

HENRY THOREAU AND CARL JUNG: MORE DAY TO DAWN

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A Thesis

Submitted to

the Graduate Faculty of

Auburn University

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the

Degree of

Master of Arts

Auburn, Alabama
May 10th, 2008

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Master of Arts, May 10th 2008
(B.S., Troy University 2004)

74 Typed Pages

Directed by James Ryan

My thesis investigates Thoreau from a Jungian perspective, concentrating primarily on *Walden*, with additional analysis of Thoreau's biography and *A Week On the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*. I apply Jung's concept of archetypes (specifically, the Anima, Shadow, and Self archetypes) to the self-made American mythos that Thoreau intended to establish, using as a starting point the popular trope of Thoreau as an "American romantic" in order to investigate the intersection of American transcendentalism and Jungian therapy, in which one seeks to arrive at a true sense of Jungian Self. Overall, this work seeks to re-contextualize Thoreau's psychology, following his account of his own transcendence and processing it in terms of Jung's depth psychology—specifically, linking the Jungian concept of individuating into a true sense of Self.

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Introduction

Psychoanalysis, as a whole, has been a mixed bag in the community of literary scholarship. For every stalwart column of support for psychoanalyzing literary works and their authors—such as L.O. Fradenburg—there exists a would-be Samson to destroy it, such as Lee Patterson¹. The reason for the continued ideological animosity is not hard to pin down: other realms of literary theory ultimately invite integration, and genesis into something new—the integration of post-structuralism and feminist theories heralding queer theory, for example, which itself became integrated with theories such as New Historicism and led to the inclusive, open-minded (and open-ended) realm of Cultural Studies. For critics such as Patterson, however, a union between the standards of proof (historicity and empiricism) and psychoanalytic inquiry (a world of archetypes and symbolic orders) is utterly impossible. The perceived incompatibility between these two modes of inquiry stayed in the forefront of my mind as I embarked on a Jungian analysis of Thoreau and *Walden*. Consequently, after climbing the mountain of opposition to psychoanalysis and resting on the plateau, I knew that a much steeper climb loomed

¹ While Fradenburg primarily promotes Lacanian and Freudian readings of medieval texts, she has emerged as the pre-eminent voice in defense of the very possibility that Patterson finds so unrealistic in “Chaucer’s Pardoner on the Couch”: that psychoanalysis can exist alongside historicity, and that the former can actually enhance the latter.

Patterson’s primary criticism of psychoanalysis is, as he would say, foundational: he believes that Freud modified his own theories when faced with opposing evidence, and thus avoided any chance for empirical proof. Psychoanalysis, to Patterson, does the same, by either modifying the foundations (à la Lacan) or making unverifiable claims.

before me than any that Patterson could devise: even the staunchest supporters of psychoanalyzing literature would inevitably peek over their volumes of Foucault, Lacan, and Althusser to mutter two haunting words: why Jung?

It's a fair question. Jung's texts and ideas, much like Freud's, are dated, and Jung has not had his own Lacan. No one has re-imagined and reshaped his ideas to make them more palatable for a new generation of readers². However, even the broadest of Jung's ideas complement or enhance Thoreau's—the concept of a collective unconscious does not seem alien at all to Thoreau, whom Lance Newman notes employed an isolationist meditation because he “hoped to become the means of redeeming a spontaneous human community in Concord” (534). This was to be done by finding something within himself that universally appealed to the unconscious desires of Concord's citizens. Jung, like Thoreau, was interested in the integration of Eastern and Western philosophies, integrating the I Ching into conceptions of synchronicity and archetypal theory even as Thoreau subtly integrated the Bhagavad Gita and the Christian Bible into his conceptions of spirituality. Such a collision of East and West for Thoreau is even more prominent in the oft-quoted passage from *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849) in which he ponders “that some will have hard thoughts of me, when they hear their Christ

² Joseph Campbell arguably came close to redefining Jung for a new generation, lending his reading of heroic archetypes to culturally-enduring icons, such as “Star Wars.” However, Campbell saw the purpose of identifying archetypal imagery as a way of divining the source of humanity, and therefore, a purpose for living. Jung, in contrast to this external search for meaning, saw the archetypes as a psychological utility, a way of individuating one's self and achieving self-understanding. Campbell also sought similar mythological structures, classifying them as an inclusive “monomyth.” Again focusing more internally than externally, Jung's archetypes were more like “polymyths”—archetypes which endure through the ages and can be wildly reinterpreted on the psychological level.

named beside my Buddha” (*A Week* 67). He has linked the oriental and occidental and symbolized their union into his own transcendence—the rhetoric shifts from the cold, external “their Christ” to the personal “my Buddha,” emphasizing a shift away from external and disparate religions to a synthesized spirituality. Thoreau’s synthesis of such a broad spectrum of writings and beliefs echoes Jung’s thoughts on a collective unconscious. There are psychic pillars in personal mythology that are not contained within boundaries. They are neither Eastern nor Western, Christian nor Buddhist. The most compelling reason to pursue a Jungian analysis, however, is that Jung’s archetypal theory helps to explain the contradictions in Thoreau’s thought, and illuminates these opposing ideas as necessary to an understanding of Thoreau’s transcendent thought.

Thoreau was a man of intentional contradictions. Emerson thought as much himself, writing in a letter that Thoreau “sen[t] me a paper with the old fault of unlimited contradiction” (quoted from Newman, 515-516). However, few would argue that there is a method to the madness. The *Walden* chapter “Solitude” is intentionally about visitors, and the chapter “Visitors” is intentionally about solitude, “Higher Laws” about brutality and “Brute Neighbors” about high spirituality, and so on. For Jung, the natural endgame of psychoanalysis was actualization—that one could individuate his soul and embrace a concept of self (separate from one’s persona, the projected outer shell) by integrating various archetypes. For Jung, this was part of the transcendent function—the balance of opposing forces into a unified whole.

The definition of archetype is best understood by looking at its Greek root, *arkhetypos*, meaning “first-moulded.” The concept is simply that there exist in the world

certain universal (and therefore quasi-mythical) figures or concepts. These universal tropes are often embodied by literary characters and visitors in our dreams.

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, for instance, achieves much of its power from our understanding that these are not wholly original characters, but an embodiment of the universal idea that young love is doomed. Broadly interpreted, archetypal theory can extend as far back as Plato, as his imagined "perfect forms" from which the entire world is cast certainly echo the most basic tenets of archetypal theory. However, for the purpose of this work, I am using Jung's modified conception of archetypes.

For Jung, the various archetypes within literature and within his patient's dreams were actually a way of understanding the human mind. Believing that a person is born with a mental form and structure already in place, he contended that by studying the products of humanity's collected unconscious—the shared images and dreams that crop up in myths, art, folktales—a person could begin, and ultimately complete, a journey to their own archetypal self. Opposing archetypes are balanced to arrive at individuation—as Nietzsche, in *Birth of Tragedy*, posited that the balance of Dionysian revelry and Apollonian studiousness resulted in the birth of tragic romance. A balance of opposed Jungian archetypes eventually allows one to shed his or her persona—the outer mask of stability worn over the chaotic face of the psyche.

The Jungian archetypes I will examine include aspects addressed by Thoreau at Walden Pond. The anima, for instance, which represents not only the feminine aspect of a masculine individual, but also the capacity of that man for sensitivity, emotionality, and spirituality, seems to loom in the background as Thoreau mentions (almost in passing)

that only women and children appreciate Walden, whereas men—mostly businessmen—cannot see the enlightenment for the trees. Thoreau makes an apparent separation between himself and men, a sort of duality where he is comfortable with aspects of femininity, even as his lifestyle at the pond is almost stereotypically masculine, ruggedly living off of the land in an embodiment of Emersonian self-reliance. The interplay between this dualism portrays a man striving for a middle-ground between arbitrary labels. Jungian archetypal theory allows us to recontextualize Thoreau and analyze this well-trod critical ground from a fresh perspective.

To this day, Thoreau is often associated with the so-called “romantic transcendentalism” in nineteenth-century America, or, more recently, associated with a romantic eco-critical school of thought. The connection between Thoreau and romanticism is readily made, of course, and has a rich critical history. Thomas Woodson declared that the “dialectical” nature of *Walden* rendered it “a typically Romantic nineteenth-century attempt to give form and substance to differing creative impulses within the writer's consciousness” (443-444). Mark Temmer considered Thoreau to be a stylistic descendent of Rousseau himself. He declared that “both are related to romanticism: Jean-Jacques [Rousseau] being the father of the new world, Thoreau, one of its sons (112). R.P. Adams picks up on Peckham’s theory of romanticism, believing that it is a simple matter of “[shifting] away from thinking of the universe as a static mechanism, like a clock, to thinking of it as a dynamic organism, like a growing tree” (419). Thoreau matches this paradigm by using “the turning seasons” to “define a process of symbolic death and rebirth” (425). As a final example, Mark Bevir links

Thoreau's romanticism to his politics. He finds that Thoreau "proclaimed the individual conscience, not the law, as the supreme moral arbiter: political obligation depends on the moral judgment of the individual, and the best government is one which does not govern" (880). Bevir further posited that Thoreau, like Emerson and Whitman, drew inspiration from Jeffersonian and Jacksonian democratic theory, which in turn restated the eighteenth-century belief in the perfectibility of mankind, a belief which fit well with their own immanentism (881). Thoreau's place in the realm of American romanticism has been well-established; however, I contend that a Jungian reading of Thoreau complements such romantic readings, rather than contradicting them.

Initially, a Jungian reading of Thoreau might seem incompatible with a romantic reading. Romanticism, particularly for Thoreau, involves a study of the natural world, whereas analytical psychology involves a study of one's unconscious dream-world. Romanticism involves using a new and dynamic understanding of the world, whereas Jung's theories involve understanding the world through mythic archetypes as old as humanity. Even politically, the "perfectibility" of man is idealized within romanticism as a way of trans-forming society/humanity as a whole, whereas the goal of Jungian psychology is an individuation of a single person towards a fully-realized self—a sort of inner revolution that stands in sharp contrast to the external upheaval of the French Revolution.

Jungian theory enables us to pursue and ultimately answer the questions that romanticism leaves blank. Thoreau's isolationist visit to Walden seems to fall under the Jungian model of self-meditation towards understanding of one's mind and the

surrounding world. Like Jung, Thoreau sought a type of self-perfection. He does not presume that *Walden* will suddenly transform the world without effort on the part of the reader. He concludes *Walden* by stating that “only that day dawns to which we are awake” (324), challenging readers to discover their own self-awakening.

