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THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTERS IN HERMAN MELVILLE'S WHITE-JACKET, OR THE WORLD IN A MAN-OF-WAR

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Marshall University

In partial fulfillment of

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by

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ABSTRACT

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTERS IN HERMAN MELVILLE'S WHITE-JACKET, OR THE WORLD IN A MAN-OF-WAR

By Toru Nishiura

Many characters who have various personalities appear in Herman Melville's White-Jacket. However, few critics have comprehensively examined the action and the characteristics of them in detail. In this thesis, I explore Melville's depiction of the battleship world in this novel by clarifying the narrator's standard to judge other characters. In White-Jacket, the whole story is narrated by White-Jacket; therefore, the characteristics of his narrative clarify the theme of this novel. I start with an analysis of his narrative and examine whether he is a reliable narrator or not. Then, I explore the relationship between the battleship world and the characters. Moreover, I analyze the inclination of the narrator's description of the other characters and confirm Melville's attitude in the narrator's description. Specifically, I examine Jack Chase and Ushant who resist the evils of the battleship world and clarify Melville's skeptical assertion toward the U.S. Navy in those days.

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INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I will examine Herman Melville's fifth novel, White-Jacket, or The World in a Man-of-War and explore the description of the characters by the narrator, White-Jacket. Few critics have discussed this topic in detail. However, it seems to be crucial to grasp Melville's attitude toward the battleship world in this novel, because the sailors cannot help but be affected by the battleship world.

In chapter one of this thesis, I will focus upon the narrator of this novel, White-Jacket, and his character. In Melville's novels and short stories, the narrators often play a crucial role in helping us understand the author's attitude. For example, in Moby-Dick, or The Whale, the position of the narrator, Ishmael on the ship, his way of telling the story, and the ending in which only he survives from the wreck, help us understand the themes of the novel. If the narrator of Moby-Dick were another person, we would have different impression of Ahab or Queequeg. In the short story, "Bartleby, the Scrivener," the characters of the narrator, the lawyer, and his positions are also important, because we can judge the hero, Bartleby, only through the lawyer's narrative. In that short story, Melville apparently does not stand by the lawyer, but instead, opposes his position. The lawyer is described as a man who pursues riches and blindly believes in Christian doctrines. In Pierre, or The Ambiguities, the omniscient narrator seems to maintain neutrality; in other words, he does not uncover his taste in the characters. However, he sometimes reveals feelings sympathetic to Pierre. For example, his description of Pierre in his poor but sincere life in the city sometimes becomes very dramatic and sympathetic to him. Thus, Melville's

novels and short stories have different kinds of narrators who are in various positions.

In White-Jacket, all the text is narrated by the narrator, White-Jacket, from the beginning to the end and we have to grasp the themes through his narrative. Therefore, it is important to analyze the narrator and I devote all of chapter one of this thesis to that analysis. White-Jacket is the prototype of the rebellious hero that appears in the Melville's later works repeatedly and in White-Jacket, he uses this character effectively. White-Jacket is only a common sailor with no power and even with no personal history like Ishmael in Moby-Dick; however he makes full use of his weak position and criticizes the society. It seems that we can generally regard White-Jacket's voice as a version of Melville's. In the latter chapters of this thesis, I will continue the analysis based upon my assumptions regarding the position of the narrator.

In chapter two of this thesis, I will argue that the narrator's voice as similar to the author's and consider the structure of the world of battleship. "The World in a Man-of-War" is the subtitle of and the largest theme of this novel. Regarding this theme, various interpretations can be made. For example, many critics focus upon the battleship world as a "microcosm" (Arvin, "Mardi, Redburn, White-Jacket" 33; Arvin, Herman Melville 112; Arvin, "The Early Novels: "Typee," "Omoo," "Redburn," "White-Jacket" 51; Dryden 68; Quirk 46; Robertson-Lorant 209; Samson 130; Seelye 44, 52; Sherrill 64; Vincent, The Tailoring of Melville's "White-Jacket" 72) and develop their discussions from that point of view. Newton Arvin psychologically approaches this work, Edgar A. Dryden explores the meaning of the narrator's white jacket, John Samson and

John Seelye analyze the character of the narrator, Rowland A. Sherrill discusses democracy and identity in this novel, and Howard P. Vincent studies in detail the relationship between this novel and its sources.

Bradley A. Johnson compares the battleship world to a body and regards the Captain as the head (an authority figure) and common sailors as the collective body. He asserts that the trace of the collective body that received a flogging represents the Navy's and the nation's "stigma," and furthermore, he relates the communal body suggested by Melville to slavery (249). Lawrance Thompson finds in the man-of-war world, "an emblem of that rigidly ordered chain of command, involving the tyrannical and brutal superiority of the officers" (103). Therefore, in chapter two, I will discuss the man-of-war world related to the context of the United States. I will focus upon especially the social classes, law, flogging, wars, and Christianity on the battleship, because these elements strikingly affect the sailors.

In chapter three, I will analyze the description of the characters in White-Jacket. Through this analysis, I will explore the perspective of the narrator more precisely. It seems that we can generally categorize the characters into two groups, one group that White-Jacket likes or sympathizes with and another group that he attacks or dislikes. In this chapter, I will examine his standards by which he judges the characters and how they are affected by the battleship world. Through this discussion, we can grasp more accurately White-Jacket's and Melville's rebellious assertions about the battleship world and the United States in this novel.

In chapter four, I will focus upon two characters, Ushant and Jack Chase,

and analyze their characters and the descriptions of them by White-Jacket. It is clear that the narrator has a special understanding of these two characters. In this novel, White-Jacket sometimes expresses his attachment to Ushant and Chase. In this chapter, I will analyze the common points between them and examine their common role in resisting the battleship world. Focusing upon chapter eighty-five, “The great Massacre of the Beards,” I will clarify that they are in positions opposing the man-of-war world. In this chapter, Melville uses rhetoric to make us imagine the expansionism of America in the nineteenth century.

In the conclusion, I will bring the prior discussions together and discuss the problems in those days in America, the social classes, law, flogging, wars, and Christianity to show their absurdity. In addition, I will examine the attitude of Melville and his rhetoric that conveys his intuition about the problems in this novel.

CHAPTER I

THE POSITION OF THE NARRATOR:
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NARRATOR AND MELVILLE

In this chapter, I will examine the parallels between the narrator of White-Jacket, White-Jacket and the author, Melville. White-Jacket is told by the narrator from the beginning to the end and he has some unique characteristics. One of them is his position on the ship. In the prologue of this novel, he says, "In the year 1843 I shipped as 'ordinary seaman' on board of a United States frigate" (pre pages) and he spends his time on the battleship as an ordinary seaman. "Ordinary seaman" is the lowest rank in the Navy. Similar to White-Jacket, Melville had served as an ordinary seaman on the frigate, the United States from August 1843 to October 1844. In White-Jacket, he described some events that he had experienced and the characters that he had seen on the voyage (Parker, Herman Melville: A Biography 1: 261-88). However, in this thesis, I will emphasize Melville's creation, because it includes his assertions upon the battleship world and the sailors in this novel. Setting White-Jacket up as an ordinary seaman generates certain effects which help Melville to tell the story of the battleship world.

For example, being a main-top-man gives White-Jacket some advantages over other sailors. He says as follows:

> Who were more liberal-hearted, lofty-minded, gayer, more jocund, elastic, adventurous, given to fun and frolic, than the top-men of the fore, main, and mizzen masts? The reason of their liberal-heartedness was, that they were daily called upon to expatiate

> themselves all over the rigging. The reason of their lofty-mindedness was, that they were high lifted above the petty tumults, carping cares, and paltrinesses of decks below.
>
> And I feel persuaded in my inmost soul, that it is to the fact of my having been a main-top-man; and especially my particular post being on the loftiest yard of the frigate, the main-royal-yard; that I am now enabled to give such a free, broad, off-hand, bird's-eye, and, more than all, impartial account of our man-of-war world; withholding nothing; inventing nothing; nor flattering, nor scandalizing any; but meting out to all—commodore and messenger-boy alike—their precise descriptions and deserts. (47)

In this part, we can recognize the characteristics of White-Jacket's narration. The adjectives, "liberal-hearted," "lofty-minded," "gay," "jocund," "elastic," "adventurous," and "given to fun and frolic" can be applied to his narration. White-Jacket is filled with "gay" narrative. For example, when he finds his book in his jacket after a long rain, he says, "my pocket-edition of Shakespeare was reduced to an omelet" (37). This is only one example and we encounter his "gay" narrative, jokes, and satire everywhere in this novel. This joyful narrative enables him to talk attractively and frankly.

A more important point is his shipboard position. He is always looking down at the man-of-war world from the top of the mast. However, when Melville was aboard the frigate, the United States, he was "assigned to the after-guard, 'composed chiefly of landsmen'" (Thompson 100). Melville's changing of the sailor's position gives "such a free, broad, off-hand, bird's-eye, and, more

than all, impartial account of" the battleship world to the narrator. The view from the top mast is, as Joyce Sparer Adler points out, closely associated with a "bird's eye" (33) view. White-Jacket's high or bird-like images often appear in this novel. In chapter two, "Homeward-Bound," when he loosens the main-royal sail, he feels that he were "an albatross" (7). Thus, White-Jacket keeps a distance from the "man-of-war world," the world on the deck, and it makes him seem to narrate the story objectively. There is another example in which he keeps a distance from the subject. In chapter nineteen, "The Jacket aloft," when White-Jacket is aloft, he compares himself to a "wanderer" (76) or a "rover" (77). He can observe the problems objectively because he is a "wanderer" or a "rover" who is isolated and out of society.

Next, I would like to examine the narrator's religious beliefs. We can find examples of White-Jacket's pious belief in Christianity in many chapters. In chapter forty-four, "A Knave in Office in a Man-of-war," Captain Claret does not give a flogging to the officer, Bland, the ringleader who has smuggled jugs of brandy, although the sailors who supported him are flogged. Protesting against this absurdity, White-Jacket says, "Christianity has taught me that, at the last day, man-of-war's-men will not be judged by the Articles of War, nor by the United States Statutes at Large, but by immutable laws, ineffably beyond the comprehension of the honorable Board of Commodores and Navy Commissioners" (188). Thus, because the attitude of White-Jacket is very devout, Wai-chee S. Dimock says, "Readers of The Confidence-Man will have trouble coming to terms with such piety. Even the spirited irreverence of Typee contrasts sharply with

this strident orthodoxy"[1] ("White-Jacket: Authors and Audiences" 299).

However, the narrator's piety seems to be from "the utter contrast between what religious—and especially Christian—principles are supposed to be and those that do actually guide the man-of-war world" (Adler 36) even though he seems to believe in its principles. In White-Jacket, the narrator also states his skepticism towards Christianity. In chapter thirty-eight, "The Chaplain and Chapel in a Man-of-war," he says:

> Of all the noble lords in the ward-room, this lord-spiritual, with the exception of the Purser, was in the highest favor with the Commodore, who frequently conversed with him in a close and confidential manner. Nor, upon reflection, was this to be marveled at, seeing how efficacious, in all despotic governments, it is for the throne and altar to go hand-in-hand. (156)

In this chapter, White-Jacket explains about religion on the battleship and ironically reflects upon the close relationships between governments and Christianity. Thus, his attitude toward Christianity seems to be unstable in this novel. His position on the top of the mast helps us to confirm this unstable attitude.

I have pointed out that the narrator's point of view from the top of the mast is like a bird looking down on the deck. Melville seems to give another feature to the position. In chapter fifty, "The Bay of all Beauties," the Neversink enters the bay of Rio. When White-Jacket sees the bay, he feels "like the foremost of a

[1] Dimock defines this problem as "the manner of [Melville's] discourse—the language and the strategies of persuasion he employs" (299) and develops her discussion upon the narration in White-Jacket.

flight of angels" (212). In chapter eighty, "The Last Stitch," two sail-makers talks about Shenly who died of a pulmonary disease on the battleship. In their conversation, one sail-maker, Thrummings mournfully says, "I think it's him; and he's further aloft now, I hope, than ever he was at the fore-truck" (338). Thus, the images of heaven and angels appear repeatedly when the top of the mast is described. This image of heaven seems to be a clue to clarify the narrator's inconsistent attitude toward Christianity.

About Christianity, White-Jacket says as follows:

> Ah! The best righteousness of our man-of-war world seems but an unrealized ideal, after all; and those maxims which, in the hope of bringing about a Millennium, we busily teach to the heathen, we Christians ourselves disregard. In view of the whole present social frame-work of our world, so ill adapted to the practical adoption of the meekness of Christianity, there seems almost some ground for the thought, that although our blessed Savior was full of the wisdom of heaven, yet his gospel seems lacking in the practical wisdom of earth—in a due appreciation of the necessities of nations at times demanding bloody massacres and wars; in a proper estimation of the value of rank, title, and money. (324)

In this quotation, White-Jacket states his opinion deliberately, using the word "seems." However, it appears that his statement upon "the wisdom of heaven" and "the practical wisdom of earth" is the assertion that Melville was interested in and strongly wanted to tell the readers, because he repeats this topic to point out acutely the gap between them in his later novel, Pierre, as several critics have

discussed (Braswell 81; Dryden 70; Vincent, The Tailoring of Melville's "White-Jacket" 170).

