhibition of an indeterminate concept of reason. (NATC 520)

Or, as he later asserts, it is that which is triggered by the exploration of the imagination as a powerful spurt of ideas that is expunged out in its totality and it is achieved by “admiration” or as Kant calls it “negative pleasure” (NATC 520). This concept is one of the greatest inspirational mechanisms that the imagination possesses, which is unperceived by the senses at first, but with manipulation takes form after its acknowledgment. In part the sublime allows for supernatural elements in a novel, short story or poem to happen and be expanded so that a writer can manipulate the natural to become supernatural. This ability is a key component to the progressions of the horror story where possibility can become so to evoke fear in the reader. Although the fantastic has elements of beauty, these elements can also contain aspects of horror.

Although the imagination and the sublime are terms that are different, nonetheless they have their similarities within the context of the fantastic. Both designate the manner in which literature, and the qualities that it has attained, shifts from the believable to the extraordinary. The fantastic and the supernatural are linked to each other in terms of having “no existence” (Sandner 317), and have a relationship that is firmly rooted in strange and mystical happenings in nature, and in society. Although it breaks with the normality of possibilities and impossibilities, the fantastic has become an important factor to the developments and improvement of how the fantastic is developed and viewed: “the appearance of a difference is necessary to the function of the fantastic” (Sandner 317). The power or importance of the fantastic is deeply rooted in how it is constructed and the form that it is given. Even though it is created in a way there are the mystical qualities that play a role on popular folklore and superstition that in turn awaken a fear of the unknown traditionally related to a culture. The transcendence from timeline to timeline makes known horror folklores exist and recur. These throughout time can be further expanded on and new forms sought for them to cause fear or terror in the individual interacting with the work.

The purpose and motive of this type of literature as is pointed out in Joseph Addison’s essays regarding “The Pleasures of the Imagination” is that “Fantastic literature opens the mind to speculations concerning what science does not yet and may never know, the workings of ‘different laws and economies...than those of Mankind’...” (Addison 318). Although the fantastic has elements of supernatural events at times they are over exposed in an exaggerated way as they break the realities of the culture of their setting. At times the fantastic depends on the time it was written and its uses for the effect

of fear in people of this culture. But this distinction is to modify the characteristics in the genre for something that has been shaped depending on the culture that is described in the tale. This association tends to be overlooked as there are numerous possibilities and influences on the style than was attributed to it in the beginning.

The fantastic led the path of change from its marvelous origins in medieval times through the eighteenth century sublime with its elements of graphic horror or shocking details. Italo Calvino discussed some of the points that Todorov began to research in contemporary fantastic literature and to show how “In contemporary French literary language the term *fantastique* is used chiefly of horror stories, which involve a somewhat nineteenth-century relationship with the reader” (Calvino 133). Although not a strong definition, it nonetheless gives the reader a sense of how the fantastic is seen in a literary context in the twentieth century. This shows that most of the literature of the fantastic contains at some point a horror that is of unimaginable or incredible prowess.

Calvino later on in his essay argues that the words “*fantasia* and *fantastico*” (Calvino 133) have no relation to each other and are used to separate all emotions and concepts of the impossible that may be found in the text. There are many ideas that are left to the reader to find out to what is the concise definition or classification of literature of the fantastic. The fantastic has its roots in stories with symbolic situations and myths of other centuries and proved to influence the imagination of the writers of fantastic stories. The use of symbolic situations and myths are blended into the writers’ stories by way of imaginary possibilities that they could shape and mold to their liking, thus becoming a great advantage to the stories that these writers were creating.

The imaginary possesses the quality of setting to reality thoughts and ideas that are not possible and thus makes them real to the context to which they are written in and/or about. The literature that is written in this manner tries to mimic situations of real life and adds additional details that give it a fantastic/supernatural quality. As David Sandner notes, “The fantastic’s claim and gestures toward irreality and estrangement always arise in that context; in fact, that is part of the point: not only charged with being ‘escapist,’ but asserting the possibility as a right, fantastic literature importantly reveals itself to be only that much more bound in place” (Sandner 5). In the fantastic there are two important terms that help in comprehending aspects of the fantastic which are The Imagination and the Sublime.

The imagination creates in the mind things that might not be possible and places them in the context of possibility. This is used to differentiate the real and the unreal. As Sandner declares, “The imagination desires not only ‘to be filled’ but to be overfilled by ‘the great,’ something (anything) ‘too big for its capacity’” (Sandner 8). The sublime according to Fred Botting is important in the sense that “no topic of aesthetic enquiry in the eighteenth century generated greater interest than that of the sublime” (Botting 38-39). The sublime presents itself in the storyline yet it is not completely disclosed to the reader as it “acts upon the imagination with irresistible force, so that we ‘are flung into a pleasing astonishment’” (Sandner 8). The fantastic relates to events that at first could not be explained possible rather are thought of possible by placing them in situations that make these possible.

The Fantastic contains a terror quality that is important and offers to the horror genre different approaches to the invention of techniques that can be expanded in the

storyline and developed into the explorations of the genre. Both the Fantastic and terror have a relation in their uses of supernatural characteristics to their tales. Noel Carroll expresses the need for the distinction of the uses of the fantastic into the horror genre: “The Fantastic is a genre unto itself, albeit one that is a near neighbor to the horror genre, and one that bears intimate relations to certain forms of horror plotting” (Carroll 144). Carroll stresses the ties that horror and the fantastic have across a variety of cultural expressions related to horror: “thinking about the Fantastic reveals important features of many of the horror stories of literature and film” (Carroll 145). In the horror genre there is a distinction between the developments of the story and imminent conclusion as divulged by Anna Barbauld that

The painful sensation immediately arising from a scene of misery, is so much softened and alleviated by the reflex sense of self approbation attending Virtuous sympathy, that we find, on the whole, a very exquisite and refined pleasure remaining which makes us desirous of again being witnesses to such scenes, instead of flying from them with disgust and horror. (Aikin 31)

Both the horror story and the Fantastic tale have elements of otherworldly events that transpire or happen in the world of the narrative and are developed throughout it. The difference between them is the manner that they are compared and contrasted, which makes them almost inseparable from each other since one complements the other in a way, but may be absent from the other. The fantastic suggests an understanding of issues of the unknown, “not the function of supernatural events, but the function of the reactions that they provoke” (Todorov 137). Likewise the characters in the story must appeal to the reader and complement each other in terms of the events that transpire so that the

characters “must decide if a certain event or phenomenon belongs to reality or to imagination, that is, must determine whether or not it is real” (Todorov 137).

This distance between the fantastic and the horror genre is governed by the rules of a natural balance towards the application of the supernatural that has been in discussion for centuries by creating elements and panoramas that have human qualities given by the writers in the tales. Joseph Addison discussed these qualities in his essay *The Fairy Way of Writing* where he notes that “we are sure in general there are many intellectual beings in the world besides ourselves, and several species of spirits, who are subject to different laws and economies from those of mankind” (Addison 22). Addison speculates on the hierarchy of the supernatural as having a likeness to the natural world by attributing human qualities to the way these supernatural events happen. As further expanded in Addison’s claim that the supernatural is mainly a play on the development of events, E. J Clery notes that “Addison’s introduction of the supernatural is not rhetorical, aimed at stirring the passions of gratifying a love of the marvelous, but farcical, a mere masquerade that the audience is party to from the outset, and in terms of dramatic value interchangeable with any other instrument of deception” (Clery 34). Most readers comprehend that in the elements of the Fantastic there is an understanding of some of the sensibilities that the Gothic novel offers not to mention the tie-in to the horror/terror story with a particular appreciation of these supernatural qualities. As Clery points out, “Given that there is no room for the supernatural in a rationalistic world, the making ‘real’ of ghosts in the response to dramatic fiction necessarily involves an enhanced sense of the possibilities of the aesthetic afterlife. Valorization of the Supernatural as a source of aesthetic pleasure, the awakening of a sensibility detached, not only from truth, but also

from probability is the sign of an autonomous sphere of art in the process of information” (Clery 35).

Fantastic literature as described by Walter Scott carries out the construction of meaning through the imagination. Writers were incorporating supernatural elements to classic traditions, which were being called romances. The romances were given their name due to the inclusion of fantastic imagery and involvement in situations where the characters are confronted with supernatural occurrences and/or dread. The marginalization of the fantastic is due to the Age of Enlightenment which caused the public to question the natural reality that is described in the story by looking at it with an objective eye, yet still squirmed at the onset of “a ghost, especially when he appears in a bloody shirt” (Clery 34). The fantastic cannot be categorized with the simple characteristic that historical facts shroud or overshadow the knowledge of the probable and improbable. Sir Walter Scott pointed out the tradition of the romances and the focus that they had in regards to the audience with the fantastic linking the characteristics that these possess:

As the knowledge to which we have before alluded made more general progress, it became impossible to detain the attention of the better instructed class by the simple and gross fables to which the present generation would only listen in childhood, though they had been held in honor by their fathers during youth, manhood and old age. (Scott 52)

This is a traditional mode of cultural history that provokes the senses and represents entertainment not to mention unsettled states of mind in the reader to another level that increase as the author sees fit. Thus this mode of operation in storytelling grips

at the foundations of having the interaction of the reader with the story or even interesting the reader with the said narrative. As with everything that had an effect historically, time passes and so does the intensity or effectiveness of a quality within the writing of an era. As Calvino observes, “Ariosto’s readers were never faced with the problem of *believing* or *explaining*. For them – as today for the readers of Gogol’s ‘The Nose’ or *Alice in Wonderland*, or of Kafka’s “Metamorphoses” – the pleasure of fantasy lies in the unraveling of a logic with rules or points of departure or solutions that keep some surprises up their sleeves” (Calvino 134). This change was in the plot construction of the fantastic where the characteristic of the fantastic was “a literature which postulates the existence of the real, the natural, the normal, in order to attack it subsequently” (Todorov 141), giving a modern side to the fantastic.

### **The Uncanny:**

There are different ramifications of the fantastic and the supernatural and there is no doubt a strong relationship with the uncanny’s techniques in how the author uses them in the narrative. The uncanny is related to the fantastic and the supernatural in how emergences of weird and unexplained happenings transpire in the story with how the author leads the reader through the unknown with elements such as places, characters and strange apparitions that the audience is not familiar with but is informed of by the author/narrator.

Regional color is the manner in which the story is told from the perspective of a narrator that lives in a particular region and has the knowledge of that place and the events that transpire. In fact, this can be seen as an element of narrative but the term will be employed here to explain the uncanny. In his 1919 essay titled *The Uncanny*, Freud

defines the uncanny as “all that arouses dread and creeping horror; it is equally certain, too, that the word is not always used in a clearly definable sense, so that it tends to coincide with whatever excites dread” (Freud 75). And much like the term Regional color, it cannot be related to that which is not known to us unless the author gives readers a sense of what the terms, places and situations mean to the people of that area or of the events that are seen through the eyes and experience of the speaker in the tales. In terms of fear, it is still something that is known to have its differences or rather its taboo status when something that is not known to us and subsequently creates a fear of change. Not knowing triggers our fears and interests in or our admiration of the unknown and it builds within us as spectators the desire to know what is going on within the story.

In relation to the supernatural, as discussed before, the uncanny is a component of it and of the fantastic but it is not only that, for the uncanny can become a unique tool for any type of storytelling. Closely linked to horror and terror, the uncanny’s interest is to explore the emotions of the readers and their perceptions of what is unknown causes discomfort to the reader.

The Horror story emerged and mixed with the supernatural and with the fantastic through history to become a style of writing distinguished from other types of stories in literature. Earlier the classic formulas of scaring readers were, as stated before, not so scary (as compared to contemporary times), yet they evolved to include things that make the reader uneasy as it merges with the current problems and fears that people experience. This problem and daily fear transcends time and becomes a key ingredient for the horror tradition to stay alive.

Although the fantastic and the supernatural have different characteristics they complement one another and are regarded equally important for the development of horror. With characteristics such as the uncanny, the sublime and the imaginary in such tales, the horror story integrates even more aspects to surprise the reader as to the events and how they happen.

In the novels *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness* the fantastic and the supernatural share equal weight in the narration in the form of presenting a horror that to each novel, is in terms of their details, unique in the narrative. The way that the events in the novels are presented is one aspect, but another aspect is the way in which the narrator tells of them and what he includes or excludes from his account. We will see in Chapter Two how narrative theory and Psychoanalytical theory help us to understand the narrator's way and need for doing so.

## **Chapter 2: Narrative Psychoanalysis: Merging Theories for a Narrator Analysis of *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness***

This study uses narrative and psychoanalytic theory to analyze the narrators' intentions and instances of displaced narration in the novels *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness*. In these novels, there are different styles of narrative yet they share a number of similarities when we look at their individual voyages in terms of their turbulent retelling of the events. When dealing with the novels the main focus is to look at how the narrators deliver the tales and the development of the events, not to mention how the narrators' psyches are slowly twisting and distancing the progress of the voyages and the events occurring around them. Throughout this chapter, narrative and psychoanalytical terms are explained with the purpose of showing how they are going to be used in the following chapters. The first part of this chapter gives an overview of narrative theory, particularly the ideas that will be used in the analysis of the novels. The main interest in the narratives that are focused on is the relationship of the narrative as told by the narrator in regards to the use of lapses of time/duration of the events narrated, or interruptions to the main narrative, and how they frequently occur in the novels. Although these narrative devices come into use, it is the way that they interact with the characters from the narrators' perspective and how they are later on related to the closure that they seek. Temporality is important in the novels as will be discussed in Chapters Three and Four.

The second part of the chapter looks at psychoanalytic theory for the purpose of understanding psyches that apply to characters in a narrative and their reaction to events

that transpire in the narrator's accounts. The study of the narrators' accounts of the tales focuses on how they are constantly deviating from the main narrative to replace the reality of events that transpired. The fact that they constantly do so in the tales leads one to believe that their concept of reality is detached for their own benefit and egos. From delusions to roles in their tale, these narrators are involved in what is a delusional story made from traumatic experiences leading them to omit and add events that are not necessary for the development of the narration.

The two sections of the chapter provide detailed reviews of the theoretical concepts that will be used in chapters three and four. The first section discusses narrative theory and its relationship to the field of literary analysis.

### **Narrative Theory:**

Narrative emerges from the moment that the subject-verb association is realized in a written text or spoken word. In its essence narrative is the telling of events in sequential and coherent order to give form to a story, yet it can exist without an order of events. Above all, narrative is involved in various types of written works so that it is seen as an important tool for the text and an essential blueprint for written works of literature and other types of written media. As H. Porter Abbott notes, it is found in a variety of different genres but it can also be found in “non-narrative genres, like say, the lyric poem, which is frequently featured as pre-eminently a static form –that is, dominated not by a storyline but by a single feeling—you will still find narrative” (Abbott 2). The narrative abilities that people possess are “something that we learn rather than something that is built into us through our genes” (Abbott 3), in other words we are constantly learning new techniques for narrating an event or telling a story. There is never a said pattern or

standard that is composed depending on the nature of a narrator, for these techniques of narration are learned and thus repeated and possibly improved. At times the narrative drifts from the purpose of the main tale to include details that might or might not be relevant to the development of the tale such as those that are found in the novels *Moby Dick* and *At the Mountains of Madness* where different factors in the narrators' accounts affect the development of the tale.

A factor of importance has been considered distinguishing narrative genres into their appropriate sub-categories, as Martin McQuillan notes: "Perhaps the key activity of narrative theory is precisely this differentiation between stories (novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy,...) and narratives (as a process of grammatical structuration within language and an object of rigorous, even scientific, analysis)" (McQuillan 3-4). However, this distinction is made thin due to the fact that within both stories and narratives the element of telling a story is apparent and cannot be distanced from each of them.

A text, a narrative and a story are three distinct devices of storytelling that have one key element, which is the telling of an event. This event is characterized by these three devices to give it a different form or process. The text is the form that this event is laid upon, the story has a sequence or order in which events are described and the narrative is the telling of the story. There is a distinction between narrative discourse and the concept of the story: the story has entities that can be named characters as well as events, whereas narrative discourse contains the concepts of fabula (another term for story) and the *sjuzet*, (order of events/plot). Most important are the uses that these three devices have within the context of this study where the narrative is to be looked at from

the position of how the narrator uses the story for his own manipulation of the reader.

The purpose of this thesis is to look at the narratives in the novels *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness* from the position of the narrators and their takes on the events that happen in each novel.

Although a text is where narrative stories, and other types of written works are found, as Mieke Bal notes it is “a finite, structured whole composed of language signs” (Bal 5). But it is not all that encompasses a text for it is “finite” (Bal 5) and has a “first and last word to be identified” (Bal 5). This process that the text passes through has a series of things/events that give way to the nature for which the story is being told by the narrator, and in part gives the thrill or excitement to the readers of what the events of the story develop in time and space. As Gérard Genette has observed, “The temporality of written narrative is to some extent conditional or instrumental; produced in time, like everything else, written narrative exists in space and as space and the time needed for ‘consuming’ it is the time needed for *crossing or traversing* it, like a road or a field” (Genette 91-92). In storytelling that deals with temporality in regards to the narrative there are two important components to the construction of the story that pertain to the story itself and the narrative discourse employed by the author/narrator of the tale being told. The first detail that is different among the events and how they are portrayed is the “sequence of events” and “how the story is conveyed” (Abbott13). Narrative discourse is in many ways fond of manipulation and can go into any such manner such as in chronological events to in retrospect, whereas the story in narrative structure has a variety of ways in which it is developed, such as whether the events narrated pertain to the real or the invented. Each of these assumptions follows a correspondent timeline. Such a device

can be seen in Ishmael's narrative as he seeps into the story by going into retrospect of the tale of the hunt, as well as jumping to details of other voyages that he had along the way, just as Dyer goes into the tale of the expedition in Antarctica referencing distinct aspects of history that reminded him of his studies at Myskatonic University. With this device the narrative leads the reader into the world that the narrator wants him/her to believe and accept regarding the tale. As argued by Hayden White, in regards to plot and historiography, they have a structure which is something important when regarding the genre of a narrative when writing it. The way that the narrator places events to give the plot a meaning and particularity can be regarded as being a generalization of a given form of narrative (White 44). The manner in which these narratives are constructed by the narrator, carried out in writing by the author, and the events that act upon the character, are not solely founded on the basis of this formula but have more to offer than just the simple outlines of the theory.

One of the elements of narration that narratology takes into consideration for the study of the narrative is focalization, a term defined as "the position or quality of consciousness through which we 'see' events in the narrative" which is at times referred to as point of view in Anglo-American Criticism (Abbott 190). Widely used in structuralism and post-structuralism, the term tends to be more enclosed than point of view. Focalization "refers to the relation between that which is focalized – the characters, actions and objects offered to the reader – and the focalizer, the agent who perceives and who therefore determines what is presented the reader" (Herman and Vervaeck 70). This refers to the relationship that the readers have to the narrator and the tale as in the cases

of Dyer, Lake and Ishmael to the reader and to the quality of the information regarding the events in the narrative as they progress.

Focalization is one of the three important aspects that we find initially when dealing with narrative texts. The others are “voice,” which is linked to focalization and is “the sensibility through which we hear the narrative, even when we are reading silently” (Abbott 196), and the last of the three linked associations of narrative is the narrator’s use of distance which can be viewed in two ways “1) the narrator’s emotional distance from the characters and the action” and “2) the distance between the narrator’s moral, emotional or intellectual sensibilities and those of the implied author” (Abbott 189). For the purposes of this study out of these three elements the emphasis will be on focalization, as explained before, and on the distance of the narrator from what is being narrated. In these two novels the events are told in retrospect, with emphasis on the perils and hardships that the narrators endured. Yet their emotional detachment is prevalent as issues that have passed in time and are just a memory to be narrated with little or no regard to the imaginations that are told of in the narrative.

Seymour Chatman stresses that “It is high time that we introduce a terminological distinction between these two loci of ‘point of view’: that of the narrator, and that of the character.” He proposes “‘slant’ to name the narrator’s attitude and other mental nuances appropriate to the report function of discourse, and ‘filter’ to name the much wider range of mental activity experienced by the characters in the story world – perceptions, cognitions, attitudes, emotions, memories, fantasies, and the like” (Chatman 98). Chatman suggests that these differences in the narrative with regards to perceptions, cognition, attitudes, emotions, memories and fantasies be used to distinguish between the

differences of point of view of characters like Ishmael, Dyer and Lake in these novels. How these factors affect the novels is all dependent on the information that the narrators of the events report and how they deal with these situations. These factors affect the development of the narrative when the reader is subjected to how Ishmael develops his hunt of the White Whale, to Dyer's and Lake's exchange of information in the Antarctic, and to Dyer's lone account of the expedition.

Another widely discussed issue in narrative theory is the use of causation and the way it depends on the content of the narration and the questions the reader might have when finding meaning in the text in relation to the events that therein act upon the characters of a narrative. Causation, therefore, has a wider scope to "take into account the enormous number of kinds of narratives that every culture disposes for those of its members who might wish to draw upon them for the encodation and transmission of messages" (White 41). Causation also relies on the curiosity that the reader has regarding the plot of a story and the events that make it shift and change towards its end. As Rick Altman declares, the manner that actions happen in a narrative in relation to action is not initiated by an individual but by a series of actions for it to be understood by the reader (284).