This organic model of transcendence (aligned with Peckham’s theory of a dynamic world) complements a Jungian reading of Thoreau. Jung’s conception of mythic archetypes and a universal unconscious are not static: mythic archetypes are constantly dynamic, changing over various eras and modified by an individual’s perception of them. For instance, the “Great Mother” archetype has been broadly interpreted as the Christian Mary or the Egyptian Isis. In Thoreau’s hands Nature is feminized, as he dynamically adapts the mythic tradition to his own woodlands experience. In this sense, Thoreau builds upon the dual foundations of American romanticism and Jungian psychoanalysis, taking the poetic love of nature forged by Keats and Wordsworth and fusing it with Emersonian self-reliance to form a uniquely American experience. He offers an American-romanticist expansion upon Coleridge’s “literary theories about the reconciliation of opposites” (Woodlief par 2); whereas Coleridge believed that the reconciliation of opposites held the key to poetry—an external understanding of sorts—Thoreau reconciles opposing ideas into an internal understanding of self. While the practical application of transcendental ideas to self-change was the primary purpose of Thoreau’s and Emerson’s transcendentalism³, Thoreau’s *Walden* is unique. The

³ Richardson 73. Acclaimed Thoreau biographer Robert Richardson notes that it is “ironic that as a group they were thought—then as now—to have their heads in the clouds, to be impractical and otherworldly, vague, dreamy, and concerned with things

synthesis of nature, literature, spirituality and patriotism forms a unified concept of self, but Thoreau's conception of himself and his purpose (his Jungian persona) fall away by the final chapter, in which the jubilantly individuated Thoreau emerges. This is where a romantic interpretation of Thoreau fails, and Jungian analysis furthers our understanding of Thoreau: American romanticism, on the shoulders of Jacksonian Democracy, never ceases to believe in the self-perfectibility of man. Yet when the Thoreau of the "Economy" chapter emerges, he is filled with contempt (bordering on disgust) for those who fail to embrace a better way of living. The disgust later appears in criticisms of John Field and his family. If the noble savage is corrupted by civilization, then those living ostensibly outside of civilization are criticized for attempting to attain the trappings of civilization. Yet by *Walden's* conclusion, Thoreau has accepted the truth that Jung would later expand upon: "perfectibility," in the traditional understanding of the word, has no place in Thoreau's transcendental plan, nor in Jung's transcendent function. Thoreau reveres his brute instincts as much as his spirituality, and Jung recognizes that transcendence hinges upon accepting one's shadow aspects—the shameful, brutal aspects of humanity that civilization stridently seeks to smooth out. Such a dual reverence constitutes Thoreau's embrace of the collective unconscious. He forsakes traditional labels in favor of identifying certain psychic touchstones and integrating them into his own individuation. This acceptance marks Thoreau's break from Emerson. His ideology travels away from Concord and away from the shores of America; indeed, the raw

that were neither real nor tangible," when in reality Thoreau, Emerson, and Margaret Fuller sought to "[work] out the ethical implications of transcendentalism and making them widely accessible and, above all, liveable."

emotion of *Walden*'s conclusion, in stark contrast to the conventional, economic rationality of the first chapter evokes the passion of Goethe's exuberances during the *Sturm und Drang* period. By placing *Walden* on the continuum of romantic thought, it is possible to identify Thoreau's break with American romanticism, even as he hearkens back to romanticism's German roots in order to forge something entirely new. Jung, then, presents the ideal tool with which to understand Thoreau as Jung seeks meaning behind mythology in order to reconcile opposites and become an individuated self—Jung offers very specific language and theories that align well with Thoreau's own transcendent enterprise, placing the oft-ephemeral concept of Thoreau's transcendentalism into the psychological framework of the transcendent function. Thus, Thoreau's concept of transcendentalism can be understood through Jung's idea of self-actualization. Thoreau's differing moods—shifts from bitterness to jubilant, beastly to divine, even masculine to feminine—can be understood through Jung's archetypal theory. Traditional methods of psychoanalyzing Thoreau and his works inevitably fall short simply because they seek to find a “real” man behind the mythic Thoreau. With Jung, man and myth are inseparable entities. To understand the man, then, the myth must not be dismissed, but decoded.

The shadow archetype is one key to understanding Thoreau's reconciliation of opposites. As the name implies, the shadow is the embodiment of an individual's repressed desires, animal instincts, and primitive intuition. Thoreau addresses his shadow archetype more explicitly than he does his anima. He who has disdained to eat even fish suddenly desires to devour a live woodchuck. This contradiction is recorded in “Higher

Laws,” and illustrates the Jungian conception of how paired opposites enable an individuated self. In a fittingly non-linear fashion, Thoreau attempts to work through this shadow element of his being, even as he reluctantly acknowledges the irony that within this monstrous excess, he comes closer to divinity.

My Study focuses primarily, then, on three archetypes—the anima, the shadow, and the self. I will illustrate how Thoreau’s spiritual journey for enlightenment is best recontextualized by a Jungian approach, incorporating the mystical elements of both western and eastern spiritual practices in a way that anticipates the mythical approaches of Jung. I will examine Thoreau’s *Walden* and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, and sketches he made of Walden Pond and the surrounding area in order to decode his archetypal journey. Above all, I hope to emphasize that while Jung’s psychology is a lens in clarifying Thoreau, Thoreau anticipates Jungian thought. I intend to illustrate how Thoreau embraces, ignores, grapples with and ultimately subdues and sublimates a variety of Jungian archetypes in his pursuit of the self—what Jung terms the oneness of knowledge and individuation that was also the impetus for the quest of the American transcendentalists. That Thoreau would exhibit proto-Jungian thought nearly a hundred years before Jung published his own works was predicted by Jung himself: Addressing critics of his archetypal psychology, Jung asserted that his philosophies were beyond the ability of the academic world to dissect or dismiss:

Even if all proofs of the existence of archetypes were lacking, and all the clever people in the world succeeded in convincing us that such a thing could not possibly exist, we would have to invent them forthwith in order

to keep our highest and most important values from disappearing into the unconscious. (*Four Archetypes* 29)

I feel that this inventive element was central to Thoreau's writing. In his relentless self-mythologizing, he sought, as did Emerson before him, to create a new kind of American, born out of conflicting opposites: Western Protestant spirituality (as evidenced by Thoreau's concern with higher laws) and Eastern self-balanced spirituality. This creeping humanism ultimately led Thoreau to his proto-Jungian sense of archetypes. In typical Thoreau fashion, however, he inverted the later Jungian paradigm, not only using invention to promote select values (such as the love of nature, self-reliance, and pantheistic spirituality), but also using invention to devalue certain cultural conceits held by the rich and educated world, such as the need for warm clothes, huge houses, and rich food. I contend that *Walden's* structure—the seasonal staging of his prose that appeared in many of Thoreau's favorite works⁴—serves also as an extended metaphor for the psychological process of attaining a Jungian sense of the self. For Jung, this balance was integral: man “ought never to forget that the world exists because opposing forces are held in equilibrium. So, too, the rational is counterbalanced by the irrational, and what is

⁴ Richardson 307-310. Richardson notes that “building a book around the seasons was hardly a fresh idea;” and he concludes that “We have made too much of the seasonal structure of *Walden*, too easily assuming that the book's message is to accept the seasonal cycle of nature as final wisdom. Such a view, essentially objective, conservative, and tragic, is not at last what Thoreau wanted or taught.” My own contention is that Thoreau assumes oneness with nature as one of the ideals of transcendentalism, and that the seasons mark progress into the blossoming of Spring. It is no coincidence that Thoreau ends the account of a two-year visit at the culmination of the first year—this transcendent journey towards Jungian individuation is not seasonally cyclical—the individuated individual is experiencing perpetual Spring, and does not return to Winter.

planned and purposed by what is” (*Four Archetypes* 31). In the spirit of these opposing forces, I begin with the Jungian trope of the anima—the feminine aspect of the male self.

The Anima

This feminine aspect of Thoreau and subsequent recontextualization is a central idea of my study, as well as the study of *Walden*. An analysis of Thoreau’s “repressed” masculine side (examined further in the context of the shadow archetype) necessitates an examination of his anima. I analyze from a Jungian perspective both the feminine aspects of Thoreau as represented in his works, as well as Thoreau’s own portrayal of femininity during his stay at Walden Pond. This Jungian examination offers a fresh perspective on the heterosexual/homosexual binary that splits critics, and it unites several disparate elements of *Walden*. For instance, the carnivorous bloodthirstiness of Thoreau in “Higher Laws,” seems to have little to do with John Fields’ wife, until one considers the spirituality Thoreau sees in bodily taking what he wants from the land, as opposed to capitalists who ensure the Fields’ poverty. Thoreau portrays Fields’ wife as urging her husband to define success in worldly terms; whereas to Thoreau the trappings of civilization are actually *trapping civilization* within a feminine framework. The counterpoint to such femininity is masculine abandon, such as eating a live woodchuck. From a Jungian standpoint, Thoreau balances the best aspects of femininity and masculinity—forsaking the capitalistic repression of Fields’ wife while retaining his own sensitive appreciation of the natural world. Similarly, he does not condemn nor regret the urge to eat a woodchuck, yet implies that such beastliness is a necessary precursor to spirituality, just as hunting is ironically necessary to teach children to value the natural

world (214). The exercise of liberating restrained femininity and restraining masculine abandon allows Thoreau to perceive transcendental truths without being held back by a persona. In Jungian terms, he is individuating himself by overcoming his own “mask,” or persona. The persona is best understood as the aspect of Thoreau that fits in to the collective consciousness—the so-called “mass of men” in Concord who Thoreau seeks to impress even as he distinguishes himself from them. The notion of such a mask extends to both the public realm of perception (how Thoreau desired others to regard him) and the archetypes of unconsciousness controlling how he views himself. Therefore, the Jungian persona dictates the deliberate teacher/student dichotomy of *Walden*’s first chapter, and shedding the persona signifies the open arms with which Thoreau greets a fraternity of free-thinkers by the close of the book. By this point, the mask of superiority has genuinely dropped; a fully individuated Thoreau is presented as a changed man.

The anima is tied deeply to the persona, as inner femininity modulates the external portrayal of masculinity necessary to success in a patriarchal world. Regarding the feminine aspect of masculinity, Thoreau related to women more than men in relation to nature. Of his visitors, he writes “Girls and boys and young women generally seemed glad to be in the woods,” contrasting them with business men and farmers who “thought only of solitude and employment, and of the great distance at which [Thoreau] dwelt from something or other” (148). Despite the readiness with which Thoreau’s female visitors took to his social experiment at *Walden*, his attitudes towards women remain mixed throughout the work. While some are helpless pawns of fate, like John Field’s dutiful wife and the black woman named Zilpha whose house, close to Thoreau’s own,

was burned down by British soldiers in 1812. Others are wise and little spoken of, like the red-faced elderly woman who visits Thoreau and tells him of the forest from years gone by—a sort of post-Edenic Eve figure, offering remembrances of paradise even as she tempts Thoreau with an apple he can't resist: knowledge of a time before industry came to Concord. However, the most prominent female in *Walden* is nature itself. Thoreau takes the romantic/poetic trope of feminizing the natural world to another level in imbuing nature with consciousness, personality, and even a voice. Witness the scene in “The Pond in Winter” in which Thoreau awoke after a “still winter night” convinced that “some question had been put to [him].” Looking out his window, however, Thoreau could see “there was dawning Nature, in whom all creatures live, looking in at my broad windows with serene and satisfied face, and no question on her lips. I awoke to an answered question, to Nature and daylight” (275). In this passage, nature serves as the intermediary balance to the Jung-esque paired opposites of day and night. In Thoreau's projection of his own anima onto the external world nature becomes a maternal educational figure who provides the quizzical Thoreau with the answers he so desperately seeks. This maternal teacher role is the aspect of his anima that Thoreau enacts the most—it is evident in his attempts to teach his philosophies. The primary theme of his transcendental philosophy as told to his neighbors is to redefine their reliance on economy, labor, and religion, simultaneously glorifying earthy work (such as gardening) and emphasizing that simple food and housing can help one create a self-sustained economy, which keeps one from being debased in the increasingly-capitalistic Concord. His characterization of the Canadian woodchopper as child-like crystallizes this maternal

anima aspect: Thoreau wants the world to grow up, and learn to live on its own. This feminine aspect of his psychology—the same that fuels the teacher addressing himself to his “poor students” (2) has given false rise to critical impressions of Thoreau as a homosexual⁵.

It is my belief that Thoreau’s pre-Jungian exercise of his anima archetype is responsible for many claims regarding Thoreau as being a homosexual. I believe that *asexual* remains the best description of Thoreau. His sexuality was, however, repressed by a combination of his personal seclusion and his contempt for the natives of Concord. Nonetheless, many passages exhibit homosexual overtones that are a direct result of Thoreau exercising this anima aspect: it is not difficult to understand a queer reading of Walden’s sixth chapter, “Visitors,” which begins with Thoreau proclaiming that he’s not that much of a hermit, and that when company comes around he is “ready enough to fasten myself like a bloodsucker for the time to any full-blooded man that comes in my way” (136). Not content with telling his readers that he is ready to suck on any available full-blooded man, Thoreau expresses concern that when 20 or 30 people gather in his small house, there may not be enough physical space for conversations with other men, which is necessary for “all of the animal heat and moisture” (137) between them to have a chance to evaporate. After mentioning the “animal heat” of the men around him

⁵ Harding, 23-45. Harding offers a cautiously homosexual reading of Thoreau, noting that while the author seemed attracted to men in his written works, no evidence exists that Thoreau was ever in a physical relationship with men *or* women. While Harding’s account remains the most thorough, Michael Warner’s “Thoreau's Bottom” (*Raritan*, 11:3 [1992], 53-79) provides a queer reading of Thoreau in concert with his politically radical ideas and his Lacan-like exploration of sameness (equated with Thoreau’s proto-queer-theory) and the other.

