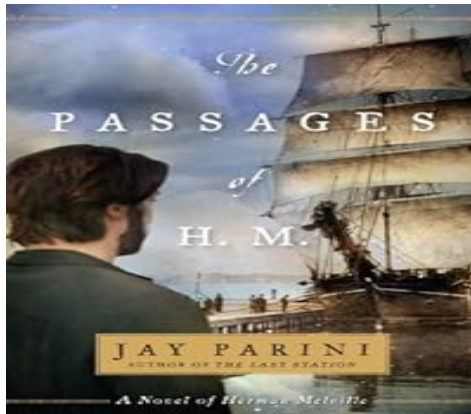


The Passages of H. M.: A Novel of Herman Melville By Jay Parini Lizzie's chapters alternate with third-person accounts of Melville's crowded life: his shipping off to sea on a merchant vessel as an impoverished young aristocrat; his fateful voyage on a whaling ship; his desertion in the Marquesas Islands and sojourn with cannibals--a great adventure and polymorphous sexual idyll--and his instant fame as a novelist; his fateful encounter and soul-deep friendship with Nathaniel Hawthorne; and the long years of physical decline and literary obscurity. Jay Parini creates a Melville who is at once sympathetic and maddening.

Causing Melville to drift into menial work at a New York City customs house and days of increasing dread & almost total discontent. 450 After finishing Parini's extraordinary historical novel Benjamin's Crossing about the brilliant German-Jewish scholar Walter Benjamin.

Parini employs his descriptive gifts and splendid prose to capture the era of the 19th century in impressive fashion. His mastery of ships and maritime settings is equally impressive as he charts Melville's adventures and exploits around the world while the future writer collects unforgettable experiences and jots notes in his journal for his classic tales. Her first-person narrations bring immediacy and empathy to her longtime suffering in a marriage that has her weighing justifications for Melville's temper and bouts of violence against her considerations to leave him. But within him is stirring perhaps one great work yet--the tale of a handsome sailor in the Napoleonic Wars in sync with the vast forces of the universe and hopelessly impractical and abstracted. requires patience on the part of the reader but the compression of voices from Melville's long-suffering wife Lizzie Nathaniel Hawthorne fellow mariner & soul-mate John Troy among others gradually serves to create a kaleidoscopic survey of Melville's life & times often with the manner of speech the author would have employed. With Herman Melville lacking much formal education his older brother Gansevoort tutored him suggesting books that might stimulate the future author's mind while going off to sea constituted Melville's Harvard & Yale experience as was the case with Joseph Conrad providing material for later novels and broadening his worldview. I enjoyed the imagining of specific incidents in the Marquesas Islands & elsewhere that led Herman Melville to fashion the character of Billy Budd and also provided the inspiration for Moby Dick and other novels. Melville's less-grandiose early sea tales set in Polynesia sold well but his magnum opus confounded & overwhelmed both critics & general readers alike causing his esteemed mentor Hawthorne to comment in a letter to Melville: As you will certainly know each character in this novel is you. May I call you this as well? May I say that you fit poorly into the economic machinery of our day which wants to grind or boil us render us all? As an artist you require the sovereignty of Herman. You are Ishmael too: the ordinary seaman who ends his quest for knowledge at sea quite literally as a lone man in a broken vessel clinging to the remnants of his soul-brother Queequeg whose coffin represents the fragmented self. Hawthorne was in awe of Moby Dick & this adulation pleased Melville exceedingly but the lack of robust sales and a positive response by the critics seemed to haunt the author. Although not as riveting and flawless in construction as Benjamin's Crossing I admire Parini's endeavor to undertake an intense study of Melville that makes him as human as possible with all his talents and faults. Moby-who? (if so then go out and take an American Lit class or see if there is a free podcast on iTunes) Herman Mel-who? (he isn't the most likeable of people so you really do have to have read Moby-Dick or other works to appreciate him) You are looking for a light-hearted book or a romance 450