Pierre, Melville's seventh novel that was published two years after White-Jacket, develops the same themes as White-Jacket, the symbolism of whiteness or the ideal and the reality of Christianity.[2] Therefore, I would like to refer to Pierre to understand the meanings of "the wisdom of heaven" and "the practical wisdom of earth" as stated by White-Jacket. The ideas of "the wisdom of heaven" and "the practical wisdom of earth" appear in the pamphlet by Plotinus Plinlimmon in "Book XIV" of Pierre. There have been many interpretations about this pamphlet.[3] Here I would like to state my view regarding the pamphlet.

In this book, Pierre accidentally finds the first part of the pamphlet and the narrator reveals to us its contents. In "Lecture First," "Chronometricals and Horologicals" (210), this pamphlet compares "the heavenly wisdom of God" and "the earthly wisdom of man" (212) to "Chronometricals" (Greenwich standard time) and "Horologicals" (Chinese local time) respectively. This pamphlet states that "though the earthly wisdom of man be heavenly folly to God; so also, conversely, is the heavenly wisdom of God an earthly folly to man" as "the China watches are right as to China, so the Greenwich chronometers must be wrong as to China" (212). Then, the pamphlet laments, "Whereas, almost invariably, with

[2] In Pierre, we can see the symbolism of whiteness in a heroine, Lucy Tartan and the ideal and the reality of Christianity in Plinlimmon's pamphlet.

[3] Several critics interpret the words of Plinlimmon literally (Mumford 214-16; Krieger 202-4; Watkins 40-51; Higgins and Parker 179-80; Moore 184-85; Radloff 97-98). Others interpret this pamphlet as a satire of Melville (Murray lxix-lxxviii; Thompson 272-79; Higgins 27-35; Milder, "Melville's 'Intentions' in Pierre" 190; Williams 165-67; Sten 236-242). As for the earlier translations of Plinlimmon's pamphlet, I consulted Hiroko

inferior beings, the absolute effort to live in this world according to the strict letter of the chronometricals is, somehow, apt to involve those inferior beings eventually in strange, unique follies and sins, unimagined before" (213). Moreover, the pamphlet asserts, "[T]he highest abstract heavenly righteousness is not only impossible, but would be entirely out of place, and positively wrong in a world like this" (213). The pamphlet concludes that a person should do "his convenient best in a general way to do good to his whole race; takes watchful loving care of his wife and children, relatives, and friends; is perfectly tolerant to all other men's opinions, whatever they may be; is an honest dealer, an honest citizen and all that" (214).

However, it seems that Melville uses this pamphlet satirically. Christopher Sten asserts as follows:

> Though hardly a Neoplatonist, like his namesake Plotinus, Plinlimmon can be said, ironically, to belong to that very "guild of self-impostors" he condemns for pretending to have got "a Voice out of Silence" (208). For, without any proof in the matter, he claims to know the Creator's mind. He presumes to know, for example, that God occasionally sends "a heavenly chronometer" into the world for the purpose of giving "the lie to all the world's time-keepers" (212). More importantly, he professes to know that a virtuous expediency "is the only earthly excellence that their Creator intended" for most people to follow (214). (239)

In this pamphlet, Plinlimmon unexpectedly denies his own idea, because he is

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Washizu's "Umi no Kukan, Riku no Jikan—Pierre to Chronometer."

exposed as one of the "guild of self-impostors." Therefore, his principle is regarded as a satirical one and to the contrary, Pierre's way of life in which he tries to live according to the "chronometricals" is emphasized as a sublime one.

In White-Jacket, the narrator pursues "the wisdom of heaven," not "the practical wisdom of earth" (324) as does Pierre. Therefore, he states:

> But as the whole matter of war is a thing that smites common sense and Christianity in the face; so every thing connected with it is utterly foolish, unchristian, barbarous, brutal, and savoring of the Feejee Islands, cannibalism, saltpetre, and the devil. (315)

The narrator does not blindly believe in Christianity. Rather, he asserts "the wisdom of heaven" to criticize wars. He criticizes wars that are again and again connected with Christianity. He says, "When shall the time come, how much longer will God postpone it, when the clouds, which at times gather over the horizons of nations, shall not be hailed by any class of humanity, and invoked to burst as a bomb?" (209). Thus, White-Jacket accurately points out the large gap between "the wisdom of heaven" and "the practical wisdom of earth" by using the perspective of "the wisdom of heaven." Superficially, he often applauds Christianity; however, he shows his attitude to treat all religions equally. In chapter thirty-eight, he complains of the contradictory existence; they have the chaplain and chapel for peace on the battleship for wars. In this chapter, he concludes, "But our own hearts are our best prayer-room, and the chaplains who can most help us are ourselves" (158). We understand that he emphasizes human's hearts more than religion that people believe in.

Next, I would like to discuss the narrator's view toward other races. In

chapter sixty-four, “Man-of-war Trophies,” White-Jacket remembers a Native American Sioux warrior. In White-Jacket’s story, the Native American was “exhibiting on the back of his blanket a crowd of human hands” (266). The human hands were trophies for him. Toward this Native American, White-Jacket says as follows:

> Poor savage! thought I; and is this the cause of your lofty gait? Do you straighten yourself to think that you have committed a murder, when a chance-falling stone has often done the same? Is it a proud thing to topple down six feet perpendicular of immortal manhood, though that lofty living tower needed perhaps thirty good growing summers to bring it to maturity? Poor savage! And you account it so glorious, do you, to mutilate and destroy what God himself was more than a quarter of a century in building? (267).

Here, he acutely attacks the savage acts of the Native Americans. Therefore, he seems to look down at them as an uncivilized race.

However, in this chapter, the narrator’s real object of criticism is not the Native American. The narrator remembers the episode of the trophies of the Sioux warrior, because he sees the “man-of-war trophies,” the President and the Macedonian. The American frigate, the President, was captured by Britain and became a British battleship, and the British frigate, the Macedonian, was captured by America and used as an American battleship. These battleships were trophies to “commemorate the heroism of the conqueror” (266). The narrator asserts, “And yet, fellow-Christians, what is the American frigate Macedonian, or the English frigate President, but as two bloody red hands painted on this poor

savage's blanket?" (267). In other words, the narrator emphasizes the savageness of the Native Americans to assert that the European and American navies were themselves savage. The description of the Native American in this chapter does not include the narrator's attitude of disdain toward "uncivilized" people.

Therefore, White-Jacket does not reject non-Christianity and non-Christians at all. In chapter twenty-eight, "Edging Away," he introduces to us Wooloo, a Polynesian servant of the Commodore. In this chapter, White-Jacket relates us three episodes about Wooloo. One is when he saw snow for the first time, he believed that it was "a species of superfine flour" and his "opinion remained unchanged for some time" (117). The second is when he saw "the hailstones," he collected them to make "glass beads" (117). After a while, he found that they had changed into water and "accused the by-standers of stealing his precious stones" (117). In the third episode, he mistook raisins for bugs and "was observed to pick out very carefully every raisin, and throw it away, with a gesture indicative of the highest disgust" (117). Thus, Wooloo's action looks strange from the perspective of other sailors.

However, White-Jacket does not show us his disrespectful manner toward Wooloo at all, even when he narrates the comical episodes that are caused by the differences of both cultures. Rather, he values Wooloo's culture as his own culture. This chapter concludes with his following opinion:

> In our man-of-war, this semi-savage, wandering about the gun-deck in his barbaric robe, seemed a being from some other sphere. His tastes were our abominations: ours his. Our creed he rejected:

> his we. We thought him a loon: he fancied us fools. Had the case been reversed; had we been Polynesians and he an American, our mutual opinion of each other would still have remained the same. A fact proving that neither was wrong, but both right. (118)

Howard P. Vincent also quotes this part and asserts, "What is perhaps most valuable about the Wooloo episode is that it undoubtedly supplied the comedy of Queequeg at the Spouter Inn in Moby-Dick" (The Tailoring of Melville's "White-Jacket" 87). From this episode, we understand that White-Jacket is a person who does not have a racially biased opinion, as Ishmael understands Queequeg.

In White-Jacket's narrative, his patriotism sometimes appears. I will examine the narrator's patriotism as a sailor on the battleship of the United States. In chapter thirty-six, "Flogging not Necessary," he declares as follows:

> And we Americans are the peculiar, chosen people—the Israel of our time; we bear the ark of the liberties of the world. Seventy years ago we escaped from thrall; and, besides our first birth-right—embracing one continent of earth—God has given to us, for a future inheritance, the broad domains of the political pagans, that shall yet come and lie down under the shade of our ark, without bloody hands being lifted. God has predestinated, mankind expects, great things from our race; and great things we feel in our souls. The rest of the nations must soon be in our rear. We are the pioneers of the world; the advance-guard, sent on through the wilderness of untried things, to break a new path in the New World that is ours. (151)

In this novel, White-Jacket thoroughly attacks the Navy of the United States.

Therefore, his praise for the United States in this paragraph might confuse us.

However, we have to read the context of these sentences carefully. In this chapter, he finds that the flogging in the American Navy is derived from that in the English Navy. He then goes on to object to the American Navy that mimics the Old World's customs, even though Americans had rejected the Old World through the American Revolution. Therefore, as Clare L. Spark asserts, we should understand that "[g]iven Melville's constant references to abused South Sea islanders, Indians, sailors, and factory workers, these words need not be taken as crypto-imperialist" (150), and his words here are only "the official, outward-looking rhetoric of American triumphalist optimism" (Tanner 59). That is to say, "he asserts the rhetoric to criticize the flogging that remains in such an `ideal nation'" (Makino 68). Thus, in the text, White-Jacket sometimes glorifies the Unites States; however, he continuously remains skeptical of the nation.

Finally, I will examine White-Jacket's humor in his narrative. He often tells jokes and the readers who continuously trace his opinions regarding the other sailors or his life on the battleship might sometimes be confused. For example, when White-Jacket talks about the First Lieutenant who refused to give him black paint which White-Jacket wanted to use to water-proof his jacket, he makes a joke, "I hardly think I shall ever forgive him; every twinge of the rheumatism, which I still occasionally feel, is directly referable to him" (24). However, after that, he continues, "But my personal feelings toward the man shall not prevent me from here doing him justice" (24) and finally he judges the First Lieutenant objectively. Thus, his jokes are not ones which distort his attitude or deceive the readers.

In this chapter, we have discussed the features of the narrator, White-Jacket. His narrative has the characteristics: (1) He is an ordinary seaman and the narrative reflects elements of Melville's biography. (2) He talks very liberally and joyfully. (3) As a main-top-man, he can describe the state of the battleship objectively from an isolated point of view. (4) His opinion regarding Christianity seems unstable, because he emphasizes the practical wisdom of earth that betrays the wisdom of heaven. White-Jacket's real feeling is skepticism toward Christianity, and similar to the assertions made by Melville in his other works. (5) White-Jacket does not show disdain for other cultures or other races. Rather, in this novel, he often attacks the savageness of the civilized people. (6) Sometimes he shows us his enthusiastic praises for America, however that is not his sole attitude. Instead, he uses them to bring out the contrast between an ideal America and the real America. (7) His narrative is always very humorous and he often makes jokes; however they are not the ones which make his attitude ambiguous. His humor is mostly seasoning and he asserts his opinion fairly and squarely as needed through this novel. Thus, we can recognize that White-Jacket serves as a mouthpiece for Melville in ways that permit the author to express an opinion that he shares. Therefore, I will rely upon White-Jacket's words in the text and continue the discussion in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II

THE TRUTH OF THE BATTLESHIP WORLD

Some critics point out that the Neversink symbolizes a microcosm. For example, Howard P. Vincent asserts that the Neversink is "the ship as a microcosm, a world-enclosure" (The Tailoring of Melville's "White-Jacket" 75). Newton Arvin states that "the battleship Neversink is a kind of Microcosm of the universe" ("Mardi, Redburn, White-Jacket" 33; Herman Melville 112; "The Early Novels: Typee, Omoo, Redburn, White-Jacket" 51). In "The End" of this novel, White-Jacket defines a battleship as "one craft in a Milky-Way fleet" (398) and says, "Glance fore and aft our flush decks. What a swarming crew! All told, they muster hard upon eight hundred millions of souls" (399). One interpretation of this reading would be that the Neversink represents the earth. However, I would like to specify the symbolism of the Neversink to clarify Melville's assertion in this novel.

In chapter eighteen, "A Man-of-war Full as a Nut," White-Jacket describes the jobs and the features on the battleship and the description gives us a clue to understand the symbolism of the Neversink:

> Frequently, at one and the same time, you see every trade in operation on the gun-deck—coopering, carpentering, tailoring, tinkering, blacksmithing, rope-making, preaching, gambling, and fortune-telling.
>
> In truth, a man-of-war is a city afloat, with long avenues set out with guns instead of trees, and numerous shady lanes, courts, and by-ways. The quarter-deck is a grand square, park, or parade

> ground, with a great Pittsfield elm, in the shape of the main-mast, at one end, and fronted at the other by the palace of the Commodore's cabin. (74-75)

The diversity of works and the phrase, "a city afloat," represent that the Neversink is a part of a civilized nation, although apart from it geographically. Moreover, in the episodes of this novel, we see various kinds of careers in the battleship and their activity as on land; the "steady-cooks," the "steady-sweepers," "steady-spit-box-musterers" (47), the surgeon, "Cadwallader Cuticle, M.D." (248), the sail-makers and the undertakers, "Ringrope" and "Thrummings" (338), the "Professor" (346) of the man-of-war university, "man-of-war barbers" (350) and so on.