(which, for the pun-happy Thoreau, could easily be a play on animals in heat), Thoreau goes on to tell us about entertaining an overly masculine woodchopper by reading to him from *The Iliad*—specifically, a scene between Achilles and Patroclus which begins with Achilles asking the younger man why he is in tears “like a young girl” (140). This gender-mixed sample exchange between two characters who are, as Henry Abelove pointed out, “often read as gay” (36) is certainly a curious passage. Thoreau, neglecting to print the strapping woodchopper’s name, may also seem suspect to a queer reading of *Walden*, yet this omission is in line with the anonymity of other unnamed individuals within the work. The notable exception is John Field, whose episode specifically feeds into Thoreau’s projected persona. However, these suspect instances—far from confirming Thoreau’s sexuality—provide a fascinating glimpse into his archetypal anima.

These three instances—particularly the extended passage regarding that rugged woodchopper—form compelling circumstantial evidence regarding the homosexuality of Thoreau. I maintain, however, in each instance Thoreau’s own anima was projecting femininity. Jung writes, “Possession caused by the anima presents a different picture. Above all, this transformation of personality gives prominence to those traits characteristic of the opposite sex “(*Four Archetypes* 67). Thoreau’s readiness to be a bloodsucker to social men enhances his earlier appreciation of how women and children are able to enjoy the world around them, whereas men simply worry about their solitude from the civilization of cities. His gregariousness is simply a magnified feminine sociability attempting to bring the civilization of his visitors to his own remote habitat. Similarly, his concern with the proximity of conversations has less to do with concern for

his guests' comfort (or his own relative comfort in the midst of "animal heat") and more to do, as Thoreau says, with having room for his "thoughts to get into sailing trim" (136). This aspect of his archetypal anima exhibits the aforementioned role of the nurturing teacher—an integral element of his persona that becomes psychologically sublimated into a maternal role. That Thoreau's transcendent philosophy is dependent on his feminine aspect is not surprising—in a Jungian framework of psychology, it is inevitable. Jung wrote "in order to establish an absolute or unconditioned connection to the world"—a phraseology that echoes Thoreau symbolically positioning himself as the connecting link between "wild and cultivated fields"—that connection can only occur "when I am both passive and active at the same time—this only occurs for a man through a woman" (*Analytical Psychology* 108). Thoreau accessing his own anima archetype throughout *Walden*, then, is another form of archetypal invention—he creates the paired opposite to his own masculinity (sensitivity and introspection), and embraces the femininity that Jung insists "links man to earth" by opposing feminine appearances within *Walden* with his radical ideas, symbolically tied to his own masculinity (*Analytical Psychology* 108). The first step, then, towards a sort of reconciliation with his feminine aspect is for the Emersonian stoic within Thoreau to embrace his emotions.

One of Jung's characteristic criteria for the anima-magnified masculine persona is that of being uncontrolled and emotional. In the passage of Thoreau overcompensating for his secluded life (note his abhorrence at being labeled a hermit), he changes from the man of chapter one who believed the residents of Concord were living "lives of quiet desperation" (6) to the man who is delighted to have a 30-person party in his 3-chair

house. He has unconsciously taken on both social and maternal aspects of his own anima; he is concerned with his own archetypal persona, which Jung insists has “a compensatory relationship with the anima” (*Two Essays On Analytical Psychology* 192). I will expand more upon Thoreau’s archetypal persona further in this work, but its relationship to his anima cannot be overstated. Thoreau finds himself caught between iconoclastic personalities, for the myth of his self-made solitary persona (the apex of Emersonian individuality) is at war with his urge to prove “I love society” (136), as he wishes not to be regarded as a hermit, but a gregarious teacher whose work can only be processed by “poor students.” This urge to teach others his own philosophy, whether they want to hear it or not (as Thoreau’s woodland neighbors would be able to attest), becomes sublimated into Thoreau exhibiting maternal aspects of his anima archetype. Even as he employs inversion worthy of Nietzsche’s master/slave morality to describe his home—its small size means that his visitors won’t feel like vermin, which is the invariable result of living in a oversized home—Thoreau is embodying the role that he earlier ascribed to a “good housewife,” responsible for “sweep[ing] out the greater part” of the American man’s reliance on luxurious housing “into the dust hole” (33). And an integral part to this maternal turn of Thoreau’s anima is his caretaking of the child-like intellect of the masculine, as he seeks to balance overt masculinity with the inevitably feminine aspect of intellectuality.

The Canadian woodchopper is, without a doubt, Thoreau’s concept of the masculine ideal. This woodchopper, in fact, would not be out of place within our own modern-day stereotype of masculinity: he is a voracious meat eater, relentless hunter, and

a skilled tradesman who, nonetheless, works only as much as he desires to. Despite these masculine tropes, Thoreau notes that in this woodchopper, the “intellectual and what is called spiritual man in him were slumbering as in an infant” (142-143). Though the incident with the woodchopper is brief, Thoreau takes it upon himself to try to rekindle the man’s spiritual development, picking up where the priest who initially taught the woodchopper how to read had left off. Again we see paired opposites, now in the context of Thoreau’s anima. He mediates between the higher laws of spirituality to which men aspire and the realm of worldly physicality by reading from a story in which everything miraculous and divine is intertwined with violence and death. Placing himself in the center of these paired opposites—as a caretaker of this man who has been kept a child, Thoreau actually becomes a Mary-like nurturer of the divinity he hopes to see the woodchopper develop. Jung notes that in some Christian traditions, Mary (who, as human mother to divine spirit, is the eternal anima) has been regarded as both the mother of Jesus and the cross upon which he was hung (*Four Archetypes* 16). In this dichotomy of maternity and persecution Thoreau’s anima plays both nurturer and torturer, as he both fosters alternative divinity—Thoreau writes of his attempt “to find a substitute within him for the priest without” (145)—yet is ultimately the crucifix upon which this animal man is hung. The woodchopper notes how attempting to write from his imagination “would kill him” (143-144), and as a writer Thoreau seems to do just that. After many attempts to make an intellectual man out of this rugged child, he ultimately leaves him for (intellectually) dead, making no further mention of this man. Thoreau declares the subject of his failed maternal experiment to be “a poor weak-headed pauper (147)” and moves on

to describing other visitors. Thus, while Thoreau's anima led him to a heightened sensitivity to nature, sociability, and an urge to nurture humanity into its own philosophical development, his persona (tied to masculinity) kept his feminine aspect—as well as those handsome paupers and choppers—at arm's length.

The Anima: Four Stages of Erotic Development

It is particularly illuminating to examine the seemingly-asexual Thoreau's erotic development in Jungian terms. Jung believed that the anima developed in man in four stages. The first stage is Eve, signifying creation, comfort, and dependence on a mother-like figure, yet can also represent helplessness and evil in women. The latter qualifications are symbolically linked through the biblical Eve to the origination of sin, a figure that may be both “nourishing” and “restricting” (Mattoon 96). The second stage is Helen, representing a kind of worldly sexuality (at the expense of virtue), named for the face that launched a thousand ships. The third stage is that of Mary, symbolic of Christ's mother and representing woman as a divine figure of salvation—a man's own inner Beatrice, lacking the worldly experience of Helen. The fourth and final stage is Sophia, in which woman is represented as a unified being, simultaneously worldly and virtuous and, subsequently, the most “real” of these conceptual women. The fourth stage was very symbolically significant to Jung, as he believed that a trinity—seen so often in religious (particularly Western) language as representing something incomplete—required a fourth aspect to be complete. Sophia, then—the completed anima—is to achieve independence over the restricted nature of Mary.

Accounting wholly for biographical details, his other written work, and the perception of Thoreau from those around him is outside the scope of this work. Rather, I limit my study to *Walden*, with some references to femininity in *A Week On the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* to help trace the erotic development of Thoreau as a writer.

In *Walden*, one instance of the initial Eve stage of erotic development in *Walden* is Thoreau's description of John Field's wife, who "was brave to cook so many successive dinners in the recesses of that lofty stove," and "with round greasy face and bare breast, still thinking to improve her condition one day; with the never absent mop in one hand, and yet no effects of it visible anywhere" (199). The faux flattery of this section exists merely as a precursor to Thoreau's rhetorical point: Mrs. Field labors for no apparent purpose or reason. Tied to Thoreau's larger point that the Fields live in squalor because they choose to follow social goals rather than the new philosophies of Thoreau, a darker view of Mrs. Field emerges. She is the Eve of a wasteland Eden, symbolically both an originator of the myth of America that brought the couple to those woods and a guardian of the place: Mrs. Field interrupts Thoreau's transcendental sales pitch and her husband's private musings to interject "'You'd better go now, John,'" (201) underscoring the undeniable need for her husband to go fishing, to pursue the "luxuries" that Thoreau insists they can certainly live without. In Jungian terms, "a social factor enters into the contrasexual definition" of anima, and "refers to the contrasocial, inferior personality" (Hillman 9). A recurring pattern of sociality/society's equation with evil emerges, though it falls heavily on both sides of progress. For Mr. And Mrs. Fields, a sort of socio-normality keeps them frozen between the two worlds of the wilderness and

the city. The symbols of domesticity associated with Mrs. Fields tied her further to the over-nurturing Eve figure. She restricted John Fields' development into a transcendent being by nurturing his love for the sedentary pleasures of the world. This further link between sociability and evil also helps us examine the apparent discrepancy between Thoreau's dim view of Mrs. Fields hunched over the oven, and his view of himself when he is forced to use an oven. It seems that technology itself is not inherently evil, but its use as a gateway to restrictive sociability further separates humanity from a natural mode of living.

While it is tempting to identify Thoreau's anti-sociality with his equation of sociability as an encompassing evil, Lance Newman's extensive research on Thoreau's time at Brook Farm yields something of a compromise on the matter:

He was repulsed by Brook Farm not because it was a community but because it was artificial. Intelligence with the earth, on the other hand, offered Thoreau an intuitive, an organic, means of connection with the laws of nature. Finally, by making that connection, Thoreau hoped to become the means of redeeming a spontaneous human community in Concord. (534)

Newman provides valuable guidance in dissecting the use of the anima in Thoreau's passages. It is important not to label society *qua* society as evil; rather, it is the type of society that disconnects an individual from the surrounding world. The scenario with the Fields reveals a situations in which there is no connection to nature. How, then, does such a lack of intimacy with nature interact with Thoreau's own anima?

The four stages of anima are, above all else, intended to be stages of erotic development. Like a microcosm of individuation towards self, a completed anima results in a male that is more receptive and open to emotion, spirituality, and the very sensitivity that causes Thoreau to link himself more to the women and children who visit than to the men. Thoreau's erotic development—the Jungian schema of an emotional evolution—dovetails nicely with Thoreau's conception of a universal karma in which “the laws of the universe are not indifferent, but are forever on the side of the most sensitive” (213). Harmonizing with the laws of the universe means heightening one's sensitivity to those same “laws of nature” Newman speaks of above—“redeeming a spontaneous human community” is a process that starts from within, as only an emotional and spiritual awareness can save Thoreau and the other residents of Concord from the creeping threat of social artificiality. Keeping such a goal a mind, it is illuminating to examine the second stage of Thoreau's anima development, the Helen stage.