In any portion of narrative there are an array of things happening. In Ishmael's narrative he keeps his readers guessing and waiting for the end result of the voyage through the interruptions of the narrative that keep the reader in awe of his knowledge on the whaling expedition, but also provide a chance for him to prove that he is better than others because of this knowledge. With Lake the narrative is a set of reports from a camp away from the other set of narratives in the exploration regarding the surroundings and

climatological devices that play a key role in the devastating events that transpired. For Dyer his narrative focuses mainly on what he thinks is going on based on his scientific knowledge and the fear that was inspired in him by reading the dreaded *Necronomicon*. These techniques in the novels have the function of introducing the series of events that are of importance to the end of the tale. All of the events in the narrative have their deep meaning and logic, which explains why they were placed in the novels and the reason that the narrators have for including them in the tales.

In terms of the meaning and how it is constructed, the basic fundamental piece is the reader “receiving the story” (Abbott 19), which is because of how the story is constructed and seen as flowing by the reader. As suggested by Hayden White, in narrative there is a system of codes that is interlinked with the culture within the story and makes narrative “a meta-code, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shaped reality can be transmitted” (White 1). Narrative is more than just a basic form of showing images and ideas about certain events that transpired in a story. Narrative is the process of presenting views about what is significant in society, culture and daily life by the use of fictional or non-fictional situations as presented by the author with the use of characters and events for them to act with. A case that is significant with regards to the routine goings-on of Ishmael in the tale is the fact that he observes culture and society as two very distinct things than from what he is projecting about himself for he is apart from nature and customary society, but not so distant as he criticizes and rejects the mentality of land lovers and sea dogs alike as if they were no different. Yet for him, he believes that this type of life at sea was more rewarding than what he was subjected to in the time he spent on land. In the case of Dyer

and Lake having scientific stature in society given to them by the appraisal of their peers is important, even if it costs them their lives. To this fact there is also the narrators' need to relate their experiences to the others who read of their voyage as something to take with them and become aware of in the process.

The construction of meaning is also related to constituent events, which are necessary for the development of the story, and supplemental action or events, those that are not essential to the story's development but share an important role in the story. These events or actions as Rick Altman stipulates, "appear so central to narrative that theorists often summarize narratives in terms of their actions alone. Narratives are typically referred to as representing a rise and fall, loss and recovery, or desire and acquisition" (Altman 11). These events of the narrative interact with the characters, the setting and the plot without which there would be no fluidity. In the events in *Moby Dick* such a summary might reduce the mammoth book to only a few chapters dealing with the tale itself, not to mention leave out the ranting of an apparently old man retelling his tale later in life, and would place this character close to recent events. In the case of *At The Mountains of Madness*, the narrative, without ramblings about old paintings, excessive descriptions of aeons long past, scientific lexicon, or the shapes of the mountains, would be a short story not a novel. With this kind of narrative in both novels there would be little or no interaction with the narrators as full people and we would not understand the relevance to their psyches nor the cultural background that the narratives suggest.

#### **Characters in the narrative:**

Characters have been categorized as flat or round, according to E. M. Forster: "Round characters are like 'complex' persons, who undergo a change in the course of the

story and remain capable of surprising the reader. Flat characters are always stable stereotypical characters that exhibit/contain nothing surprising” (Bal 117). This clear distinction serves as a passageway either relating to the character or just ignoring them altogether, yet the importance of their existence in the narrative remains to hint at other factors of believability of their existence and of their true role in the narrative. This is seen with the case of the relationship between Ishmael and the emergence of Queequeg in the novel, and in Dyer’s relationship to the remnants left by Lake at the camp. The main tool for discerning this point is with the “semantic axes” by demonstrating “pairs of contrary meanings” (Bal 126), which tend to present the characters for who they are and their weight within the narrative and their narrator/author/character relationship by implying attitudes and other manners that complement this relationship between the reader and the character in the narrative. Thus the characters in a narrative are as Mieke Bal puts it, “the anthropomorphic figures the narrator tells us about” (Bal 114), which allows us to see that the characters have qualities that are as bereft of human understanding as possible. This leads us to believe that there might be a relationship between the narrator/author and the characters in the narrative. In this manner the narrative gives the reader a connection of sorts with the characters. Even though it only hints at portions of life it makes a connection with the reader.

### **Character/Narrator/Author Relationship in Narrative:**

Characters for some critics are not real, or do not exist, but rather influence and represent certain characteristics of the writer in terms of their own personal grasp of the situations that are in the narrative, and are often times referred to by critics as just being “marks on a page” (Abbott 127), but these “marks” are representations of what makes or

shapes the character thus giving a sense of a person involved with the events of the story and relating within the events of the story. Similarly actions are linked to characters and it is important for the actions to be set in motion by the characters of the story. The actions act upon the characters and shape their sensibilities as they, the characters, pass through time and events and the completion of all things within the story.

We might come to question the author. Who is he? Why is he important in the narrative? By popular definition he is the person responsible for penning a literary work or any other piece of written work that can be read by an audience. He is at no other time, unless noted in an autobiographical work, to be confused with the narrator of a tale who is a type of persona that is present in the narrative. Likewise the implied author is “neither the real author or the narrator, the implied author is the image of the author constructed by the reader as s/he reads the narrative” (Abbott 191). Our image of the narrator is solely based on the depiction of who that person is. And the implied author is also clearly linked to the implied reader or the “reader we infer to be an intended recipient of the narrative” (Abbott 191). So according to this definition of the author there are a series of elements that are important to understanding the narrative that we are interpreting as we read about the events that transpire in the story. But also according to this definition there is a fine line between how we distinguish different “types” of characters or stereotypes of characters that are found in the narratives.

### **Timeline and Chronology in the plot:**

Likewise the story is not necessarily as it is placed or centered by the content due to the fact that it can fluctuate and change with every reading under which a careful eye perceives the actions within the narrative with a different perspective or as critics look for

patterns to construct meaning and sense in the narration. Disruptions in the fluidity of the tale can also dramatically change the flow or direction of the narration. This happens in both *Moby Dick* and *At the Mountains of Madness* because both are voyages into unexplored areas of the soul or other possible worlds.

Plot is of central importance for the development of the events that transpire within the novel. E.M. Forster has defined plot and alluded to the story “as a narrative of events arranged in their time sequence. A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality” (Forster 45). In addition to the use of events in a time sequence it is important to look at the distinction of both terms, “The time sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality overshadows it” (Forster 45). Time shifts provoke a stop in the main narrative to head into one of two ways at a time forward in time or backwards in the plot. Time shifts also allow for the addition or clarification of points made in an earlier event. As found in the shifts of time and order of events in the novel *Moby Dick*, Ishmael drifts from time past of the tale and events that transpired outside of the time frame of the voyage as well as other voyages he had after the hunt for the White Whale. Within the novel *At The Mountains of Madness* the narrative timelines of plots differ from evidence found by Lake and Dyer in the exploration of the Antarctic only to present displacements not of time but of memory due to knowledge, cutting the narrative to hear of great cities that have long been diminished or the descriptions of the mountains themselves, and Dyer’s interrogation is cut short due to his fear of telling of the events that happened in the exploration.

There is a deep interest on the part of critics in narration and temporality. As Mikhail Bakhtin notes in *The Dialogic Imagination*, there is a key concept in narrative

theory called the Chronotope defined as “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature” (Bakhtin 53). It accounts for a “category of literature” (Bakhtin 53) that is of key importance for the process of narrative theory in its comprehension of the areas that are relevant for the story and the tale that is being told and its place in the realm to which it is applicable within the narration. As can be seen with the chronotope, it can define different types of narrative as well as the temporal agents that lie within the tale or its plot.

An example is the chronotope of the road where characters are basically on a journey within the novel. The temporality of the narration lies in the fact that it consists of a series of events which shape the fate of the characters: “The chronotope of the road is both a point of new departures and a place for events to find their denouement” (Bakhtin 54). But most important is the notion that chronotopes “are the organizing centers for the fundamental narrative events in the novel” (Bakhtin 57). In this sense the chronotope is the concept that links the story to the idea of temporality in the novel. Moreover the chronotope is responsible for placing time on a visible spectrum and is precise in its contextualization of events. It gives events both a historical and spatial existence (Bakhtin 57).

In narration temporality has vast importance. The sequence of events is something that cannot be put in reverse, but only tampered with in terms of reading it fragment by fragment in this aspect, so we have a diachronic reading. In diachronic reading images lead the reader to imagine the world described in the text. These images are also presented by an illustration for the sake of saving space in the temporal succession of

events written on the page. This type of narrative is what Génette refers to being in its content a text:

Books are a little more constrained than people sometimes say they are by the celebrated linearity of the linguistic signifier, which is easier to deny in theory than eliminate in fact. However there is no question here of identifying the status of written narrative (literary or not) with that of oral narrative. (Génette 91)

The distinction between the elements of temporality in narrative can be described as being related in temporal order. Anachrony in narrative is where time displacement in narrative pertains to a certain element of transition measured only for the purpose of reliving an order of events in the story and a chronologic order for the progression of the story, the term “A first narrative” (the main narrative or the body of the narrative).

Whereas in variable duration or *analepses* in narrative depends on internal and external to which the narrative is subjected to a narrative and also to a factor that is intertwined or mixed within the narration. The External never interferes with the first narrative but “enlightens” it on any other feature that may have come before and thus leads the reader to where they currently are in the story; the Internal has the problem of putting to “risk” the narration and thus provoking a “redundancy or collision” (Génette 93). The novels in question have a grasp of additional information to the reader on the voyages and exploration in both novels. Although in some cases the details most needed for the first narrative or important ones for its progress are left out, this is done for the sake of boasting the narrators’ sense of importance in the tales and at times drifting the reader from the main narrative and preventing him/her from reaching the end of the tale.

Temporal prolepses have the characteristic of making connections between frequency and

anticipation within a plot, thus shaping the element of narrative central to the tale. In relevance to the narratives of the novels, the expectancy to continue on with the main tale or first narrative serves to distance or rather delay the narratives' end is a signal that the narrator does not wish to end for with this end there is also his demise into memory. Todorov otherwise called this the plot of predestination, "but the very idea of retrospection in narrative or anticipation, which ground the narrative categories of analepsis and prolepsis in 'psychology', take for granted a perfectly clear temporal consciousness and unambiguous relationships among present, past and future" (G n tte 95).

Jonathan Culler points out the distinction between temporal narrative and the discourse as rather being chronological space that is dictated by the events and their importance to the development of the narrative (Culler 104). More than that it is due to the improbable nature of the narrative or rather the retelling of a story that is somewhat left to prove its content and its relation to the narrative that is still up to the reader to decide. The testimony for which the witness has proof and is not clearly resolved is the case of the example Culler uses with Oedipus and the murderers of King Laius (Culler 105). The murder of the king was as known to Oedipus by a band of robbers yet in reality it was Oedipus himself who had slain the king as was witnessed by the shepherd who was near the site of the murders. Thus it can be seen that such an "event is not a cause but an effect of theme" (Culler 105). Temporality has a significant factor in relation to the past. It is set in motion by present events in a narrative due to the fact that these events are pieces of information that set forth a series of events that are sometimes considered unexplained. The actions and the endings relate to the double nature of hidden discourse

to set the narrative in motion, yet it might set in motion a series of contradictions that may cause trouble to the analysis of the narrative itself. Culler argues that this analysis of narrative “depends ... on the distinction between story and discourse, and this distinction always involves a relation of dependency: either the discourse is seen as a representation of events which must be thought of as independent of that particular representation, or else the so called events are thought of as the postulates or products of a discourse” (Culler 108). This last remark denotes that there is always a pattern of concern within the narrative and the story and discourse where either one or the other mimics the other on the basis of consistency of details and patterns of construction. Event and discourse on the other hand cannot be in harmony for the mere aspect that they invert each other on occasions within a plot and contradict at times the message or information that the narrator has to narrate.

Plot has the liberty of arranging the work anachronically. Story on the other hand has the limitation of following a sequence of events in chronological order. For the study of both novels the term that is of use is the analysis of the events in the story from the standpoint of the narrator and how he sees fit to relate the narrative to the reader.

The distinction of narrative’s focus and purpose also depends on the objectivity and the subjectivity from which the story is seen. The term subjectivity is the technique of “the person who maintains the discourse,” and has the position of the narrator in the tale while keeping in mind the author’s view on the tale. Objectivity on the other hand is “the absence of all reference to the author” (White 3). The narrator is the one that is responsible for the tale that is being told to the reader. This distinction gives the audience a sense of who the author/narrator or the narrator and the author are within the tale and

their purpose for telling the story at hand, giving a sense of personality to the manner in which the story is supposed to develop. White observes, “if we view narration and narrativity as the instruments with which the conflicting claims of the imaginary and the real are mediated, arbitrated, or resolved in a discourse, we begin to comprehend both the appeal of narrative and the grounds for refusing it” (White 4). In other words the readers can either refute the ideas, details or the overall work itself, for a comprehension that might get a different understanding of the tale at hand might not be apparent at a single glance. The events in the narrative all have a point to reach that lets the reader as well as the narrator comprehend the tale and the events, but it is with the device of closure or the end of the tale that has significance to what it is to be discovered by the reader at the end of the tale.

#### **Closure of the tale and the end of the narrative:**

Closure has to do with how the narrative ends. Closure also employs the participation of the reader who is interacting with the text: “Closure is only one tropological possibility within the production of narrative syntagmation and has no absolute authority in relation to the interminable narrative exchange. On the contrary, closure provides that necessary limit to the narrative-mark which makes possible the ‘degenerescence’ of the boundaries of the narrative-mark and so determines the success of the narrative-mark as a differential trace within the narrative-matrix” (McQuillan 20-21). This signal or mark of closure is necessary for the reader and the author of a narrative since at a certain point the narrative has to become a thing of the past for the author and then the reader even though the outcome might or might not be favorable. Closure can provide a deeper understanding of the narrative. It also has to contain details

that “satisfy the expectations” and “answer the questions” (Abbott 188) that arise upon interaction with the narrative. The assumption of the end of the story is mainly discussed as the closure of the tale but, as McQuillan adds, “the story of the end of the story is the supplementary story which the ‘end of story’ cannot accommodate. There will always be one extra story which eludes any attempt to put a limit on the idea of story, and that will be the story of story itself” (McQuillan 3). Closure in both *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness* is interesting because the novels do not really end there. They are just letting the reader know of the end of that particular voyage but the narrators have showed in their narration that they in fact have done other things before the point they decided to narrate of the individual voyages. In *Moby Dick* we know from reading the novel that there is no death for Ishmael as he goes on to tell of this tale, whereas in *At the Mountains of Madness* there is the fact that we have Dyer being interrogated and forced to begin and end the narration as if he were on trial.

Narrative theory as can be seen has an aim that focuses on the aspects of the narrative and how its shape and form are factors to take into consideration in terms of craft, characters and temporality, among other things, for the exposition that is to be presented to the reader. But more than that it is also a matter of consideration when it is looked at from the perspective of distance and non-association to timeline and character modalities. It is important to understand the narrator because he might have a distorted sense of self created by the author, not to mention the characters as they evolve from the beginning to the end of the tale, and to see how their psyches are modified or deteriorate throughout the novel. A detailed analysis of the psychoanalytical aspect of the novel is to

be made for comprehending the nature of these characters and the way in which their behavior is shaped by their surroundings.

Narrative theory helps us understand the components of the narrative and its structure, yet there needs to be an analysis of the characters and the narrator in order to understand the tale not only from the perspective of narrative theory but also from the psychological perspective. Both novels have strong narrators that have dealt with events that affected their psyches before the beginning of these narratives. They remember these events and reminisce about that time in their lives and the events that shaped their behavior.

### **Psychoanalytical Theory:**

Psychoanalytical research has for the better half of the twentieth century helped literary scholars analyze and interpret texts of literature from realms that before might have been thought of as impossible or rather improbable to look at in a particular way. As of late the use of this theory in the realms of horror, supernatural and detective novels has been essential since it goes into the characters and the settings of the stories and explains the motives for why the characters act upon and/or react to situations as they do. As remarked by Vincent C Leitch, “According to psychoanalysis, the human psyche consists of unconscious and conscious spheres, with most of its contents lodged out of sight in the unconscious and covered over by a relatively smaller and less dense consciousness” (Leitch 15). Other than focusing on the unconscious and conscious of the human it is also the frequency to where they emerge. Its usefulness has given scholars another way to understand and interact with texts and explain all the bits and pieces that

lie within each story, poem or novel that may seem at first unimportant. According to *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* psychoanalytic criticism employs “a formal model from psychology to analyze the writing or reading or content of literary texts; more generally, the application to literary problems of psychology” (NPEPP 997).

There are three types of psychoanalytic criticism that can be used for the benefit for understanding Chapters Three and Four. The first is Freudian Psychoanalysis, applied to language and the stages of dialogue, which aspires to understand a person’s inner state of mind. The second is the Lacanian approach which focuses on the role of language and on how lack and desire define the unconscious. The third, based on Jung’s position in psychoanalysis, focuses on the collective unconscious and the identification of the archetypes in people/characters as a means for easier comprehension of mental and behavioral procedures. The purpose of psychoanalysis is “that of at once seeking and affording glimpses into the hidden workings of human thought” (Meltzer 156).

Psychoanalysis studies the psyche, the self and the world that surrounds the person.

Psychoanalytical theory based on Freud’s position is employed to look at a patient to comprehend the modus operandi of the unconscious, not to mention the way that the person thinks and acts in a society, as well as psychological imbalances that are prevalent in the person. By treating an “analysand” through verbal communication the analyst is able to tap into the unconscious aspect of the patient and treat his “illness” through dreams, repressions and other things that are within the persons in themselves.

The purpose of focusing on these theorists’ ideas and applying them to the novels *Moby Dick* and *At the Mountains of Madness* is to determine the narrators’ motives for their interrupted narrations. The constant interruptions to the main tale in both novels is a

recurring feature, as if the narrators are trying to hide information regarding their background or the voyages they are on. Repression and societal ties lead these narrators to hide details of the tale since in their minds there are motives that drive them to hide or omit important pieces of information. Some parts of their narration might not be considered proper or suited as being fit for the standards that society places on the behavior and actions of people. Yet the narrators' behavioral patterns are reflected and resurface in the narrative when they talk about situations they encountered in their journeys.

These theories are going to be used to uncover why there are doubts about the order of the narration and frequent mental breakdowns due to elements of fear of the unknown, as well as fear of society's acceptance of their new transformation after such events are narrated. In the case of Freud's theories, included in the study, particular attention will be paid to the stages of language development with regards to the state of mind of the narrator. This is important for the narrators in the novels have a distinct pattern of how they go about telling the narrative, yet have a similar attribute which is the displacement of the tale to focus on little separate details as they go about their voyages. Jung's theory of archetypes will be used to show how the collective unconscious is present in the development of alter egos or archetypes in the narrators as a mechanism to try and distance themselves in the narration from their own behavior. Lacan is used in this work to focus on the desire that is sought after by the narrators to justify the patterns of behavior and repression of their needs due to the unconscious need to liberate the Other or what is known as the narrator's alternate persona. In relation to the theories of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari there is the schizoanalytical pattern and the emergence

of Desiring Machines that are linked to all of the needs that are lacking in the narrator to bring them to a pattern. This pattern makes the distinction to the behavior that the narrators present in respect to the theories explained yet this brings out problems in the acceptance from their problems in their construction as desiring machines.

In literature psychoanalytic criticism is mainly applied to the language of the text, hence the associations of one character, narrator or the importance that the author places in his/her piece of work. Often the phases of psychoanalytical theory are based on the uses of the conscious and the unconscious as to define the decisions of the narration, as well as the uses of the language as appropriate or inappropriate for the developments of the tale. Most importantly the individual analysis of the conscious and unconscious are to comprehend individually what is being repressed in the mind of the character as leading them to a set pattern that might not be appropriate in terms of behavior within societal standards and views. According to the uses of the unconscious and conscious in literature, this repression of childhood instances in the writer triggers him/her to develop a piece of work drenched in imagination and things that might not necessarily be possible yet it is a possibility in this realm of the author and/or narrator. In *Moby Dick* this is prevalent on the emergence of an alter self for Ishmael and the way in which that alter self represents the standards that Ishmael keeps hidden from what he is. In *At The Mountains of Madness* the information that Dyer presents is his view of reality as a distorted sense setting forth a series of events that trigger inner fears in his narration as well as Lake's transmissions.

In regards to character there are instances of the self that are also analyzed in the theory to look at the parallels that lie in terms of the developments of the narrative. In

theory it is based on the notion of the self as independent from the Oedipus complex where the child has a need to depart from the shackles of necessity brought on by parental guidance and suggestions as to desire as either being for pleasure or for the above-mentioned dependence. This dependence or desire as Lacan points out is a key concept to comprehending the instances of repressed emotions that were paramount in the theories penned by Freud as something to be controlled by the psyche, yet are held within the context of the unconscious. For Lacan they are because of “a lack of” something the person needs.