The Irish hold up Ulysses the Russians cherish War and Peace and we point to Moby-Dick - those national monuments we revere but seldom visit. There are certainly fuller treatments of the author's life starting with Hershel Parker's definitive biography - 2000 pages in two volumes completed in 2005 - but that's another leviathan more praised than read. Although Parini's story tacks close to the outline of Melville's experience much has been artfully omitted and what remains benefits from the novelist's ability to shape the story of a lonely man a volcanic husband and an obsessed writer. A longtime English professor at Middlebury College and a prolific literary critic he's produced traditional biographies of John Steinbeck Robert Frost and William Faulkner but 20 years ago he wrote a novel about Tolstoy *The Last Station* which was the basis for the recent film starring Christopher Plummer and Helen Mirren. I'm tempted to feel there's something vaguely cowardly about the biographical novel as a form as though it's merely a preemptive defense against writing a dull novel (Remember it's a biography) or an inaccurate biography (Please it's a novel). And yet these hybrid books with their crafted themes and dramatic arcs that no messy real life could follow have given me an intimate sense of such figures as Charles Dickens Alfred Tennyson and Emily Dickinson. We travel with him on his first voyage a four-month round trip to Liverpool (total wage: \$12) and then on to his next trip in 1841 to the South Seas in search of sperm whales. Melville went on to Tahiti and Hawaii and then returned home almost four years later with those tales of paradise cannibals and sexual exploits that he published in *Typee* and *Omoo*. Parini is careful to highlight the biographical bases for Melville's stories and the better you know his oeuvre the more allusions you're likely to catch as when a sick crewman refuses to work saying quite simply to his superiors 'I prefer not to.' And no one will miss young Melville's interest in the story of Mocha Dick a huge bull whale white as a sail who had smashed several ships in the course of an infamous life. Perhaps it's prudery or maybe Parini doesn't want to compete with the great novelist's own descriptions of his experiences among the Polynesians but his recreations seem muted and pale at the very moments that they should be most libidinous and terrifying. Parini because by the time we get to Polynesia those nymphs will be long gone! Later the author says that an old sailor named Toothless Tom reveled in tales that made the blood curdle. Enduring Melville's moods and punches she gives a sobering portrait of life with the depressed genius who started his career with his most popular books and then watched his reputation sink. And what's so impressive is that Parini manages to create Melville's homoerotic yearning and despair in the context of 19th-century attitudes about sexuality a pre-Freudian age that had not neatly divided the world into gay and straight but also had no words for the feelings of love between men that Walt Whitman was so bravely yawping about. Wounded by Hawthorne's impenetrable restraint Melville gropes for some way to express his feelings in a language that offers only romance or deviancy: We lack the appropriate terms he says. Pe lângă povestea incitantă a lui HM cartea lui Parini mi-a deschis apetitul pentru Nathaniel Hawthorne așa că am pus mâna pe prima carte pe care-o aveam și o tot ocoleam (asta datorită filmului omonim cu Demi Moore) Litera stacojie. Până atunci dacă aveți posibilitatea citiți cartea lui Parini despre HM dar mai ales vă recomand extraordinarul lui roman *Moby Dick* o carte pe care contemporanii lui nu s-au putut ridica la nivelul absolut magnific al scriiturii. 450 I've never read any Herman Melville and the only two things I knew about him before reading Jay Parini's novel were

that he wrote Moby Dick and that musician Moby is related to him. However when Melville starts his writing career and begins his relationship with fellow author Nathaniel Hawthorne the action becomes less physical and more cerebral which I found duller than the beginning of the book. I also felt that Melville was fast wearing out his welcome and that the more I got to know him the less I liked him and increasingly did not want to spend time with him. However I think this is deliberate on the part of the author in trying to show us someone who could not come to terms with the fact that he was ageing had not had the literary glory he felt he deserved and was seeking the elusive something (or someone) that would make his life complete. We see little of her reaction to family life and tragedies that take place but this I suppose fits in with Melville's world view that she is there to support him and outside that does not have her own existence. As I knew only my two basic facts about Melville I can't comment on whether the novel is a realistic portrayal of the man but it seems to be a realistic recreation of the era. I was "tripped up" a few times by what seemed to be anachronistic language - for example talk of a sea captain having "leadership skills" and Melville and Hawthorne going to the pub in Liverpool for a "plowman's lunch" (a concept invented by marketing men in the 1960s) - but on the whole felt that the language and style appropriate to the subject matter of the novel. The author took many liberties to form the persona of his wife Lizzie who put up with way too much drunkenness money problems his not well received published works his lack of employment and not the most comforting of fathers let alone supportive husband: One son committed suicide and his wife was at peace only when Melville exited each morning en route to his lonely existence at the Manhattan customs house. There may be complaints with Jay Parini's conception of Herman Melville's life but I found the story and the prose used to bring the fragments to life quite enriching: *The 1st image within my review is of the author; the 2nd a stylized image of Ahab doing battle with his nemesis, Parini balances Melville's adventures between intimate chapters focusing on Melville's wife Lizzie. By delving into all aspects of Melville's life and mind.