An instance of the symbolic Helen in *Walden* can be found in Thoreau's account of “Madam Pfeiffer,” who “in her adventurous travels round the world...says that she felt the necessity of wearing other than a travelling dress,” and that “when she went to meet the authorities” she was relieved because she “was now in a civilized country, where ...people are judged of by their clothes.” Thoreau goes on to decry how “[e]ven in our democratic New England towns the accidental possession of wealth, and its manifestation in dress and equipage alone, obtain for the possessor almost universal respect.” He ends the exchange by ruminating that “clothes introduced sewing, a kind of work which you may call endless; a woman's dress, at least, is never done” (20). Madam

Pfeiffer is, in every sense, a more worldly woman than the often helpless, oftener nameless women in *Walden*. She is a real person, after all, and fits well into the Helen of Troy model as described by Mattoon: “*Helen* (of Troy) personifies the seductress....she may be manipulative, using her charm to other’s detriment” (96). Thoreau certainly evokes a sense of Pfeiffer’s individuality and charm, yet he does not imbue her with any kind of morality—quite the opposite. When Thoreau rhetorically asks “if my jacket and trousers, my hat and shoes, are fit to worship God in, they will do; will they not,” the need for extravagant clothes takes on a moral dimension. After all, ostentatious garments lack the Godliness of old clothes. New fashion is linked to youthful excess and even royal absurdity, as evidenced by passages such as “Every generation laughs at the old fashions, but follows religiously the new,” and “We are amused at beholding the costume of Henry VIII, or Queen Elizabeth, as much as if it was that of the King and Queen of the Cannibal Islands” (23). Though she is mentioned only at the beginning of this passage, Madam Pfeiffer remains on the periphery of Thoreau’s rhetoric for she is an emblem of Thoreau’s evolving view of women, as well as the evils of fashion, which keeps humanity from evolving, unlike a “snake casts [that] its slough, and the caterpillar its wormy coat” (21). Madame Pfeiffer, then, symbolizes Helen of Troy in that she represents an arrested human development, linked to her own independence. Pfeiffer’s travels around the world only serve to reinforce her ideas about the inherent necessity of modernized fashion, and her writings are diametrically opposed to Thoreau, who despite having only “travelled a good deal in Concord,” offers an alternative to her immoral trendsetting. Like Helen of Troy, Pfeiffer’s charm and her manipulation are intertwined;

she is not an evil person, but in using the enhanced visibility of both her travels and her publications, she enhances the charm of clothing's social dimension, adding an inevitably capitalist agenda to clothing that in Thoreau's view should be purely functional. That is, being civilized necessitates an external purchase, rather than an internal change. The over-nurturing aspect of the Eve stage of development is not present in this exchange. It is significant to Thoreau's developing view of women that the perspective has shifted from a woman whose helplessness was tied to her restrictiveness (Mrs. Field restricted spiritual growth by insisting on material prosperity) to an independent woman who does not, to Thoreau's view, so much restrict human development as she channels it to her own will. Pfeiffer's stipulation of what defines a civilized society ties her Helen-like role as seductress. She is not physically seductive (Thoreau's near-asexuality precludes an erotic physical description of women), yet her stipulative definition of civilization places her at the feminine center of such a definition, meaning that a submission to modern fashion becomes a submission to Madam Pfeiffer. The next stage of erotic development, then, must reintroduce virtue into Thoreau's anima equation.

The Mary stage of erotic development is symbolized by an anonymous old woman who Thoreau claims visits him often:

An elderly dame, too, dwells in my neighborhood, invisible to most persons, in whose odorous herb garden I love to stroll sometimes, gathering simples and listening to her fables; for she has a genius of unequalled fertility, and her memory runs back farther than mythology, and she can tell me the original of every fable, and on

what fact every one is founded, for the incidents occurred when she was young. A ruddy and lusty old dame, who delights in all weathers and seasons, and is likely to outlive all her children yet. (134).

It is tempting to read this figure as God, as another embodiment of feminized nature, or even as a sort of post-Edenic Eve, her identity as written ties her to the Mary stage of Jung's anima development. Her obvious femininity seems to bar her from being a direct metaphor for God, as she is prominently linked to fertility and maternity. Mattoon describes this vision of Mary as "the pure virgin, the spiritual mother," a vision of "integrity and independence," yet one who may be "remote, and demand high achievement at the expense of personal relationships" (Mattoon 96). The idea of spiritual maternity is enhanced by the notion of her children, whom she is likely to outlive. The very existence of children highlights the mysterious figure's maternity, but the identity of these children is left purposefully unknown, highlighting her remoteness and actually de-emphasizing the mother/children relationship. Thoreau, through his writing, has deliberately "rescued" this elderly dame from the confines of society; unlike Mrs. Fields and Madame Pfeiffer, this newest incarnation of woman in *Walden* is defined solely by her relationship to Thoreau himself. Also unlike Pfeiffer, she has managed to harmonize integrity with independence, whereas Pfeiffer's integrity (in Thoreau's moral framework) is compromised by her independence, and her linking of "civilized" society to fashion. Regarding the larger framework of Thoreau's individuation towards self, it is significant that this woman's "memory runs back farther than mythology." Thoreau's synthesis of Eastern and Western religion illustrates his search for an archetypal truth: a universal,

transcendental truth that pre-dates holy texts of any region. It also ties back to Newman's point regarding Thoreau's agenda: the mythic nature of this woman paints her, too, as a type of archetypal force, as Thoreau invites others to embrace a memory older than mythology. In doing so, human community will be spontaneously ignited within Concord outside of the restrictive bounds of religion. This is actually an important aspect of Thoreau's anima development. Whereas the Mary stage of erotic development is the most spiritual stage, Thoreau defines spirituality in terms of nature. It is no coincidence that the primary sensory connection to this figure is the natural scent of her "odorous herb garden," or that hearing her tales is associated with "gathering simples" from the earth. This figure is the antithesis of the nurture-overriding-nature-reliance on prosperity symbolized by the Eve stage, and the artificially stipulated civilization of the Helen stage. Thoreau has reached beyond those primitive stages towards a stage that, historically, has threatened to be the final stage of an incomplete anima development. Jung believed that many Westerners ceased their erotic development at this juncture because of the Mariolatry encouraged by Medieval Catholicism in order to direct erotic love in a healthier direction, transforming "the knightly cult of the lady" by combining the "sublime aspect" of feminine worship with the positive nature of Mary (Franz 187). In order to complete his erotic development, Thoreau must engage and embrace Sophia, the final anima stage.

Mattoon describes Sophia as "the figure of wisdom" (96), a kind of synthesis of the previous stages in that Sophia combines the worldliness of Helen and the spiritual virtue of Mary; her integrity is intact, and not at the expense of virtuousness. For

Thoreau, this final stage is embodied by Nature itself. In *Walden's* various descriptions of Nature as a feminine being, the synthesis of the previous anima stages is seen. Nature serves as the nurturing Eve, with Thoreau commenting that “the pill which will keep us well, serene, contented” comes from “our great-grandmother Nature's universal, vegetable, botanic medicines, by which she has kept herself young always, outlived so many old Parrs in her day, and fed her health with their decaying fatness” (135). Nature is at once a mystifying combination of youth and age, and offers a natural, organic alternative to modern medicine. Thoreau's comparison of this final anima projection to medicine is very appropriate, as it requires a complete “ingestion” of what he has learned at *Walden* to complete his original transcendent intent. Within its cyclical pattern, *Walden* concludes with a variety of “digestion” metaphors, after the medicine has run its course. The prescription, then, involves challenging the world with the bold claim “Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth” (321). Accepting this truth—fully accepting what Nature offers Thoreau—helps fulfill the anima's role in individuating the man. A Franz explains, “Only the painful (but essentially simple) decision to take one's fantasies and feelings seriously at this stage” can help one avoid “a complete stagnation of the inner process of individuation, because only in this way can a man discover what this figure means as an inner reality” (188). In this spirit, I contend that feminizing Nature was more than a rhetorical trick for Thoreau, but a way of contextualizing and processing the philosophical discoveries that he made throughout *Walden*. Nature provides a spiritual alternative to God, Christian or otherwise, as Thoreau ponders that when “Nature made [the woodchopper], she gave him a strong

body and contentment for his portion, and propped him on every side with reverence and reliance” (143). Yet Thoreau notes the lack of spirituality in the man, and the simplicity (and originality) of his thoughts, realizing that the man’s abundant pragmatism must be paired with a higher purpose. Wisdom comes from accepting nature *as* an answer, rather than assuming nature will provide answers; hence the woodchopper’s unique affinity for nature (being of nature himself), yet his inability to synthesize natural experiences into answers, both spiritual and philosophical, keeps him from growing as a human being. Further explicating his view of nature, Thoreau says

Nature puts no question and answers none which we mortals ask. She has long ago taken her resolution. “O Prince, our eyes contemplate with admiration and transmit to the soul the wonderful and varied spectacle of this universe. The night veils without doubt a part of this glorious creation; but day comes to reveal to us this great work, which extends from earth even into the plains of the ether.’

(275)

This aloofness from humanity imbues the final stage of Thoreau’s anima with an earthly divinity, combining the archetypal earth mother of the Eve stage with the spirituality of Mary, all while retaining the worldliness emblematic of Helen. Extending beyond the divinity, however, is Thoreau’s rhetoric in humanizing Nature, making her simultaneously a spectator to the wonders of the world, even as she is also the spectacle itself. It is not insignificant that Thoreau, in particular, completes his erotic development by personifying nature, rather than identifying elemental qualities in a woman or women,

as fits a “normal” erotic development. However, the ultimate goal of the anima development is to form an understanding of life, and to build towards an individuation of self. In psychoanalytic terms, it is assumed that a successful erotic development is a necessary step in navigating the heteronormality of modern culture. For Thoreau, the eternal bachelor, heteronorm-ality was apparently a non-issue, and navigating culture meant establishing a connection to nature. As Ann and Barry Ulanov detail in their extensively-researched *The Archetypal World of Anima and Animus*, “an anima carries a man’s orientation to life; she personifies his animating connection to being. If he establishes a good relationship with her, he can perceive the way he is positioned toward life itself” (40). This perception of one’s position in life aligns itself with Thoreau’s purpose for his stay at Walden Pond, and goes towards explaining the continued feminizing of Nature as Thoreau’s way of achieving this self-perception. It complements the answers provided by Lance Newman, who claimed that life at Brook Farm “relied on work that, if pursued for more than symbolic value, required capitulation to the low rationalism of the market. Thoreau solved this problem by rethinking the question of where and how to make contact with nature” (532). In his rhetoric, Thoreau quite literally humanizes nature in order to make his own contact with her, and in his writing he encourages others to complete their own erotic development on proto-Jungian terms. His individuation towards self, however, is incomplete unless he is also able to overcome his external persona.

The Man, the Mask: Thoreau's Persona

Thoreau's archetypal persona is linked to his relentless self-mythologizing, and the persona's relationship with the collective consciousness of Concord. According to Jung, "the persona is never the true character; it is a composite of the individual's behavior and of the role attributed to him by the public" (*Symbolic Life* 579). He goes on to note that a man's history is "often a record of his own projected persona, and very little individual truth" (579). Thoreau engages in a projected persona of his idealized individual from the very first sentence of the very first chapter, telling his readers that he lived at Walden "in a house which I had built myself" (1). History records Thoreau as having lived on land loaned to him by Emerson—a far cry from his cloak of utter independence. Thoreau insists on projecting these tropes of Emersonian self-reliance throughout *Walden*, a clever move that sets him up as a worthy teacher for the cadre of poor students for whom the book is written. From a Jungian perspective, it is notable that the persona is, ultimately, the biggest hurdle for Thoreau's individuation and discovery of self. As Jung bluntly puts it, "the persona must be extinguished or, in other words, restored to the unconscious. From this arises individuality" (*Symbolic Life* 453). Thoreau's self-made myth waxes and wanes throughout his narrative. Early in the narrative, Thoreau admits that the pseudo-autobiographical nature of his work is due to being confined to this theme by "the narrowness of my experience," because ultimately there is "nobody whom [he] knew as well" (1). This humility—the admission that his

knowledge of himself dwarfs his knowledge of others, and that even his self-knowledge is incomplete—contrasts with nearly every personal interaction that Thoreau writes about. Compared to this statement, the incident with the Field family is particularly illuminating.