The last of the detachment from the figures of parental guidance is the ego, superego and id triangle in a character. The id is the part of the mind that responds to biological needs. The superego governs behavior according to social customs or restrictions and/or family upbringing and ensures culturally acceptable behavior. The ego balances the natural urges associated with the id with the acceptable behavior imposed by the superego. Other than the psychological ties to family, societal and or existential issues there is the issue of an individual attaining an alter personality which is mostly recognized as a stereotype in relation to the variety of archetypes that are reflected in literature. Yet in terms of theory this assimilation of a character in literature and society is related to the term archetype.

### **The Alternate Psychosis: The Archetypes:**

Archetype is a term proposed by Carl Gustav Jung, who “described the collective unconscious as consisting of mythological motifs or primordial images to which he gave the name ‘archetypes.’ Archetypes are not inborn ideas, but ‘typical forms of behaviour which, once they become conscious, naturally present *themselves as ideas and images,*

like everything else that becomes a content of consciousness' ” (Storr16). This theory was based on behavior patterns in the unconscious of the person. It is emergent where the unconscious is believed to be not just thoughts or ideas that are prevalent in the self but a whole other side of the person in question. Storr proceeds to describe the position of the unconscious with a split personality in terms of the archetypes that “have an organizing influence on images and ideas. Archetypes are not themselves conscious but seem to be like underlying ground themes upon which conscious manifestations are sets of variations. Their presence is felt as ‘numinous’; that is, of profound spiritual significance” (Storr 16).

An association that Jung remarked on in his essay “Recent Thoughts on Schizophrenia” is that “unlike ordinary dreams, such a dream is highly impressive, numinous and its imagery frequently makes use of motifs analogous to or even identical with those of mythology.” He also noted about archetypes that “... most of them can be found everywhere and at all times” (Jung 66). In this manner archetypes are not only present in the mind or memory of a person they are found in almost any kind of setting or in culture itself. They are free and apparent especially in literature where there are countless themes and motifs that interrelate with a character to make him/her seem like an archetype.

Before analyzing patterns of behaviors of a character in a story one must look at three things that Jung calls psychic levels so as to understand behavior and how to interpret it. The three psychic levels constitute the conscious, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. The distinctions between them are needed to comprehend the state of mind of a character and how it constitutes the behavior assumed in culture

and society. The personal unconscious is that which is individual and never shared and it loses its importance. The collective unconscious is that which every being--human or animal--possesses and is shared in culture and society.

So the mind relates to a subconscious thing which has been known to the person yet it is suppressed either one way or the other and remains within the confines of the psyche, at the unconscious level. This aspect is not discarded; it is just set aside and at any time that the person feels an unnerving feeling it might reappear within the patterns of behavior at an unprecedented time or state of mind.

Archetypes can serve as mere images and not whole parts of a paradigm: “a primordial image is determined as to its content only when it has become conscious and is therefore filled out with the material of conscious experience” (Jung 84). Characters that have a deep seated emotional turmoil might trigger the unconscious and produce a behavior pattern related to an archetype. With regard to analyzing literary figures and the instances of images and patterns of behavior, Jung notes in his essay “Psychology and Literature”: “we may expect psychological research, on the one hand, to explain the formation of a work of art, and on the other to reveal the factors that make a person artistically creative. The psychologist is thus faced with two separate and distinct tasks, and must approach them in radically different ways” (Jung 153). There are many ways of approaching art and literature. With psychoanalytical theory the goal is to identify a distinct pattern of behavior in the narrative be it that of a character or characters, the narrator or even the implied author. Jung adds, “in the case of the work of art we have to deal with a product of complicated psychic activities – but a product that is apparently

intentional and consciously shaped. In the case of the artist we must deal with the psychic apparatus itself” (Jung 152).

The reader using psychoanalytical theory must by all means be conscious and ready to tackle the variety of situations and changes in personality within the novel “[he]...must content himself with more or less widely ranging descriptions of happenings and with the vivid portrayal of the warp and weft of the mind in all its amazing intricacy” (Jung 154). By analyzing the piece of art or literature the reader is able to unfold and develop a speculation only to be demonstrated by the evidence he or she presents in the text. Thus in this proof there are the grounds to which the claims made by Dyer and the patterns of behavior are proven to be delusionary. Yet, as Jung asserts, “whatever its particular form may be, the psychological work of art always takes its materials from the vast realm of conscious human experience – from the vivid foreground of life” (Jung 156). And within literature there are ties that bind the story to the shackles of mortality in its basic tenets of life as though they were understood to happen to everyday people: “Even basic experiences themselves though non-rational, have nothing strange about them; on the contrary, they are that which has been known from the beginning of time – passion and its fated outcome, man’s subjection to the turns of destiny, eternal nature with its beauty and its horror” (Jung 154).

Psychoanalytical criticism doesn’t end with the study of literature only; it also deals with the processes of social strata and the routines and patterns that are seen throughout this process of the character incorporating itself in works through a psychoanalytical view. Jacques Lacan’s psychoanalytical theory is based on Freud’s theories but also influenced by Hegel, especially his dialectic of the hierarchy of slaves

and masters. As is noted by Meltzer, “Lacan believed that Freud’s greatest discovery was the idea of the unconscious, as described by the descriptive, or topographic, model of the mind” (156). Described as a tripartite model, Lacan’s psychoanalytical theory presented the reader with three orders or dimensions of the psyche that constitute the mindset of an individual, and are named the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic. Although these three orders have a succinct individual nature, they constitute a whole in acknowledging Lacan’s further theory of the Other.

The Real relates to the separation of the natural part of the being once language enters into the individual’s knowledge. The real then comes to light as a partner to the other two orders or dimensions of the psyche. The Real is something which is encountered in the trauma of the person and includes both The Imaginary and The Symbolic. The Imaginary on the other hand has its inscription in the context of form and shape as a mirror image and this recognition that the self realizes as it goes through the appropriation of the self until it becomes the “I” or recognition of a solid object where the person can find a physical relationship. The Symbolic is in part the abstract representation of a thing within the self or around it or an unconscious conduct that is repressed until it comes out as an act.

It was the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari that gave a new perspective to the uses of psychoanalysis by projecting previous works of Freud and debating as to their consistency within the contemporary consciousness. Their theories went further, engaging with the mind and the libido in ways that transcend the Oedipus complex. Deleuze and Guattari coined the term schizoanalysis which is the critique of psychoanalysis as being a theory that is repressive family-oriented practice that

ultimately affects the individual, creating neurotic states. By relating the desire of a person to a series of machines they developed the term to be something that is automatic regarding wants and needs as the individual grows in society and develops family ties. Deleuze and Guattari define it as “the variable analysis of the  $n$  sexes in a subject, beyond the anthropomorphic representation that society imposes on this subject, and with which it represents its own sexuality. The schizoanalytic slogan of the desiring-revolution will be first of all: to each its own sexes” (*Anti-Oedipus* 296). As an effect from that suppression comes the creation of an imbalance in the individual’s existence in his/her behavioral circle. In terms of this lack it is possible that there might be an emergence of a neurosis or psychosis within the individual, stemming from the deep rooted restrictions that the individual in society or the character in a novel has set upon themselves.

For Deleuze and Guattari this instability has to do with desire; unlike Lacan and Freud, to them the emergence of neurotic behavior and/or a psychotic state is the result of something imposed on the individual because society does not accept that individual’s behavior. Thus the “Desiring machines” have a grasp on the manner that culture and society expect that individual to behave and form part of their conglomerate. When this standard is not met, this individual is set aside or made to question his or her integrity, validity or societal behavior, thus shaping a discomfort that can later become a problem. In the novels studied, the narrators seek to become important individuals in their profession and thus be accepted as knowledgeable people in their field, yet they still feel that they have to become even more than what they have become.

Deleuze and Guattari incorporated the psychosexuality that Freud created towards calling the sexuality of a being as “desiring machines” where they deemed this part of

their behavior as “desiring psychology.” To this desiring machine there are ramifications as to the needs of development in the psychological desire that the human psyche has. With desiring machines the purpose is more than just the desire or the lack of the thing most needed by the individual in order to become harmonious in their own mindset. It is mostly in the theory that desire is a “universal flow that exists prior to the establishment of the subject-object distinction and prior to representation” (Macey 95). For this establishment of the thing most longed for, Dyer presented his need to have his name known on the expedition by longing to be at the campsite and his own name across the findings of the expedition. Ishmael, on the other hand had, by his own account had his life all planned and developed but he still felt that he needed to expand on the narrative of his life.

But the representation of the desire that a character has in attaining harmony in its setting has a big part in terms of the diversity that the text brings to the reader and how they understand it. A point of interest in this is the relationship that both the events in society and in the identity of the character have to come to terms with the desire presented and how it is handled by the character in the text. In regards to literature Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari viewed literature and its analysis as something that is subjected to different things: “a book is an assemblage of this kind, and as such is unattributable. It is a Multiplicity – but we don’t know yet what the multiple entails when it is no longer attributed, that is, after it has been elevated to the status of a substantive” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 4) but the book becomes something more that mimics what is seen in contemporary times, “the book imitates the world, as art imitates nature: by procedures

specific to it that accomplish what nature cannot or can no longer do, the law of the book is the law of reflection, the One that becomes two” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 5).

The credibility of a narrative depends on how believable the statements made by the narrator are. This study focuses on the narrators of *Moby Dick* and *At The Mountains of Madness*, on how they weave their narratives, their views of other characters and of the situations they describe. The delusions that these narrators have will be analyzed in the study in order to demonstrate the reason for the styles of narration in the books.

Narratology and psychoanalytical theories will be used to determine to what degree the narratives of the events are real or illusionary.

## **Chapter 3: A Distracted Whaler: Ishmael's Reflection of His Voyage**

*Moby Dick, or The Whale* (1851) is a novel written by Herman Melville that tells of the voyage of Ishmael, the novel's main narrator. This voyage is a turbulent one not only for the narrator as he describes the events, but also for the reader due to interruptions to the main narrative. These interruptions consist of information that does not complement the main narration yet lets the reader know the context of the world of whaling and information regarding Ishmael. In this chapter Narrative and Psychoanalytical theory, discussed in Chapter Two, are used to analyze the mind of Ishmael and his need for interruptions on the hunt for the white whale. The use of narrative theory allows us to see how Ishmael loses the continuity of the tale by using narrative concepts to manipulate the events and the overall employment of the subjectivity in the narrative that occurred during the hunt for the white whale. The Psychoanalytical concepts of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Carl Gustav Jung and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari are used to comprehend Ishmael's psyche in the narrative and his need to cause stops in the main tale to tell of his tremendous knowledge of the sea and other topics that he distinguishes himself to be knowledgeable about

Sea voyages have events that are catalogued from the perspective of the captain kept in a ship's log and records the details of events as they happened. In *Moby Dick* this log, which is the tale of the hunt for the white whale, is not from the captain but from a shipmate who tells of such a hunt from memory. This shipmate is Ishmael and his narrative is a reminiscence of the voyage with the inclusion of details regarding his life experiences in the form of interruptions. These interruptions come in the tale to let the

reader know of Ishmael's knowledge about his life at sea and topics related to his studies, such as references to art, cultures and the past. The interruptions in the main narrative reveal aspects of Ishmael's personality and his detachment from reality, leading the reader towards his motives for relating details of peril in the narrative.

In this study the analysis of Ishmael's accounts is focused on his accounts of a hunt filled with mystical allusions and sights that seem far-fetched events and fragment the main storyline, including his memories of other voyages. Here the single tale can tell the perils that troubled the voyage of the Pequod and its ill-fated crew as well as provide information regarding the routine of whaling during the 1800's. The story seems to lack any account of believability due to its lack of continuity between chapters. There are chapters where the break from the voyage ranges from thematic references and past whaling experiences to the terminology used in Cetology, defined as a "branch of zoology that deals with whales, dolphins and porpoises," and whaling ship sailing processes, to jumping back and forth to the hunt for the accursed white whale.

Thus our understanding of Ishmael comes from a background of distorted origins, as is hinted throughout the narrative, but clearly he possesses some experience in the whaling industry. Although the evidence presented by him in the spaces within the story are related to the whaling industry, they were not known by him during the hunt for the white whale and are side notes of other voyages he had afterwards. The story must be read with a keen eye to understand the breaks that the narrator makes as he tells the reader of the events that transpired on this voyage and their relation to supplemental information he places in the narration. Throughout the novel we are led to believe the tale of the hunt for the white whale that Ishmael is retelling is not focused solely on that point.

As Thomas Dunn declares, “Here things begin to get complicated, for the tale is told by someone who is employing a kind of ‘splitting’ address, a narrative where the seaman’s yarn is joined to testimony concerning a disaster where fable is joined to witnessing. . . readers are enjoined to believe this story, to accept its reality while knowing of its fabulous character” (400). This “fabulous character” mentioned by Dunn is an example of how the narrative while remaining on one point shifts to other perspectives, adding to the variety of ideas that Ishmael wishes to portray to the reader. Hayden White elaborates on how this imposition of events is shaped depending on the narrator’s desire to shape his/her ideas onto a narrative. The end result is what we have presented in the narrative and its construction is up to how each point is related to the next.

As the novel commences we meet our narrator by the name or alias by which he wishes to be known: “Call me Ishmael” (Melville 1). So the distinction of who the narrator is is important, for later on in the novel Ishmael’s fear creates an alter ego to direct the narrative into another set of ideas. The tale begins with the proclamation of a person who does not wish to tell us his name as we might infer from reading this, not saying “my name is...” or rather “I am” -- but the use of the phrase “call me” by this name, leaving the reader to wonder: who is this character/narrator or what is he?

He is the source of information in the novel and throughout it we see how he changes. As Warwick Wadlington has observed in relation of Ishmael’s distinction to categorizing characters, “In *Moby-Dick* rhetorical effect is knit organically into structure and theme; it is peculiarly true of Ishmael that he ‘makes his readers as he makes his characters’ including himself. What remains to be seen is the way the processes of making [the characters] fit seamlessly into each other” (Wadlington 320-321). But this

statement is only left for the reader to assume that he is called just that but never is there a reference towards the need to call him by that name in particular within the novel and throughout its content (Wadlington 321). This is the first sign of displacement of the narrator from the actual tale, leaving the reader to wonder as to the reliability of this narrator. Throughout the novel there are numerous other instances of this separation seen, which will play a role in the decline of understanding and continuity of the novel itself.

Ishmael in his accounts is narrating a voyage he is remembering now, which the reader can assume happened when he was a young man and about something particular that happened: “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” (Melville 1). Using Chatman’s definition of a ‘filter,’ or “the mental activity experienced by the characters in a narrative,” we see that Ishmael’s claims from memory are that he never had been out to sea from this point in the narrative. As readers we feel compelled to wonder how long it was that he had experienced life at sea before there was an interest to tell a narrative about the hunt for the white whale.

Over the course of the tale there are instances of time displaced chapters, in the sense that the voice of the narrator shifts into a more knowledgeable manner than that of someone recently introduced to whaling, who deals with, as mentioned before, Cetology and whaling ship procedures. This learned narrator at times distances the reader from the actual story of the hunt for Moby Dick which bewilders the audience with his knowledge of such matters:

So far as what there may be of a narrative in this book; and, indeed, as indirectly touching one or two very interesting and curious particulars in the habits of sperm whales, the foregoing chapter in its earlier part, is as important a one as will be found in this volume; but the leading matter of it requires to be still further and more familiarly enlarged upon, in order to be adequately understood, and moreover to take away any incredulity which a profound ignorance of the entire subject may induce in some minds, as to the natural verity of the main points of this affair. (Melville 293)

In the narrative the beginning of each chapter has an opening related to the tale that is the purpose of his narration, yet others veer the reader from the original voyage with information that is of the whaling industry, “I have given no small attention to that not unvexed subject, the skin of the whale. I have had controversies about it with experienced whalemens afloat, and learned naturalists ashore” (Melville 441). So as is signaled in the process of the narrative, he tries to point out the particulars of his knowledge at any chance he gets during the narrative. Ishmael does this so the reader will not be alienated by the terminology that is described in the beginning, development and end of the narrative where he sees it fitting to address these topics for a better understanding of his story.

This so happens to feed his love for knowledge; he does not fail to mention the wide range of his knowledge regarding religious references and those of mythological instances that emerge as he talks of something that triggers his memory. Fortunately there is room for the intrusion of the manner in which he mixes mythology and religion most recognizably at the gory or perilous instances of the tales: “I care not to perform this part

of my task methodically; but shall be content to produce the desired impression by separate citations of items, practically or reliably known to me as a whalerman; and from these citations, I take it—the conclusion aimed at will naturally follow of itself” (Melville 293-294). Just so Ishmael gives his narrative a hint of the supernatural and the sublime to impress the reader and make noticeable that the impossibilities encountered in the voyage are possible.

Wadlington, in his article “Ishmael's Godly Gamesomeness: Self Taste and Rhetoric in *Moby-Dick*,” claims that the end of the narrative is really the forefront of the tale to be told and that the reader/narrator relationship seems to dwindle as the tale progresses or regresses towards its final outcome. As Ishmael commences his tale, he distances his world from that of the readers’ comprehension because he wants his readers to become distant, to become separated from comprehending his current self. This is due to the fact that Ishmael the narrator is finding that the younger Ishmael is more appealing to the reader (Wadlington 324). This realization is in turn done in a self-conscious way for Ishmael sheds information to reveal that his societal manners in the tale are not those accepted by society, which wakes his superego and thus the older Ishmael tries to protect the younger one by placing all the knowledge he has as being the time after the hunt for the white whale. The younger Ishmael remains naïve while the old Ishmael malicious in how he adopted new ways of thinking that are not suited with the culture’s standards, making the young Ishmael acceptable to society.

This interrelation and cycle of knowledge on diverse topics related to the humanities and whaling become an evolution or growth that is narrated to us from a learned/older narrator-character. This presentation of different aspects of knowledge lies

in the difference of narration from that of a young shipmate's first time at sea to an older experienced narrator who has understood the things that went on in the voyage from hindsight. In the next section, *Beginnings and Ishmael's Other Self*, we will look at Ishmael's narrative as it starts to shed light on the differences in the narrative's direction and how it is divided into a series of events that transpired. A look at Ishmael's division of character and his narration on it and the adoption of an alter ego is also discussed and analyzed.

### **Beginnings and Ishmael's other self:**

As Ishmael's narration progresses a sense of arrogance and distrust for other people is apparent as though he does not know or does not care to know of the people that surround him or of his utter dislike for those that have monetary possessions, "considering that we so earnestly believe money to be the root of all earthly ills, and that on no account can a monied man enter heaven. Ah! how cheerfully we consign ourselves to perdition!" (Melville 6). Yet that negativity towards people with money does not account for the disgust he has towards pagans and "savages," until, he meets his "dark half" Queequeg, the man he encounters at the time of darkness and whose participation in the tale overshadows his as being merely an observer and/or documenter of the voyage.

Ishmael's use of distance from the narrative as a means of acknowledging his other self comes from a deep seated emotional separation that he does not wish to present to the reader as a sort of defense mechanism. So in the process of presenting Queequeg to the reader Ishmael weaves himself in and out of the narratives of the hunt and other information regarding whaling and its perils to present to the reader what his motives are for having a dark half.

In Chapter CII Queequeg's tattoo serves as a reference to what Ishmael encountered on his voyage to Arsacides. Upon visiting the king of Tranquo, Tranque, Ishmael got measurements tattooed on his right arm thus beginning the sequence of his transformation into a "savage" like the natives he met in Arsacides:

The skeleton dimensions I shall now proceed to set down are copied verbatim from my right arm, where I had them tattooed; as in my wild wanderings at that period, there was no other secure way of preserving such valuable statistics. But as I was crowded for space, and wished the other parts of my body to remain a blank page for a poem I was then composing—at least, what untattooed parts might remain—I did not trouble myself with the odd inches; nor, indeed, should inches at all enter into a congenial admeasurement of the whale. (649)

Here Ishmael clearly leaves the reader with a sense that he in fact is the savage Queequeg, his dark half mirrored on this event of a later voyage seen as his transformation. Nevertheless Ishmael creates the persona as a rejection of contemporary thought of what is appropriate in society and represented in the working class. Before Ishmael reveals the nature of his dark side as described here, there are a series of events that lead up to this factor of allusion to the duality in Ishmael's nature.