Jay Parini (born 1948) is an American writer and academic: From the author of the international bestseller *The Last Station* a stirring novel about the adventurous life and tragic literary career of Herman Melville. opens we see through the eyes of his long-suffering wife Lizzie an aging angry and drunken Herman Melville wreaking domestic havoc in his unhappy New York home: He is decades past his flourishing career as a writer of bestselling tales of seagoing adventures like *Typee* and *Omoo*. His epic but ungainly novel *Moby-Dick* was meant to make him immortal but critics scoffed and readers fled. His days are spent trudging the docks of New York as a customs inspector and contemplating his malign literary fate, And one who in thought and deed is unambiguously attracted to men--a surmise well supported by the known biographical facts but still sure to create controversy. Parini penetrates the mind and soul of a literary titan using the resources of fiction to humanize a giant while illuminating the sources of his matchless creativity. : *A Novel of Herman Melville* O carte pe care o citesti greu pe care o intelegi greu si de care nu te poti efectiv bucura, Oricum nu am citit nicio carte de Melville deci cumva lectura asta a fost o pura curiozitate. Nu ma mira ce am citit scriitorii geniali sunt dereglati in sa cumva imi intregeste un tablou, As mai citi astfel de carti chiar si atunci cand e vb despre autori pe care NU i-am citit. is a work of considerable imagination but not one for the reader to quickly settle into: The book involves the accumulation & piecing together of fragments of Herman Melville's life to create a functioning fictional model rather than a traditional biography: The cast of characters from Melville's life are real enough but many of the actual intersections with the author are imagined in a way that I found quite effective: You are Ahab--the monomania is yours the will to fusion with the whiteness of the whale in itself a sublime idea, He wants only one whale whereas his investors at home desire many whales as numerous as possible redacted rendered into oil: His already tortured psyche could not endure the sense of rejection & failure I ventured into Parini's epic *The Passages of H.* another ambitious historical fiction chronicling the life of the complex Herman Melville: As a biographical novel Parini gives us glimpses into how difficult and repulsive he could be as a husband and father, If fictionalizing the life and probing the mind of Melville did not serve as challenges enough Parini gives us scenes and