Thoreau looks upon John Field's wife with condescension, noting that she too was "brave to cook so many successive dinners in the recesses of that lofty stove; with round greasy face and bare breast, that she sadly clung to the hope that she might improve her condition one day" (199). Thoreau looks down on her for her reliance on the stove—an artificial artifact in the woodland world of *Walden*. However, after being forced to use a stove himself later on, Thoreau offers a second-hand admission of its utility, noting that a half-frozen visitor to his home was warmed by Thoreau's artificial fire, and the visitor "acknowledged that there was some virtue in a stove" (287). Even in acknowledging the use of a stove, Thoreau is unwilling to sacrifice his persona as a man of nature, allowing a begrudging admission of the stove by this hired man whom Thoreau describes as being made less human by the cold—the implication being, of course, that Thoreau himself is above such pettiness as the freezing winter, as he is not obsessed with "animal heat" like others. Thoreau's second notation about Mrs. Field—that she hoped to improve her condition, even as she wielded a seemingly never used mop—is another aspect of mythologizing; Thoreau himself ostensibly moved to Walden Pond as a means of self-improvement, yet he mentally condemns this family to destitution after they fail to accept his transcendental philosophy. The mop is a metaphor for Thoreau's ideas, a means by which the Fields could improve their lives, if only the ideas would be used.

The message is clear: self-improvement on its own terms is useless, and only Thoreau's methods may lead to transcendence. This is seen in John Field's admission to Thoreau, that he clung to the belief that "in coming to America...you could get tea, and coffee, and meat every day." Thoreau cautions, however, that "the only true America is that country where you are at liberty to pursue such a mode of life as may enable you to do without these" (200). This view of the American myth is the pendulum on which most of Thoreau's points swing: he rejects the capitalistic view of America in favor of transcending the riches the country offers. In Jungian terms Thoreau sees America as needing to be one extreme or another, only realizing at the end that the individuated truth of the country lies in the opposition of the Fields' abundant America to his own "only true America."

Thoreau does not encourage anarchism, though his radicalism has been occasionally mistaken for anarchism by academics.⁶ However, Thoreau himself contradicts this claim, as he ponders Mirabeau's justification for highway robbery. He writes that Mirabeau sought "'to ascertain what degree of resolution was necessary in order to place one's self in formal opposition to the most sacred laws of society" (313). Thoreau posits that "[a] saner man would have found himself often enough 'in formal opposition' to what are deemed 'the most sacred laws of society,' through obedience to *yet more sacred laws*, and so have tested his resolution without going out of his way" (314, emphasis mine). Thoreau anticipates Jung's own theories, in alluding to a cause/effect paradigm: transcendence is predicated on the opposition between the

⁶ Buranelli 264. Buranelli believed that "Thoreau's commitment to personal revelation made him an anarchist" (264).

sacraments of society and one's own self-discovered sacred laws. It is only in this opposition that Thoreau's "true America" is found, as people are forced to individuate themselves in order to find their own more sacred laws. After all, if Thoreau had completed his own transcendental journey as soon as he began following his new laws, the experimental stay at Concord would have been completely unnecessary. The Fields are, in Thoreau's eyes, at fault for refusing obedience to Thoreau's more sacred laws in favor of "the most sacred laws of society." However, Thoreau projects his own archetypal shadow on the Fields in an attempt to magnify his own persona.

Thoreau concludes his episode with John Field's family by commenting that John is "born to be poor, with his inherited Irish poverty or poor life, his Adams grandmother and boggy ways, not to rise in this world, he nor his posterity, till their wading webbed bog-trotting feet get talaria to their heels" (204). While Thoreau scholars like William Gleason maintain that Field is just another example of Thoreau barring "the Irish from the new ideology" that "Thoreau was attempting to formulate" (697), I contend that they simply remind Thoreau too much of himself: they, too, live in the forest and live off of the land. They, too, have moved from their home to begin a new life; indeed, there seems to be a cognitive dissonance between the dismissal of the poor Fields and Thoreau embracing the "poor students" to whom he addresses *Walden*. Thoreau's Jungian reaction, then, is to use his writing to project negativity and inevitable failure onto their lives. It is an aspect of the shadow archetype, in which a person recognizes their own flaws in others and berates them for it. Why, then, does Thoreau bother "to purposely [talk] to [John] as if he were a philosopher, or desired to be one" (200)? Much like the

incident with the Canadian woodchopper, Thoreau's effort to ostensibly improve another becomes merely an intellectual game that allows Thoreau to magnify his self-mythology in the eyes of his few neighbors.

The pattern is relentless. Thoreau receives visitors whom he claims are half-witted and then immediately proceeds to prompt them to "exercise all the wit they had" (146). Of one particular simple-minded pauper, Thoreau is pleased that the man declares his own ignorance before Thoreau, and Thoreau believes that the pauper prostrating himself before a wise man, the pauper might find intellectual salvation: "in proportion as he appeared to humble himself was he exalted" (147). It quickly becomes clear that for Thoreau, ultimate value lies not in leading this man to a better-educated future, but in the pauper's expressed a wish "to live as [Thoreau] did" (147). Although the persona is dangerous, Jung himself pointed out the inherent value of persona: "no one can imagine getting along without a persona—that is, a relationship to the outside world" (*Analytical Psychology* 51). The problem Thoreau encountered with his archetypal persona was expounded upon by Jung in that same lecture: "When one identifies with the persona, its valuable side disappears in its abuse" (51). In other words, the danger begins for Thoreau from the moment that he begins to believe his own projected persona and flawless philosophy. The logical question, then, asks whether Thoreau was truly attempting to achieve a proto-Jungian individuated state. Overcoming all other archetypal modes, resolving his dichotomous paired opposites, and finding his self—does Thoreau ever overcome his persona?

I contend that by the work's conclusion, Thoreau has finally overcome the personaa with which he has previously projected on the world. In typical fashion, he does not explicitly recant his prior view of himself. Rather, he addresses the reader directly, writing that even if we “may have known [our] neighbor yesterday for a thief, a drunkard, or a sensualist, and merely pitied or despised him,” in the nature-renewed glory of the Spring “all his faults are forgotten” (306). Thoreau proceeds to rhetorically ask why the jailer, judge, and preacher do not forgo their duties in accordance with God's hints. Of course, Thoreau has played each of those roles during his tenure at Walden. He has fashioned himself as a preacher of his transcendental philosophy to any who would listen, yet at the same time he plays judge to intellectually poor people, such as the hopeful Canadian woodchopper and the benighted Field family. Thoreau concludes every written interlude with his would-be pupils with condescension and condemnation. Their failure to grasp his new philosophy is their failure to ever succeed, period. Ultimately, Thoreau becomes a kind of jailer as well in his transformation of bourgeois tropes into symbolic prisons. Specifically, Thoreau deliberately inverts the typical American concept of a house, speaking repeatedly of the misfortune of those who have “inherited farms, houses [and] barns” (3). This denigration of property-owners is one of Thoreau's rhetorical traps—he is turning domesticity into a prison in and of itself. As to those who own large houses, Thoreau believes their largeness transforms the inhabitants into mere vermin who infest the house. He goes so far as to label luxurious houses as merely a larger and more luxurious box (26). Thoreau the jailer, indeed! However, in the proto-Jungian spirit of paired opposites, his belief that the world can be collectively

awakened to transcendental ideals leads Thoreau to shrug off each role. The poetically cryptic line “only that day dawns to which we are awake” (324) implies not only Thoreau’s forgiveness for those who have not accepted his new philosophy, but offers a ray of transcendental hope for Thoreau himself. Despite his (likely ironic) sentiment at the beginning of *Walden*—that he has left the wilderness and returned “to civilized life again” (1)—the idea that the world must be awakened before it can experience the dawning of a new day implies a duty. Thoreau himself must continue to help others see the metaphorical light. But is this enough to ensure he has overcome his persona?

By the conclusion of *Walden*’s “Spring” chapter, Thoreau’s persona seems to have finally been sublimated into himself. The work’s iconoclastic and solitary mode suddenly sees Thoreau including himself in the surrounding world. He speaks of *our* “village life,” and mentions how *we* “need the tonic...of wildness” (308). Most notable, however, is his quiet mention that “we need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we never wander” (309). It is upon this line that Thoreau finds himself finally free of his self-made myth: not only has he learned to count himself among those fellows living in “quiet desperation (6),” but recognizes the necessity of the John Fields of the world—those who transgress upon Thoreau’s own philosophical limits, and pasture in those small shanties and large prisons which Thoreau’s beliefs keep him from inhabiting. Thoreau has accepted that his inability to inhabit these lives does not dismiss the validity of the lifestyle. His journey to an individuated selfhood is not complete—having overcome the outward projection of civilization and philosophy that he consciously offers the world, Thoreau must integrate

his own inner demon: the elusive shadow archetype, the unconscious element of evil and chaos inherent in all men that defies their holiness even as it defines their humanity.

Spiritual Savagery: Repression and the Shadow

Of all of the Jungian archetypes Thoreau anticipates in his writing, none seems more frustrating—or fascinating—than the shadow. At the outset of my examination of Thoreau’s struggle with the shadow, his words from *A Week* seem particularly appropriate: “There are other, savager, and more primeval aspects of nature than our poets have sung. It is only white man’s poetry” (56). Thematically, much of *Walden* is spent dismissing the symbolic “white man’s poetry” of the modern world. Whether it is the “civilized” world’s reliance on heavy clothing and rich food, or the conceit that money is necessary for success in America. Thoreau emphasizes the need for the reconciliation of the white man’s poetry with his inner darkness, without which transcendence is an impossible enterprise. For Jung, the shadow was the twisted mirror of the psyche—the aspect of ourselves that we encounter, often in dreams, which represents everything we abhor: the shadow’s behavior may be illegal, violent, traitorous and even murderous. We deal with the shadow in four different ways: denial, projection, and ultimately either integration or transmutation. None of these archetypal activities are occur in a vacuum. Thoreau, for example, is struggling with his anima even as he integrates his shadow, and the projection of the shadow is integral to understanding Thoreau’s persona. Obviously, he cannot have fully shed his outward mask of self-mythology while he is still projecting his own fears on his neighbors in order to foster that same myth. As with my anima analysis, an examination of Thoreau’s self-described

dark side in concert with Jungian psychoanalysis will allow us to recontextualize well-known chapters into a new understanding of *Walden*: specifically, to illustrate the similarities between Thoreau's transcendentalism and Jung's sense of individuation by the reconciliation of paired opposites—to synthesize the masculine and the feminine, the savage and the spiritual, into a whole being.