The dual nature of man within society is a topic that is discussed early in the novel, which we see in Ishmael's reaction towards it in how he interacts within the narrative. His viewpoint is that man is distancing himself from the richness of creativity and from nature and exploring the alternate riches or spoils that social life can bring. Such a position in regards to this characteristic of man and nature is clarified by Bryan

Wolf in his essay “When is a painting most like a whale?: Ishmael, Moby Dick, and the Sublime.” Wolf argues that Ishmael contradicts himself as to the vast richness of nature for merely a “malleable nature poured through the mold of human consciousness” (Wolf 146). Just giving credit to his own ego and to the vastness of nature is also something that is supposed to fill the human not the other way around as a source of inspiration for the soul, yet he continues his argument regarding the sublime uses of painting and nature as parallel to each other in *Moby Dick* as well as other works by Melville. yet the exasperated split of nature and the self continues. As Wolf illustrates, “Like the pantheist that he has just warned, Ishmael is guilty of a Cartesian split between mind and world. He has separated his thoughts just long enough to allow him to reduce reality – to reify it – to a sentiment of his own making” (Wolf 146-147). This struggle in Ishmael’s mind sets a division of personality between that which is accepted in society and that which is rejected by it. Ishmael is plagued with a decision to deny that side of him which is not accepted for something that is accepted. Jacques Lacan’s theory regarding desire here clarifies our understanding as we see Ishmael’s narrative as a conflict which separates the “civil” self accepted by society and creating a “savage” self to suit the particular needs he is after.

This disassociation in narrative can be seen as a key point that leads one to think that the narrator or the narration itself seems to be from two distinct possibilities. Ishmael displaces himself into two distinct personalities in the narration employing the character of Queequeg for the benefit of his other half, the other operating entity in the body of the story. Displacement as defined by Anthony Storr is “a splitting of the personality in which the right hand did not know what the left was doing; and it followed that cure of

this type of neurosis depending upon making the divided selves conscious of each other and thus creating a new unity” (Storr 14).

Ishmael’s desire emerges when he encounters his alter ego Queequeg during the night where the narrative shifts towards happenings of the otherworldly. Queequeg, Ishmael’s doppelganger that he has just set free upon the narration, is Jungian in his dual nature of the conscious and unconscious mind. In the description of the narration there are lapses of time where, as mentioned before, Ishmael displaces himself altogether from the tale to “...become a transparent eyeball” (Emerson 6), who is within all the elements of nature to tell of the narration with distance from the perils it holds, not to mention that Queequeg is a being in the narration that tackles the dangers in the narrative. With this technique of separating the narrator from danger, Ishmael at times displaces himself as if to shut down his character, as part of the story, on the voyage and just become the narrator of all that is happening within the tale as if assuming and dictating the fates of the other whalers. Yet we also see that Ishmael at the onset of the meeting had “...an overwhelming desire to embrace the unknown, but he also recognizes the danger of drawing too near the ‘ungraspable phantom’” (Kvidera and Reising 290). The meeting between the two is seen as something that is supernatural and becomes a catalyst for the voyage that he is narrating to make of it a tale of displacement and loss of temporality.

There is a resurgence in Ishmael’s narration of the events as being told during the nighttime or times of darkness. Due to his fears of remembering the voyage and the conflicts encountered during the narrative at night in the novel this fear could be attributed to what are called night terrors or things that go bump in the night. As Ishmael describes in chapter XCVI *The Try Works*: “Wrapped, for that interval, in darkness

myself, I but the better saw the redness, the madness, the ghastliness of others. The continual sight of the fiend shapes before me, capering half in smoke and half in fire, these at last begat kindred visions in my soul, so soon as I began to yield to that unaccountable drowsiness which ever would come over me at a midnight helm” (Melville 610).

It would be useful to look closely into the case of Ishmael and Queequeg’s friendship. They met at a midnight hour after Ishmael was lulled by Peter Coffin, proprietor of the Spouter-Inn to share a bed with him: “You haint no objections to sharing a harpooner’s blanket, have ye? I s’pose you are goin’ a whalin’, so you’d better get used to that sort of thing” (Melville 19). Soon after a quick exchange of words came into play as to the nature of the harpooner’s life and his personality, Ishmael deemed him a “cannibal” who had no morals or other self-conscious nature as a gentleman. After Coffin told his tale of the cannibal with whom he was supposed to share a bed, it is only natural that Ishmael might have dreams and transfixions of Freud’s uncanny emerge in Ishmael’s mind. As Freud pointed out, the uncanny is that which “incites dread” and by being entreated by the Landlord of the Inn tale it can be assumed that the emergence of Queequeg in the novel is purely provoked by some unnerving inner dread that Ishmael had pent up through time and is now unleashing on himself—his “primitive” self. It can be argued that the narrative that was repressed is suddenly released by the narrator and having a body, shape and form, or rather describable nature to it, the uncanny in this sense sees the other self--taking the shape of the doppelganger Queequeg.

This event is not the only occasion on which the distance from Queequeg happens; there are other instances with Queequeg that make Ishmael release the nature of

the other self throughout the narrative. At these points Ishmael takes hold of the causation in the narrative where the events occur in a manner that he sees fit to manipulate and control over time with his alter ego. The motives for manipulating causation are to justify his dark half to gain an acceptance from society even though he has a “savage” nature to himself. A more vivid explanation of Queequeg’s release is found in the darkness of the night and the relation to Ishmael’s world just as Edinger in his book *Melville's Moby-Dick: An American Nekyia* points out “...emphasis on blackness and death, characteristic of the early phase of the descent into the unconscious, corresponds to the first phase of the alchemical transformation process, called the nigredo, or blackening” (Edinger 31). This “nigredo” by definition relates to the moment when the individual is at most peril that he/she needs to confront this moment in order to continue on with life. Furthermore the reference to the shadow in the text places Ishmael within the confines of bringing about his dark side or the neglected unconscious is when the Shadow appears at night in the form of Queequeg, or as Edinger puts it, “The shadow is the first personification to be met in an analysis of the unconscious. It is the antithesis of the conscious personality, embodying those characteristics, potentialities and attitudes that have been rejected or depreciated by the ego” (Edinger 32).

Another instance of this parallelism of displacement is when Ishmael shares the bed with Queequeg and is afraid when Queequeg placed his hand over Ishmael’s chest:

Instantly I felt a shock running through all my frame; nothing was to be seen, and nothing was to be heard; but a supernatural hand seemed placed in mine. My arm hung over the counterpane and the nameless, unimaginable, silent form or phantom, to which the hand belonged, seemed closely seated by my bedside. For

what seemed ages piled on ages, I lay there, frozen with the most awful fears, not daring to drag away my hand; yet ever thinking that if I could but stir it one single inch, the horrid spell would be broken. (Melville 38)

In this instant the fear that arose in Ishmael would further interrupt his sanity and ability to correctly follow through with the story and not fail to give accurate descriptions of the narration, yet it seems that at that moment he managed to lie bewildered by that which he did not comprehend or rather feared.

Ishmael sees that Queequeg displays manners more proper than those of the white man: “Thinks I, Queequeg, under the circumstances, this is a very civilized overture; but, the truth is, these savages have an innate sense of delicacy, say what you will; it is marvelous how essentially polite they are. I pay this particular compliment to Queequeg, because he treated me with so much civility and consideration, while I was guilty of great rudeness;...” and later re-stating, “Nevertheless, a man like Queequeg you don’t see everyday, he and his ways were well worth unusual regarding” (Melville 39). The dark side of Ishmael can only mirror his own modality reflected outwards. Within the savage and, as can be seen, outside of his shell is the sense of his temporal displacement that gives him this view of struggle to understand how a savage being can be so civilized or long for understanding from those that neglect or are afraid of him, thus bringing about a reconciliation of the two.

Another point that is withheld from the reader in the analysis of Ishmael and his other self Queequeg is the shadow theory about which Edinger remarked and observed “So Queequeg, the primitive, is Ishmael’s shadow, but he is more than a personal shadow; his roots go deep. He is a piece of primeval nature itself, a personification of the

original whole man at home with nature and himself” (33). Thus the division between them can be looked at in more detail as the primal and civilized as mentioned before. The two of them have a distinct quality yet are one and the same for they are the yin and yang equations; one cannot be without the other. The situation here is that in the process of the night the two halves have become divided by an intrusion of Ishmael’s mind thus producing two different individuals with their own manners.

An instance of the last point that can be seen is when Ishmael places his alter ego on the side of the boat to work, as seen in chapter LXXII “The Monkey rope” where the note of the narrator contradicts the purpose of the tale with the rope, “The Monkey-rope is found in all whalers; but it was only in the Pequod that the monkey and his holder were ever tied together. This improvement upon the original usage was introduced by no less a man than Stubb, in order to afford to the imperiled harpooner the strongest possible guarantee for the faithfulness and vigilance of his monkey-rope holder” (Melville 463 footnote). To which suggestion Ishmael claims that “So strongly and metaphysically did I conceive of my situation then, that while earnestly watching his motions, I seemed distinctly to perceive that my own individuality was now merged in a joint stock company of two: that my free will had received a mortal wound; and that another’s mistake or misfortune might plunge innocent me into unmerited disaster and death” (Melville 463). Through this we can observe that distrust is an issue for this temporal displacement as well as the means of mortality on other people in the boat. We should also note that up to now the people on the Pequod do not necessarily trust each other; rather they trust the captain. Starbuck is at this point not pleased with Ahab’s decisions to chase Moby Dick. Stubb in Chapter XXX had a disagreement with Ahab and had

developed some resentment and then descended into a dream that suggests that his trip within the Pequod had taken effect to determine him in the grip of dementia, believing himself “Wise Stubb” (Melville 188). Flask on the other hand had become somewhat of a listener and follower, not having any say in matters within the boat just following the orders of the other shipmates in command. This distrust of other shipmates makes Ishmael confide in his alter ego Queequeg in writing his last will and testament:

... oftentimes a fellow who at that very moment is in his impetuosity upon the point of scuttling the craft with his won frantic stampings; considering that the particular disaster to our own particular boat was chiefly to be imputed to Starbuck's driving on to his whale almost in the teeth of a squall, and considering that Starbuck, notwithstanding, was famous for his great heedfulness in the fishery; considering that I belonged to this uncommonly prudent Starbuck's boat; and finally considering in what a devil's chase I was implicated, touching the White Whale: taking all things together, I say, I thought I might as well go below and make a rough draft of my will. “Queequeg” said I, “come along, you shall be my lawyer, executor, and legatee. (Melville 331).

In Chapter LXXVIII we find Ishmael making allusions to and descriptions of the decapitated head as being alive and shifting as if to set itself free, and a fear overcame his being and thus he speaks of the head as having been taken by some supernatural power that made Tashtego lose his balance on the stern (Melville 496). But what is most surprising is that Ishmael at all times did nothing about the situation and then suddenly shifted into his other self to save Tashtego from the inside of the whale by pulling him by the head. It can be seen that the headhunter's customs are rarely distanced from him as he

did not trust grasping Tashtego from the leg but then again in this part of the narration there are instances that can be seen as distinct and supplemental to seeing how the shift between one or the other gets triggered in the narration in regards to the ship's maintenance. (Melville 498). But it is at the instance of a fear evoked by death, or rather feeling the sense of impending doom that makes this displacement in consciousness happen in the narration. The need that Ishmael has for displacing himself from a conscious self to his shadow self has been accounted for by Warwick Wadlington in "Ishmael's Godly Gamesomeness: Self Taste and Rhetoric" : "Self-being results from an endless cycle of activity pitting one's sense of separateness against its opposite – the obliteration of personal separateness either by a 'pantheistic' merging with others or by death, real or metaphysical" (Wadlington 312). Yet it suffices to say that Ishmael is on his own journey looking for this death of the other side of himself and longs for the ability to separate his past from his future. All of his efforts fall short when at the sight of death Ishmael hides his persona behind the curtain letting his alter ego take the risk of dying, until the end where both Ahab and Queequeg fall prey to the natural release of death thus leaving him alone and adrift at sea.

Ishmael's view of death and the supernatural rely on questioning his own mortality and livelihood as something that needs to be evaluated by the people he is accustomed to living with: "There's your law of precedents; there's your utility of traditions; there's the story of your obstinate survival of old beliefs never bottomed on the earth, and now not even hovering in the air! There's orthodoxy!" (Melville 447).

Ishmael's opinion on the subject of the old ways of life as his puritan morality in his younger years towards the reception to the death of a whale raises the question of what is

an acceptable view or improvement of old manners in this day and age as coming from a person who has explored different views and cultures in his voyages, as he presumes he did. “Thus, while in life the great whale’s body may have been a real terror to his foes, in his death his ghost becomes a powerless panic to a world” (Melville 447). Ishmael’s view on the aspect of death is a factor that makes even the crew’s fate seem meaningless and thus his vehemence to the voyage seems a thing of little or no care for the livelihood on the ship so it is a point of controversy when he is apt and able to depart from his ties with the connection with Queequeg: “Now, at this time it was that my poor pagan companion, and fast bosom-friend, Queequeg, was seized with a fever, which brought him nigh to his endless end” (Melville 685). Like the fate that met the crew so his other half had been stricken to cease to exist at his expense and because of a narrow minded resolve to give end to the tale and other ties that bound him to the voyage to go against nature. For his condition represented that of sea sickness at first “...stripped to his woollen drawers, the tattooed savage was crawling about amid that dampness and slime like a green spotted lizard at the bottom of a well” and “...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” (Melville 685). This indicated that the voyage was a bad omen to all that accompanied Ishmael for even his dark half had been stricken with illness. Yet for Queequeg’s funeral arrangement Ishmael described not a Christian funeral but a heathen one: “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 islands, and from these dark planks the coffin was

recommended to be made” (Melville 687). So even in his last instances Ishmael resolved to get rid of his dark half or his pagan manners in such a fashion.

But this impending dread of death did not seem to trouble Queequeg as much as Ishmael anxiously troubles himself that the coffin will turn out as: “overhearing the indignant but half-humorous cries with which the people on deck began to drive the coffin away, Queequeg, to every one’s consternation, commanded that the thing should be instantly brought to him, nor was there any denying him; seeing that, of all mortals, some dying men are the most tyrannical; and certainly, since they will shortly trouble us so little for evermore, the poor fellows ought to be indulged” (Melville 688). This leaves room to debate whether it was that aspect of Ishmael’s dark half that was not welcomed by the crew. But this aspect of shortcomings for Queequeg came to an end for he regained his strength and continued forwards to the end of the journey with Ishmael:

So, in good time my Queequeg gained strength; and at length after sitting on the windlass for a few indolent days (but eating with a vigorous appetite) he suddenly leaped to his feet, threw out arms and legs, gave himself a good stretching, yawned a little bit, and then springing into the head of his hoisted boat, and poising a harpoon, pronounced himself fit for a fight. (Melville 690)

In his remark “So, in good time my Queequeg” leaves an enduring perception that Ishmael did not want to abandon nor could his dark half be abandoned for needing it to complete the narration, or for the matter that his own self lacked any strength to survive within the tale.

Ishmael’s displacement from the tale has him dependent on Queequeg as the only resource that he can place as himself on his account of the voyage. Yet as he does this he

does not distance himself from the manners of his custom which to the Nantucket community with their religious customs was not appealing:

Many spare hours he spent, in carving the lid with all manner of grotesque figures and drawings; and it seemed that hereby he was striving, in his rude way, to copy parts of the twisted tattooing on his body. And this tattooing, had been the work of a departed prophet and seer of his island, who, by those hieroglyphic marks, had written out on his body a complete theory of the heavens and the earth, and a mystical treatise on the art of attaining truth; so that Queequeg in his own proper person was a riddle to unfold; a wondrous work in one volume; but whose mysteries not even himself could read, though his own live heart beat against them; and these mysteries were therefore destined in the end to moulder away with the living parchment whereon they were inscribed, and so be unsolved to the last. (Melville 690-691)

Yet Ishmael likes to keep Queequeg an enigma to be sought for as a source of knowledge and provider of a structure of far superior knowledge to the crewmembers as well as the readers of the voyage. The revelation of his tattoos presents a riddle which not even he could decipher for they are the tale of heaven and earth done by a prophet or seer from the island of Arctides.

This need for separation of the self that Ishmael presents in the narrative is an important aspect to revealing his dual nature on the voyage, since we see that his narrative of the events complements other events that he narrates which delay the narrative. This dual persona--Queequeg--reveals aspects of himself that help Ishmael understand the hunt more accurately in terms of the primal instinct that defies the laws of

civilization and society. It was his desire to maintain his dark half that keeps Ishmael bringing Queequeg into the narrative to suggest that he was not a savage but a man fit for survival above and beyond the standards of Nantucket civilized/reasoned life. A key point to understanding the narrative is that the views and events narrated are from the interaction of the narrator and his comprehension from his primal mentality that sets up a series of stops to the hunt for the white whale.

### **The Voyage Interrupted:**

This section explores the interruptions that are found throughout the narrative in hopes of understanding the need for them in the narrative other than for supplemental information regarding Ishmael's life and other ramblings. Another point of importance looked at is in regards to Ishmael's psyche as he is narrating the events on the hunt for the white whale. As Gérard Genette declares in "Order of Narrative," the narrative gets written over a period and understood over another with these pieces of information in the narrative the events are shaped as the narrator sees fit utilizing anachrony to present such ideas in the hunt. Ishmael's journey is through time developed and interacts with other ventures which are narrated aside from the one that was originally focused upon the hunt for the white whale. Prolepses are used throughout the novel to introduce the events that happened after the hunt for the white whale, and often times are useful for Ishmael to delay his narrative reflecting his reluctant state of mind.

Throughout the novel there are instances of departure from the hunt to the descriptions from the learned, all masterful narrator, who deems himself a knowledgeable person about many topics dealing with whaling. During these interruptions Ishmael egotistically drifts in and out of the tale trying to shed light on different themes relevant

to his liking as well as to the tale that he underwent. But this recurrent knowledge overlaps countless times with the fluidity of the narration towards the search for terminology that one might think appropriate for a Zoological study book. However, this technique that Ishmael performs throughout the novel seems to be used to avoid his own psyche or to soften the strenuous remaining memory of the voyage. For Ishmael, his placement of ideas in a narrative is mainly to give himself a boost as to the need to introduce topics of whaling to the reader which he experienced at a point later in his life. This in the narrative gives the reader a clearer understanding of the whaling business on the how and why it is carried out, letting the reader understand a point made in the narration at the pace that Ishmael sees fit, clarifying ideas that he did not understand at that time in the hunt.

In the opening paragraph of Chapter LV, *Of the Monstrous Pictures of Whales*, Ishmael comments on the importance of illustrations and on the nature and appearances of whales in the artistic representations of whales. Other matters of art are also alluded to in Chapters LVI and LVII only for Ishmael to criticize the manner where these artists represent the fierceness of the whale.

It is this displacement of the psyche or flow of narration that serves as a signal of what Deleuze and Guattari term in their analysis of inconsistency of narrative as Delirium. Since Delirium makes shifts from theme and topic and vice-versa, this is done without finishing the previous statement yet it finds an unusual link between the topics towards an end result. This result varies from person to person in terms of the order with how they plan out a logic in their statements. This serves to explain the case with Ishmael and his narrative where he displaces himself from the narrative of the sea voyage and the

matters that go on within the boat to descriptions of hunting the white whale, to focusing on his own infatuation with demonstrating details of his knowledge of the whaling industry, philosophy and history. This diversity of topics and how they relate to the narrative stem from Ishmael's use of internal prolepses to explain his knowledge of diverse topics that he did not know during the time that the hunt for the white whale occurred, although it is important to remember he tells the reader he acquired this knowledge after the voyage ended. Ishmael's view creates an interest in his readers, yet this displacement puts his voyage on the Pequod as a debatable means of logic and reliability, as if he is trying to sum up information to place within the "tale" he is narrating to distract the reader or make the reader comprehend his logic.

In *Moby Dick* these interruptions come throughout the tale at the most inopportune moments, superficially only to be seen as mere stops to help guide the reader into the market of such a trade. As mentioned before, Ishmael's array of details comes not as enlightenment, but can be seen more as the progressively imbalanced psychological nature of Ishmael, his experience and how the voyage becomes a maddening journey.

Although it can be argued that the narrative has a continuous change in topics provoked by delirium it is this delirium that brings about obsession with mortality by all who are involved in the narrative but most importantly the narrator. The novel has a shift in regards to the lives of the characters but this concern comes from the manner that the tale is being narrated and is also documented in the words of the narrator. The narrator shifts in and out of the voyage that he is telling, as if he is afraid that at any instant he will die, thus drifting from the voyage. So from Ishmael's position in narrating the tale as a

mirror image he is referring to other voyages to set aside the tale for the white whale as a defense mechanism. For Ishmael this fear of mortality is something that comes from an interminable quest to distance himself further from the others in the boat as from the reader, not to mention that the voyage that he undertook was for reasons that he wanted to abandon his old life behind for a new one. Ishmael is assuming the role of a powerful persona by this displacement from the tale. It is apparent that if he does not continue the tale he does not have power over the reader and the narration itself is doomed. This becomes a motif that is continually seen in the novel and with no chance of stopping until the final chapters where the hunt is clearly the main focus of the narrative.