In White-Jacket, the narrator often compares the features on the battleship to those of a civilized nation. In chapter three, "A Glance at the principal Divisions, into which a Man-of-war's Crew is divided," when he introduces the Waisters, he compares their position where they superintend "the chicken-coops, pig-pens, and potato-lockers" to "the market-place of a small town" (10). Thus, life on the battleship is like working on land. Melville seems to use these descriptions to remind us that the world of a man-of-war is a part of a nation.

In chapter thirty-five, "Flogging not Lawful," White-Jacket condemns the absurdity and mercilessness of flogging. In this chapter, he says that "though the naval code comes under the head of the martial law, yet in time of peace, and in the thousand questions arising between man and man on board ship, this code, to a certain extent, may not improperly be deemed municipal" (144). Then he regards the battleship as "a city on the sea," because it has "its crew of 800 or

1000 men," (144) and attacks the gap between the city on the sea and a city on land:

> What would landsmen think, were the State of New York to pass a law against some offence, affixing a fine as a penalty, and then add to that law a section restricting its penal operation to mechanics and day laborers, exempting all gentlemen with an income of one thousand dollars? Yet thus, in the spirit of its practical operation, even thus, stands a good part of the naval laws wherein naval flogging is involved. (145)

White-Jacket objects to the difference in the application of the law on land and on the battleship. In the quotation above, he mentions, "the State of New York" as an example. In this novel, the narrator uses "the numerous reminders of New York" (136) as Wyn Kelley points out. It seems that the narrator emphasizes that the Neversink represents the United States. In this novel, he often compares the world of the man-of-war to that on land in the United States. He says, "Any American landsman may hope to become President of the Union—commodore of our squadron of states" (114).

White-Jacket sometimes uses the word, "Republic" instead of "America." For example, in chapter seventy-one, "The Genealogy of the Articles of War," he says, "And how is it that one arm of the national defences of a Republic comes to be ruled by a Turkish code, whose every section almost, like each of the tubes of a revolving pistol, fires nothing short of death into the heart of an offender?" (297). This is because he emphasizes the republican side of the United States. He describes how battleships of the United States launched as "from the dock-

yards of a republic, absolute monarchies are launched" (297). However, as I discuss in the next chapter, the battleship world is far from "Republic." His use of the word "republic" ironically reminds us of the gap between the world on land and on the battleship.

In chapter thirty-five, White-Jacket asserts the absolute power of the Captain and common sailors' powerlessness in the Navy. As an example of that, he narrates a story; "the Captain of American sloop of war, from undoubted motives of personal pique, kept a seaman confined in the brig for upward of a month" (144). Then he asserts the gap as follows:

> As a sailor, he shares none of our civil immunities; the law of our soil in no respect accompanies the national floating timbers grown thereon, and to which he clings as his home. For him our Revolution was in vain; to him our Declaration of Independence is a lie. (144)

White-Jacket mentions the ideals, "Revolution" and "Declaration of Independence" and emphasizes the betrayal of the man-of-war world. Similarly, he uses the word "Republic" ironically to describe the man-of-war world which is, in fact, an absolute monarchy.

In chapter six, in which White-Jacket classifies the sailors and the officers, he says, "Owing to certain vague, republican scruples, about creating great officers of the navy, America has thus far had no admirals" (20). However, these words are also ironic. Although America is a republic, the commodores and the captains have absolute power on the battleships and the American Navy was no more republican than other European countries. White-Jacket calls

America “Republican” and then attacks the non-republicanism of the Navy. Thus, the world of the man-of-war that White-Jacket describes represents a part of the United States of those days.

The battleship world has another important feature. In chapter forty-two, a sailor named “Shakings” appears. He had been in “the New York State’s Prison at Sing Sing” (174) and asserts that a man-of-war world is “a sort of State Prison afloat” (175). He remembers the days he was in the prison as follows:

> And when fortune would go hard with him, and he felt out of sorts, and incensed at matters and things in general, he told me that, at such time, he almost wished he was back again in Sing Sing, where he was relieved from all anxieties about what he should eat and drink, and was supported, like the President of the United States and Prince Albert, at the Public charge. He used to have such a snug little cell, he said, all to himself, and never felt afraid of house-breakers, for the walls were uncommonly thick, and his door was securely bolted for him, and a watchman was all the time walking up and down in the passage, while he himself was fast asleep and dreaming. (175)

White-Jacket says that Shakings “scandalously” (175) made that assertion, however White-Jacket’s and Melville’s attitude do not seem to regard Shakings’ assertion as “scandalous.” Rather, White-Jacket and Melville seem to assent to Shakings’ assertion, a man-of-war world is “a sort of State Prison afloat,” because White-Jacket hints to us that the battleship is like a prison in another place.

In chapter seventy, “Monthly Muster round the Capstan,” White-Jacket

narrates the monthly muster and the Articles of War that are read in the ceremony. In this chapter, he repeats the burden of nearly every Article, "Shall suffer death!" (293) and emphasizes the inhumanity of it. Then, he points out that "[s]hall suffer death, or such punishment as a court-martial shall adjudge" in the Article might mean "death, or worse punishment" (293). He imagines that "death, or worse punishment" might be "to be imprisoned in a cell, with its walls papered from floor to ceiling with printed copies, in italics, of these Articles of War" (293). This is one image of being imprisoned in the world of the battleship.

The image of a prisoner who is deprived of his freedom appears in this novel repeatedly. In chapter seventy-two, White-Jacket describes the powerlessness of a sailor; "no mark of humanity, no attribute of manhood, that, bound hand and foot, he is cast into an American frigate shorn of all rights and defences" (301). This is also a variation on the image of a prisoner. Moreover, Joyce Sparer Adler regards the narrator's white jacket itself as a prison. She says that the "jacket—in its most important qualities and effects—symbolizes the 'uniform' in which all the common sailors are imprisoned" (30). She focuses upon chapter ninety-two, "The last of the Jacket" in which, when the narrator is on the yard, he accidentally throws his jacket over his head and falls into the sea. She asserts, "He cannot swim, however, because he is "pinioned" by the jacket (as a bird is pinioned to restrict its flight)" (35). Thus, the world of the battleship is filled with images of prison, the metaphors and the similes. I would like to consider further why the battleship world becomes a prison.

Some critiques give hypotheses that explain what the prison represents in

White-Jacket. For example, Sten asserts as follows:

> For when Melville stepped onto the United States, he suddenly became subject to an autocratic ideology that did everything it could to erase his previous identity, both by systematically intimidating him and by arbitrarily imposing on him a much-diminished sense of himself as a "cog" in a military machine, as a set of numbers in a highly regimented bureaucracy, or as a "prisoner," a "serf," and a "slave" (194, 174, 295). (117)

As the elements that make the battleship world "a prison," Sten lists the routine jobs that "are designed for convenience and pleasure of those in command" and "punishment" (119) which includes the flogging that deprives the sailors of their dignity. Meanwhile, Adler, as I stated, regards the narrator's white jacket as the uniform that imprisons the common sailors (30). She says, "It creates a microcosm of the Neversink world, concentrating in one intensely visual scene the threefold choice that the book as a whole presents: life or death; acquiescence or dissent; the values of war or of peace" (48). Arimichi Makino asserts that what makes a person a prisoner in Melville's works is "American ideology" that has "godlike existences," "mammonism," "technology and arms," "law and order" and "common sense and expediency" (166). All are elements that imprison the sailors in White-Jacket.

As for wars, in chapter seventy-four, "The Main-top at Night," an old African-American sailor, Tawney, tells his story of war. In his story, he and several others were impressed by an English frigate in the war between England and America. On the battleship, they are stationed at the quarter-deck battery

and when they saw the Captain, they appealed to him:

> They conjured him to release them from their guns, and allow them to remain neutral during the conflict. But when a ship of any nation is running into action, it is no time for argument, small time for justice, and not much time for humanity. Snatching a pistol from the belt of a boarder standing by, the Captain leveled it at the heads of the three sailors, and commanded them instantly to their quarters, under penalty of being shot on the spot. (312)

Thus, Tawney and others are forcefully deprived of their families, their home country and even their own humanity and are "enslaved" (313) by the war. This is one miserable aspect of the world of the battleship.

The development of the arms is also a negative side of wars. We find White-Jacket's critical eye toward the modern technology of the arms. In chapter sixteen, "General Training in a Man-of-war," he says, "My station at the batteries was at one of the thirty-two-pound carronades, on the starboard side of the quarter-deck" (65) and explains the new weapon of those days, "carronade" as follows:

> When of large calibre, however, it throws within that limit, Paixhan shot, all manner of shells and combustibles, with great effect, being a very destructive engine at close quarters. This piece is now very generally found mounted in the batteries of the English and American navies. The quarter-deck armaments of most modern frigates wholly consist of carronades. (65)

In this explanation, White-Jacket narrates calmly, however "great effect" of the

arms makes us shiver, because it means nothing but the effect of murder.

We recognize the terror of the technology of modern arms in the end of this chapter. This chapter concludes with the following paragraphs.

> Then, upon mustering the men, and calling the quarter-bills by the light of a battle-lantern, many a wounded seaman, with his arm in a sling, would answer for some poor shipmate who could never more make answer for himself:
>
> "Tom Brown?"
>
> "Killed, sir."
>
> "Jack Jewel?"
>
> "Killed, sir."
>
> "Joe Hardy?"
>
> "Killed, sir."
>
> And opposite all these poor fellows' names, down would go on the quarter-bills the bloody marks of red ink—a murderer's fluid, fitly used on these occasions. (69-70)

Quoting this part, Adler asserts, "Again, war and murder are synonymous" (43). The development of technology of the arms makes the murder more horrible. The last scene of this chapter tells us how easily and how many living man can be killed in a war by the technology of modern arms. In this chapter, White-Jacket reminds us of the inhumanity of modern wars in which people's lives are slighted and the situation makes the sailors like prisoners.

Another element that imprisons the sailors is law on the battleship. I have listed "to be imprisoned in a cell, with its walls papered from floor to ceiling

with printed copies, in italics, of these Articles of War" (293) in chapter seventy as an image of a prisoner. White-Jacket defines this situation as "death, or worse punishment" (293), however, the sailors are always ruled by law on the battleship. In the same chapter, he asks himself:

> A hard case, truly, White-Jacket; but it can not be helped. Yes; you live under this same martial law. Does not every thing around you din the fact in your ears? Twice every day do you not jump to your quarters at the sound of a drum? Every morning, in port, are you nor roused from your hammock by the reveille, and sent to it again at nightfall by the tattoo? Every Sunday are you not commanded in the mere matter of the very dress you shall wear through that blessed day? Can your shipmates so much as drink their "tot of grog?" nay, can they even drink but a cup of water at the scuttle-butt, without an armed sentry standing over them? Does not every officer wear a sword instead of a cane? You live and move among twenty-four-pounders, White-Jacket; the very cannon-balls are deemed an ornament around you, serving to embellish the hatchways; and should you come to die at sea, White-Jacket, still two cannon-balls would bear you company when you would be committed to the deep. Yea, by all methods, and devices, and inventions, you are momentarily admonished of the fact that you live under the Articles of War. And by virtue of them it is, White-Jacket, that, without a hearing and without a trial, you may, at a wink from the Captain, be condemned to the scourge. (295)

The “martial law” does not only include the Articles of War that White-Jacket fiercely attacks in this chapter. The detailed rules affect all the common sailors all the time on a battleship and imprison them.

The scenes that describe the sailors who are tortured by “martial law” and White-Jacket’s protest against it often appear through this novel. In chapter twenty-one, “One Reason why Man-of-war’s-men are, generally, Short-lived,” White-Jacket presents “a grievance among the sailors” (82). In the battleship world, the sailors are, “on and off duty every four hours,” “through every twenty-four hours” (82). However, they cannot use their hammock in day time and they “have but three hours’ sleep” (82) in their hammock a day. Therefore, in the end of this chapter, White-Jacket asserts, “Health and comfort—so far as duly attainable under the circumstances—should be legally guaranteed to the man-of-war’s-man” (84). The reasons why the sailors cannot use their hammocks are because “such a proceeding would mar the uniformity of daily events in a man-of-war” and because “precedents are against it” (84). Thus, the exceeding pursuit of rationality deprives the sailors of their rights and even their health. This condition is another cause that makes the battleship world a prison.

The most miserable episodes imposed by the martial law are, of course, the episodes of flogging. In chapter thirty-five, White-Jacket quotes XXXII of the Articles of War, “All crimes committed by persons belonging to the Navy, which are not specified in the foregoing articles, shall be punished according to the laws and customs in such cases at sea” and says, “This is the article that, above all others, puts the scourge into the hands of the Captain, calls him to no account for its exercise, and furnishes him with an ample warrant for inflictions of cruelty

upon the common sailor, hardly credible to landsmen (143). Thus, the Articles of War nearly admit that the Captain can practice flogging.