Thoreau, as befitting the journey motif of *Walden*, goes through the full sequence of reactions to the shadow archetype in his attempt to overcome his own shadow; this psychological journey, however, is far from linear. Ironically, it is in the shadow of the evil archetype that a Jungian conception of divinity is easiest to attain. Jung writes of man's entire notion of binaries in the natural world as part of his unconscious self:

How else could it have occurred to man to divide the cosmos on the analogy of day and night, summer and winter, into a bright day-world and a dark night-world peopled with fabulous monsters, unless he had the prototype of such a division in himself, in the polarity between the conscious and the invisible and unknowable unconscious? (*Four Archetypes* 38)

In *Walden*, Thoreau engages in this day-world and night-world dichotomy. He criticizes the neighbors around him because, among other things, “I could never see that these men slew or captured any monster or finished any labor” (2). Thoreau here juxtaposes the binary oppositions of the mundane and the mythical, as he puns the word labor—his neighbors are failures at both Herculean feats as well as the labor of “creeping down the road of life” (3). Eventually, Thoreau shifts gears, and rather than concern himself with

man versus monster, he takes on the theme of man as a monster. John Field's inability to escape the capitalist tropes of America caused Thoreau to describe him as having "webbed bog-trotting feet" (204), dehumanizing the poor farmer and turning him into one of Jung's fabulous monster in contrast to Thoreau's cultured self. He even characterizes traditional forms of education as inviting monsters, declaring that a young boy attempting to learn about the world should not be "devoured by the monsters that swarm all around him, while contemplating the monsters in a drop of vinegar" (48). In these examples, we see Thoreau both deny his own shadow (elevating himself in comparison to the bevy of failed Herculean specimens around him) and projecting his own monstrous visions onto the external world. Nietzsche's abyss stares back and is projected by Thoreau onto everyone but himself.

Thoreau certainly shows aspects of shadow projection early on in the text, pitying the uneducated lot around him for their simple lives. Thoreau's outward shadow is, in many ways, the men of Concord. He demeans the poor who do not immediately subscribe to his philosophy, but takes particularly nasty shots at the rich and educated, making frequent comparisons to primitive cultures and delighting to inform the reader that the educated, modern man is inferior to, for instance, a primitive aborigine. However, Thoreau is very much a part of that world he demeans; he is a Harvard-educated and cultured man. The celebrated comfort of Walden—the low cost of living—was subsidized by not having to pay for his lodging. In this respect his shadow projection is tied into his idea of persona—the cloak of his self-made myth allows him to consciously separate himself from his upbringing and peers, even as his unconsciousness

struggles with not truly being the magnified myth he presents to the world. By the final chapter, Thoreau is willing to accept humility and grace, his examination of an insect reminding him “of the greater Benefactor and Intelligence that stands over me the human insect” (323). While the concluding humility is a touchstone of his final individuation, earlier chapters present Thoreau as all-too-eager to project weakness, fear, and turgid spirituality on other residents of Walden Pond. Jung was one of the first psychological theorists to propose the idea that the qualities we most despise in a person or persons are, in fact, the qualities we perceive or fear within ourselves. Thoreau denigrates the souls of Concord, rich and poor, as a way of denying the shadow of his self that he sees in the assorted paupers, woodchoppers, and other half-witted visitors. He also denigrates the world around him for relying on what “they [have] heard of other men’s lives” (1) rather than personal experience. This is a subtle form of projection, as he rejects the ethos of both the uneducated Concord masses and his fellow Harvard alumni who, as educated men must rely on what they have heard of other men’s lives (the Harvard of the time notoriously teaching through repetition of information)—and Thoreau himself completes this ironic circle by asserting that his book may be best received by poor students. In short: the oft-elitist Thoreau nonetheless projects his negativity on both poor and wealthy, educated and uneducated. To transcend on his own terms, Thoreau must find an inner success that is beyond the external, worldly definition of success. To self-actualize in Jungian terms, he must find peace with the projected negativity of his shadow.

Thoreau’s advocacy of his work to students foreshadows the role of teacher (or perhaps “sage”) that Thoreau assumes for the rest of the work. He certainly hopes that

his student readers, who have rejected everything they've heard from others' lives, will listen in rapt attention to this story of his own life. For Thoreau, this is a dual denial/projection of his own shadow, as he seems unaware of the irony in denying the experience of other men while telling his readers to rely on his own writing. He seems equally unaware of irony as he explains his book's unique use of the word "I" is due to the book being mostly about himself. Most readers would agree, I think, that both the scope and intent of *Walden* went far beyond Thoreau's own experience; the homily-filled final chapter is proof, in and of itself, that he intended his book to transform his readers—and that they should trust another man's experience. This self-experiential ethos on Thoreau's part is later echoed by Jung, who insisted that "it is a field of personal experience which leads directly to the experience of individuation, the attainment of self" (*Four Archetypes* 45).

A large part of Thoreau's shadow projection is the transvaluation he espouses of what it means to be civilized or savage. The recurring theme of the chapter "Economy" is a revaluation of what it means to be civilized. Thoreau employs rhetorical tricks that enact Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* belief in the idea of transvaluation—specifically, that the concept of goodness was actually co-opted by the weak masses, who proceeded to label the strong, authoritarian figures around them as evil. Thoreau's own transvaluation seeks to redefine a seemingly binary opposition—not good and evil, but civilized and savage, though some critics feel that Thoreau's endeavor amounted to very

little, save for exaggeration.⁷ In examining Thoreau as an agent of change, however, we see that his exaggerations are a way of textually creating Jungian paired opposites: the city's flaws are magnified so the savage life can be elevated. Thoreau's discriminating readers—his "poor students"—will, by necessity, find the balance between these two extremes in the pursuit of their own balanced self. Thoreau, of course, is the prototype of this method. Fanuzzi points out that "Walden Pond is in this sense a socially symbolic form created by the same manifest contradictions that organized antebellum society" (13). In placing himself squarely in the middle of the two sets of paired opposites—city life and natural life, the civilized man and the savage man, Thoreau actually forms a symbolic mandala, Jung's ultimate symbol for the attainment of self.

The mandala (see Figure 1A) is a subject to which I will return; however, I feel it important to note the symbology of Jung's "magic circle" surrounded by "four gates" around a center containing "the symbol of divine imagery" (*The Symbolic Life* 178) in reference to Thoreau's philosophy: in reading *Walden* as narration of a psychological process, we see Thoreau entering the "magic circle" of Walden Pond itself, becoming the balanced center of this nature-centric spiritual life only after passing through each of the four metaphorical gates—abandoning city life, rediscovering the natural life of his boyhood, forgoing civilization and redefining what it means to be savage—only after all

⁷ Fanuzzi 22. For Robert Fanuzzi, Thoreau's resolution is more or less a kind of rhetorical cheat—that Thoreau's frequent evocations of failed city life were not grounded in reality but in a literary "imaginary city," which was employed by Thoreau in the development of an "urban imagination". I agree with Fanuzzi, but only to a point—yes, the city is imaginary; it is a conceit just as necessary to understanding Thoreau's mind as the conceit of Thoreau having no help whatsoever in living at Walden Pond. These conceits, however, form the imaginary foundation with which Thoreau insists we build our new lives.

of this, can Thoreau attain a sense of transcendental self. In this sense, Walden Pond becomes a psychological construct made manifest: it is the center of its own mandala, and also Thoreau's psychic touchstone to the natural, transcended life he hopes to lead.

Part of the hurdle of redefining the "savage" is inventing the language to create his own definition—picking up where Rousseau left off, so to speak, in the same manner he attempted to pick up where the Canadian woodchopper's priest left off. In seeking to clarify what he meant by necessary to life, Thoreau precedes Darwin in asking how so many savages survived with little or no clothes in the Winter, while Europeans would freeze to death without bundles of clothing. With this in mind, Thoreau begins his subtle transmutation/ transvaluation of his shadow archetype, casting the traditional concept of a civilized man (which Thoreau was typical—even stereotypical—of) as cold and helpless, wasting both time and money in an effort "not to live comfortably warm, but unnaturally hot" (12). The savage man, by contrast, is able to live like a rich man: "in the savage state every family owns a shelter as good as the best, and sufficient for its coarser and simpler wants" (27). Thoreau projects everything negative about himself onto the label civilized, transmuting the term into a pejorative and essentially reinventing Rousseau's noble savage first discussed in *Emile*.

Thoreau seems to take Rousseau's stance when he declares that "in making the life of a civilized people an institution, in which the life of the individual is to a great extent absorbed, in order to preserve and perfect that of the race," and he goes on to describe, in detail, "what a sacrifice this advantage is at present obtained" (29). On the surface, Thoreau acknowledges that in the transition between savagery and civilization,

something vital has been lost. As Thoreau scholar Ryan Hanley points out in “Thoreau Among His Heroes,” however, Thoreau’s emphasis of civilization—both in the sense of being civilized, as well as finding one’s place in a community—“rendered both Homer’s pre-modern Achilles and Rousseau’s noble savage unfit models for the sort of human excellence he sought” (60). Once again, Thoreau is seeking to redefine success in his own terms, something truly embodied by neither a cultured warrior nor an uncorrupted savage. Thoreau’s interest, then, is redefining what goes into a successful civilization; he wonders whether “it is impossible to combine the hardiness of these savages with the intellectualness of the civilized man” (11). We can see in these words the unconscious urge to balance the Jungian paired opposites of the “civilized” and the “savage,” a crucial step in attaining the archetypal self. As William Gleason points out, “Thoreau’s ostensibly private retreat involved him in a series of very public debates over the cultivation of not only the individual self, but the ‘self’ of the nation” (674). Of course, as befits *Walden*’s motif of an inward journey, Thoreau must cease projecting his own shadow archetype on the world around him in order to balance himself—the case-by-case individuation that is essentially the only way to free the state from its dichotomous views.

It is readily apparent for the first half of *Walden* that Thoreau is unable to confront—or even find—a dark shadow side of his self. The negativity with which he regards well-educated men with large houses is a downright palpable projection of his own negativity onto the inhabitants of Concord. It feeds into the elitism that Thoreau has (rightly) been accused of: his iconoclastic sojourn results in a judgment of the rich and elite as losing their humanity in the material world while at the same time, the poor,

however, are condemned because they seek to emulate the rich—if the poor could only live *like* poor people, then they would be better off. In rejecting both economic spectrums of man—rich and poor, cultured and uncultured, Thoreau upsets the Jungian balance of the paired opposites—an upset that is not addressed and rebalanced until the chapter “Higher Laws.”

The primary confrontation in Thoreau’s “Higher Laws” occurs as he recounts the sudden, inexplicable urge to devour a live woodchuck; he was not hungry for the animal in and of itself, but he was hungry “for that wildness which he represented” (205). Thoreau suddenly finds his consciousness torn into proto-Jungian paired opposites, as the devoutly spiritual man which he has so fervently sought to become faces down his shadow. The repressed urges have taken on an instinctual, wild life of their own; as Thoreau puts it, “I found in myself, and still find, an instinct toward a higher, or, as it is named, spiritual life, as do most men, and another toward a primitive rank and savage one, and I reverence them both.” He makes the surprising conclusion “I love the wild not less than the good” (205).

Hanley points out the brilliance of this curious chapter:

The genius of "Higher Laws" is that the higher law of which Thoreau here speaks is not a transcendent or divine law, but, in the truest sense of the word, a *natural* law—a law which emerges from the nature of our being, and which we need look no further than within to find. (59)

In this sense, Thoreau is beginning to face the transmutation of his shadow by redefining the spiritual life he feels called to—as well as the savage life that tempts him. He

continues to separate divinity. Just as he hoped the savage/divine dichotomy of *The Iliad* would free the woodchopper from the intellectual prison of the priest, he begins to view this ravenous side of himself as the balance to his own spirituality. In this context, we see Thoreau integrating into his own shadow, embracing the wisdom of what he derisively wrote earlier in the work that “man thus not only works for the animal within him, but, for a symbol of this, he works for the animal without him” (54). Compare this early disdain to his declaration in “Higher Laws” that he enjoys living life “more as the animals do” (205). This dynamic character of Thoreau’s attitude towards his own philosophy is tied to my interpretation of his work as a proto-Jungian process of individuation; his writing style does not favor traditional conceptions of an autobiography. Rather than espousing the sum total of what he has learned during his time at *Walden*, Thoreau writes in a revelatory mode that makes it so fascinating to study from a Jungian perspective. He admits, for instance, in “Higher Laws,” that “I hesitate to say these things, but it is not because of the subject—I care not how obscene my words are—but because I cannot speak of them without betraying my impurity” (216).”