Everything in the narration shifts towards this issue of existence with Ishmael's dilemma between his own death or the crew's but altogether it is a position towards the death of life in the sea. This paranoiac obsession with death is for the narrative a theme that keeps reemerging till the end of the novel. Just as death is the catalyst of all who seek it for there is little to nothing that can console the soul of the crew in the search for the white whale, his own view of the hunt makes Ishmael's dread resurface at the sight of death:

Death seems the only desirable sequel for a career like this; but Death is only a launching into the region of the strange Untried; it is but the first salutation to the possibilities of the immense Remote, the Wild, the Watery, the Unshored; therefore, to the death-longing eyes of such men, who still have left in them some interior compositions against suicide, does the all-contributed and all-receptive ocean alluringly spread forth his whole plain of unimaginable, taking terrors, and wonderful, new-life adventures; and from the hearts of infinite Pacifics, the

thousand mermaids sing to them –“Come hither, broken-hearted; here is another life without the guilt of intermediate death; here are wonders supernatural, without dying for them. Come hither! bury thyself in a life which, to your now equally abhorred and abhorring, landed world, is more oblivious than death. Come hither! put up *thy* grave-stone, too, within the churchyard, and come hither, till we marry thee! (Melville 697)

Henceforth from Chapters CXV onward the chapters relate to the fixation with death in the eyes of the crew. That grim sentiment of death and mortality is shared after Queequeg’s petition for the coffin as well as the end of the journey in the novel. We see that the novel itself is about to fall victim to issues of mortality, as is everything in life.

This strenuous exercise in narrating the hunt shows the beginnings of self-doubt and fear of death, yet the narrative reveals that this was part of the purpose for which this tale was being narrated which is to present Ishmael’s view of mortality. Ishmael questions his place in the world and throughout the novel’s position just as “...for Melville – and it is here, perhaps, that he is most centrally in the Romantic tradition – the savor of one’s private being is a register for reality, and the heightening of selftaste a necessity for existence” (Wadlington 311). Ishmael’s obsession with existence and mortality stem from a discomfort that he encountered through his voyages at every instance and upon remembering these events he displays elements of paranoia throughout the voyage thus incorporating these ideas into the narration.

This fear of death is, aside from fear of society’s acceptance, the mechanism found in Ishmael’s psyche, as that uncontrollable end that he will meet. Thus here is the question that is assimilated to both cases: society’s concept of what is right and wrong

and nature's law. In both cases Ishmael treats them indifferently, thus the collective unconscious reveals the possibility of death and becomes a possibility in their current state. For Ishmael his imminent demise is no longer repressed but possible in all aspects in the narrative. The search in the novel focuses on exploring Ishmael's narrative in terms of his psyche being involved in the middle of its progress and in relation to how the tale ends.

### **Madness in the end:**

Towards the closing chapters of the novel we are confronted with the emergence of madness among the crew and in Ishmael himself. This is seen as the men are drawing closer to the end of the tale and so the end of their lives together. This emergence of madness comes at the end of the narrative from what Ishmael experienced as a young man, and afterwards narrates in the text, thus creating a set of focalized ideas from the older Ishmael on the topics of death alongside madness. Aside from the stress that is put on the crew by Ahab, the crew's confrontation with a storm leaves them at the mercy of Nature and uncertainty about what will happen: "Towards evening of that day, the Pequod was torn of her canvas, and bare-poled was left to fight a Typhoon which had struck her directly ahead. When darkness came on, sky and sea roared and split with the thunder, and blazed with the lightning, that showed the disabled masts fluttering here and there with the rags which the first fury of the tempest had left for its after sport" (719). These issues of mortality twist the focus that Ishmael had on the narrative of the hunt and now he relates all of the subsequent chapters to focus on madness and obsessions with death. The narrative at this point presents ideas regarding madness and fear which are two aspects that supplement the main narrative towards its end.

The repressed sentiments on the topic of madness and fear of death are thus here evoked without any censorship or omission of information as they all are relevant to the current state of the narrative. Here the paranoid obsessions are shared by the crew regarding the topics of death and madness.

Madness and unsteadiness are prevalent throughout the novel and are evoked by the typhoon in Chapter CXIX *The Candles*, which promotes the decay of the ship and the decay of the crew. The emotions of the crew get twisted as the storm pours down on the boat, yet they have the hope of St. Elmo to save them from the ravaging storm. “‘Look aloft!’ cried Starbuck. ‘The St. Elmo’s Lights (corpus sancti) corposants! the corposants!’” (Melville 722). In Ahab’s case the maddening stress to the end takes a toll on him as desperation and aggravation take hold of his own psyche as he tries to snap some sense on the crew at the impending dread at hand, only to frighten them even further with his incessant cries for war: “‘all your oaths to hunt the White Whale are as binding as mine; and heart, soul, and body, lungs and life, old Ahab is bound. And that ye may know to what tune this heart beats; look ye here; thus I blow out the last fear!’ And with one blast of his breath he extinguished the flame” (Melville 727). The case regarding Ahab’s psyche changes between the climate and Ahab’s frightening impression that make the crew question the nature of Ahab in relation to the fierceness of the storm: “‘As in the hurricane that sweeps the plain, men fly the neighborhood of some lone, gigantic elm, whose very height and strength but render it so much the more unsafe, because so much the more a mark for thunderbolts; so at those last words of Ahab’s many of the mariners did run from him in a terror of dismay” (Melville 727).

As the reader reaches the chapter called *The Musket* Ishmael feels a certain detachment from accusing Ahab and goes towards Starbuck as well as the other crew members in regards to losing their sanity. Ishmael is indiscriminately seeing those around him as losing their sanity when the narrator is the one in question as to the reliability of narrating the voyage as he himself is focusing on the same turmoil as the rest of the crew. Although not showing the same symptoms as with the rest of the crew Ishmael still has to suffer some sort of imbalance and not be at all collected as in chapters before this. He presents a part of his psyche to the readers of the narrative describing him and the others: “No reasoning; not remonstrance; not entreaty wilt thou harken to; all this thou scornest. Flat obedience to thy own flat commands, this is all thou breathest. Aye, and say’st the men have vow’d thy vow; say’st all of us are Ahab’s. Great God forbid!—But is there no other way?—no lawful way?—” (737). He is indebted to Ahab as the only one that the crew can rely on for their salvation, but it was the fear of Ahab’s rule as bigger than the fear of Death on the voyage: “As for the men, though some of them lowly rumbled, their fear of Ahab was greater than their fear of Fate. But as ever before, the pagan harpooners remained almost wholly unimpressed; or if impressed, it was only with a certain magnetism shot into their congenial hearts from inflexible Ahab’s” (741).

Fate and desperation play a key role in the closing chapters of the tale for there is little or no resolution of the long trip but their impending doom. The attitude of the crew turns somber as does the tone that Ishmael assumes in these chapters, as the life preservers have been all lost only to rely on the coffin for the benefit of their survival. The dialogue over the coffin as a life preserver makes the crew uneasy; later Ishmael comments on the dread and ominous nature of having this coffin within a boat:

crupered with a coffin! Sailing about with a grave-yard tray! But never mind. We workers in woods make bridal-bedsteads and card-tables, as well as coffins and hearses. We work by the month, or by the job, or by the profit; not for us to ask the why and wherefore of our work, unless it be too confounded cobbling, and then we stash it if we can. (Melville 753).

Death comes to all that await it yet it comes to all that live as Ishmael was so obsessed on the topic of death. The carpenter remarks, ““I’ll have me thirty separate, Turk’s-headed life-lines, each three feet long hanging all round to the coffin. Then, if the hull go down, there’ll be thirty lively fellows all fighting for one coffin, a sight not seen very often beneath the sun! Come hammer, calking-iron, pitch-pot, and marlingspike! Let’s to it”” (Melville 753). The notification by the carpenter of the boat gives way to the madness that the crew will have over the coffin as a life buoy. Ahab makes a speech regarding the coffin that leads one to analyze his position on death and the symbol that a coffin carries. As he sees it he exclaims: “Here now’s the very dreaded symbol of grim death, by mere hap, made the expressive sign of the help and hope of most endangered life. A life-buoy of a coffin! Does it go further? Can it be that in some spiritual sense the coffin is, after all but an immortality-preserver! I’ll think of that. But no, so far gone am I in the dark side of earth, that its other side, the theoretic bright one, seems but uncertain twilight to me” (Melville 756). These words uttered by Ahab go back towards the duality of the narrator Ishmael as he himself is ridding his dark side at the end of the tale as well as the dreaded megalomaniac Ahab as it is for his own mental stability to be rid of both for his own continuation of life and the completion of this portion of his life.

Ishmael's narration is cataloguing Ahab's psyche as something that is not controlled or controllable by him but something that is spontaneously happening and in a proper manner as an insight to his confession before death. Likewise the novel itself is Ishmael's final catalogue of the voyage that changed his life and is most remembered by him. But unlike the narrative of Ishmael and his life and confessions, Ahab's is filled with momentary lapses of doubt and regret as to his decisions in life. How this sadness in his life is brought up by his knowledge of his own mortality and how he preemptively knows that he is going to die on the chase for the White Whale. While Ishmael uses devices such as continuous instances of internal analepses, Ahab's memories stay concentrated to the use of external analepses as he remembers his life on land and his relationship to things that are distant to the main narrative yet are a memory that brings an aspect of sadness to him.

Stepping aside from Ahab, Ishmael goes into unifying the crew as one whole entity of displaced humans: "They were one man, not thirty. For as the one ship that held them all; though it was put together of all contrasting things—oak, and maple, and pine wood; iron, and pitch, and hemp—yet all these ran into each other in the one concrete hull, which shot on its way, both balanced and directed by the long central keel; even so, all the individualities of the crew, this man's valor, that man's fear; guilt and guiltiness, all varieties were welded into oneness, and all directed to that fatal goal which Ahab their one lord and keel did point to" (Melville 797). Here Ishmael is attaining a sense of reality and a survival instinct towards the end of the voyage for he is leading the reader to the fate that all three entities will face, which is the untimely end of the voyage. Thus the last moments in Ahab's life are shown as he is tied to the side of the white whale. Even in his

last moments of life he is intent on destroying or rather remaining an enemy of nature for the sake of his personal vendetta. As he declares: “Towards thee I roll, thou all-destroying but unconquering whale; to the last I grapple with thee; from hell’s heart I stab at thee; for hate’s sake I spit my last breath at thee. Sink all coffins and all hearses to one common pool! and since neither can be mine, let me then tow to pieces, while still chasing thee, though tied to thee, thou damned whale! *Thus*, I give up the spear!” (Melville 820). In his last act of defiance Ahab puts to waste the crew along with him but rather than resting on a black coffin his coffin metaphorically becomes the white whale as they are sucked into the vortex that eliminated the Pequod (Melville 821). The Vortex mysteriously disappears from the constant circling of the white whale as Ishmael describes to the reader becomes the object of the topic of man against nature. Nature is intent, according to Ishmael’s narration, to prove a point to the reader and teach a lesson to the crew of the Pequod never to go against it.

Ishmael’s final words of the voyage are of significance to the destruction of his past in the vortex where he is drowning all his troubles and split personality along with the Pequod to assume a secure and stable livelihood on land. It is the manner in which the epilogue serves as a last will and testament that gives the reader a sense of departure after the long voyage. Ishmael in the epilogue tells of how he managed to escape the eerie fate that had befallen the Pequod: “I was he whom the Fates ordained to take the place of Ahab’s bowsman, when that bowsman assumed the vacant post; the same, who, when on the last day the three men were tossed from out the rocking boat, was dropped astern” (Melville 825). The three men are Ishmael’s alter egos: Queequeg, Ahab and himself, as a note that all were now again one in his own self. As he was liberated from the three,

Ishmael abandoned all of his earthly bonds and saw there was hope for him to survive: “So, floating on the margin of the ensuing scene, and in full sight of it, when the half-spent suction of the sunk ship reached me, I was then, but slowly, drawn towards the closing vortex. When I reached it, it had subsided to a creamy pool.” (Melville 826).

Ishmael’s fate had not ended there for he was saved by a grim object “Till, gaining that vital centre, the black bubble upward burst; and now, liberated by reason of its cunning spring, and, owing to its great buoyancy, rising with great force, 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 826).

In this grim scene of salvation neither the animals nor the sea threatened his life although he was part of the plot to destroy a creature of nature, yet nature greeted him with warm and hopeful hues. His narration in the end seems so supernatural as if he was or has overcome his dark side, burying it in the vortex yet still carrying it in memory inside of a coffin that saved his life from the perils of the sea for two days. “The unharmed sharks, they glided by as if with padlocks on their mouths; the savage sea-hawks sailed with sheathed beaks. On the second day, a sail drew near, nearer, and picked me up at last. It was the devious-cruising Rachel, that in her retracing search after her missing children, only found another orphan” (Melville 826).

Madness and death are two elements that affect the narration and control situations throughout the novel but are not the only aspects that make *Moby Dick* a dense novel to read. The narrator is responsible for the novel’s dense nature and it is he who divides the narrative into two halves. One part of the novel is the hunt for the white whale and the other part is the life experiences of an old man. While they both are from the

same narrator at the same time the narrated the experiences are told from distinct times in his life as he tries from memory to narrate them.

### **The Narrative of the Tale:**

What is most remarkable is the tone in which Ishmael is speaking. At times the narrator is a reminiscing old man, like the Ancient Mariner speaking to the Wedding Guest of his own voyage, of the perils that were met and the losses that were incurred, at other times there is a hint of naïveté in his style of narration like that of an excited boy revealing his most beloved treasure for all to know about. This duality is what is understood to happen in the narrative in regards to the split personality that Ishmael has shown throughout it. All of the events that transpire through the tale have an impact on him that, as mentioned before, leaves him retelling some other tale or technique of the whaling industry. This leads us to believe that he is not a little boy but rather an old man suffering from delirium as stated earlier. Yet it feels as though the narration instead of achieving its proposed intention is slowly and effortlessly heading in another direction that at times feels vague and confusing to the reader.

The focalization of the story is divided into two halves of a story: on the one hand we have the hunt and then we have the supplemental information. Both run at the same time in the narrative yet there are events that happened at different times in Ishmael's life. Ishmael is consciously avoiding; at every instant he is willing to retell the events in a cohesive manner. Thus he leaves gaps to be filled in later in the tale of the hunt, using the importance of telling how things work or of an event that transpired that needs an in-depth explanation to the reader as an excuse. Ishmael is at times distant from the ship and

the crew but moreover he is distant from the tale assuming that there is a larger aspect of the tale that he has to hide for himself, to the extent that one might question whether he is even there or as proposed earlier his alter ego is in the tale as a harpooner. Thus Ishmael is clearly distancing himself emotionally from the tale by assuming his intellectual prowess of all-seeing and all-powerful entity in the tale. Towards the end of the tale we see the words and the precision from which Ishmael does not distance himself in the last instances of the voyage; we see that not only is he accepting the fate that the voyage is coming to an end but he remembers it quite vividly as he is narrating the closing statements. This leads to the fact that he has come to terms with the departure from his past and can pursue his end with efficiency and not distract the reader from the full details of the hunt as he did throughout the narration.

Ishmael's purpose is not certain as to his desire to complete the narrative out of fear of mortality; or that the text itself is alive and does not want to reach the untimely end when the novel is finished. The purpose at these intervals in the story shows a great deal about the journey, the perils and gains of the whaling industry, yet his accounts fall short of the rationalization as to why there are so many stops in the tale or rather the need to make so many. These interruptions in the narrative are due to a series of traumas that occurred to Ishmael within his time at sea and progressed afterwards; it is also his need to do this as compelling and the novel can be said to be a confession or even a psychological release for Ishmael to cope with this portion of his life that made him outstretch his knowledge and need to understand why he is at the verge of coping with his past.

Ishmael's focalization throughout the narrative sets out to tell of his accounts as clearly as he can, yet in his narration his stops and detachment from the main narrative fail to give a concise delivery of the events because of other details that happened before the narrative of the hunt. These side events present to the reader a side of Ishmael and shed light on his dual nature on the hunt as a person who is deeply traumatized by the hunt of the white whale. He also presents a series of unresolved issues in his psyche from different times in an old sailor's life. From narrative devices to psychoanalytical implications the way that these narrations are given come from issues of fear, psychosis, delirium, split personality and issues of mortality. In addition, the manipulation of time is another important factor that is of importance since all of the accounts are memory-based at a time in the narrative that is distant from the actual time that the events happened. These points serve to illuminate the narration that Ishmael has been giving to the readers.

## **Chapter 4: Dyer's Maddening Eve: Narrative and Fear in *At The Mountains of Madness***

When discussing the topic of Supernatural Horror fiction there is no other name that resounds as much as that of Howard Philips Lovecraft. Lovecraft has been revered for his contributions to the *Weird Tales* magazine and his ability to include instances of dementia, survival and the supernatural as customary to the world in the tales he wrote. Some of his short stories were "Dagon," "The Colour From Out of Space" and his widely known "The Call of Cthulhu." Yet one characteristic of importance when reading Lovecraft is what Vivian Ralickas points out in terms of his style of writing: "Lovecraft's fiction...denies our planet a place of importance in the universe and revokes the human privilege of having been the first species of higher intelligence to populate it. The direst critique of humanism in Lovecraft's mythology, however, is evident in the human characters' perception of the omnipotent alien races as gods" (Ralickas 368-369). Such an instance of his storytelling is seen in the short novel *At The Mountains of Madness*, considered a timeless classic by many contemporary filmmakers, authors of the horror genre, and scholars of horror fiction.

For purposes of this thesis the focus will be on elements of narrative and psychoanalytical theory to explore the narration of the novel in hopes to discern the information that is given to the reader. This is due to the fact that the novel is layered with a number of narrative devices that, as in Melville's *Moby Dick*, go in and out of the main tale to focus on otherworldly aspects and information regarding paintings. This device used by Lovecraft through Dyer gives the reader a sense and understanding of who the character is and his mental stability. Dyer, who is the main narrator of the novel, avoids at any opportunity telling of the events that happened during his Antarctic

exploration mainly due to issues of the supernatural, sublime and uncanny that are spoken of in relation to the references made to the *Necronomicon*. This is done in order to avoid being separated from the societal bonds that keep his job in Miskatonic University. The narrative agents he employs in his tale involve uses of distancing, framing device, implied readers, and focalization.

In *At the Mountains of Madness* the use of distancing and framing devices are important in structuring the narrative. Distancing for Dyer is significant since he keeps his emotions out of the characters' well being as well as avoiding the risk of becoming involved with any of them as is the case with the first trip to the mountains where he is adamant to tell of his feelings regarding his being left behind. Also, as the narrative develops, this distance keeps him safe from the problems that arise in the novel and keeps his integrity intact. A framing device is a narratological term that best describes the style of narrative that is used in the novel for Dyer is narrating the events of the narrative in a reflective style remembering the events as he thinks they happened. In terms of the reader Dyer assumes that there is an implied reader and intended audience for his narrative. The implied readers of this novel are believed to be people interested in making such an expedition to the mountains. The intended audience is anyone that might find interest in taking or financing the expedition to prove all of their accounts as real or fake. This allows Dyer at every chance that he gets to focus on giving warnings to explorers not to go to the Antarctic yet his intentions are not clear, only that supernatural and dreaded things live in the mountains and may lead to their death or loss of sanity. As Dyer slowly tells of the tragedy that occurred in the mountains, a part of his psyche is slowly diminishing and his focalization of events goes in and out of the narrative in terms of

landscape and the journey to the mountains only thinking on points related to the loss of his sanity.

The loss of sanity for Dyer is the most important aspect in relation to how the events in his narrative are occurring. The involvement of the fantastic and supernatural in the narrative allows for the horror to emerge in the story and the way it is narrated raises questions as to how shattered Dyer's psyche is in his narrative.

*At the Mountains of Madness* is said to be "the culmination of HPL's lifelong fascination with the Antarctic, beginning when as a boy he had written treatises on Wilke's Explorations and the Voyages of Capt. Ross, R.N., and had followed avidly reports of the Arctic explorations of Borchgrevink, Scott, Amundsen, and others early in the century" (Joshi 10). The novel is a tale told from memories or the filter of a nameless narrator, who is later revealed to be William Dyer (Joshi 9), said to be the head of the expedition who suffers through catastrophic events that affect him as he narrates. This thesis's interest in the novel lies in Dyer's narrative ability, the events presented by Dr. Lake from a telegraphic medium and his records found in the campsite in the mountains. One point in regards to the characters in the novel is that in Lovecraft, the characters and their loss of sanity stems from a more deep-seated insecurity of their livelihood that is taken into consideration by the readers:

Danforth and I have recollections of emerging into the great sculptured hemisphere and of threading our back trail through the Cyclopean rooms and corridors of the dead city; yet these are purely dream-fragments involving no memory of volition, details, or physical exertion. It was as if we floated in a nebulous world or dimension without time, causation or orientation.

(Lovecraft 97)

The insecurity that they have relates to psychological ties that are linked to social bonds and the needs that they have in being seen as reliable in their social circles. As Vivian Ralickas points out:

In Lovecraft the subject suffers from a violation of its sense of self, but it is graced with no consolatory understanding of the human condition to mollify its fragmented psyche. With its identity and the foundation of its culture destroyed, the subject who experiences cosmic horror always succumbs to one of three comparably dreadful fates, judging from the standpoint of a balanced, rational mind: insanity, death, or the embracing of its miscegenated and no longer human condition. (Ralickas 365)

The characters in this point of view become the creatures that are talked of in the narrative and thus are no longer considered human after the transformation that they went through on the journey. This metamorphosis of the psyche creates a sense of dread that will remain with the characters till the end of the expedition and the rest of their lives.