In chapter thirty-four, "Some of the Evil Effects of Flogging," White-Jacket asserts the crucial faults of flogging. He says as follows:

> One of the arguments advanced by officers of the Navy in favor of corporal punishment is this: it can be inflicted in a moment; it consumes no valuable time; and when the prisoner's shirt is put on, <u>that</u> is the last of it. Whereas, if another punishment were substituted, it would probably occasion a great waste of time and trouble, besides thereby begetting in the sailor an undue idea of his importance. (139).

Although he admits that "all this is true" (139), clearly he attacks flogging. In the quotation above, he admits "that all this is true" to be logical only from the perspective of a man who does the flogging.

In chapter thirty-three, "A Flogging," White-Jacket describes four sailors, John, Peter, Mark, and Antone who are flogged because they violated a law of the ship and fought. Throughout flogging, John "stood still" and after that, he said, "D—n me! it's nothing when you're used to it! Who wants to fight?" (137). Antone was "pouring out a torrent of involuntary blasphemies" (137) when he was being flogged that he had never said before. Mark got "extreme mental misery" (137-38) and "felt the insult more than the injury" (138) after the flogging. In the case of Peter, in his scourging, "the shudderings and creepings of his dazzlingly white back were revealed" and "he turned round his head imploringly" (138). Thus, the four sailors show us quite different responses.

However, they also show us that they are commonly deprived of their humanity. Therefore, in the last part of this chapter, White-Jacket says, "You see a human being, stripped like a slave; scourged worse than a hound. And for what? For things not essentially criminal, but only made so by arbitrary laws" (138). Thus, the flogging and law drives the sailors into being prisoners on the battleship.

The miseries of war and flogging seem to be generated by the same reason. In chapter seventy-four, White-Jacket narrates the engagement off the Bay of Valparaiso:

> Look at the engagement between the American frigate Essex with the two English cruisers, the Phœbe and Cherub, off the Bay of Valparaiso, during the late war. It is admitted on all hands that the American Captain continued to fight his crippled ship against a greatly superior force; and when, at last, it became physically impossible that he could ever be otherwise than vanquished in the end; and when, from peculiarly unfortunate circumstances, his men merely stood up to their nearly useless batteries to be dismembered and blown to pieces by the incessant fire of the enemy's long guns. Nor, by thus continuing to fight, did this American frigate, one iota, promote the true interests of her country. (314-15)

White-Jacket condemns the Captain of the frigates, because he "seek[s] to crown himself with the glory of the shambles" (314). Thus, the Captain's egoism does not allow him to regard the sailors as human beings which makes the war even more terrible, just as flogging is one element which further imprisons the sailors.

In the world of the battleship, laws, floggings, and wars rule the sailors.

However, officers escape from the suffering, even though they are subject to the same laws. As for wars, the officers' feelings toward them are far different from the sailors'. In chapter forty-nine, "Rumors of a War, and how they were received by the Population of the Neversink," White-Jacket describes the difference. The sailors, in a war, are obliged "harder work, and harder usage than in peace" and might be compelled to receive "a wooden leg or arm; mortal wounds, and death" (208). Meanwhile, the officers "verbally expressed their gratification," because "promise of promotion, and what is called glory" (208) strongly motivate them to fight.

Moreover, the officers also can easily avoid floggings. In chapter forty-four, the sailors who helped the smuggling "were scourged, double-ironed, and for several weeks were confined in the 'brig,' under a sentry" (185). However, the master-at-arms, Bland "was merely cashiered and imprisoned for a time, with bracelets at his wrists" (185), because he presented the Captain some articles before the incident. About the Captain's discrimination, White-Jacket says, "it was not Captain Claret who would inflict such a cutting wound upon any officer's sensibilities, though long-established naval customs had habituated him to scourging the people upon an emergency" (189). Thus, in fact, the officers have much less chance of being flogged than the sailors. Therefore, in chapter thirty-five, White-Jacket says, "the laws involving flogging in the Navy do not render to every man his due, since in some cases they indirectly exclude the officers from any punishment whatever, and in all cases protect them from the scourge, which is inflicted upon the sailor" (145). Thus, the law, flogging and war are elements that have an extremely evil effect only upon the sailors. Moreover, the

considerable gap between the officers and the sailors becomes an element which further imprisons the sailors. Therefore, White-Jacket questions, "By abolishing the scourge, shall we do away tyranny; that tyranny which must ever prevail, where of two essentially antagonist classes in perpetual contact, one is immeasurably the stronger?" (208).

Christianity is also one part of which the prison, the battleship world, is composed. In chapter thirty-eight, "The Chaplain and Chapel in a Man-of-war," a sailor asks the Captain, "May I be allowed, sir, not to attend service on the half-deck?" (157), because he is a Baptist and the chaplain on the Neversink is an Episcopalian. To him, the Captain answers as follows:

> "You will be allowed, sir!" said the Captain, haughtily, "to obey the laws of the ship. If you absent yourself from prayers on Sunday mornings, you know the penalty" (157).

On the battleship, the sailors are not allowed liberty of religious beliefs. Thus, Christianity functions as one element which constricts the liberty of the sailors just as war, law, and social classes also bind the sailors.

Furthermore, Christianity is deeply related to wars, law, and social classes in White-Jacket. In the quotation above, the Captain dictates "the laws" and orders the sailor to obey them. About the relation between Christianity and social class, White-Jacket says, "the throne and altar to go hand-in-hand" (156) as I pointed out in chapter one of this thesis. As for the relation between wars and Christianity, White-Jacket discusses the point in chapter forty-nine. He tells about British officers who were pleased at the news of Napoleon's return from Elba, because they "had previously been expecting to be sent ashore on half-pay"

(209). White-Jacket continues:

> Standing navies, as well as standing armies, serve to keep alive the spirit of war even in the meek heart of peace. In its very embers and smoulderings, they nourish that fatal fire, and half-pay officers, as the priests of Mars, yet guard the temple, though no god be there. (209)

"[T]he meek heart of peace" means one of the doctrines of Christianity. White-Jacket's assertion here reminds us of a belief in those days;

> The belief that American expansion westward and southward was inevitable, divinely ordained, and just was first called manifest destiny by a Democrat, the newspaperman John L. O'Sullivan. The annexation of Texas, O'Sullivan wrote in 1845, was 'the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions." Americans had thought similarly for decades, but during the 1840s they used such rhetoric to hurry the inexorable process along and to justify war and threats of war in the quest for more territory. (Norton, et al. 1: 365)

In White-Jacket, Melville warns us of the absurdity and the danger of the connection between Christianity and wars as manifest destiny.

In this chapter, I have discussed the battleship world, where White-Jacket sometimes mentions "the whiteness of the quarter-deck" (88). The symbolism of whiteness in the battleship world is one of the most important themes in this novel. Therefore, I would like to consider the "the whiteness of the quarter-

deck" and conclude this chapter. In chapter fifty-seven, "The Emperor Reviews the People at Quarters," the Emperor of Brazil, Don Pedro II and the noble courtiers visit the Neversink. They see "the extraordinary polish of the bright-work about the great guns, and the marvelous whiteness of the decks" (238) and say as follows:

> "Que gosto!" cried a Marquis, with several dry goods samples of ribbon, tallied with bright buttons, hanging from his breast.
>
> "Que gloria!" cried a crooked, coffee-colored Viscount, spreading both palms.
>
> "Que alegria!" cried a little Count, mincingly circumnavigating a shot-box.
>
> "Que contentamento he o meu!" cried the Emperor himself, complacently folding his royal arms, and serenely gazing along our ranks.
>
> Pleasure, Glory, and Joy—this was the burden of the three noble courtiers. And very pleasing indeed—was the simple rendering of Don Pedro's imperial remark. (238-39)

Surely, the words, "pleasure," "glory," and "joy" can ironically be applied to the battleship world. As for "pleasure" and "joy," in chapter forty-nine, White-Jacket tells a story about the naval officers who became "rejoicers" (209) because they knew that Napoleon returned from Elba.

However, their pleasure or joy has cruelty. They were pleased because they knew that they could continue the war. We also cannot take the word "glory" literally here. White-Jacket says that war "held out to the sailor no

promise of promotion, and what is called glory, these things fired the breast of his officers" (208). According to White-Jacket, the word "glory" is just a justification and a motivation for massacres.

Thus, "pleasure," "glory," and "joy" are only the words that superficially and ironically decorate the battleship world. From the perspective of outsiders, the Emperor of Brazil and his courtiers, the battleship world is regarded as "pleasure," "glory," or "joy." However, in the truth of the matter, it is ruled by a strict social class, law, floggings, war, and Christianity. Therefore, the whiteness in White-Jacket is associated with them. In chapter twelve, "The Good or Bad Temper of Men-of-war's men, in a great Degree, attributable to their Particular Stations and Duties aboard Ship," White-Jacket remembers "an English line-of-battle ship" (44) that he visited before. He describes that the batteries on the battleship "according to the Admiral's fancy, had been painted white as snow" (44) and looked like "rows of white head-stones in a church-yard" (45). Here, the whiteness is associated with war that "the batteries" represent and is associated with the strong power of the Admiral that "the Admiral's fancy" represents. Moreover, the whiteness is associated with the image of death that the "head-stone in a church-yard" represents.

Here, I would like to refer to chapter forty-two, "The Whiteness of the Whale" of Moby-Dick. Moby-Dick was published in the year after White-Jacket and also treats the topic of symbolism of whiteness. Therefore, the symbolism of whiteness in Moby-Dick may be a clue to understanding that in White-Jacket. In chapter forty-two of Moby-Dick, at first, the narrator Ishmael emphasizes the "beauty" and "royal pre-eminence" (188) of the whiteness and gives many

examples. However, he points out that "yet for all these accumulated associations, with whatever is sweet, and honorable, and sublime, there yet lurks as elusive something in the innermost idea of this hue, which strikes more of panic to the soul than that redness which affrights in blood" (189). Moreover, he asserts that the whiteness generates "the transcendent horrors" (189). The whiteness of the battleship world in White-Jacket seems to have the ironic implications that Ishmael asserts. As appearance, the battleship world is full of "pleasure," "glory," and "joy"; however, inside of it, it is full of evil phenomena, war, strict social classes, merciless law and bigoted Christianity.

As I have discussed, the world of the battleship in White-Jacket can be regarded parallel to Melville's United States. Therefore, naturally, the sailors' rights may be observed as the "Republic," the mainland of United States. However, in fact, on the battleship, the sailors are ruled by hierarchy, especially the large gap between the officers and the sailors, law, and its evil consequence, flogging, wars, and Christianity that should not exist on the battleship. These elements to an extreme level pursue rationality and as a result, the sailors are deprived of their humanity in the prison-like situation. However, the world of the battleship disguises itself as a world of "pleasure," "glory," and "joy." In the following chapters, I will discuss the White-Jacket's observation of other characters and how the characters are affected or not affected by the ambiguous battleship world.

CHAPTER III

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTERS BY WHITE-JACKET

On the Neversink, very strict social classes rule the sailors. In chapter six, "The Quarter-deck Officers, Warrant Officers, and Berth-deck Underling of a Man-of-war; where they Live in the Ship; how they Live; their Social Standing on Ship-board; and what sort of Gentleman they are," White-Jacket classifies the social classes on the battleship by their mess. According to this chapter, the social classes are composed of the Commodore, the Captain, the Ward-room Officers (The First Lieutenant, the junior lieutenants, the Sailing-master, Purser, Chaplain, Surgeon, Marine Officers, Midshipmen's Schoolmaster or Professor), The Warrant (Forward) Officers (Boatswain, Gunner, Carpenter, Sail-maker, reefers or middies or midshipmen), various subordinates (the master-at-arms, purser's steward, ship's corporals, marine sergeants, ship's yeomen and so on) and the seamen. In White-Jacket, the narrator mentions the social classes in the battleship repeatedly, and it is one of the most important themes in this novel as I discussed in chapter two of this thesis. Therefore, I will start to analyze the narrator's description of the Commodore and the Captain, and then descend into the lower ranks.

White-Jacket does not mention the Commodore so frequently because "he seldom or never uttered a word," he had "the strange manner in which every one shunned him" (21), and he was "having so little to do" (22). We do not have enough information about the Commodore to appreciate him. Therefore, I will discuss the Commodore and the Captain together, and I will also analyze the Commodore, referring to the description of the Captain, because the Commodore

and the Captain have some important common points.

Like the Commodore, Captain Claret is isolated on the battleship. In chapter twenty-three, "Theatricals in a Man-of-war," the sailors have their theater on the battleship, the most enjoyable type of entertainment. However, even when the play began and "a group of ward-room officers emerged from the after-hatchway" (93), the Captain and the Commodore did not appear. White-Jacket explains why they are isolated as follows:

> As in the case of the Commodore, when the captain visits the deck, his subordinate officers generally beat a retreat to the other side; and, as a general rule, would no more think of addressing him, except concerning the ship, than a lackey would think of hailing the Czar of Russia on his throne, and inviting him to tea. (23)

As he says, their extremely high rank is the reason why Captain Claret and the Commodore are isolated from the sailors. Through the novel, White-Jacket emphasizes their strong power. He asks, "Who put this great gulf between the American Captain and the American sailor?" (301). In this novel, one of the objects that White-Jacket attacks is the Captain's and the Commodore's high power and the absurdity of its use in the United States Navy.