It is, then, no surprise that Thoreau does not fully confront this savage, animal shadow until the eleventh chapter of *Walden*. In saying these things, in writing out his own thoughts as a process for transcendent individuation, he begins to discover his own impurity. Why is there no mention of this love for his archetypal shadow until this chapter? Because Thoreau did not realize it existed—or at the very least, he was unable to place it within the context of spirituality until he began writing. He betrays his own impurity to himself, and is forced to ask himself if such wild urges compromised his own

spirituality—the divinity he sought so hard to attain in the seclusion of *Walden*.

Thoreau's answer, after meditating on the irony that hunting is the best way to teach boys to respect nature and its animals, is to define divinity on his own terms: "Every man is the builder of a temple, called his body, to the god he worships, after a style purely his own" (216). This neatly reconciles the savage and the sublime; nature has become god to Thoreau, yet he feels his earlier years as a hunter are what led him to his current spiritual and intellectual development. His body is a temple to nature—whether he eats beans and potatoes or woodchuck and venison. Rather than his earlier convictions that eating meat and fish was unclean, physically and spiritually, Thoreau has come to the revelation that it is "not that food which entereth into the mouth defileth a man, but the appetite with which it is eaten" (213). His archetypal shadow, then, is something that he can never simply sublimate into his spirituality; his development as a righteous being is not, as in Christian teachings, a linear journey from sinfulness into saintliness, as Thoreau writes, "there is never an instant's truce between virtue and vice" (213).

This love of wildness, sensuality and animal nature within man may seem irreconcilable with Thoreau's thoughts in that same chapter—that "He is blessed who is assured that the animal is dying out in him day by day, and the divine being established" (214). If virtue remains married to vice, if one's animal nature is an inextricable aspect of living, then why is the man whose animal nature is dying blessed? While Rick Furtak believes that blessedness was a matter of Thoreau possessing "a discriminating moral comportment that enables [him] to admit passion without becoming debased" (125), I believe that the answer lies in Thoreau's assertion that men worship their own god in

their own way; the establishment of divinity within a person does not have to follow external rules and strictures. For who, then, would assure this man that his animal aspect is dying? Thoreau's bold declaration of self-religion, i.e. "individualism"—similar to the sentiments that made Thomas Paine a pariah earlier in the century—frees man to bless himself. In doing so, Thoreau has achieved what Jung saw as one of the chief difficulties of integrating an archetypal shadow into a moral framework:

Its integration makes the highest demands on an individual's morality, for the 'acceptance of evil' means nothing less than that his whole moral existence is put into question. Decisions of the most momentous kind are called for." (*The Symbolic Life* 619)

By redefining spirituality on his own terms, Thoreau has managed to accept this "evil" aspect of himself—even to revere it. It is important to note the proto-Jungian framework within which Thoreau worked to arrive at this conclusion: by inverting the Christian trope of one's body being a temple—a maxim often used to enforce rules regarding all things sensual in the world, Thoreau frees himself from traditional Christian morality without allowing his shadow self to consume him entirely. His body remains a temple—Thoreau does not use the revelations of this chapter to allow him to suddenly eat or drink unclean things, or to stop preaching his transcendentalist philosophy. Rather, he realizes there is a difference between his idealized wildness and the Judeo-Christian conception of unnatural wildness. Furtak explains, "Wildness involves a close acquaintance with *what is*; it does not imply recklessness or bestiality" (125). Thoreau realizes that there is

something within him—something irrevocably internal, dependent on no outside deity or religious structure—that is able to purify his life.

The chapter concludes with Thoreau suddenly switching to a third-person account of John Farmer, who has returned home from work and is taking a break from his “mean, moiling life” in order to recreate “his intellectual man” (216). In many ways, John Farmer is emblematic of traditional religion; after all, trying to recreate intellectuality based on the thoughts and expectations of others is as far from a sense of self-divinity as possible. Farmer assumes that the source of this spiritual intellectuality is something far removed from himself—something he can only recreate with great care and concentration. Into his introspection, however, comes the liberating sound of a flute that “harmonizes” with his thoughts. Together, flute and thought “gently did away with the street, and the village, and the state in which he lived” (217). The flute is a subtly-evocative symbol of John’s movement from Christian-centric mode of processing information to the pantheistic mode of the Greek mythology. Because Thoreau has never previously shifted his narrative setting before launching into this third-person account, we can only assume John Farmer is a rare neighbor. The haunting flute melody drifting in from the forest brings to mind the sensual potency of Pan, and it is only in this framework—away from the external world of neighbors, away from his house—that John is able to hear the voice from on high. But rather than confer purity, the voice asks John why he chooses to let himself be tied down to things of this world when “a glorious existence awaits you” (217). John’s ultimate solution for escaping permanent spiritual attachment to the world—the same solution Thoreau employs to resolve the archetypal

quandary of his shadow self—is to “let his mind descend into his body and redeem it, and treat himself with ever increasing respect” (217). For Thoreau, the spiritual mind can always redeem the animal body—but such a redemption is an ongoing process. He may just eat that woodchuck tomorrow, but he can always make himself pure; and indeed, the entire concept of transcendence is predicated on man’s animal nature: every animal action offers a chance of becoming pure again, creating an eternal continuum of transcendence rather than the typical Christian plateau of penitence. In Jungian terms, the shadow is a requisite for the illumination of the self, and remains an integral aspect of the paired opposites that lead to Self, just as transcendence is the center of a pure mind, cleansing a corrupted body.

Transcendentalism Achieved: The Self, and Individuation

Jung defined the self as an archetype that “represents a numinous wholeness,” that it “reaches beyond the individual in time and space, and is therefore not subjected to the corruptibility of *one* body. The realization of the self is nearly always connected with the feeling of timelessness, ‘eternity,’ or immortality” (*The Symbolic Life* 694). We see this explicated by Thoreau in “Spring,” as he relates looking upon nature as a redemptive act that overcomes death itself:

Ah! I have penetrated to those meadows on the morning of many a first spring day, jumping from hummock to hummock, from willow root to willow root, when the wild river valley and the woods were bathed in so pure and bright a light as would have waked the dead, if they had been slumbering in their graves, as some suppose. There

needs no stronger proof of immortality. All things must live in such a light. O Death, where was thy sting? O Grave, where was thy victory, then? (308).

Thoreau's quintessential dilemma in embracing the wholeness of the self-archetype lies in trusting his own purity. Furtak observes, "due to his painful sense of how easily human nature can be corrupted, his willingness to admit the possibility of self-trust is always guarded" (126). He also points out that Thoreau's own keen awareness of human fallibility provides a tentative point of discourse from which Thoreau transcends human fallibility to embrace nature's divinity. Thoreau becomes one with nature, and associates the power of the first Spring day as the strongest possible proof for immortality.

The victory of nature over death anticipates Jung on the self. Thoreau asserts that the beauty he sees will resurrect the dead from their slumber so they may exist alongside the living in deathless, painless immortality; this resurrecting power reaches beyond time and space: beyond Thoreau's simple cabin within the woods, beyond the forest, beyond Concord. *All* things must live in the generative light of nature. Nature, too, becomes eternal in its growth and vitality. As Furtak points out, Thoreau wished to show us that "the image of pastoral placidity that we tend to sketch from afar is incomplete; nature may be steadfast, but it is also characterized by a fervid vitality" (125). In seeking to transform ancient clichés about pastoral life into a vivid opera of vitality, Thoreau seems to have finally achieved the spontaneous human change that defines his transcendence. It has been achieved through the balance of Jung's opposing archetypes—the spiritual has been reconciled to the terrestrial (the purity of nature's light

possesses the power and imagery of Christ resurrecting the dead), death has been reconciled with life (death still exists, but holds no “sting” in life itself), and the human with the divine (notice that “no greater proof of immortality” is followed immediately by the command “all must live,” linking the light of divinity with the shopworn souls of humanity). Anticipating the designs later embraced by Jung, Thoreau has not removed any of these concepts in favor of another—the divinity of nature does not keep Thoreau from asserting soon afterward that sailors circumnavigating the world are missing the simple treasures that Thoreau’s solitude brings. He writes, “I have more of God, they more of the road” (313). Much like Jung’s final stage of erotic development, the spiritual has been reconciled to the world. Thoreau can only transcend that which he has reconciled with, synthesizing ancient experiences into new wisdom.

Thoreau’s association nature with resurrection is in accord with later Jungian thoughts on the self as it relates to both resurrection and Christ. Jung writes, “the story of the Resurrection represents the projection an indirect realization of the self that had appeared in the figure of a certain man, Jesus of Nazareth” (*The Symbolic Life* 694). This projection of self and resurrection onto Jesus, as Jung asserts in the same work, is a “desperate attempt” to create a spiritual monarch—a sort of consolidation of the soul—in opposition to the “concretized divinity” (694) of the Caesar in Rome. Thoreau, however, does for himself what he so ardently tried to get the woodchopper to do. Picking up from the work begun by priests (by, indeed, all of Christianity), Thoreau does not project his self and its eternal, resurrecting powers onto an external god or Christ. Rather, he deifies nature as well as himself. As Jung notes in *Analytical Psychology*, “doing away with the

concept of God means that you become that God” (88). Thoreau, then, starts with an incomplete trinity—himself, divinity, and nature—and by integrating himself with nature and nature with divinity, something new emerges. His own symbolic, theoretical “beautiful and winged life” emerges after humanity’s slumber. As it is with the four stages of erotic development, the incomplete trinity becomes whole with the addition of a fourth element. In doing this, Thoreau is creating another symbolic mandala in the paired opposites of resurrection and death, as well as well as God and man. In Jung’s mystic circle, in the middle, we have Thoreau’s newly attained sense of the self. It is fascinating to note that Jung himself drew comparisons between his use of the mandala and Hindu literature, writing that within Eastern texts we “also find the terms *padma* (lotus) and *chakra*, meaning the flower-like centres of different localizations of consciousness” (*The Symbolic Life* 578). Thoreau, of course, employs various Eastern philosophies and texts as he attempts to create a kind of language to encapsulate his new ideas. However, as David Scott notes, Thoreau favored the passages from Eastern works that complemented his western transcendentalism. Speaking of the Bhagvad Gita, Scott notes “[Thoreau’s] selectivity, citing Gita strands on selfless detached action (karma yoga) and yogic training of the mind and body (dhya na yoga) rather than its strong devotional (bhakti) material on Krishna” (18). This is critical, I believe, in illustrating the philosophical kinship between Jung and Thoreau. Jung believed that the western world did not have a psychological means of processing paired archetypal opposites, and that if we wanted to understand it we would have to return to Eastern roots, such as the *I Ching*, Taoism, and the *Upanishads* (*Analytical Psychology* 73-74). Thoreau, too, returns to Eastern

philosophies, most particularly the Upanishads of the Vedas and the aforementioned Bhagavad Gita, a work of the same Sanskrit heritage as Jung's beloved mandala. However, neither Thoreau nor Jung subscribe to the exact beliefs of these Eastern influences, but use these older texts and philosophies as a way of creating their own language of self. Thoreau, in mixing Eastern and Western ideas, was charmingly described by R.L. Stevenson in 1880 as "a very Yankee sort of oriental" (qtd from Scott 14).