The novel *At The Mountains of Madness* is the tale of an exploration to the Antarctic to investigate the massive mountains in hopes to document their massive size and the surroundings. During the exploration the crew gets separated into two camps: the main camp where Dyer is, located far from the base of the mountains, and the second camp, where Dr. Lake is, located at the mountain's proximity. At Lake's mountain camp, after blowing up sections of the mountains to clear a passage, the team discovers a series of shards that appear to be of pre-historic origins. After a series of information exchanges the team came upon another discovery, this time eight cylinder shaped creatures trapped

in the ice which Lake takes to the camp to perform an autopsy to find out more about this new unknown specimen. After the news of the discovery Dyer's camp comes to help with the exploration of the mountains only to find Lake's camp destroyed apparently by strong gusts of wind and Lake as well as all of the members of the camp and the alien specimens missing. Thus begins an investigation as to where Lake and the members of the camp have gone only to come across a forgotten city in the mountain's base which leads to a series of events that transcend human rationale as to the possibility of the things they witnessed.

Dyer is the main narrator of the tale and his narrative regarding the expedition begins when the entire crew arrives at the site of where they were going to stretch out before going on to the "Mountains of Madness." The second set of narratives is given in the form of little reports sent by Lake from his camp. Although there are several clues leading to the discovery of an ancient "alien" civilization, Lake's narrative is given in interrupted reports whereas Dyer's narrative is an account of the events that happened on the expedition from his perspective. Among the elements used by Dyer in his retelling of the events are representations of fear and the supernatural entwined in the environment and uses of psychological techniques to create doubt and push the reader into believing the events that occurred in the narration. These supernatural elements are the use of creatures such as the cylinder type Old Ones, the Shoggoths, Giant Albino Penguins as well as a lost and forgotten city dating back before the dinosaurs.

Different forms of narrative follow from the lapses in narration where discussion of the expedition is interrupted with a narrative of his current preoccupation with people going to the mountains, interruptions similar to those in *Moby Dick*, yet in *At the*

*Mountains of Madness* there is in-depth evidence that suggests the supernatural is something that is very natural in the world and shapes the narrative to the narrator's accounts of what went on in the narrative as being influenced by experiences. References from past explorations, discoveries in the geological world and the allusions to literature such as the Edgar Allan Poe short story "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket" (1850) are influences on this narrative. China Mieville remarks that "Lovecraft takes from Poe his bizarre giant birds and the cry 'Tekeli-li,' which is incomparably more terrifying the second novel around" (Mieville xviii), not to mention a style of narration concentrating on details and setting and the imbalanced psyche of the narrator. The narration at one point relies on sound and atmosphere as influences on Dyer and Lake's accounts of the events. These two elements and the way in which they are presented as strange and unexplainable are key characteristics in Dyer's attempt to inform the reader of the perils at the mountains. Another point is how people come to understand these factors and the manner they are dealt with in Dyer's narrative. Lovecraft inspired with Poe's story sets out to make *At The Mountains of Madness* a continuation of the story with the inclusion of supernatural and tragic events. A point of difference here is that unlike Poe, Lovecraft's intention in the novel is, according to Vivian Ralickas, to prove that "the human race is the by-product of an accidental, biological alien experiment and is of little consequence to the Old Ones. Chance, and not divine grace, brought us into being" (Ralickas 369). Lovecraft instills in the reader a dread caused by the idea that humans are expendable creatures, both mortally and psychologically. He took this aspect from Poe's short stories in the essence of dread, yet he expands on the way that the horrors in the story are confronted. For Lovecraft the measure of fear is more reliant on

the otherworldly and supernatural rather than on the mystery of societal dread and conscientious guilt.

The novel presents a series of events on the expedition to the Antarctic and the way that Dyer narrates it is the focus in this thesis. The narrative takes into account Dyer's position on discouraging people from going into the Antarctic with supernatural elements in the climate and instances of horrific details. Another key component to his narrative is his distance from the characters in terms that the imbalances that they suffer did not apply to himself.

From the beginning of the exploration we have, as mentioned earlier, two sets of narratives, one by Dyer who is the narrator of the main tale, and one by Dr. Lake, who in part gives, Dyer assumes, a slightly distorted vision of the events that occurred when he and his crew were separated from the rest of the group. We are shown in Dyer's narrative a glimpse of how fear, psychological instability and the unknown are related and take form as occurrences that can push a narrator or a character to misunderstand/misinterpret events. There are strange assumptions in Lake and Dyer's narration about what may be the truth regarding the events of the Antarctic exploration. In this problematic flow of information events in the story have a way of mixing what is possible with what is impossible, of what is evidence and what is fallacy. Although the focus will be mainly on the narrative of Dyer with regards to the Antarctic exploration it is also on his need to withhold information so as to prevent others from finding out what happened in the frozen mountains of madness.

At the beginning of the novel Dyer stresses his refusal to tell his story because of the maddening fear that he experienced. The narrator's need to retell his experience with

the trauma that was brought on by nature and the supernatural was a forced need that is imposed on the narrator. In the beginning he starts his narration with a troubled tone:

I am forced into speech because men of science have refused to follow my advice without knowing why. It is altogether against my will that I tell my reasons for opposing this contemplated invasion of the Antarctic – with its vast fossil-hunt and its wholesale boring and melting of the ancient ice-cap – and I am the more reluctant because my warning may be in vain. (Lovecraft 3)

This warning by the narrator signals that it was not a swift expedition to the mountains as a series of events managed to drive the investigators mad and delirious in the process. As Ralickas has observed, “As suggested by the use of the modifier ‘madness’ in the story's title to qualify ‘mountains,’ the text dramatizes the defilement of human protagonists' subjective integrity, particularly in terms of their loss of faith in reason and scientific progress. A key transition point in the text further corroborates the humbling turn of cosmic horror in ‘Mountains’” (Ralickas 375). The modern uses of supernatural horror are clearly a key factor into determining the loss of coherence in the details of the expedition. Dyer's refusal at first to acknowledge this madness, or maddening factors, on the crew including himself goes on to document other limitations on the expedition's narrative/log entries using distance to justify his own madness in the process of the investigation.

Dyer continues interrupting the narrative due to his awe of the natural aspects of the panorama that make him deviate from the main narrative to comment on the immensity of the landscape: “On many occasions the curious atmospheric effects

enchanted me vastly; these including a strikingly vivid mirage – the first I had ever seen – in which distant bergs became the battlements of the unimaginable cosmic castles” (Lovecraft 6). This enthrallment with the landscape did not affect Dyer’s judgment in a significant manner but it did have a distracting effect that affected his perception of the things that happened around him throughout the expedition. This narrative pause is seen throughout the expedition of the mountains and is repetitive when the landscapes capture his attention and this stretches the time of the main narrative. With his amazement with the landscape, Dyer, much like Ishmael, comments on other topics that reminded him of details found in books he had read at Myskatonc University:

Something about the scene reminded me of the strange and disturbing Asian paintings of Nicholas Roerich, and of the still stranger and more disturbing descriptions of the evilly fabled plateau of Leng which occur in the dreaded Necronomicon of the mad Arab Abdul Alhazared. I was rather sorry, later on, that I had ever looked into that monstrous book at the college library. (Lovecraft 7)

*The Necronomicon*, is a book dedicated to the tales of the Old Ones, the Ancient Ones and creatures from another universe whose sole engagement with humanity is to end it. This book has a strange and powerful effect on the minds of both Dyer and Danforth as they venture into the mountains and the caverns for it justifies for them the strange things that they see in those cruel mountains.

Dyer’s narrative is rich with poetic language as he describes the mountains and the polar regions, yet his narrative leads the reader to believe he is still traumatized by the events that he experienced and narrates to the reader his own perception of the

maddening mountains. As he is recounting the exploration he notices how the mirages are helpful because of how “they afforded us some magnificent examples of the richly fantastic and deceptive mirages of the polar regions, of which our sea voyage had given us some brief foretastes” (Lovecraft 10). Vivian Ralickas compliments Lovecraft’s uses of fantastic landscapes to induce horror:

As the emblematic example of the aforementioned bas-reliefs in “At the Mountains of Madness” illustrates art’s formal properties denote some type of secret abject meaning that characters are compelled to discover. Often this hidden significance is allied to human degeneracy and the leitmotif of the devolution of the species central to Lovecraft’s oeuvre, themes whose race and class implications have been explored in recent scholarship. In my view the affective power that art commands in Lovecraft – is sacred, ritualistic function—is intrinsic to characters’ viewing of art works with what David Freedberg calls the gaze that “enlivens,” even when the object in question is neither anthropomorphic nor figurative. (Ralickas 299)

The fascination Dyer has with the details of the surroundings takes the narrative even further towards the downfall on the journey because of the traumatic experiences the expedition went through. Dyer’s use of descriptions of the surroundings lulls the reader in order to place a series of horrors using uncanny aspects in the form of people losing their sanity and/or their lives if they become interested in taking the journey to the Antarctic. Mystery, wonder and fear fill Dyer’s narrative to bring on distracting elements to the reader from the main narrative of the Antarctic exploration, yet because this he reveals at a slow pace the details of the things that both he and Danforth discovered.

Little knowledge was revealed to the people on the outside and those involved in the crew (expedition) regarding the change to the journey to the mountains, although Dyer explains: “The outside world knew, of course, of our programme, and was told also of Lake’s strange and dogged insistence on a westward – or rather, northwestern – prospecting trip before our radical shift to the new base” (Lovecraft 11). Lake had developed an obsession with the markings he found on the mountains on the trip when they were originally found. These markings in his analysis were of ancient prehistoric origin and awoke in Lake an insatiable need to pursue their analysis. The investigation would focus on the mountains even though Dyer’s narrative makes clear that Lake was neither competent nor interested in compiling the findings as he went to the mountains without the whole crew. In the narrative the way that the transmissions were sent from Lake’s camp to where Dyer was located are lacking in detail:

Lake’s sub-expedition into the unknown, as everyone will recall, sent out its own reports from the short-wave transmitters on the planes; these being simultaneously picked up by our apparatus at the southern base and by the Arkham at McMurdo Sound, whence they were relayed to the outside world on wave-lengths up to fifty metres. (Lovecraft 12)

These messages did not provide consistent data to give Dyer’s camp details about the events that were going on in the campsite, which began to create mystery and confusion in Dyer’s understanding of what was actually going on. Lake focused mainly on the markings on the wall as they were all that was found at the mountains: “Six hours after that a second and very excited message told of the frantic, beaver-like work whereby a shallow shaft had been sunk and blasted; culminating in the discovery of slate fragments

with several markings approximately like the one which had caused the original puzzlement” (Lovecraft 12). Afterwards the messages came in more frequently, documenting the findings regarding the dimension and stature of the mountains. The disaster that befell the crew in Lake’s camp was not something that could have easily been known from the messages that came to Dyer’s camp since the entire focus was solely on the fragments found.

Over at Dyer’s camp the crew were anxiously waiting for the update from Lake’s camp in an obsessive manner: “Thought of this titanic mountain rampart 700 miles away inflamed our deepest sense of adventure; and we rejoiced that our expedition, if not ourselves personally, had been its discoverers” (Lovecraft 13). The obsession over the discovery made the crew interested in Lake’s messages and in the findings on his camp and not doubtful about the secrecy of the details only described in hints.

The men in the crew were anxious and sleepy, a key factor in any type of investigation that was highly taken for granted: “Though it was technically sleeping-time, not one of us listeners thought for a moment of retiring” (Lovecraft 13). Lake’s incoming message had a hallucinatory feeling to it: “Odd formations on slopes of highest mountains. Great low square blocks with exactly vertical sides and rectangular lines of low vertical ramparts, like the old Asian castles clinging to steep mountains in Roerich’s paintings. Impressive from distance” (Lovecraft 14). Although the landscape was something that caused excitement it was the discovery of ancient creatures that was the main concern for Lake as they would form the problem that would prevail in the rest of the novel.

The next message from Lake's camp is filled with excitement at the discovery of more evidence of Archaean nature or the earlier part of the Precambrian era when there was apparently no life on earth. Here the narration presents Lake's motivation and interest in the discovery of creatures from aeons long past and how he tries to convince the crew to come over to the camp to hasten the investigation. Within the caves they find a series of fossils and other remnants of prehistoric creatures, yet Lake does not personally send the wire himself but sends an excited Moulton to wire the message back to Dyer. Lake sends a new message because he is not satisfied with how the content was written. Dyer remarks:

Lake was not content to let his first message stand, but had another bulletin written and dispatched across the snow to the camp before Moulton could get back. After that Moulton stayed at the wireless in one of the planes; transmitting to me – and to the Arkham for relaying to the outside world—the frequent postscripts which Lake sent him by a succession of messengers. (Lovecraft 18)

This was the only message dispatched to the outside world regarding the discovery of the creatures where Dyer remarks: “I had better give the messages literally as Lake sent them, and as our base operator McTighe translated them from his pencil shorthand (Lovecraft 18). This transmission is important for documenting the way that the expedition was carried out, for Lake and Dyer personally since the comprehension of this information has the potential to greatly enhance their reputations in the scientific world. The reports contain descriptions of creatures unknown to science but described as the elder ones in the Necronomicon and in relation to the Cthulhu Mythos.

Lake is enthralled with the composition and characteristics of the creatures and the weird and strange findings that they discovered in the mountain. This obsession becomes a compulsive hourly programming that he is transmitting (Lovecraft 19-22). At times his narration conveys interest as well as of amazement yet this excitement about the creatures makes him blind and susceptible to outside forces: “within an hour and a half interest again rose to banish disappointment. Lake was sending more messages, and told of the completely successful transportation of the fourteen great specimens to the camp” (Lovecraft 22). Upon the arrival of the creatures at the camp, Lake’s reports become even weirder. He decides to perform an autopsy on one of them. This autopsy lets another factor affect the nature of Lake’s reports: smell.

The autopsy becomes the main focus of Lake’s interest and his desire to understand the composition of the creatures produces the factor of smell and delusion in the camp: “The autopsy was something of a hardship from the first slice towards the continuation of the procedure not to mention the odors that were emitted from the inside of the body, which is an attribute to a delirious state of mind. There was an insecurity in the naming of these creatures, which they dubbed ““The Elder Ones”” (Lovecraft 25). These odors created a state of delirium and a delusionary state of mind leading Lake also to reference *The Necronomicon* as a source of information for understanding what these creatures were.

Before Lake’s final message to the outside world he urged Dyer’s camp to come over in order to continue the investigation of the creatures that they had discovered. Dyer pointed out Lake’s wishes for them to go into the mountains. He wanted to make sure that the world knew of their current location and to limit the information that was going

to be shared: “Just before retiring I dispatched a final message to the Arkham with instructions about toning down the day’s news of the outside world, since the full details seemed radical enough to rouse a wave of incredulity until further substantiated” (Lovecraft 25). This “wave of incredulity” lets the reader understand that all the documentation that was given by Lake to Dyer was a series of delusions due to the exposure Lake had to the creature’s stench in the autopsy. Dyer’s limitation of the knowledge of the findings was made available to the outside world. The future collaboration Dyer aspires to is to be between himself and Lake and relies on the study of the creatures even though the details are somewhat unclear. This uncertainty is such that due to pieces of information that are not completely laid out in the narrative for the reader to understand the purpose of such a collaboration between the two and for what purpose is not certain. Here more desires arise for Dyer to be included in the investigation while his initial desire was to be where Lake was to receive praise along with him. Now with the emergence of the creatures Dyer’s desire grows not only into wanting to be part of the discovery of the mountains, shards or the creatures, he also wants to be included in finding more and more evidence that will elevate him in his position in the scientific field. This creation of new desires is what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari call a desiring machine where one desire is manufactured in the individual without having a structure while other new desires are slowly being developed. The problem with this for Dyer is that in his desire for this he will find himself losing part of his own sanity as he longs to find more and more information about the discoveries at the mountains.

With regards to Lake’s position on the topic of exchanging the information, the influence of extreme conditions and odors affected the quality of the information, a point

that Lake makes clear in the sent transmission. In addition this narration relies heavily on prior knowledge of the creatures found within a book written by a “Mad Arab,” which may have influenced Dyer’s perception of the creatures in the camp and the information in the telegram. After the telegram exchange Lake’s communication mysteriously ceases the transmissions regarding the discoveries made at the mountains. Dyer declares that he has perfect equipment for transmissions, but that the wind is a key factor in the decrease in the exchange of information; “Nevertheless the stony silence continued; and when we thought of the delirious force the wind must have had in his locality we could not help making the most direful conjectures” (Lovecraft 27). The transmissions stopped for a period of time but this is due to some problems with the strong gusts of wind that mysteriously arise in Lake’s campsite where the strange weather becomes an enemy of the narration.

The remarks that Dyer made on the climate and how it affected Dr. Lake’s campsite greatly affected the expedition and the outcome of the narrative. These same statements later affect Dyer’s own perception when confronted with the disaster at the camp. The atmosphere at the campsite provokes in Dyer feelings of dread and impending doom:

The atmosphere was clear, fairly quiet, and relatively mild in temperature; and we anticipated very little trouble in reaching the latitude and longitude designated by Lake as the site of his camp. Our apprehensions were over what we might find, or fail to find, at the end of our journey; for silence continued to answer all calls dispatched to the camp. (Lovecraft 27)

Since the first transmissions the disturbances of strong winds and the cold turned to peaceful factors upon Dyer's arrival as they were no longer felt at the extreme that was talked about by Lake. The radio silence did have an effect as Dyer's mind and his narration were still tormented about the voyage to Lake's camp, and remembering the tragedy had an effect on the way that he narrated the events that came afterwards.

According to Dyer, his psychological stability was shattered: "Every incident of that four-and-a-half-hour flight is burned into my recollection because of its crucial position in my life. It marked my loss, at the age of fifty-four, of all that peace and balance which the normal mind possesses through its accustomed conception of external Nature and Nature's laws" (Lovecraft 27). Dyer continues telling of the traumatic experience that took a toll not only on him, but also on the crew and how his inner self was trying to find composure upon the uncanny elements he attributed to the expedition: "Thenceforward the ten of us – but the student Danforth and myself above all others— were to face a hideously amplified world of lurking horrors which nothing can erase from our emotions, and which we would refrain from sharing with mankind in general if we could" (Lovecraft 27). The experience in the frozen mountains traumatized Dyer and Danforth as is described on their return to the world, but the rest of the crew were not so lucky as all of them died. Dyer's psychosis in schizoanalytical terms comes from his knowledge that all that he is to narrate is not going to be accepted by those who hear it and deem him mad. This psychosis stemmed from the overwhelming images that he witnessed, as well as from the climate that he endured, two factors that are important for understanding his narrative, which is not going to be welcomed by the readers of the events of the expedition.

Dyer was skeptical about publishing the records of the voyage because he thought the information was too fantastical to be believed. This in part explains the limited exposition in the narrative of the events:

The newspapers have printed the bulletins we sent from the moving plane; telling of our non-stop course, our two battles with treacherous upper-air gales, our glimpse of the broken surface where Lake had sunk his mid-journey shaft three days before, and our sight of a group of those strange fluffy snow-cylinders noted by Amundsen and Byrd as rolling in the wind across the endless leagues of frozen plateau. There came a point, though, when our sensations could not be conveyed in any words the press would understand; and a later point when we had to adopt an actual rule of strict censorship. (Lovecraft 27)

Dyer was convinced that the mountains were not so beautiful anymore and none should go there. Looking back at the mountains he speaks of them as evil and thinks that they should not be ventured into as they have the power to twist the minds of people and even cause their deaths (Lovecraft 28). For these reasons, Dyer tries to prevent other wanderers from visiting the mountains. Afterwards it can be seen that the motive for discouraging people from visiting the mountains is due to his fear that they would lose their sanity there. The focus of these statements is directed towards the readers of the reports about the expedition in hopes that these implied readers of the narrative would try to undertake an expedition to the mountains. In the descriptions given by him there are insistent references to creatures found in the *Necronomicon* used to induce fear and dread in the reader about the idea of a voyage to the mountains:

A few daring mystics have hinted at a pre-Pleistocene origin for the fragmentary Pnakotic Manuscripts, and have suggested that the devotees of Tsathoggua were as alien to mankind as Tsathoggua itself. Leng, wherever in space or time it might brood, was not a region I would care to be in or near; nor did I relish the proximity of a world that had ever bred such ambiguous and Archaean monstrosities as those Lake had just mentioned. At the moment I felt sorry that I had ever read the abhorred *Necronomicon*, or talked so much with that unpleasantly erudite folklorist Wilmarth at the university. (Lovecraft 28-29)

Dyer's obsession with the *Necronomicon* is recurrent throughout the novel. The book creates paranoia because it is held to possess truths about the supernatural world that resides in the mountains and a justification of the weird events that transpired before Dyer's eyes. As Vivian Ralickas remarks on the influence of the *Necronomicon* in Lovecraft's fiction particularly in *At The Mountains of Madness*, "both attributes what would be deemed by a rational mind as undue importance to the *Necronomicon* and implicitly privileges its cosmic indifferentist narrative of existence over any affirmative understanding of creation" (Ralickas 376).