Further, White-Jacket compares the Captain and the Commodore to kings again and again. White-Jacket calls the Captain, "a Harry the Eighth afloat" (23) and describes the king, the Captain as follows:

> It is no limited monarchy, where the sturdy Commons have a right to petition, and snarl if they please; but almost a despotism, like the Grand Turk's. The captain's word is law; he never speaks

> but in the imperative mood. When he stands on his Quarter-deck at sea, he absolutely commands as far as eye can reach. Only the moon and stars are beyond his jurisdiction. He is lord and master of the sun. (23)

Because the Captain has the mighty power that is equal to law itself, White-Jacket condemns the Captain repeatedly throughout the novel. Specifically in chapter seventy-two, White-Jacket attacks the Captain thoroughly. In this chapter, he quotes XV of the Articles of War, "No person in the Navy shall quarrel with any other person in the Navy, nor use provoking or reproachful words, gestures, or menaces, on pain of such punishment as a court-martial shall adjudge" and asserts, "Captain Claret, of the Neversink, repeatedly violated this law in his own proper person" (300).

However, White-Jacket does not always denounce the enormity of the Captain and the Commodore. In chapter eighty-seven, "Old Ushant at the Gangway," White-Jacket points out that in fact the Neversink's crew regarded Captain Claret as "a lenient officer," because he often "refrained from oppressing them" and allowed them to do "the free playing of checkers" (367). About Captain Claret's ambivalent personality, Joyce Sparer Adler asserts, "A complementary set of chapters shows not only how good is assaulted but how the potential for evil in men is fed in a man-of-war world" (46). The Commodore is also one of the men in whom the evil is fed. In chapter sixty-eight, "A Man-of-war Fountain, and other Things," White-Jacket explains that the Commodore has "a prerogative" (285) and adds as follows:

> But this prerogative is only his while at sea, or on a foreign

> station. A circumstance peculiarly significant of the great difference between the stately absolutism of a Commodore enthroned on his poop in a foreign harbor, and an unlaced Commodore negligently reclining in an easy-chair in the bosom of his family at home. (285)

Thus, the Captain and the Commodore are not native tyrants.

In chapter two of this thesis, I discussed the evil in the battleship world that results from the two social classes, law, war, and Christianity. In chapter six, White-Jacket explains why the Commodore is always isolated:

> The real reason probably was, that, like all high functionaries, he deemed it indispensable religiously to sustain his dignity; one of the most troublesome things in the world, and one calling for the greatest self-denial. And the constant watch, and many-sided guardedness, which this sustaining of a Commodore's dignity requires, plainly enough shows that, apart from the common dignity of manhood, Commodores, in general, possess no real dignity at all. (21)

In the case of the Captain and the Commodore, their social classes make them grotesque persons to the sailors.

As for Captain Claret, White-Jacket fiercely attacks his shipping of the quarter-deck face (276) in chapter sixty-six, "Fun in a Man-of-war." In shipping of the quarter-deck face, "a sea-officer assumes his wonted severity of demeanor after a casual relaxation of it" (276). Then White-Jacket asserts:

> For any landsman to have beheld him in the lee waist, of a pleasant

> Dog-Watch, with a genial, good-humored countenance, observing the gladiators in the ring, and now and then indulging in a playful remark—that landsman would have deemed Captain Claret the indulgent father of his crew, perhaps permitting the excess of his kind-heartedness to encroach upon the appropriate dignity of his station. (276)

Thus, White-Jacket hates Captain Claret's vague tenderness and it is one bit of evidence that proves that his high rank in the battleship strongly affects his nature. At the end of this chapter, White-Jacket warns, "That potentate who most condescends, mark him well; for that potentate, if occasion come, will prove your uttermost tyrant" (276), because the potentate is polluted by his high rank on the battleship.

The episode in which the Captain uses his position and law on the battleship and reveals his inhumanity appears in chapter fifty-three, "Sea-faring Persons peculiarly subject to being under the Weather / The Effects of this upon a Man-of-war Captain." In this chapter, the Captain falls into "[a] morbidness of mind" (222) and is "indirectly induced to the infliction of corporal punishment upon a seaman" (223). Then, he actually engages in the selfish flogging of an innocent sailor. This episode also shows that the Captain is affected by power and becomes a tyrant. He is accustomed to being in the high rank and exercising flogging as he likes. Thus, to some extent, the Commodore and the Captain are also victims in the battleship world and White-Jacket admits that. However, principally, he does not approve of their tyranny and it is one of the crucial targets he attacks.

In White-Jacket, the narrator tells also the life of "midshipmen," or "middies." They "are sent to sea, for the purpose of making commodores" (25). Therefore, I would like to analyze them as a clue to understand the Captain's and the Commodore's characters. In chapter fifty-two, "Something concerning Midshipmen," White-Jacket says as follows:

> But since what human nature is, and what it must forever continue to be, is well enough understood for most practical purposes, it needs no special example to prove that, where the merest boys, indiscriminately snatched from the human family, are given such authority over mature men, the results must be proportionable in monstrousness to the custom that authorizes this worse than cruel absurdity. (218)

What makes them midshipmen is the same as what makes the Captain or the Commodore: their authority on the battleship.

Another element that makes them "monstrous" is the law. When a quarrel occurs between a sailor and a boy midshipman, White-Jacket describes the sailor, "Yet that man's indignant tongue is treble-knotted by the law, that suspends death itself over his head should his passion discharge the slightest blow at the boy-worm that spits at his feet" (218). Of course, if the social classes and the laws in the battleship function regularly, White-Jacket would not criticize them so acutely. However, as I discussed in chapter two of this thesis, the social classes and the laws in the Neversink are corrupted; therefore White-Jacket describes the midshipmen jokingly, stating that "in order to become commodores, many of them deem it indispensable forthwith to commence chewing tobacco, drinking brandy

and water, and swearing at the sailors" (25). Thus, because they are living in the depravity of the battleship world, they cannot help but follow the corrupted Captain and Commodore.

White-Jacket finds the same characteristics in other officers as in the Captain and the Commodore. White-Jacket describes that they have "stiff upper lips, and aristocratic cut noses," because they have been "served by a crowd of menial stewards and cot-boys, and always accustomed to command right and left" (48). Moreover, they "have shipped their quarter-deck faces" (95) as the Captain. In chapter twenty-three, "Theatricals in a Man-of-war," after the play, White-Jacket offers his feelings about the officers as follows:

> And here White-Jacket must moralize a bit. The unwonted spectacle of the row of gun-room officers mingling with "the people" in applauding a mere seaman like Jack Chase, filled me at the time with the most pleasurable emotions. It is a sweet thing, thought I, to see these officers confess a human brotherhood with us, after all; a sweet thing to mark their cordial appreciation of the manly merits of my matchless Jack. Ah! they are noble fellows all round, and I do not know but I have wronged them sometimes in my thoughts. (95)

However, White-Jacket's impression of the officers is betrayed soon. Next morning, he sees the officers who "assembled with the Captain, to witness punishment" and an old sailor says to White-Jacket, "they have shipped their quarter-deck faces again" (95). Thus, most officers including the Captain and the Commodore are captured by their rank and have lost their humanity.

Cadwallader Cuticle, M.D. also is one of the officers on the Neversink. In this novel, the narrator does not accuse Cuticle of evil so strongly. However, we can find some descriptions that indicate his heartless personality from chapter sixty-one to chapter sixty-three. In chapter sixty-one, "The Surgeon of the Fleet," White-Jacket says that Cuticle has "his marvelous indifference to the sufferings of his patients" and "his enthusiasm in his vocation" (251) and these words describe his personality well. In the chapter sixty-three, "The Operation," he operates on a sailor who has been shot in his foot. In the operation, the patient dies, although the surgeon amputates the patient's foot. The description of the operation is concluded as follows:

> "Please, sir," said the Steward, entering, "the patient is dead."
>
> "The body also, gentleman, at ten precisely," said Cuticle, one more turning round upon his guests. "I predicted that the operation might prove fatal; he was very much run down. Good-morning;" and Cuticle departed. (264)

Howard P. Vincent asserts, "The operation is a success for Cuticle but not for the patient, who dies; Cuticle's reaction is characteristic of his essential callousness" (The Tailoring of Melville's "White-Jacket" 147). He is so indifferent to his patients that even his colleagues complain, "[Cuticle] does not, surely, mean to touch the body?" with "much excitement" (264).

Cuticle also fully exercises his authority on the battleship. In chapter sixty-two, "A Consultation of Man-of-war Surgeons," he and other surgeons talk about the way of the operation. However, as Adler emphasizes, this is only a "ceremonious consultation" (49). In the consultation, Cuticle listens to all the

opinions of the other surgeons, however he ignores all of them and decides despotically. White-Jacket does not seem condone Cuticle's personality and policy. Therefore, regarding the operation, White-Jacket describes Cuticle, "And who was it that now stood over him like a superior being, and, as if clothed himself with the attributes of immortality, indifferently discoursed of carving up his broken flesh, and thus piercing out his abbreviated days?" (259).

Other surgeons on the Neversink have the same characteristics as Cuticle. In Chapter seventy-seven, "The Hospital in a Man-of-war," White-Jacket says as follows:

> The Surgeon is, by law, charged with the business of overlooking the general sanitary affairs of the ship. If any thing is going on in any of its departments which he judges to be detrimental to the healthfulness of the crew, he has a right to protest against it formally to the Captain. When a man is being scourged at the gangway, the Surgeon stands by; and if he thinks that the punishment is becoming more than the culprit's constitution can well bear, he has a right to interfere and demand its cessation for the time.
>
> But though the Navy regulations nominally vest him with this high discretionary authority over the very Commodore himself, how seldom does he exercise it in cases where humanity demands it! (328).

White-Jacket presumes that they do not exercise their right because they are "at swords' points with its Captain and Lieutenants" (328). White-Jacket does not allow for their weak attitudes towards the authority. Their existences are also

bound by the battleship world and White-Jacket denounces them. Thus, Cuticle and other surgeons are of a high rank and therefore become self-centered and lose their humanity like the Captain and the Commodore.

In chapter eleven and chapter twelve, White-Jacket introduces Quoin, the quarter-gunner and other quarter-gunners. White-Jacket describes Quoin as being "withal, a very cross, bitter, ill-natured, inflammable little old man," and says that "the gunner's gang of every man-of-war are invariably ill-tempered, ugly featured, and quarrelsome" (44). Thus, White-Jacket does not express any good impressions about them and indeed he presumes the reasons why they have such bad personalities. He explains, "They were continually grumbling and growling about the batteries; running in and out among the guns; driving the sailors away from them; and cursing and swearing as if all their consciences had been powder-singed, and made callous, by their calling" (44). Their personalities are related to their attitudes towards war. In chapter eleven, White-Jacket says, "To Quoin, the honor and dignity of the United States of America seemed indissolubly linked with the keeping his guns unspotted and glossy" (42). From the discussion in chapter two of this thesis, it is clear that White-Jacket and Melville do not advocate the blind patriotism and the modern technology of the arms for slaughter. Quoin and other quarter-gunners represent the cruelty of modern warfare.

Like Quoin, the gunner, Old Combustibles also has a direct relationship to war. In chapter thirty-one, "The Gunner under Hatches," White-Jacket describes him and his environment. In this chapter, White-Jacket says that the gunner is one of only a few persons who can enter the magazine of the battleship. The

magazine is the space which gives the readers images of death repeatedly and is described as “shrouded in mystery,” “family vaults of buried dead” (127), and “mysterious vaults” (128). Moreover, it is compared to the images of a jail again and again and described as like being “confined to the Jew’s quarter of the town,” “the dungeons and cells of the Inquisition,” and “the key, nearly as big as the key of the Bastile” (128). These images indicate how war deprives the sailors of their freedom and imprisons them, as I discussed in chapter two. Of course, it is clear that the gunner himself cannot escape from the confinement. Therefore, he shows us “a frightful scar crossing his left cheek and forehead” (129). He got it “during a frigate engagement in the last war with Britain” and it gives him “a sinister look” (129). Thus, he also is a man who is affected in his mind and in his body by war.

Toward the Captain, the Commodore and other most officers, White-Jacket emphasizes his acute condemnation. Meanwhile, toward the master-at-arms, Bland, he somewhat shows his complex feelings. In chapter forty-four, White-Jacket narrates the story of Bland’s smuggling. In the end of this chapter, White-Jacket describes Bland’s character, “the two ends and middle of the thrice-laid strand of a bloody rascal” and the “ineffable villain” (190). However, White-Jacket also positively points out his many virtues. White-Jacket says that Bland is “a neat and gentlemanly villain” and has “a fine polish” (187). White-Jacket even says that Bland is “the most entertaining” (187) man except Jack Chase.

Thus, there is an ambivalence about Bland; the pleasant surface and the evil soul. White-Jacket confesses his sympathy with Bland as follows:

> But, however it was, I, for one, regarded this master-at-arms with mixed feelings of detestation, pity, admiration, and something opposed to enmity. I could not but abominate him when I thought of his conduct; but I pitied the continual gnawing which, under all his deftly-donned disguises, I saw lying at the bottom of his soul. I admired his heroism in sustaining himself so well under such reverses. (188)

Such characters that White-Jacket does not favor are, in the battleship world, all manipulated by social class, law, Christianity, cruelty of the war and arms, the tools of murder, and so on. However, in White-Jacket, some characters appear for whom White-Jacket has respect.

