

The Monster in the Ocean: Identity in Frank Schätzing's *The Swarm*

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Abstract: *This study explores the discursive construction of negative identity through the monstrous antagonist, the yrr – a collective intelligence of deep-sea organisms – in Frank Schätzing's novel The Swarm and the intricate implications stemming from humanity's interaction with this creature. The yrr represents characteristics fundamentally alien to human nature, such as collective intelligence and ecological harmony, while simultaneously exposing humanity's exceptionalist and destructive tendencies. In doing so, the novel compels readers to confront human responsibility for climate change and environmental degradation. This study contends that the yrr functions as a metaphor for humanity's failure to address pressing environmental issues and serves as a critique of anthropocentric discourse. Additionally, Schätzing's portrayal of the ocean as a space of both mystery and fear reinforces these thematic concerns. By situating the Yrr in the ocean's depths, Schätzing underscores the concept of a vengeful nature, responding to humanity's environmental degradation, colonial ambitions, and ecological ignorance.*

Keywords: *Frank Schätzing; The Swarm; anthropocentrism; climate change; nature's revenge; monster;*