When Dyer and Danforth reached the City located in the mountains after following a trail through the mountains, the trail reveals a series of events that greatly affected their understanding of the natural for the supernatural. Danforth had a breakdown with all the images that were on the walls, which made Dyer think that "Certain lingering influences in that unknown Antarctic world of disordered time and alien natural law make it imperative that further exploration be discouraged" (Lovecraft 59). He therefore states once more that further exploration would not be advisable and

adds that he and Danforth have a means for discouraging others from making the journey to the mountains. Then comes the justification of his actions and his motives to continue on with the investigation:

There are those who will say Danforth and I were utterly mad not to flee for our lives after that; since our conclusions were now—notwithstanding their wildness—completely fixed, and of a nature I need not even mention to those who have read my account as far as this. Perhaps we were mad—for have I not said those horrible peaks were mountains of madness? But I think I can detect something of the same spirit—albeit in a less extreme form—in the men who stalk deadly beasts through African jungles to photograph them or study their habits. Half-paralysed with terror though we were, there was nevertheless fanned within us a blazing flame of awe and curiosity which triumphed in the end.

(Lovecraft 79)

Dyer justifies his voyage to the mountains and the exploration with Danforth by pointing to his curiosity about finding out more about the place even though they were slowly losing their grip on sanity. Dyer claims that all of the greatest explorers share this madness. But the insides of the mountains, the city or the strange supernatural creatures are not enough to suffice that they went mad in the expedition by these facts alone but there is the strange appearance of mirages in the narrative to induce fear in the readers.

In the novel the description of images is a major factor to keep in consideration when looking into the details of the exploration and how they relate to the narration in the story. One technique Dyer employs throughout his narration in regards to the mirages is his use of the sublime to associate dread with the mirages in the setting of the events. On

their way to finding information as to what happened to Lake's camp, Dyer and Danforth set forth to the base of the mountains where the creatures were said to be found by Lake. On the journey to the mountain base Dyer comes to see the landscape as marvelous and dreadful at the same time employing elements of the sublime and references to terrors and paintings. Dyer at this time employs the use of mirages and hallucinations to the narrative of what they see. The mirages and hallucinations described by Dyer tap into his senses making his comprehension of the images before him seem unbelievable, which leaves the reader doubting his accounts as true and more like descriptions to evoke dread in the reader: "I had seen dozens of polar mirages during the preceding weeks, some of them quite as uncanny and fantastically vivid as the present sample; but this one had a wholly novel and obscure quality of menacing symbolism, and I shuddered as the seething labyrinth of fabulous walls and towers and minarets loomed out of the troubled ice-vapours above our heads" (Lovecraft 29). The memories of these hallucinations had been causing Dyer to constantly return to reminisce on books and myths that he had previously read and try to connect them in a logical and reasonable manner to his experience in the mountains. One of the narrative characteristics that Dyer possesses is the ability to distance people from the events of the narration by using images of wonderful and grim panoramas in order to keep people from exploring the Antarctic regions. He feels compelled to transcend the narrative into other fantastic sights and opine on what he could tie in to distract the reader. This is so he can prolong the narrative with these wonderful details in order not to reveal a lot of the things that they saw that would interest an expedition to the place. One example is when he describes the drawings of the Arctic whaler Scoresby in comparison to how the mountains are shown as being a

dark and fearful place. These drawings corroborate the impression of the Antarctic as being nightmarish in Dyer's experience when he and Danforth visited it: "...that anomalous elder-world discovery in our minds, and the pall of probable disaster enveloping the greater part of our expedition, we all seemed to find in it a taint of latent malignity and infinitely evil portent" (Lovecraft 29). The evil nature that Dyer describes reemerges frequently throughout the novel and is constantly referred to with images of the environment and the creatures that are within the cold regions.

The initial mirages on the way to the mountains affected Dyer's perception of the expedition as they explored more along the trail to continue to look for the men in Lake's camp, but it is not until he and Danforth come upon a city inside the mountain that the mirages and wonders of it impact his development of the narration: "It was, very clearly, the blasphemous city of the mirage in stark, objective and ineluctable reality. That damnable portent had had a material basis after all – there had been some horizontal stratum of ice-dust in the upper air, and this shocking stone survival had projected its image across the mountains according to the simple laws of reflection." (Lovecraft 43)

The city in Dyer's view is a bad place to be in, yet he does not cease looking at the inscriptions on the walls telling of the history of the place that he relates to the Old Ones and their society. The city taps into his memory of the esoteric happenings of the world and the supernatural that lurks within his familiar knowledge of the descriptions found in the pages of the *Necronomicon* regarding the mysterious city of the elder gods. Dyer does not find any comfort knowing how these themes and occurrences could be related to this world. Since he is not in control of all that is happening he becomes uneasy at the emergence of mirages in his narration. All that is happening is mysterious to his

understanding yet he narrates it as only he can, relating it to previous knowledge of landscape's fantastic details to find some justification for what it is that they are going through.

Dyer reminisces about how insignificant he and Danforth felt in the world around them looking at the vast information imprinted on the walls and on how reliable they found the information to retell of their discovery. Their accounts regarding the civilization they had encountered told of their amazement about the information:

Looking back to our sensations, and recalling our dazedness at viewing this monstrous survival from aeons we had thought pre-human, I can only wonder that we preserved the semblance of equilibrium which we did. Of course we knew that something –chronology, scientific theory, or our own consciousness – was woefully awry; yet we kept enough poise to guide the plane, observe many things quite minutely, and take a careful series of photographs which may yet serve both us and the world in good stead. In my case, ingrained scientific habit may have helped; for above all my bewilderment and sense of menace there burned a dominant curiosity to fathom more of this age-old secret. (Lovecraft 45)

With this information Dyer re-states that he has not placed much interest either in the details that were important to the mystery of the missing crew or in the destruction at the campsite. This thirst for knowledge was focused solely on finding more information related to the history of the city in the mountains and the creatures, or Elder Ones that ravaged Lake's camp who were also found inside the mountain.

Inside the city the reader gets a glimpse of Dyer's unreliability in the narration and of his uncertainties about the details he is narrating other than revealing little bits of information that are later on commented by him as not possible to exist in the world:

Only in fantastic nightmares could any human beings but Danforth and me conceive such optical effects. Between us and the churning vapours of the west lay that monstrous tangle of dark stone towers; its outré and incredible forms impressing us afresh at every new angle of vision. It was a mirage in solid stone, and were it not for the photographs I would still doubt that such a thing could be.  
(Lovecraft 48-49)

In this account Dyer describes the magnificence of the city which he could not believe was real, and as such he wondered if it was truly real and not a dream. The pictures were said to be evidence of all that is described to be inside the city but were they ever given to the people interrogating Dyer? This is a problem for the comprehension and believability of Dyer's accounts since all evidence that is given is references to either the campsite, the magnificence of the city within the mountain walls, loss of comprehension and sanity or his warning not to venture to the Antarctic.

Lake's campsite is one setting that is currently referred to in the narrative and promotes Dyer's narrative towards the altered psychological state that he and Danforth undergo due to the "malicious nature" of the mountains. The campsite destruction is what drove Dyer and Danforth to venture into the base of the mountain and ultimately within the caves towards the lost city in hopes of finding the missing crewmembers or information as to what had happened to them. What Dyer published in the report was not entirely accurate:

Everyone, of course, has read the brief and unsatisfying bulletins of the rest of our Antarctic sojourn. Some hours after our landing we sent a guarded report of the tragedy we found, and reluctantly announced the wiping out of the whole Lake party by the frightful wind of the preceding day, or of the night before that.

Eleven known dead, young Gedney missing. (Lovecraft 30)

The problem at the site was reported suggesting that the climate was the problem that disturbed the exploration. His main focus was that his report was not a satisfying one, or more likely something believable to the outside where later he continued with the report's reaching the outside world and again he thought it to be misunderstood by them: "People pardoned our hazy lack of details through realization of the shock the sad event must have caused us, and believed us when we explained that the mangling action of the wind had rendered all eleven bodies unsuitable for transportation outside" (Lovecraft 30). The description of the bodies at this point in Dyer's narrative suggests a sinister intention as the wind in all its power could not possibly mangle a body in the manner he had described. "Indeed, I flatter myself that even in the midst of our distress, utter bewilderment, and soul-clutching horror; we scarcely went beyond the truth in any specific instance. The tremendous significance lies in what we dared not tell – what I would not tell now but for the need of warning others off from nameless terrors" (Lovecraft 30). His insistence continues with his confession to the readers of the telegram as a censored warning to the readers who are interested in making an expedition to the mountains not to do so for they would ultimately suffer through it. Although the crew was dead Dyer was being pompous about the courageous way that he related the tragic events in Lake's camp to the outside world. But he did have some issues, providing

completely the details of this tragedy due to his own need: “It is a fact that the wind had wrought dreadful havoc. Whether all could have lived through it, even without the other thing, is gravely open to doubt” (Lovecraft 30). All that happened as Dyer states is “open to doubt” due to the lack of accuracy in his retelling of the demise of the people in Lake’s camp.

In the narrative the strange occurrence also involves the dogs that were used for traveling through the mountainous terrain. Their dogs, once in the camp before being caged, felt uneasiness next to the site where the specimens were located in the camp afterwards in the supposed storm “the most we said about agitation concerned our dogs, whose frantic uneasiness near the biological specimens was to be expected from poor Lake’s accounts” (Lovecraft 31). After the storm Dyer assumed a justification for the dogs’ demise as the possibility that the wind might have done it, yet he still has some doubts as to his assumption: “None of the dogs survived, their hurriedly built snow enclosure near the camp being almost wholly destroyed. The wind may have done that, though the greater breakage on the side next the camp, which was not the windward one, suggests an outward leap or break of the frantic beasts themselves” (Lovecraft 31). This distinction regarding the uneasiness of the dogs at the camp was a warning that something horrible was about to happen yet the crew paid no attention to their warnings. Dogs have a keen sense of smell that could receive the horrendous odors mentioned by Lake in the autopsy reports. Dyer puts little emphasis on Lake’s scraps of notes, which were left scattered in the destroyed campsite: “We brought back all the books, scientific equipment, and other incidentals that we could find, though much was rather unaccountably blown away” (Lovecraft 31). It is these little details that are important

pieces of information that might shed light on the mysterious disappearance of the crew and the dogs, but the issue that is of concern to Dyer is mainly the composition of the creatures.

When Dyer and Danforth gathered the remaining bits of information left at the campsite they trod through the ice terrain towards an opening in the mountains, exploring the halls of the same to discover a forgotten city. Inside the city they found carvings on the walls. This evidence points to an ancient civilization that existed long before the known strata of their history. Dyer began to speculate on the significance that this new discovery would have on humanity. When Dyer and Danforth step into the city amazed at the extraordinary landscape, Danforth remembers the memories of the campsite tragedy in a paranoiac state, fearing for his life:

Danforth was frankly jumpy, and began making some offensively – irrelevant—speculations about the horror at the camp – which I resented all the more because I could not help sharing certain conclusions forced upon us by many features of this morbid survival from nightmare antiquity. The speculations worked on his imagination, too; for in one place – where a debris-littered alley turned a sharp corner – he insisted that he saw faint traces of ground markings which he did not like; whilst elsewhere he stopped to listen to a subtle imaginary sound from some undefined point – a muffled musical piping, he said, not unlike that of the wind in the mountain caves yet somehow disturbingly different. (Lovecraft 50)

Dyer's wish to set aside Danforth's mad musings causes the reader to question what these remarks were about and why he neglected the relevance of the details in regards to the campsite. Danforth's paranoia stems from a more deep-seated instability that is related to

smells and the musical pipings of the place. Danforth's obsession with the dreaded *Necronomicon* brought up assumptions as to what is going on in the surroundings and ultimately drove Danforth towards an unstable position in the expedition.

Dyer and Danforth's exploration of the city was not something that should have been done by them, but by professionals. The fear they experienced, especially Danforth, would later affect the credibility of the narrative as Dyer places the blame on this fear that affected the outcome of reasoning and accuracy in gathering information of the city.

Our motivation after that is something I will leave to psychologists. We knew now that some terrible extension of the camp horrors must have crawled into this nighted burial-place of the aeons, hence could not doubt any longer the existence of nameless conditions—present at least recent—just ahead. Yet in the end we did let sheer burning curiosity—or anxiety—or anxiety—or auto-hypnotism—or vague thoughts of responsibility toward Gedney—or what not—drive us on.

(Lovecraft 77)

This motivation and curiosity lead to the loss of the little sanity left in Dyer's and Danforth's minds, where their conscious minds go into repression upon the details of death they experienced in their expedition. Here the ability of the unconscious to store information is used for easy retelling of the details of the tragedy that Dyer found inside the city.

After the discovery of the bodies of Gedney and the missing dogs, the smells encountered in the autopsy of the creature re-emerge: "The nameless odor was now curiously mixed with another and scarcely less offensive odour—of what nature we could not guess, though we thought of decaying organisms and perhaps unknown sub terrene

fungi” (Lovecraft 87). This odor of fungi provoked hallucinations and paranoid delusions in both but it is particularly associated with how Danforth’s mental stability is lost.

According to Dyer, “The new and inexplicable odour was abominably strong, and we could detect scarcely a sign of that other nameless scent. Puffs of visible vapour ahead bespoke increasing contrasts in temperature, and the relative nearness of the sunless sea-cliffs of the great abyss” (Lovecraft 89). Dyer at that point decides to flee from the place after acknowledging that Danforth is not in his right mind after witnessing all that they encountered.

From the accounts at the campsite to the interior of the city, Dyer’s narrative documents the events as he believes them to have happened. With the uses of mirages and the uncanny to support the fear of losing a person’s sanity Dyer’s narration strikes fear in the readers of the expedition. Here Dyer does not leave out the chance of refuting the documents left behind by Lake to impose his own for the benefit of justifying his maddened state of mind. But at the onset of imposing his own views and experiences of the expedition Dyer declares that all the notes, although not found in their totality, are insufficient to serve as valuable data.

Although Lake’s presence has been erased in the tale, his words are found in Dyer’s accounts and through his understanding express his point of view about the expedition, leaving the reader to question what the complete events at the campsite and afterwards were. Dyer’s narrative relies on the fact that Danforth is not stable at all to recall accounts of what happened to the interrogators so he is the only source of information to retell what happened on the expedition. Dyer suggests that Lake’s descriptions of the creatures and the gathering of data were left to his own distorted

reality of the events and that these descriptions should not be believed due to the inaccuracy with which he sent his messages by wire. In his narrative Dyer points out that the information gathered by Lake was lost due to the strong winds at the remains of the campsite:

About fourteen biological specimens we were pardonably indefinite. We said that the only ones we discovered were damaged, but that enough was left of them to prove Lake's description wholly and impressively accurate. It was hard work keeping our personal emotions out of this matter – and we did not mention numbers or say exactly how we had found those which we did find. We had by that time agreed not to transmit anything suggesting madness on the part of Lake's men, and it surely looked like madness to find six imperfect monstrosities carefully buried upright in nine-foot snow graves under five-pointed mounds punched over with groups of dots in patterns exactly those on the queer greenish soapstones dug up from Mesozoic or Tertiary times. The eight perfect specimens mentioned by Lake seemed to have been completely blown away. (Lovecraft 32)

In the investigation of Lake's camp Dyer revealed evidence about the accuracy of the records written down by Lake and he considered these pieces of information to be inaccurate in relation to the transmissions. Dyer's interaction/tampering with the information found in Lake's camp ensures that the outside world does not hear anything regarding the reality of what happened at the campsite or of the data written down by Lake. Dyer explains that they censored the information that they transmitted: "We were careful, too, about the Public's general peace of mind; hence Danforth and I said little about that frightful trip over the mountains the next day" (Lovecraft 32). Although Dyer's

words sound protective, it is not for this reason that he makes this transmission. It is to prevent an expedition to the Antarctic mountains. He does so because of his need for secrecy about what he found in those mountains: “Fortunately our tale sounded realistic and prosaic enough not to tempt any of the others into emulating our flight. Had any tried to do that, I would have used every ounce of my persuasion to stop them – and I do not know what Danforth would have done” (Lovecraft 33). At this point in the narration Dyer uses prolepsis just as there is some progress in the narrative of events to state that he and Danforth got away with their lives. He deems the place damned and one that should not be visited by anyone: “Less than a fortnight later we left the last hint of polar land behind us, and thanked heaven that we were clear of a haunted, accursed realm where life and death, space and time, have made black and blasphemous alliances in the unknown epochs since matter first writhed and swam on the planet’s scarce-cooled crust” (Lovecraft 34). The narration’s scarcity of details again hints at the fear that Dyer has in remembering his experience in the expedition and what he can tell the reader without sounding crazy. In his attempts to prevent people from going into the Antarctic Dyer manipulates the narrative of the events by using temporal lapses as a way to give some details and hide the rest.

Since our return we have all constantly worked to discourage Antarctic exploration, and have kept certain doubts and guesses to ourselves with splendid unity and faithfulness. Even Danforth, with his nervous breakdown, has not flinched or babbled to his doctors – indeed, as I have said, there is one thing he thinks he alone saw which he will not tell even me, though I think it would help his psychological state if he would consent to do so. It might explain and relieve

much, though perhaps the thing was no more than the delusive aftermath of an earlier shock. That is the impression I gather after those rare irresponsible moments when he whispers disjointed things to me – things which he repudiates vehemently as soon as he gets a grip on himself. (Lovecraft 34)

Dyer places the responsibility for all that happened in the mountains to elements of the supernatural as for him it is a reasonable explanation for all the things that went on from climate changes, sleep deprivation and imbalances to their sanity. To validate his claim of the supernatural as responsible he uses Danforth as an example that people might lose their grip on reality and sanity if they venture to the Antarctic. This warning in the narrative is related to his constant fear of what happened or what he believes to have happened. In his narrative he has a remorseful train of thought that takes him back to using analepsis to recount and relate his fear of what happened in the camp: “It is only with vast hesitancy and repugnance that I let my mind go back to Lake’s camp and what we really found there – and to that other thing beyond the frightful mountain wall. I am constantly tempted to shirk the details, and to let hints stand for actual facts and ineluctable deductions. I hope I had said enough already to let me glide briefly over the rest; the rest, that is, of the horror at the camp” (Lovecraft 35). Dyer is admitting to have omitted things in the report of the camp and with dismay he continues to describe the lapses of memory in the narration, all due to his constant fear of the realities that occurred in the camp and his own protection although no clear evidence as to what happened is given. All that is true is that everyone in the camp was dead but how is not clearly stated by Dyer since he is obviously omitting information from the trauma he experienced on the expedition. Vivian Ralickas remarks on the characteristics of Lovecraft’s ability to

make the characters seem distant and hesitant; they repress information due to the fact that it would not be understood by the people in their culture: “The impossibility of an experience of the sublime in Lovecraft, intrinsically tied to characters' coming into awareness of Western culture's failure to represent the world as it really is, becomes apparent in Lovecraft's juxtaposition of [the] protagonists' initial, aesthetic responses to natural spectacles in ‘Mountains’ with descriptions of their uncultivated, instinctive sense of repulsion towards the same objects” (Ralickas 375-376). The sublime in the novel is implied in the narrative but the details are held back by the narrator because these types of events are mainly seen as being tall tales too fantastic to be believed rationally. The details are implied by the narrator in a manner to be understood by others who might not deem the declarations made by him as crazy antics. In context the problems that Dyer and Danforth withstood, when they came back to society, made them distance themselves from the strange occurrences they experienced in the expedition to become parts of society again.

Dyer constantly and inefficiently tries to explain what happened at the camp only to distance the reader or the interrogators by attributing the details of the disappearance of Lake's camp to altered states of mental stability. He says specifically that it was all due to the side of Lake's camp for uncovering those creatures that this tragedy befell the crew:

The principal things I have been keeping back relate to the bodies, and to certain subtle points which may or may not lend a hideous and incredible kind of rationale to the apparent chaos. At the time I tried to keep the men's minds off those points; for it was so much simpler – so much more normal – to lay everything to an outbreak of madness on the part of some of Lake's party. From

the look of things, that daemon mountain wind must have been enough to drive any man mad in the midst of this centre of all earthly mystery and desolation.

(Lovecraft 35)

The wind along with the smells that were emitted from the bodies of the creatures were key factors described in Lake's reports that Dyer used to justify the madness that consumed the minds of the people in Lake's camp. The desire that Dyer had in making this justification was to point out details of Lake's negligence with his crew in regards to the process of evaluating the bodies as the only evidence that strongly points to what happened: "They had all been in some terrible kind of conflict, and were torn and mangled in fiendish and altogether inexplicable ways. Death, so far as we could judge, had in each case come from strangulation or laceration" (Lovecraft 35). The scenes of death and macabre happenings were factors that made Dyer omit information from Lake's reports.

Death is an important factor on the expedition to the Antarctic since its appearance causes the narrative to reveal a series of changes in Dyer's psyche and the clarity of the details of the events. Yet for credibility of what happened and the sake of sidetracking their mental breakdown to the public they opted to gather data for reports to prove the mysterious death of the crew and what became of Lake's camp: "...we carefully photographed all the main evidences of insane disorder at the camp; and shall use the prints to buttress our pleas against the departure of the proposed Starkweather-Moore Expedition" (Lovecraft 37). His motives for presenting these pieces of information to the interrogators are to impede another investigation because of the sanity that they lost and will be lost by others that attempt this journey.