White-Jacket does not have many close friends. He says about his friend as follows:

> The allusion to the poet Lemsford in a previous chapter, leads me to speak of our mutual friends, Nord and Williams, who, with Lemsford himself, Jack Chase, and my comrades of the main-top, comprised almost the only persons with whom I unreservedly consorted while on board the frigate. (50)

As for Jack Chase, I will discuss him in the next chapter in detail. Here, I will discuss the close friends of White-Jacket, Lemsford, and Williams.

In chapter eleven, "The Pursuit of Poetry under Difficulties," White-Jacket introduces Lemsford to the readers. He is "a gentlemanly young member of the After-Guard" and "a poet" (40). White-Jacket describes him as follows:

> In a frigate, you can not sit down and meander off your

> sonnets, when the full heart prompts; but only, when more important duties permit: such as bracing round the yards, or reefing top-sails fore and aft. Nevertheless, every fragment of time at his command was religiously devoted by Lemsford to the Nine. At the most unseasonable hours, you would behold him, seated apart, in some corner among the guns—a shot-box before him, pen in hand, and eyes "in a fine frenzy rolling." (40)

In chapter eleven, White-Jacket shows us the outstanding contrast between Quoin and Lemsford. As I stated, Quoin is possessed by wars and arms in the battleship world. Meanwhile, as for Lemsford, White-Jacket says, "not even all the tar and tumult of a man-of-war could drive it out of him" (40). In White-Jacket, Melville describes wars as things that deprive the sailors of their humanity and make them machine-like, whereas, literature is described as the antithesis of war. White-Jacket asserts that Lemsford has "wit, imagination, feeling, and humor in abundance" (41). These things are unnecessary in a war or are crushed in military life or a battle. Lemsford has his beliefs and continues to write his poems on the battleship and therefore, White-Jacket considers Lemsford as his "fine friend the poet" (41). Another friend of White-Jacket, Williams, has a character similar to Lemsford. White-Jacket says that he is "honest, acute, witty, full of mirth and good humor—a laughing philosopher" (52).

Generally, White-Jacket looks favorably upon those who are cheerful and have humor. In chapter fifteen, White-Jacket introduces to us the cook of the Neversink, Old Coffee and his assistants, Sunshine, Rose-water, and May-day.

Every morning, they wash the copper and during work, the band of the trio, Sunshine, sing "some remarkable St. Domingo melodies" (58). These songs are also the antithesis of the battleship world. White-Jacket explains that battleships prohibit the sailors from music when they are "pulling ropes or occupied at any other ship's duty" (58). Therefore, they have to do such work "in profound silence" (58). Here, White-Jacket compares the sailors to "convicts" (58). In other words, he reminds us that they act as if they are part of a machine. White-Jacket describes the work without music as an "endeavor to impart unity to the exertions of all hands, by singing out mechanically, one, two, three, and then pulling all together" (58). Excessive and absurd rules again deprive the sailors of their freedom so they live like they are in a prison or like they are machines. Therefore, White-Jacket shows his respect for Sunshine, Rose-water, and May-day as sailors who resist the rules of the battleship world. White-Jacket calls the three assistants' names by "the poetical appellations" and calls Sunshine "the bird of the trio" (58). Like Lemsford, they are also the poets of the battleship.

We notice Rose-water's literary sense in chapter forty-one, "A Man-of-war Library." In this chapter, White-Jacket states there is "a public library on board" (167) and talks about his favorite books. Although he says that there are not too many sailors who love reading on the Neversink, he lists Rose-water as one of them. White-Jacket says that he borrowed Moore's "Loves of the Angels" from Rose-water "who recommended it as "de charmingest of wolumes" (168). White-Jacket praises him, "Rose-water, whose own predilections were of a more elegant nature, as evinced by his exalted opinion of the literary merits of the

'Loves of the Angels'" (169). Thus, the reason why White-Jacket favors the three assistants of the cook, especially Rose-water, is because of their literary temperaments.

White-Jacket also enjoys another kind of art. In chapter twelve, he describes various kinds of sailors including the band on the Neversink. About the band, he says as follows:

> But still more efficacious, perhaps, in ministering to the light spirits of the band, was the consoling thought, that should the ship ever go into action, they would be exempted from the perils of battle. In ships of war, the members of the "music," as the band is called, are generally noncombatants; and mostly ship, with the express understanding, that as soon as the vessel comes within long gun-shot of an enemy, they shall have the privilege of burrowing down in the cable-tiers, or sea coal-hole. Which shows that they are inglorious, but uncommonly sensible fellows. (48)

The nature of the band strikingly contrasts with that of the gunner, Quoin who is described in the same chapter. White-Jacket says that the band is "inglorious." However, "glorious" things on the battleship are closely related with the misery of wars as "the honor and dignity of the United States of America seemed indissolubly linked with the keeping his guns unspotted and glossy" (42) to Quoin. Therefore, White-Jacket is favor of their "sensible" action, their opposite action to combat, playing music.

The cook, Old Coffee and his assistants, Sunshine, Rose-water and May-day are all African-Americans. In White-Jacket, some other African-American

sailors, Tawney and Guinea, also appear. In chapter seventy-four, White-Jacket introduces Tawney as follows:

> There was an old negro, who went by the name of Tawney, a sheet-anchor-man, whom we often invited into our top of tranquil nights, to hear him discourse. He was a staid and sober seaman, very intelligent, with a fine, frank bearing, one of the best men in the ship, and held in high estimation by every one. (311)

White-Jacket is a very frank narrator and he points out others' faults without reserve. However, as for Tawney, White-Jacket finds his characters to be of high quality and praises his virtues.

As I discussed in chapter two of this thesis, Tawney was impressed by an English frigate and forced to fight in the war between England and America. White-Jacket is told this story by Tawney and is enraged by the savageness of war:

> Courage is the most common and vulgar of the virtues; the only one shared with us by the beasts of the field; the one most apt, by excess, to run into viciousness. And since Nature generally takes away with one hand to counterbalance her gifts with the other, excessive animal courage, in many cases, only finds room in a character vacated of loftier things. But in a naval officer, animal courage is exalted to the loftiest merit, and often procures him a distinguished command. (314)

The words that represent the character of Tawney, "staid," "sober," "very intelligent," and "with a fine, frank bearing" are completely opposite to that of

officers in terms of what is regarded as a virtue in a war. Therefore, White-Jacket expresses his respect for Tawney in this chapter.

Another African-American sailor is Guinea. In chapter ninety, White-Jacket narrates that Guinea is "a Virginian slave" and has "shipped as a seaman" and his owner is "receiving his wages" (378). White-Jacket admires the personality of Guinea. White-Jacket confesses, "There were times when I almost envied him myself" (379). Moreover, White-Jacket says, "Lemsford once envied him outright" (379). The reason why White-Jacket and Lemsford envy Guinea is also because of his cheerfulness. Guinea is "ever gay and hilarious; ever ready to laugh and joke" (379). Here, White-Jacket does not show a racial bias. He finds other characters' humor or artistic senses that tend to be crushed in a war, and praises them positively. Moreover, Guinea has a role that brings out the evil on the battleship that is peculiar to whites. White-Jacket says that Guinea is "almost entirely exempted from the disciplinary degradation of the Caucasian crew" (379). Of course, "disciplinary degradation" means flogging, the Articles of War, encounters, smuggling, or strict social class on the battleship as I have discussed.

Thus, Lemsford, Williams, Sunshine, Rose-water, May-day, Tawney, and Guinea have intelligence or humor and in them, White-Jacket finds hope in the battleship world. White-Jacket himself is a narrator who is very humorous and always makes jokes in his narrative, and that style is effective in criticizing the excessive strictness and absurdity of the battleship world. However, White-Jacket does not look with favor upon all of the sailors who have humor. In chapter ninety, White-Jacket introduces a sailor called Landless. As with all

other common sailors, for Landless, the battleship world is “an oaken prison, with the turnkey sentries all round him,” however he “paced the gun-deck as if it were broad as a prairie, and diversified in landscape as the hills and valleys of the Tyrol” (383). His optimistic attitude is due to his cheerful character. White-Jacket describes that “he perpetually wore a hilarious face, and at joke and repartee was a very Joe Miller” (383). Moreover, White-Jacket adds that he enjoys singing.

Thus, Landless has common points with Lemsford, Williams, Sunshine, Rose-water, May-day, Tawney, and Guinea: the literary sense and cheerfulness. At a glance, White-Jacket seems to sympathize with him as he does with Lemsford and others. However, White-Jacket clearly declares his disfavor toward Landless:

> This Landless was a favorite with the officers, among whom he went by the name of “Happy Jack.” And it is just such Happy Jacks as Landless that most sea-officers profess to admire; a fellow without shame, without a soul, so dead to the least dignity of manhood that he could hardly be called a man. Whereas, a seaman who exhibits traits of moral sensitiveness, whose demeanor shows some dignity within; this is the man they, in many cases, instinctively dislike. The reason is, they feel such a man to be a continual reproach to them, as being mentally superior to their power. He has no business in a man-of-war; they do not want such men. (384-85)

Here, “dignity” seems to represent one of the qualities of resisting the absurdity

and the inhumanity of the battleship world.

The sailors to whom White-Jacket shows his favor, Lemsford, Sunshine, Rose-water, May-day, Tawney, and Guinea protest against the battleship world. As for Lemsford, in chapter forty-five, "Publishing Poetry in a Man-of-war," he hides his poetry in a gun on the battleship and when the gun salutes, his poetry is also fired. Looking at him, one of his great friends, Jack Chase, says to him as follows:

> "Well, my after-guard Virgil," said Jack Chase to him, as he slowly returned up the rigging, "did you get it? You need not answer; I see you were too late. But never mind, my boy; no printer could do the business for you better. That's the way to publish, White-Jacket," turning to me—"fire it right into 'em; every canto a twenty-four-pound shot; hull the blockheads, whether they will or no. And mind you, Lemsford, when your shot does the most execution, you hear the least from the foe. A killed man can not even lisp." (192)

When Lemsford hears Chase's words, he is excited and says, "I published a volume of poems, very aggressive on the world, Jack" (192). It seems that for Lemsford, the fight on the battleship is to continue to write his poems.

However, his works do not be understood by other sailors. "[T]he less learned of his shipmates" (41) hates his works and he is exposed to "the deadly hostility of the whole tribe of ship-underlings— master-at-arms, ship's corporals, and boatswain's mates,—both to the poet and his casket" (41). They hate Lemsford, because they have already lost their humanity in the battleship world. One of the foes of Lemsford, Quoin, is described by White-Jacket, "He seemed

seized with the crazy fancy, that his darling twenty-four-pounders were fragile, and might break, like glass retorts" (42). "[T]wenty-four-pounders" represent war and the misery that accompanies war, in contrast to the poems that Lemsford loves. Thus, Lemsford is described as a sailor who aggressively continues to resist the evils in the battleship world.

As for Sunshine, Rose-water, and May-day, we have confirmed that their songs play a role in resisting the rules on the battleship. Tawney also shows his inclination to disobey the absurdity of a war. As I pointed out in chapter two of this thesis, when he was impressed into the English Navy, he made a natural assertion that he did not want to fight against his own country. Guinea also has an episode in which he resists the battleship world. On the Neversink, when all sailors are called to witness a punishment, he refuses to watch. To the deck-officer who finds him and asks him, "Where are you going, Guinea?", he answers, "I can't 'tand it; I can't, indeed, massa!" (379). In this scene, he clearly shows his hatred toward the rules of the battleship world. Thus, whether White-Jacket supports a sailor or does not depends upon whether or not he is rebellious against the battleship world. White-Jacket does not respect a sailor who does not see the evils of the battleship world, like Landless.

Nord is one of only a few sailors with whom White-Jacket "unreservedly consorted while on board the frigate" (50). He does not have humor as do White-Jacket's favorite sailors. However, as with White-Jacket, he is very intelligent and fond of reading. White-Jacket judges that Nord is "a reader of good books," understands "the right meaning of Montaigne," and is "an earnest thinker" (51). Besides, White-Jacket compares him to Coleridge; "He amazed

me, as much as Coleridge did the troopers among whom he enlisted" (51). At the same time, he works studiously upon the battleship. White-Jacket narrates as follows:

> This much was observable, however, that he faithfully discharged whatever special duties devolved upon him; and was so fortunate as never to render himself liable to a reprimand. Doubtless, he took the same view of the thing that another of the crew did; and had early resolved, so to conduct himself as never to run the risk of the scourge. (51)

However, Nord cannot completely escape from the evils on the battleship and has to content himself with the misery of the battleship world. White-Jacket says that "he managed to preserve his dignity" and to do so, Nord becomes "a wandering recluse" or "a man-hater" (51). This form of resistance is not the positive one that Jack Chase or Ushant shows. However, in this way, he prevents himself from being affected by the battleship world and losing his humanity like Landless.