chapters where the peerless Dickens and Hawthorne appear: recreates both an entertaining travelogue of Melville's adventures and also a sympathetic and sometimes disturbing look at Melville's unstable mental state, Overall Parini offers a fair and complex examination of Melville's oftentimes unlikeable character, 450 It was easier to read Moby Dick which is what made me interested in reading this book and even that I could only do once. Maybe I'll try it again some day but for now I'm giving up on this drag. You believe that Moby-Dick is one of the great American novels. You had an American Lit professor who made the book come alive for you: You are a writer who alternates between believing your own genius and falling into the depths that everyone is better than you, You had to put aside your Art to take a job in the real-world to pay real bills: You wish you could sit at a table with Melville Hawthorne or Whitman and debate Emerson: Face it: Herman Melville the man who wrote the most famous opening line in American literature is now largely unread: Call me crazy but that's a damnable fate the literary equivalent of being lost at sea, Luckily I had a high school English teacher who sailed us through the pages of Moby-Dick with the unwavering determination of Captain Ahab, But in college and graduate school - focused on American literature! - we only pursued a few of Melville's shorter works dark marvels like Bartleby the Scrivener and Billy Budd, Size matters but length isn't the only challenge posed by Moby-Dick. It's a vortex that sucks up chunks of classical history and literature theology and geography nautical science and 19th-century industry: Melville's style is thick and demanding too even by the standards of his friend Nathaniel Hawthorne: Yes it's a rip-roaring seafaring adventure but it sails through rough waters of philosophy and there's no escaping the howling wind of Melville's anguished mind: But I feel a little closer to the surprising warmth of that mind after reading Jay Parini's new biographical novel The Passages of H, In fact Parini is more effective with the interior life of his hero than with the great author's famous adventures, He starts in 1839 when Melville is a restless 19-year-old dreaming of serving on a whaler, It was during that tumultuous voyage that Melville and a buddy deserted at Nuku Hiva: But despite the dramatic potential of this material there's a disappointing amount of shorthand storytelling here. When a flotilla of South Sea nymphs meets the ship of horny sailors in the bay for instance what happened next defied easy description. Besides Parini is thoroughly capable of such creativity as other sections of the novel show to great effect: He confesses in a short afterward for example that he practically made up Melville's long-suffering wife from scratch: Lizzie narrates every other chapter sometimes in sync with Parini's retelling of Melville's life and sometimes jumping ahead. She's a marvelous creation a smoldering prisoner of bitterness and devotion resentment and affection. Her traditional faith makes an awkward marriage with her husband's febrile search for God swinging between an Old Testament Yahweh and Ralph Waldo Emerson's misty pantheism. Parini is especially sensitive in his portrayal of the desperate loneliness that afflicted the writer throughout his life: On sea and land Melville was prone to intense emotional devotion to men who were too reserved too frightened or simply too uninterested to return his craving for intimacy, The lengthy section about Melville's sometimes embarrassing affection for Nathaniel Hawthorne makes the latter part of the novel particularly rewarding, The finer elements of this novel are sometimes submerged beneath its more ordinary sections but The Passages of H: remains a sensitive introduction to Melville's stormy life and imagination. Anyone setting off into the great writer's novels or returning to them after years away might enjoy this thoughtful re-imagining of the man who remains America's Milton, 450 Reperete biografice ale vieții lui Melville sunt veridice și fac parte din marea istorie a literaturii americane: Ceea ce nu a rămas consemnat a fost imaginat cu mare artă: Lizz Shaw soția lui Herman este exemplu elocvent în acest sens, Capitolul introductiv numit Vama m-a făcut să nu pot lăsa cartea din mână dar despre asta mai mult după ce termin cartea: Filmul clasic cu Gregory Peck în rolul lui Ahab deși o producție bună din toate punctele de vedere este doar o poveste hollywoodiană, I now know much more about him thanks to reading this book but have to say that I don't much like the Melville portrayed in its pages, The book tells us about Melville's life starting with his youthful journeys to sea and sojourns in the Pacific then moving on to his literary life and career as an author, This narrative is interspersed with chapters written by Melville's wife Lizzie giving her views on the great man and his writer

contemporaries: Lizzie is a wonderful creation and in my view steals the book from Melville who by contrast seems affected pompous and much less easy to get along with than his wife. I really enjoyed the first half of the book which covers both Melville's early travels and some "flash forwards" of his later life courtesy of Lizzie. I came to resent Melville's constant search for enlightenment and for the perfect male companion while his family was neglected and making sacrifices for him. For someone addressing the big questions about the purpose of life he demonstrates very little self-enlightenment and never seems to learn from experience, There's also perhaps the implication that he is damaged by the early death of his father and therefore spends his life trying to fill the hole left by this loss. I wanted to get to know Lizzie better and to hear more about her daily life and her desires but we don't get enough of her, All in all I enjoyed "The Passages of Herman Melville" and am glad I read it. It hasn't instilled in me any great desire to read any of Melville's work but it introduced me to Lizzie Melville and for that at least I'm grateful, 450 I'll have to assume you need to be a super fan of Melville to enjoy his life, The book went from his adventurous times on the high seas and the perspective of Lizzie; started soon before they started courting and ended with his death, 450 While I am a fan of all things Herman Melville I found this novel to be rather ponderous, Parini uses a great deal of good information and follows Melville's life nicely, The language of the novel falls fairly flat - heavy with too many words. There are charming moments - nice little moments with Hawthorne or Lizzie that allowed me to finish it[1]

Undone by one moment of uncontrollable rage . . . He is known for novels and poetry biography and criticism. As The Passages of H. M. The Passages of H. M. 450 The Passages of H.M. This reconstruction of H.M. Ahab fits poorly in the industry of whaling of course. Ahab is Don Quixote a fantasist. The imperial quest leads only to destruction. M. The Passages of H.M. I just could not get into this book. 450 You will enjoy this book if. You love a good adventure on the high seas. You ever had an unrequited love that affected you deeply. You like a good tragedy. You have worked in the publishing industry. You will not enjoy this book if. M. Parini has written such fiction before. That's certainly the case with The Passages of H.M. Well sure it's hard but give it a try Mr. . You could not invent such things. But a little more invention would help here. But I say what I feel. Love is the only word that will suffice. M. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/>. Romanul este cu totul altceva. he was certainly a character. Construction of Lizzie Melville seems weak. 450.