For madness ... was the explanation spontaneously adopted by everybody so far as spoken utterance was concerned; though I will not be so naïve as to deny that each of us may have harboured wild guesses which sanity forbade him to formulate completely. (Lovecraft 38)

Dyer's position on the topic of madness as the main problem for the investigation was something that held the supernatural responsible in his narrative by all the people who knew of the expedition. The madness that Dyer discusses relates the supernatural but is mixed with elements of climate, the landscape and odors.

Danforth and Dyer went into the caves because they were curious and wanted to explore the insides of the caves with a map they created with the information found on a wall engraving. They came upon items that resembled some of the materials, such as surgical materials, books and notebooks, which were found in the ravaged campsite and in a state that suggested someone had been utilizing them. This new campsite raises a series of questions for both Danforth and Dyer that leads them to further explore the unknown, risking their lives and their sanity (Lovecraft 78-79).

As they go further into the caves they find three roughed up sledges that had disappeared from Lake's camp along with Gedney's body and the missing dog. The bodies presented the same description of preservation as read in Lake's accounts of the creatures that appeared to be frozen. Dyer and Danforth were not familiar with the type of preservation the creatures used but later found out by reading Lake's description that this was the look of the creatures described in the reports (Lovecraft 82-83). This detail regarding the creatures raises questions about Dyer's account of the information found in

Lake's reports, to Dyer's revelation that Lake had a distorted view of what these creatures were.

Throughout the novel there are a series of confessions that Dyer has left half mentioned to the reader and he in part confesses that he did not reveal the entirety or the truth of what happened. Dyer's motives for omitting these events and situations that he and Danforth experienced at the site described in Lake's accounts might be that he and Danforth are individuals who had a detached sense of reality, but it is interesting to see why he did so. For aspects of credibility of the tale and/or suspicions of foul play the narrative holds a thread of credibility to the events that happened on the exploration. In Dyer's confession his concern about how his information on the exploration and Danforth's loss of sanity would be seen in public signals a concern towards others venturing into the mountains:

I have already repeated the non-committal story we told the men at camp – and relayed outside—after our return sixteen hours later. It is now my terrible duty to amplify this account by filling in the merciful blanks with hints of what we really saw in the hidden trans-montane world – hints of the revelations which have finally driven Danforth to a nervous collapse. I wish he would add a really frank word about the thing which he thinks he alone saw – even though it was probably a nervous delusion – and which was perhaps the last straw that put him where he is; but he is firm against that. (Lovecraft 39)

Dyer's concern for Danforth's sanity serves as an example of the effect that the expedition had on him as well. In Chapter VI, Dyer commences the narrative again by re-

stating the need to remember the fear that he experienced in the caverns with details of supernatural qualities in the narrative:

It would be cumbrous to give a detailed, consecutive account of our wanderings inside that cavernous, aeon-dead honeycomb of primal masonry; that monstrous lair of elder secrets which now echoed for the first time, after uncounted epochs, to the tread of human feet. This is especially true because so much of the horrible drama and revelation came from a mere study of the omnipresent mural carvings. Our flashlight photographs of those carvings will do much toward proving the truth of what we are now disclosing, and it is lamentable that we had not a larger film supply with us. As it was, we made crude notebook sketches of certain salient features after all our films were used up. (Lovecraft 53)

The interior of the Mountains and the Mausoleum gives the reader an idea of what Dyer is referring to as the monstrous sights he witnessed in the mountains in relation with his omission of information and evidence in the documented mountains. Although the sketches prove to be useful they are not considered concrete evidence after Dyer professed that the information left behind by Lake was lost as well as the materials at the camp were destroyed or lost by the gusts of wind. In the documentation of materials the lack of film in the exploration proved to be of importance in the attitude that Dyer had in withholding the accounts of the caverns. This allowed for little to disclose to the outside world on what they discovered and to have people focus on his narrative as the sole source of evidence. The pictures they did take were not clear enough to use as justifiable evidence so it proved to benefit Dyer's purpose for retelling his point of view of the events that transpired.

Inside the caverns his narrative is a warning to all not to venture out and see the wonders as well as the horrors that he saw. Dyer presents a worry in narrating the events and the revelation of the evidence of the trip because people might discover or rather disprove what he and Danforth went through on the expedition: “I can only hope that my account will not arouse a curiosity greater than sane caution on the part of those who believe me at all. It would be tragic if any were to be allured to that realm of death and horror by the very warning meant to discourage them” (Lovecraft 55).

For Dyer fear and the unknown are issues that do not have so great an impact as he remembers them, or, as he tries to justify his position, he states in chapter VIII: “I am not as skeptical about old tales and fears as I used to be, and I do not laugh now at the pre-human sculptor’s notion that lightning paused meaningfully now and then at each of the brooding crests, and that an unexplained glow shone from one of those terrible pinnacles all through the long polar night” (Lovecraft 69). His ramblings went on half mentioned as he places other obstacles to limit the amount of information he is telling regarding the place “we meant to look farther later on; but as I have said, immediate conditions dictated another present objective” (Lovecraft 70).

Regarding their investigation into the city, “Danforth and I had seen a good deal in the last few hours, and were prepared to believe and keep silent about many appalling and incredible secrets of primal nature” (Lovecraft 74). Withholding this information about the expedition and what they found out about the history of the place and the way of life of the Old Ones was of importance to him, yet he also distances himself from the tale’s outcome saying that Danforth was bound for madness when he encountered the

situations they were going through. Dyer does not express the need to tell of the extreme conditions and decides to rule out any information on this topic in the narrative.

Although they have a need to get out of the mausoleum there is the same train of thought that brought Lake to his untimely end in the campsite and he starts to express the need to explore even deeper into the mountains and the halls: “I have said that our study of the decadent sculptures brought about a change in our immediate objective. This of course had to do with the chiseled avenues to the black inner world, of whose existence we had not known before, but which we were now eager to find and traverse” (Lovecraft 74). This new interest in the mausoleum’s secrets made him curious to find out about the wonders and the horrors that had not been mentioned before and the problematic that this intrigue and wonder might have on Danforth and himself.

At the beginning of chapter X Dyer is becoming hesitant yet again to retell these events to the world, which could become interested in exploring the mountains of madness and discover the dead. He goes on to speculate that “Many people will probably judge us callous as well as mad for thinking about the northward tunnel and the abyss so soon after our sombre discovery, and I am not prepared to say that we would have immediately revived such thoughts but for a specific circumstance which broke upon us and set up a whole new train of speculations” (Lovecraft 83). This circumstance that Dyer tells us about regarding the fear of remembering what happened in the tunnels made Danforth lose touch with reality due to the impacting images that he experienced.

Chapter XI opens with a confession from Dyer regarding his psyche before the horrors of the things that he had seen in the experience and breaks into a deep personal psychoanalysis of himself: “Still another time have I come to a place where it is very

difficult to proceed. I ought to be hardened by this stage; but there are some experiences and intimations which scar too deeply to permit of healing, and leave only such an added sensitiveness that memory re-inspires all the original horror” (Lovecraft 89). The original horror that he refers to is the massacre at the campsite along with the discovery of the bodies in the caves and the weird and otherworldly Albino penguins in the cave. To Dyer all of these memories prevent him from telling all of the details as they happened in the exploration and limit the information that he provided to little details regarding the exploration in the “Mountains of Madness.”

During Dyer’s continuing exploration of the caverns and passages they came upon a sight that deeply disturbed them for his narrative shows that they were frightened for their lives which forces them to “...—run back, before we had seen what we did see, and before our minds were burned with something which will never let us breathe easily again!” (Lovecraft 90). The image that burned their minds as, Dyer puts it, gives the reader an idea of how horrific the details of the scene were that Danforth fell into a traumatic state of mind. As they were exiting the cave an image deeply disturbed Danforth for he “gave vent to a nerve-tortured cry which echoed hysterically through that vaulted and archaic passage with the evil palimpsest carvings” (Lovecraft 91).

Dyer later describes what he saw as frightening to the reader and the interviewers: I might as well be frank—even if I cannot bear to be quite direct—in stating what we saw; though at the time we felt that it was not to be admitted even to each other. The words reaching the reader can never even suggest the awfulness of the sight itself. It crippled our consciousness so completely that I wonder we had the residual sense to dim our torches as planned, and to strike the right tunnel toward

the dead city. Instinct alone must have carried us through—perhaps better than reason could have done; though if that was what saved us, we paid a high price.

(Lovecraft 96)

Dyer speaks of Danforth's loss of sanity from the experiences at the mountains yet he was also there but does not want to disclose what he saw for fear that this recurring loss of sanity might befall on him. Dyer justifies his claims by stating that there was an agreement made between the two of them not to disclose the information in full detail:

Certain things, we had agreed, were not for people to know and discuss lightly-- and I would not speak of them now but for the need of heading off that Starkweather-Moore Expedition, and others, at any cost. It is absolutely necessary, for the peace and safety of mankind, that some of earth's dark, dead corners and unplumbed depths be let alone; lest sleeping abnormalities wake to resurgent life, and blasphemously surviving nightmares squirm and splash out of their black lairs to newer and wider conquests. (Lovecraft 101)

Dyer's need to distance all others from this part of the world justifies the texts and the reports. Danforth's hallucinations of creatures and other entities that were said to be in the mountains stem from his obsession with the cursed book: "Danforth, indeed, is known to be among the few who have ever dared go completely through that worm-riddled copy of the *Necronomicon* kept under lock and key in the college library" (Lovecraft 101). Dyer has also read the book and should present the same paranoid symptoms as Danforth yet he puts the condition solely on Danforth for his own benefit of remaining important in the findings of the exploration: "I have said that Danforth refused to tell me what final horror made him scream out so insanely—a horror which, I feel

sadly sure, is mainly responsible for his present breakdown” (Lovecraft 100). He is adversely also admitting that in his silence no evidence is to be presented to wonder why Danforth’s sanity waned in the narrative and he protects his own state of mind from being known to others.

Dyer’s desire to declare Danforth mad lets the reader see that his narrative with evidence documenting the events of the expedition to the outside world are little pieces of a puzzle he is trying to hide regarding what happened in the mountains. Dyer is clearly delirious in how he narrates the events yet he uses Danforth’s loss of sanity and Lake’s disappearance to hide traces of the reality that transpired in the Mountains, the city and in the Caverns. He bases his narrative on what he saw and in a way that he can shed light on the expedition with fantastical ideas and hallucinatory images to try and discourage any further exploration. His narrative is plagued with death, the supernatural, dementia and psychological imbalances, yet he believes this narrative is what happened in the Antarctic. His main focus is on these scraps of evidence he gathered in Lake’s camp and the limited pictures in the caverns and city. With these pieces of information he narrated the details of the events with the use of prolepses and analepses to go back and re-establish his concern for the omission of information. These omissions are used by him for his own benefit and to discourage others into going into the mountains so that other people do not tamper with what happened in the mountains for his own benefit.

## Conclusion

This thesis has used Narratology and Psychoanalytical analysis to examine two novels, Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness* and Melville's *Moby Dick*, and explore the ways in which the narrative elements, in particular the uses of temporal prolepses and analepses, are affected by the psychological status of the narrator. The relation to the Gothic, horror and the plural multiplicity of the storyline was also explored in aspects relevant to the storyline which horrify and/or terrorize the narrators to try to steer away from the problems of the past that they are plagued with and which they are telling. The testimony given to the reader in both novels is something in which they have come to terms with what has happened, although there is no instance of clarity on the events, just hints and pieces of a puzzle that the reader has to piece together.

In Chapter One a brief analysis and review of the origins of the horror story were provided for the purpose of explaining the points and aspects of horror and the emergence of madness as seen in both novels. In the discussion I have analyzed points and ideas of what elements strike fear and doubt in the narrative in their timeline as well as the importance of the transcendence of fear throughout the years and the way in which the portrayal of fear has evolved over the centuries.

In Chapter Two a discussion on the topics of Narratology and Psychoanalytical analysis was presented, particularly those pertaining to the ideas that were encountered in the narrator's views and depictions of the events that transpired. It has taken into consideration the ideas of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Carl Gustav Jung, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari to explore in depth the personality of each narrator not to mention the psyches that were tied to the omission of information in their accounts.

Chapter Three discussed Melville's *Moby Dick* focusing on Ishmael's narrative and how he narrated from memory his accounts at sea, in particular the hunt for the White Whale. He goes back to retell an event in his life when his psyche was heavily traumatized. The constant interruptions lead the reader to believe that he was in fact very hazy about the events that transpired on the Pequod not to mention his own brushes with insanity by splitting his being into two.

The interruptions in the narrative regarding the hunt for Moby Dick leave the reader questioning the true intentions of these sudden breaks. Although these narrative breaks provide information to understanding concepts and points about the whaling industry they at times prove to be unsatisfactory to understanding the main tale. The addition of a variety of information from other journeys after the hunt for Moby Dick gives the reader an idea of who this narrator Ishmael became and the one that we came to know through the tale of the hunt, which was his first trip out to sea. In this sense the pieces of information from these interruptions to the narrative help us to comprehend the narrator. At times, the reader feels that Ishmael's intentions are placed into the question of the narrator's need to bring up topics that do not always seem fully to complement the tale of the hunt, but address other matters that seem more of a moral, and do not push the whale hunt narrative further.

Ishmael's narrative told is from the perspective of a reminiscence that was very tumultuous and confusing to him. At the time of narrating his accounts he fully comprehends his past and finds solace in his words, in this sense he also reveals this dread towards his voyage as he tells of the close relationship that he had with his dark half, the "savage" Queequeg.

In the beginning of the novel there are hints as to why Ishmael is very biased and distracted in the narrative, as if there are two individuals involved in the narrative, but that is clarified once he introduces Queequeg, the “savage,” into the narrative. The introduction of the “savage” gives the reader the idea that during the voyage Ishmael was going through traumatic times searching for who he was and what he would become, thus displacing himself in the narrative. These displacements were between Ishmael the Character and Queequeg the Savage, and they are presented as two distinct individuals throughout the novel, but in the beginning the encounter suggests that they are one and the same. The fear of death causes this displacement to present Queequeg, the Other, into the narrative. This evidence is presented in the chapters following their first encounter. These two share in common the need for acceptance from society and peers both at sea and on land. Likewise with William Dyer the fear of death haunted his psyche through the exploration after he and Danforth set foot upon the mountains to research the whereabouts of the people in Dr. Lake’s camp as was discussed in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four focused on Lovecraft’s *At The Mountains of Madness* discussing similar points of Narratology as was done with *Moby Dick* but in particular the narrative and the structure of the novel. In *Mountains* there is a different context in regards to survival of the fittest and the increasing depth of madness at the sight of gruesome events and scientific discoveries in the mountains. My main focus is Dyer’s narrative and how it shifts and changes from chapter to chapter to become more of a warning than a narrative of what transpired in the mountains during their exploration.

During the exploration, particular points affect the manner in which Dyer presents his narrative, such as the climate and the incident at the camp where Dr. Lake was

conducting his investigation of the mountains and of the strange creatures his team discovered in the ice. I have discussed the ways in which the emergence of the creatures primarily created this plunge into dementia and hallucinations. Another instance of the twists in Dyer's displaced psyche involves the exploration to find the people of the campsite within the mountain walls. At this time the narrative gives more and more warnings than in previous chapters as Dyer warns other explorers not to venture into the depths of the mountains for they too might go mad.

The narrative the omission of information is followed by one of warning of an imminent loss of sanity on behalf of himself and of his assistant Danforth. This imbalance of sanity puts Dyer's narrative into doubt as to the relevance in the information given. This information comes from a person who is clearly affected by the events that he and his companion endured within the walls of the lost city in the mountains they were exploring.

At the end of both novels the narrators Dyer and Ishmael exhibit examples of paranoid delusion and their inconsistent fluidity of ideas comes from their lack of mental emotional stability as they remember the things that happened and avoid retelling all instances of what happened on their particular voyages. Along with this previous point, the sign of repentance with retelling the events in the narrative is a characteristic that signals that Ishmael and Dyer are not at all satisfied with what they are narrating and particular details are left out of what they went through in their voyages.

For Ishmael the problem in fluidity of the narrative comes from megalomania and a problem of memory for he places himself above all others including his readers even though he has an unstable psyche. This is apparent as he has the need to bring out his

dark side as a defense mechanism from the perils he encountered. In the case of Dyer the narrative that he is presenting is a confession and warning to all that dared to venture into the mountains in the Antarctic. By utilizing elements of the supernatural to avert inquiry such as mystical cities and creatures he goes from a sane man to a man plagued with memories that distort his reality.

Narratology and Psychoanalytical theory can both be used to look into the structure of a text and explore the nature of the narrative coming from a narrator whose ability to tell of events seems at times off or strange. With both theories the reader can reach conclusions as to why the style of narration is complex, simple or normal, yet that is only left to the analysis that the reader applies to the psyche of the one who is narrating the events for it can produce different opinions upon reading in relation to the outcome or end of the narrative.

The use of temporality and the manipulation of time as a device to carry out the narrative serves Ishmael in *Moby Dick*, for example, he manipulates the temporality of the events as he sees fit, when he abandons the main storyline in order to discuss details of whaling, history, and philosophy and so forth, and go back to the troubles of his past. As well as discussing *At The Mountains of Madness*, Dyer's words go from the inside of the experience in the mountains to topics of art and references to the *Necronomicon* judging that it was an important book in his past and that it was a key reference to the things he is experiencing at the point of narration. Such a device can be seen in Ishmael's narrative as he seeps into the story by going into retrospect of the tale of the hunt, as well as jumping to details of other voyages that he had along the way. In Dyer's case he goes into the tale of the expedition in Antarctica referencing distinct aspects of history that

reminded him of his studies at Myskatonic University. With this device the narrative leads the reader into the world that the narrator wants him/her to believe and accept regarding the tale. In terms of the narrator and causation the point of interest lies in how the narrator is influenced by culture and society and in part how the narrator feels compelled to be either part or against being set with the constraints that it makes the narrator analyze. For Ishmael the case is his narrating all that he learned while being away from society and placing himself above all others that read the narrative and who thought differently of him in his mind. Dyer in his narration tries to distance everyone on trying to set foot on the mountains, a warning to all reading never to set foot into the mountains for fear of what they might find. He wants first and foremost to be recognized at the same status as his peers and even further but as his narrative does not allow full details he conforms to the simple bits and pieces that he narrates.

Fluidity and construction of narrative events play a key role in both novels since they are not followed chronologically and go in and out of anachronic order as well. The events follow in to what the narrators want to expose the events of their voyages to the readers. *Moby Dick*, which is a 800-plus page book, could be reduced to 200 pages on the hunt for the white whale whereas *At The Mountains of Madness* could be reduced from 110 pages to a minimum of a short-story length reading. This reduction on page numbers is due to the fact that there are a series of details that are supplemental and do not necessarily complement the overall hunt but do serve to leave knowledge to the readers regarding different topics that might interest them. In both novels closures and the end of the narrative have a key role in portraying their true beginnings as they are narrating all in retrospect and remembering their voyages although traumatic as they were to both.

In terms of their psychological instability, society and the unconscious play a key role in how the narratives are delivered. In *Moby Dick* the social aspect prevails on the emergence of an alter self for Ishmael and how that alter self represents the standards that Ishmael keeps hidden from what he at his old age is. The case with Ishmael's own displacement from himself can be seen as a defense mechanism putting the perils of death or otherwise near-death experiences as part of himself, which he is ready to let free from himself

In *At The Mountains of Madness* the information that Dyer presents is his view of reality as a distorted sense, setting forth a series of events that trigger inner fears in his narration. In the case of Dyer and Lake there is a constant struggle for power where Dyer wants to attain or be present where Lake has reported being in his reports. As has been stated, he wants to see and experience what he did and thus creates in his narrative a type of displacement. This displacement makes him bring fictional creatures into the narrative, to have them destroy the camp as well control and manipulate his mind. These creatures enter the narrative upon Dyer's reminder of reading of the dreaded *Necronomicon* for references although at first he is enthralled, but later finds all these details to be proven fact in his narrative. Lake's reports pertain mainly on the statistical and the scientific not on superstition which causes his own downfall due to curiosity, a detail that later on influences Dyer's own assumptions as being too curious himself.

Repression as discussed earlier is seen in Ishmael's need to displace his own self for Queequeg, depending on the situation in which he finds himself. For the most part some instances of his apparition last for several chapters, yet others are completely erased from his mind as he narrates the tale. In the case of Dyer and Lake this temporality of

narrative is focused on the need to outstand the other in terms of the research in the Antarctic Region, leaving Lake's reports half documented for Dyer's own need and lack of narrative for his own benefit, and their interaction with the *Necronomicon*.

This study demonstrates that both Ishmael and Dyer suffered through events that shaped their lives to the point where they now have come to terms with what they went through and retell it as they can remember, and they are both able to do so given the restrictions to what they say they have or show through omission.

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