Mad Jack also desperately resists the rules on the battleship. In chapter twenty-six, "The Pitch of the Cape," when a gale hit the Neversink, he gave orders contrary to the Captain. The sailors obeyed Mad Jack's order and as a result, they were helped. White-Jacket explains that Mad Jack's order was "the safer" and "the most generally adopted" (110) one and Captain Claret gave the wrong order because he was drunken. Therefore, the Captain did not "even venture to reprimand him for his temerity" (111). Thus, Mad Jack is the sailor who never yields to the social classes or the Articles of War. White-Jacket

praises him, stating that "Mad Jack was the saving genius of the ship" (106).

In this chapter, I have discussed the description of the characters by White-Jacket. Sten divides the sailors on the Neversink into two types, (1) the sailors "who escape this almost irremediable fate," the Quoin and Landless type, and (2) "the benevolent leaders or even the potential redeemers of the man-of-war world," like Jack Chase, Mad Jack, Ushant, Lemsford, Nord, and White-Jacket himself (120). If we consider them according to the descriptions of White-Jacket, we can find that even the Captain and the Commodore represent the former type. In White-Jacket, the narrator's standards of judging other characters are comparatively clear. He hates and attacks the characters who are affected by the evils of the battleship world, whether voluntarily or not. Therefore, he describes Captain Claret, the Commodore, the midshipmen, the officers, Cuticle, Quoin, and Bland whose mere existences should be punished or should receive sympathy because of their pitiful existence. In contrast, White-Jacket respects the characters who are not affected by the battleship world; Lemsford, Williams, Sunshine, Rose-water, May-day, Tawney, Guinea, Nord, and Mad Jack. Jack Chase and Ushant also belong to the latter, but they seem to have special features that others do not have. In the next chapter, I would like to analyze the descriptions of those two through White-Jacket's (Melville's) eye to show their role of resisting the battleship world in this novel.

CHAPTER IV

JACK CHASE AND USHANT'S ROLE IN RESISTING TO THE BATTLESHIP WORLD

Jack Chase is one of the close friends of White-Jacket and wins his great respect. White-Jacket describes that Chase as "a true-blue" and "loved by the seamen and admired by the officers" (13). Moreover, White-Jacket says that "[n]o man ever had a better heart or a bolder" (13) than Chase. As for Ushant, White-Jacket praises him that calls him, "a fine specimen of a sea sexagenarian" and is "so active in time of tempest" but is "a remarkably staid, reserved, silent, and majestic old man" (353). Thus, through the novel, White-Jacket expresses his respect for the two sailors.

However, Chase and Ushant have a few strange common points that other sailors do not have; Chase and Ushant are often portrayed in the image of kings by White-Jacket. For example, in chapter fifty-six, "A Shore Emperor on board a Man-of-war," the sailors on the Neversink welcome Don Pedro II. When they see the Emperor, Chase has a conversation with his colleague, Jonathan, as follows:

> "Ha! ha!" laughed Jack, now seeing into the joke, and willing to humor it; "though I'm born a Briton, boys, yet, by the mast! these Don Pedoros are all Perkin Warbecks. But I say, Jonathan, my lad, don't pipe your eye now about the loss of your crown; for, look you, we all wear crowns, from our cradles to our graves, and though in double-darbies in the brig, the Commodore himself can't unking us."
>
> "A riddle, noble Jack."

> "Not a bit; every man who has a sole to his foot has a crown to his head. Here's mine;" and so saying, Jack, removing his tarpaulin, exhibited a bald spot, just about the bigness of a crown-piece, on the summit of his curly and classical head. (236-37)

Ushant is also compared to a king. In chapter eighty-seven, White-Jacket talks to Ushant as follows:

> I know not in what frigate you sail now, old Ushant; but Heaven protect your storied old beard, in whatever Typhoon it may blow. And if ever it must be shorn, old man, may it fare like the royal beard of Henry I., of England, and be clipped by the right reverend hand of some Archbishop of Sees. (367)

In the analysis of the Commodore and the Captain in the last chapter, I pointed out that White-Jacket compares the Captain and the Commodore to kings again and again. As we have discussed, the Captain and the Commodore have absolute power that is equal to that of kings and they rule the sailors, whereas, Chase and Ushant are only seamen in the social class of the battleship world.

Chase and Ushant have another common point with the Captain and the Commodore. That is their relationship with god. As I have discussed, the autocrats on the floating monarchy, the Captain and the Commodore, cooperate with religion and the chaplain. As a result, the close relationship generates an absolute absurdity, the connection between war and religion that is originally for peace. As for Chase and Ushant, they are described as the persons who convey the words of god. White-Jacket says that Chase "had a high conceit of his profession as a seaman; and being deeply versed in all things pertaining to a man-

of-war, was universally regarded as an oracle" (13). White-Jacket uses the similar simile when he tells about Ushant: "He resolutely set his beard against their boyish frolickings, and often held forth like an oracle concerning the vanity thereof" (353).

Chase and Ushant are clearly in a different position from the Commodore and the Captain. However, Melville seems to be effectively comparing Chase and Ushant to a person who convey the words of god. White-Jacket says of Chase, "The main-top, over which he presided, was a sort of oracle of Delphi; to which, many pilgrims ascended, to have their perplexities or differences settled" (13). "Delphi" is the ancient city of Greece, which had flourished as the place of oracles. While, as for Ushant, White-Jacket describes him: "This Ushant, in all weathers, was ever alert at his duty; intrepidly mounting the fore-yard in a gale, his long beard streaming like Neptune's" (353). Thus, he is compared with "Neptune," the god of ancient Rome. Or, as White-Jacket says, "When the master-at-arms advanced with the prisoner's shirt, Ushant waived him off with the dignified air of a Brahim" (366). In this sentence, Melville seems to use the word, "Brahim" as "Brahman," a person in the rank of priest in Hinduism. Thus, Chase and Ushant are repeatedly compared to the non-Christian gods or the religious leaders. It is obvious why Melville has given Chase and Ushant non-Christian images. They are the antithesis of Christianity that cooperates with the authority and inconsistently flourishes on the battleship.

Clearly, Chase and Ushant are superior to the Captain and the Commodore, according to White-Jacket's narrative. In chapter fifty-one, "One of 'the People' has an Audience with the Commodore and the Captain on the Quarter-deck,"

Chase has contact with the Captain and asks him for "at least one day's 'liberty' to go ashore" (213). In this conversation between Chase and Captain Claret, White-Jacket emphasizes their social classes. Chase is called, "the People" in the title of this chapter and is named "a commoner" (214) in the chapter. On the contrary, the Captain's high rank is also emphasized. In this chapter, White-Jacket insists again that the Captain is "the supreme authority of the vessel" (213). Moreover, White-Jacket explains that Chase "seemed to say, Magnanimous Captain Claret, we fine fellows, and hearts of oak, throw ourselves upon your unparalleled goodness" (214). In this chapter, the rank of the Commodore is also stressed. When the Commodore appears, White-Jacket describes, "[The Commodore's] gilded buttons, epaulets, and the gold lace on his chapeau glittering in the flooding sunset" (214).

However, their attitudes are inverse to their social classes. Chase is "in his own off-hand, polished, and poetical style" (213) and shows "a picture of eloquent but passive appeal" (214). Through this chapter, White-Jacket again and again praises Chase and his attitude as being perfect. On the contrary, the Captain and the Commodore unexpectedly expose their weak points in the conversation with Chase. To Chase's asking for the liberty, Captain Claret answers as follows:

> "And what do you want to go ashore for?" asked the Captain, evasively, and trying to conceal his admiration of Jack by affecting some haughtiness. (214)

The Commodore also is described as a more commonplace person than Chase. The Commodore answers to Chase as follows:

> "Ah! cunning Jack!" cried the Commodore, by no means blind to the bold sortie of his flattery, but not at all displeased with it. In more respects than one, our Commodore's wound was his weak side. (215)

Thus, in this chapter, through the striking contrast between them, Chase reveals how the Captain and the Commodore are not qualified for their mighty power and how social class in the Navy is assigned groundlessly.

We can find the character of Ushant most clearly described in chapter eighty-five, "The great Massacre of the Beards," and its accompanying chapters. The episode of "The great Massacre of the Beards" is about the Captain's order for the sailors to shave their beards and their disobedience of that order. Of course, this episode can be read in the context of mutiny and the Captain's handling of it. However, as Michael Paul Rogin points out, in "The great Massacre of the Beards" chapter, "[t]he mutiny of the beards merges the resistance of sailors to shipboard authority with that of savages to Christianity" (97). In particular, as one of the motifs of this episode, it seems that Melville was conscious of the wars between Whites and Native Americans.

Right before "The great Massacre of the Beards" chapter, in the end of chapter eighty-four, "Man-of-war Barbers," White-Jacket explains the variety of the sailors' hair and beards:

> But there were others of the crew laboring under the misfortune of long, lank, Winnebago locks, or carroty bunches of hair, or rebellious bristles of a sandy hue. Ambitious of redundant mops, these still suffered their carrots to grow, spite of all ridicule.

> They looked like Huns and Scandinavians; and one of them, a young Down Easter, the unenvied proprietor of a thick crop of inflexible yellow bamboos, went by the name of Peter the Wild Boy; for, like Peter the Wild Boy in France, it was supposed that he must have been caught like a catamount in the pine woods of Maine. (354)

In this paragraph, White-Jacket compares the sailors to the tribe of Native Americans, "Winnebago" and moreover, he relates them to wilderness.

Captain Claret decides to order to the sailors to shave their beards, because he regards them as "[a] pretty set of savages" (356). Thus, the opposition between Captain Claret and the bearded sailors reminds us that of the U.S. Government and Native Americans. Of course, Captain Claret embodies the U.S. Government. He is the Captain of the U.S. frigate, the Neversink, and as I discussed, the Neversink is a part of a civilized nation that has law, modern arms and is expanding its territory for Christianity and manifest destiny.

"The great Massacre of the Beards" is an episode in which the Captain's orders the sailors to shave their beards and some of them resist. Ushant, who continues to resist the order, is flogged and confined in the brig until they returned to America. However, no one is killed in this episode. In spite of that, in this chapter, White-Jacket emphasizes that the opposition between Captain Claret and the bearded sailors is a "war." He laments, "Such a heartless massacre of hair!" (355) and expresses his pathetic and brave determination toward the merciless order:

> Train your guns inboard, let the marines fix their bayonets, let the officers draw their swords; we will not let our beards be reaped—the

last insult inflicted upon a vanquished foe in the East! (357).

The images of bloodshed and fierce battle against "savages" can be associated with wars between white Americans and Native Americans. Melville suggests to us more evidence to prove this hypothesis.

In her Removals: Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Politics of Indian Affairs, Lucy Maddox asserts as follows:

> The plot that seems to have fascinated Melville most, the one he kept rewriting and revising, is an account of the confident white American's unsettling encounter with the silent other, the representative of a world that lies beyond the limits of the American's own discourse. In Melville's plot, the American must work to turn this other into "a beautiful blank" for the inscription of his particular discourse, if he is not to be completely undermined; when the other resists, then he must be removed, or exterminated, or both. In the responses of Melville's Americans, then, the other is given two familiar alternatives: to be civilized—through incorporation (or translation) into the American discourse—or to become extinct—through exclusion from it. (53)

In this book, Maddox picks up The Confidence-Man, Typee, "Bartleby, the Scrivener," Pierre, "Benito Cereno," and Moby-Dick and discusses the problem of Native Americans. However, the "two familiar alternatives" that she asserts can also be applied to "The great Massacre of the Beards" episode.

To the order to shave the beards, White-Jacket excitedly cries, "[T]his is too bitterly bad, Captain Claret! and, by Heaven, we will not submit" (357).

Then, he adds, "[W]e will enact over again the mutiny of the Nore, and sooner perish than yield up a hair!" (357). White-Jacket clearly declares that they have only two alternatives just like Native Americans. As White-Jacket says, the two alternatives for Chase and other sailors in "The great Massacre of the Beards" are (1) to "submit" or "yield" and (2) to "perish."

In "The great Massacre of the Beards," to "submit" means "incorporation into the American discourse" as Maddox says. Captain Claret decides to order the sailors to shave their beards because having a beard is "against the law" (356). This assertion parallels the Removal Act against Native Americans in the nineteenth century. In the middle of the nineteenth century, an approver of the Removal Act, Timothy Flint, asserts as follows:

> On the other part, the advocates of removal contend, that the states, within whose limits [the Cherokee] reside, have perfect sovereignty in their lands, and an undoubted right either to compel their submission to their laws, or to remove them. They state, that it is impossible, that the Indians should exist, as an independent people, within the populous limits of the whites; that collisions, murders, escapes of fugitive slaves, and the operations of laws and usages so essentially different, as those of the white and red people, will forever keep alive between the contiguous parties, feuds, quarrels, and retaliations, which can never cease until one of the parties becomes extinct. They state, that commissioners, who have been sent to explore the country assigned to the Indians, who have already emigrated, find them generally in healthy and fertile countries,

> satisfied with their condition, and advancing still more rapidly in agriculture, wealth, and civilization, than their brethren east of the Mississippi; and, that their removal will advance, instead of retarding these improvements. (240)

Thus, the white supporters of the Removal Act judged whether Native Americans would be civilized or not by whether they would submit to the laws of the whites. This is the same logic Captain Claret uses in "The great Massacre of the Beards" chapter.