More research regarding Jung and his relationship with Thoreau is necessary in order to understand both men. In the finest Jungian tradition, the examination of these two paired opposites—the twentieth-century Swedish psychologist and the 19th century American transcendentalist, the psychologist-scientist and the writer-philosopher—will lead to a balanced center of understanding the relationship between transcendentalism and the archetypal self. I would like to conclude by illustrating the relationship between one of Jung's own painted mandalas (Figure 1A) and Thoreau's sketch of Walden Pond (Figure 1B). As you can see, Thoreau has actually divided the pond itself (which is the redemptive, generative "magic circle") into four quadrants, the four gates of paired opposites. Thoreau's cabin was close to "D" on the map, near his cove. Its paired opposite, above "C," was Baker Farm, home of the Field family, the psychological shadows of Thoreau that he took such methodical care in dismissing. Running at a slight diagonal beside "B" is the railroad, the "fire-steed" (114) that interrupted Thoreau's patient meditations with the influx of "restless city merchants" (112). This symbol of industrialization contrasts with "A," which, according to Herbert Gleason's 1906 map of

antebellum Massachusetts (See Figure 1C), was mostly undeveloped wilderness, such as hills, ponds, and the tiny Lincoln Village. In other words, it was as far from the hustle and industry of Concord as possible. From a visual standpoint, Thoreau's quaternary pattern of paired opposites draws our eyes directly to the intersection of these four points: the center of Walden Pond itself, symbolized repeatedly by Thoreau as the exemplar of nature's wonders. From a transcendental standpoint, being in the center of the lake is to be in the center of nature. This is the divine middle, the center of self. There was already a precedent for Thoreau in finding such symbolism in nature, as he states in *A Week* that a "straight geometrical line against the water and the sky stood for the last refinements of civilized life, and what of sublimity there is in history was there symbolized" (40). Thoreau himself previously combined geometry and symbolism as a means of decoding meaning from nature; in placing himself in the center of these paired archetypal opposites, Thoreau ensures that the journey to self-individuation (and therefore, to transcendentalism) ends where it begins.

At last, Thoreau can finally be that "strong and beautiful bug" that has "unexpectedly come forth from amidst society's most trivial and handselled furniture, to enjoy its perfect summer life at last" (324). Thoreau, anticipating and reconciling the Jungian archetypal modes of persona, anima, and shadow at last balances the paired opposites of Concord life to transcend everything mundane, mythic, religious or heathenish in order to attain his true, archetypal self. Having overcome these archetypes, Thoreau has now become them. Rather than a fraction here and there, however—a dash of persona, a glimpse of shadow—Thoreau can express all of these archetypes

simultaneously. The final chapter, a series of homilies and proverbs, exists as a chorus singing to the tragedy of the non-transcended world. Thoreau, in a fundamental way, has ceased being himself, because he is linked to thousands of years of mythic archetypes; his voice is not lost in the wilderness, but conjoined to a symphony unseen and unheard. Thoreau's "perfect summer life"—the chords to the symphony, hidden from light-blinded eyes—is there, for those are willing to sing.

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Index of Jungian Terms

Anima: At its most basic, the anima is simply the feminine aspect of a man, just as the Animus is the masculine aspect of a woman. On a deeper level, however, the anima functions as a sort of psychic bridge for a man, allowing him access to sensitivity, beauty, and even his soul. For Jung, a man had to possess a way of projecting his anima, often onto a woman, in order to access his soul. For Thoreau, the notorious lack of romantic involvement in his life would seem to limit this; indeed, little can be transcended in the absence of one's soul. It is my belief that this is the very reason for Thoreau feminizing Walden Pond and the surrounding area, as a way of engaging this aspect of himself that would otherwise be lost completely. Given this, it is unsurprising to see the level with which Thoreau feminizes nature; serving not only as the natural gateway to beauty (Thoreau's appreciation of Walden Pond on its own terms seems echoed only by women and children), Thoreau's discovery of the feminine in nature as he simultaneously discovered his own reflection in Walden itself—"a mirror in which all impurity presented to it sinks, swept and dusted by the sun's hazy brush" (184)—allowed the spiritual images to overlay, as he saw both the feminine and himself united in a vision of transcendence.

Archetype: Essentially, an archetype is an inherited psychic blueprint for mythological ideas that is made manifest through literature, art, dreams, folklore, and various religions and philosophies. From a literary standpoint, this is perhaps best understood through Joseph Campbell's *Hero With a Thousand Faces*, in which characters as varied as culturally varied as Odysseus, Jesus Christ, and Osiris all followed the same basic

adventure pattern, which Campbell called “the monomyth.” Jung, of course, precedes Campbell, and sees the archetype as one aspect of the human mind which either constrains or liberate one’s soul. For Jung, the archetype was more of a polymyth—rather than seeking a unifying theory that explains everything, Jung’s archetypes (a refined version of Plato’s forms, though archetypes are dissimilar in that they are rarely “ideal”) represent inherited ideas that not only manifest through cultural expressions, but arguably *create* cultural expressions: as an example, Jung’s examination revealed that the powerful Mother archetype is magnified even further in one’s grandmother, a figure that can be perceived as either benevolent (the stereotypical doting grandparent) or evil (her power, after all, is greater than one’s mother, which is frightening). According to Jung, this duality is subsequently represented by good witches and wicked witches, gentle goddesses and scheming sorceresses, and so on. In this sense, Baum’s famous Good and Bad Witches of “The Wizard of Oz” are both manifestations of, as well as *products* of such unconscious archetypes.

In structurally imagining the human mind, it is important to note that the outward consciousness and subsequent persona rests atop a violently churning sea of the collective unconscious. The unconscious determines both the shape and direction of the conscious, and continues to do so even after individuation.

Collective Consciousness: If the collective unconsciousness is a person’s touchstone to instinctual, individual knowledge, the collective consciousness is its polar opposite: collective thought that exists outside of the instinctual realm, in the consensus of the

masses. From a psychological point of view, it is intriguing that so much of Thoreau's rhetoric is engaged with essentially validating individual knowledge over the mass mentality in Concord; at the heart of *Walden*, Thoreau seems to be inviting others to participate in the instinctual, archetypal wisdom he has absorbed from both Eastern and Western texts, as well as copious volumes of literature. The emotional and mental touchstones he discovers in these works, and subsequently rediscovers in Walden Pond itself, become his individuated counterpoint to the dominant, status-seeking mass mentality of Concord.

Collective Unconscious: For Jung, certain concepts are psychically inherited by humanity, ranging from conceptions of right and wrong to the meaning of God and the State. In addition, there are mythic associations which are independent national, religious, or psychological restrictions. These are, of course, the aforementioned archetypes, that exist outside of time and place—the concept of anima, for instance, is often situated in western terms (erotic development being halted by Medieval Christianity, for instance), but has its base roots—finding another half of a divided soul within the opposite sex—in Greek beliefs. The trickster archetype, too, is one shared by Norse Mythology, Native American creation tales, and Christianity—there is an archetypal resonance within these concepts that transcends oceans, cultures, and individuals, to form an aspect of the universal collective unconscious.

It is also worth noting that the relationship between the unconscious and the conscious is compensatory; this is best understood as a necessary component of the

mind—an individual who experiences dark, even murderous impulses in their unconscious dream life is not only less likely to enact such violence in his waking hours, but has been able to process conscious agitation in an unconscious, healthy manner.

Self: The self archetype is the ultimate goal of the transcendent function—in which all opposing forces have equalized, and a person can be all things at all times—equally shadow, equally anima, and so forth. In this sense, Thoreau’s reverence for brutality and spirituality exists in a kind of continuum—he need not lesson his shadow to be a spiritual man, nor abandon his spiritual anima in order to embrace bestial urges. The process of achieving this state is referred to as self-actualization, which overlays Thoreau’s own conception of transcendence in many ways.

The shadow: This archetype represents repression—specifically, dark urges, emotions, and thoughts that a person truly fears and denies as being a part of himself. Thoreau reacts to this shadow aspect of himself by first projecting it onto those around him (as an example, he sees others as too caught up in what society thinks even as he develops a book meant for that same society), yet eventually integrates this dark aspect into himself in the “Higher Laws” chapter. It is important to note that identification with this dark aspect is tempered by Thoreau’s identification with his own anima, allowing a union of sensitivity and savagery.

The Transcendent Function: This, more than any other Jungian concept, is central to my reading of Thoreau; Jung believed that the balance and mediation of two opposing aspects of the psyche could ultimately lead an individual to individuate himself. It is important to note that the opposing aspects are not destroyed by such an individuation, but united: as Thoreau himself notes, “I found in myself, and still find, an instinct toward a higher, or, as it is named, spiritual life, as do most men, and another toward a primitive rank and savage one, and I reverence them both” (205). It is precisely such a reverence that allows Thoreau to return to civilization once more: he is exiled neither by animal urges nor self-cloistering monasticism, and synthesizes the flesh and the spirit into Jung’s “third thing,” the Unus Mundus, having touched the underlying miasma that forms the foundation of all existence. To modify Yeats, Thoreau has individuated into both the center, and the world tearing that center apart, a cycle of death and rebirth that never fully stops.

Trinity: For Jung, trinities (or triads) represented an incomplete aspect of the human psyche as it struggled for wholeness; in spiritual terms, it represents the religious concepts of both the Christian Holy Trinity and mariology, as the Church downplayed the human earthiness of Jesus within the Holy Trinity and later refocused courtly love into a less hedonistic worship of Mother Mary. The latter led to Jung’s belief in the Four Stages of Erotic Development, in which a person wavers between the controlling (Eve), the physical (Helen) and the spiritual (Mary). Believing that the medieval church had deliberately channeled erotic development into mariology, Jung believed the final stage

of development was that of Sophia—uniting the wisdom of Mary, the earthy physicality of Helen and the nurturing of Eve into a final image of wholeness. The wholeness Jung advocated—a quaternary instead of a triad—was symbolized by his idea of the Mandela as “the circle squared.”

Figure 1A

Jungian Mandala, Courtesy of the C. G. Jung Society of New Orleans



Figure 1B

Thoreau's sketch of Walden Pond, Courtesy of the Concord Free Public Library

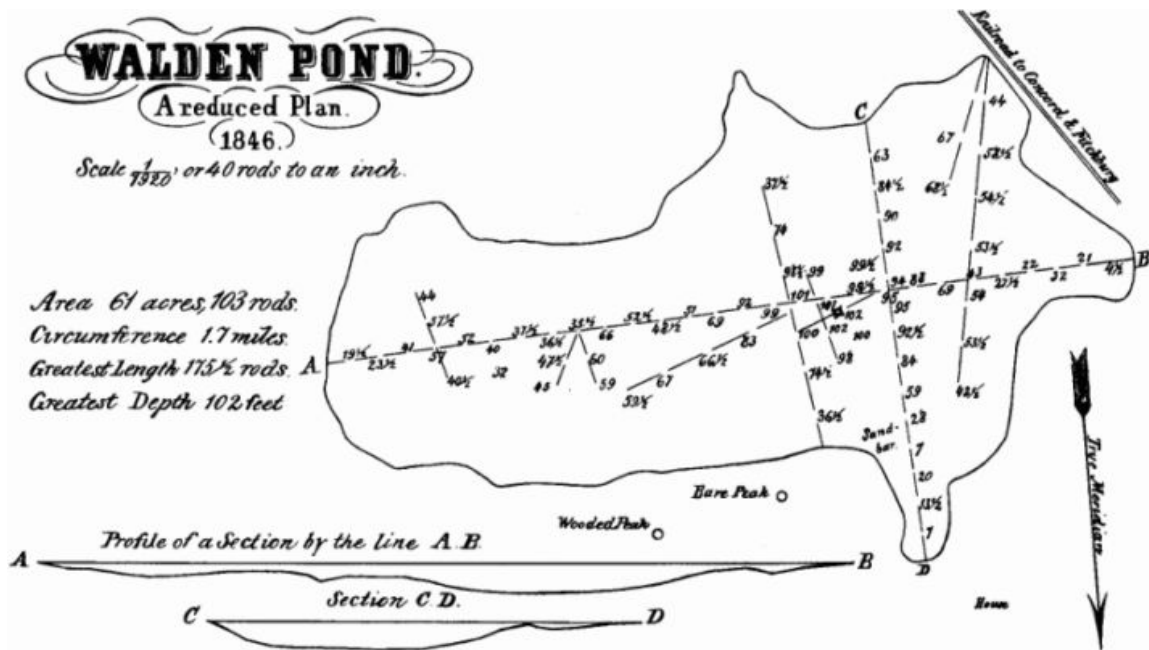


Figure 1C

Herbert Gleason's 1906 map of antebellum Massachusetts, courtesy of the Concord Free Public Library.