In this episode, of course, "the American discourse" that Maddox asserts embodies naval law. As I discussed in chapter three, naval law is closely related to wars and in the nineteenth century, through wars, whites deprived Native Americans of their land. It is clear that "the American discourse" means a white American-centered discourse. On the contrary, for other ethnic groups, it suggests a humiliating and bloody discourse.

In "The great Massacre of the Beards," Captain Claret deprives the sailors of their beards. In American history, whites deprived Native Americans of their land. In this chapter, Chase compares his beard to be shaved to land. Before shaving, he says to the barber as follows:

> "My friend, I trust your scissors are consecrated. Let them not touch this beard if they have yet to be dipped in holy water; beards are sacred things, barber. Have you no feeling for beards, my friend? think of it;" and mournfully he laid his deep-dyed, russet cheek upon his hand. "Two summers have gone by since my chin has been reaped. I was in Coquimbo then, on the Spanish Main; and

> when the husbandman was sowing his Autumnal grain on the Vega, I started this blessed beard; and when the vine-dressers were trimming their vines in the vineyards, I first trimmed it to the sound of a flute. (360)

In his talk, he uses the agricultural word, "reaped" when he says that he "shaved" his beard. Moreover, he compares the growth of his beard with agricultural works, "sowing his Autumnal grain on the Vega" and "trimming their vines in the vineyards." Thus, in this chapter, his beard represents nature or ground. Besides, he regards beards as "sacred things." This reminds us of the Native Americans' spiritual thoughts that emphasize nature. Thus, in this chapter, Chase can be regarded as embodying elements associated with Native Americans.

There is another point that we should pay attention to in "The great Massacre of the Beards" episode. Before Captain Claret decides to order the sailors to shave their beards, White-Jacket states, "But as Captain Claret said nothing, and as the officers, of themselves, had no authority to preach a crusade against whiskerandoes, the Old Guard on the forecastle still complacently stroked their beards and the sweet youths of the After-guard still lovingly threaded their fingers through their curls" (355-56). The words "a crusade against whiskerandoes" seem strange if we try to understand this chapter in the context of a mutiny on a battleship, because on this U.S. battleship, both the "crusade" and the "whiskerandoes" are Christians. Therefore, in these words, Melville alludes to the war between Christians and non-Christians.

The rhetoric that regards a war as "a crusade" and justifies it is used even in the twenty-first century. Right after the September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attacks

in New York, President Bush said, "This is a new kind of evil and we understand, and the American people are beginning to understand, this crusade, this war on terrorism, is going to take a while, and the American people must be patient" (Purdum)[4]. Of course, I do not intend to condone the terrorism. However, President Bush's rhetoric to regard their revenge war as a "crusade" and regard the terrorists as "evil" is an oversimplified perspective. Moreover, to regard a war as a "crusade" leads to lawless condition in which they can do any outrageous things to punish the foe. White Americans had used the similar self-justification, "manifest destiny," when they had expelled Native Americans. Melville's using "crusade" here seems to include an ironical meaning. He satirizes the self-centered ideology of Americans that justifies themselves by regarding their war as "a crusade" and their enemies as "evil" and it continues to the present day.

In the episode, "The great Massacre of the Beards," Chase and Ushant play the role of the savages. They have their beards, regarded as the evidence of savages by Captain Claret's white American-centered standard. Maddox asserts that Native Americans in Melville's works have only two alternatives, "to be civilized" or "to become extinct." Chase and Ushant respectively represent the two alternatives. White-Jacket describes Chase's response to the Captain's order; "My noble captain, Jack Chase, was indignant," however, "Jack Chase was a wise man; he at last deemed it but wisdom to succumb" (360). Meanwhile,

[4] In his essay, Tsutomu Yasuda discusses the chivalry of Amasa Delano in "Benito Cereno." He quotes President Bush's statement of the "crusade" after the September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attacks, states that "President Bush asserts their justice by comparing them to the crusade that the chivalry produced" (30) and points out that America continues to use this rhetoric to pursue their profit by the wars even now.

Ushant is flogged and imprisoned until the Neversink arrives in America, because to the end, he did not surrender to the order. This is same as extinction, because being imprisoned means being erased from the battleship world that represents United States.

Thus, in "The great Massacre of the Beards" episode, Chase and Ushant represent the savages. However, White-Jacket also emphasizes the greater savageness of Captain Claret and the order itself. White-Jacket calls Captain Claret the "barbarous author" of "the mandate" (357) and says, "By this brown beard which now waves from my chin—the illustrious successor to that first, young, vigorous beard I yielded to your tyranny—by this manly beard, I swear, it was barbarous!" (360). If we find the metaphor of the massacre of Native Americans in the episode of "The great Massacre of the Beards," these words of White-Jacket also start to have an important meaning. If we read this episode in the context of the conflicts between Native Americans and whites, whites who relied on their power and deprived Native Americans of their land can also be regarded as "barbarous."

However, in this episode, Melville does not seem to assert which side is right or wrong. Instead, he uses rhetoric to criticize white Americans in those days. Maddox points out the analogies between an Indian and an Indian-hater in the chapters of "Indian-hating" of The Confidence-Man and asserts that "the discussion of Indian-hating is not a serious philosophical meditation or an allegory of good and evil but a thoroughly ironic pastiche made up of the confident assertions of white writers who professed to understand the vast difference between being an Indian and hating Indians" (86).

In the chapter of "The great Massacre of the Beards," we cannot find as many common points between the bearded sailor and Captain Claret as in the chapter of "Indian-hating" of The Confidence-Man. However, by regarding both the bearded sailors and Captain Claret as "savages" or "barbarous," White-Jacket makes the border between them ambiguous. He points out that Captain Claret also "wore a small speck of a beard upon his own imperial cheek" (356). Therefore, he is also partly given the image of a savage. White-Jacket presumes the thought in Captain Claret's mind, when he decides to issue the order to shave the sailors' beards as follows:

> A pretty set of savages, thought he, am I taking home to America; people will think them all catamounts and Turks. Besides, now that I think of it, it's against the law. It will never do. They must be shaven and shorn—that's flat. (356)

In Captain Claret's thought, he unconsciously exposes that he is also regarded as one of the savages, because he also belongs to the ship of savages. Moreover, this thought ironically reveals that they will think that Captain Claret is the leader of the savages, because he is the Captain of a ship of savages.

About the Navy of the Unites States in the nineteenth century, H. Bruce Franklin says as follows:

> Between 1886 and 1891, while Melville was composing Billy Budd, the United States, having fulfilled its manifest destiny to conquer the continent from ocean to ocean, now contemplated a globe being divided and redivided by the great European empires. America's puny little navy could hardly lead the nation into a global

> destiny, especially while the country was hemmed in by the indomitable fleet and world-wide empire of Great Britain. To become a world power, America would need both overseas colonies and a large peacetime navy. Indeed, these two were inseparable, for a military fleet was necessary to seize and hold colonies, and these colonies provided bases indispensable to maintaining such a fleet. (200)

Thus, the United States fleet and the battleships as the Neversink in White-Jacket are the embodiment of the overseas expansionism of the United States. The overseas expansionism is an extension of white Americans' expelling Native Americans from their land to fulfill their manifest destiny. Therefore, it is not strange that we can see the opposition between the U.S. Navy (the Government) and Native Americans in the chapter of "The great Massacre of the Beards."

Thus, in White-Jacket, Chase and Ushant play a special role that other sailors do not. Although they are just common sailors, they are sometimes described as kings. Similarly, Chase's refined attitude is contrasted with the common attitudes of the Captain or the Commodore. These characteristics question the baselessness and the absurdity of the social classes on the battleship. In the battleship world, persons who do not have leadership, the Commodore and the Captain of the Neversink, are in the high rank. Moreover, they are also given the non-Christian characteristics to show their resistance to Christianity as the authority in the battleship world. In particular, we can read the episode, "The great Massacre of the Beards" in the context of white's expelling Native Americans and in that context, they are regarded as the savages whom whites

deprive of their land. In this episode, the savage features of the bearded sailors paradoxically expose the savageness of Captain Claret, the leader of the Navy of a civilized country with high technology of arms and rational laws.

CONCLUSION

In White-Jacket, the narrator exhibits some instability in his narrative, especially when he talks about Christianity. Melville skillfully uses the dualism of perspective of the narrator and criticizes America in those days through its miniature, the man-of-the-war world. In this work, the voice of the narrator, White-Jacket, bears similarities to that of Melville, although White-Jacket's narrative is both humorous and satirical.

The world that the narrator narrates with his humor and satire is one that is drawn from the United States itself in the middle of the nineteenth century. In the world, the absolute social classes, law of the Navy, war and arms, Christianity which opposes wars, flogging, and other evils are mingled or complemented each other. The immoderate pursuit of rationality and depriving the sailors of their humanity create the prison-like world. However, even in the evil world, the appearance is filled with "pleasure," "glory," and "joy," and they do not notice the cruelty from the outside world. Moreover, the Captain, the Commodore and the officers are motivated by "glory" and "promotion"; therefore the world seems to them to function effectively. But, these sweet words and their effectiveness are always intermingled with miseries of war on the battleship.

The battleship world is a part of a modern country; therefore, the persons in this novel are very diversified. In the battleship world, the persons are more or less affected by its elements; the social classes, laws of the Navy, war and arms, and Christianity. In this situation, the Captain, the Commodore, and the officers always appeal to their strong power and lead outrageous lives rule the world despotically. They were affected by the battleship world and they lost

their humanity. Therefore, White-Jacket does not admire the actions of the midshipmen, the officers, the surgeon, Cuticle, Quoin, and Bland. Meanwhile, White-Jacket praises or respects for several sailors, including Lemsford, Williams, Sunshine, Rose-Water, May-day, Tawney, Guinea, Nord, and Mad Jack, who have not yet lost their humanity, even on the battleship. In the Navy, they continue to have their humor or are engaged in literary activities. Those activities are opposite to a war in which their emotions and productivity are completely oppressed. However, White-Jacket does not accept the characters only because they have joy. Landless is a character who has cheerfulness, however, White-Jacket attacks him, because he is "without shame" and "without a soul" (384). Other characters that White-Jacket applauds have rebellious spirits, more or less.

Of all characters that have rebellious spirits, the two sailors, Chase and Ushant, play special roles. Sometimes they are compared to kings with high dignity, and in counterpoint to the kings in the battleship world, the Commodore and the Captain. Or, Chase and Ushant wear the images of non-Christian oracles in contrast with the Christianity, which combined with the authority of the Navy, flourishes in the battleship world. In particular, in the episode, "The great Massacre of the Beards," Chase and Ushant are fiercely persecuted by the Captain of the battleship, a leader whose methods suggest the expansionism of the white Americans. In this episode, we witness the persecution of Native Americans by white Americans, and the images of Native Americans are reflected in Chase and Ushant. In this chapter, they are regarded as savages by Captain Claret and law of the Navy. However, as White-Jacket's narrative reveals, the Captain also is a savage who selfishly appeals only to law and violence. Thus, in the world of the

battleship, Chases and Ushant play the roles to reveal and resist the absurdity of the world.

Through the analysis of the description of the characters, we have examined the Melville's assertion and insight in White-Jacket. In this novel, Melville suggests us how a war distorts a human's mind easily and how the national ideology was used effectively in the wars, although it was baseless. For example, Christianity for peace inconsistently exists in the battleship world. Moreover, Christianity has betrayed its original doctrine and is used for wars like manifest destiny. White-Jacket describes the sailors in the grotesque battleship world. The wars and national ideology that affects humans' mind continue up to the present as President Bush's statement of "crusade." White-Jacket tells how the battleship embodies the history of the United States from the eighteenth century to the present in which "savages" are always persecuted. However, Melville also suggests us the way of life of people who are not affected by the battleship world. We can find the rebellious mind and the hope that Melville hints in them.

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Thesis

MA thesis, "The Images of Native Americans in Herman Melville's Pierre, or The Ambiguities" (2003). A thesis picks up the images of Native Americans in Pierre and relates them to the audial images.

Employment

Teaching Assistant 2001-2003

Meiji University Information Science Center, Tokyo, Japan

*Assisted in computer classes

*Instructed students in computer classes

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*Built FAQ for teaching assistants

Publications

"The Whiteness of Lucy Tartan in Herman Melville's Pierre, or The Ambiguities." Sky-Hawk 20 (2004): 17-29.

"Appendix to a Bibliography of Melville Studies in Japan xvi." Edited. Sky-Hawk 20 (2004): 55-60.

"The Visual Images and the Audial Images in Herman Melville's Pierre, or The Ambiguities." Studies in Arts & Letters 20 (2003): 1-9.

"Appendix to a Bibliography of Melville Studies in Japan xv" Edited. Sky-Hawk 19 (2003): 51-56.

"Nippon ni Okeru Hakugei Kenkyu Shoshi (Shou) [A Bibliography of Moby-Dick Studies in Japan (An Extract)]." Co-edited. Rising Generation 147 (2002): 627-628.

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"Mark Twain to Wangan Sensou—Technology, Ideology, Media, America [Mark Twain and the Gulf War—Technology, Ideology, Media and America]." Magnolia 15 (2000): 11-26.

"William Faulkner's Light in August: Joe Christmas Not as the Symbol but as a Human." Magnolia 14 (1999): 19-36.

Conference Presentation

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