

Good essay about annotation

[Art & Culture](#), [Symbolism](#)



Summary and Annotation

Putting Walden's philosophy and that of Henry David Thoreau, it is easy to notice the interconnectedness of their philosophies and their practicality. Both use metaphors that in the end become a philosophic system. Walden speaks about the relationship between man and his environment. Thoreau on the other hand demonstrates that human beings can overcome struggle that exists between the self and the society but then, nothing can be trusted if proof is not offered, "No way of thinking or doing, however ancient, can be trusted without proof." (Hamby 1). These try to bring out meaning of the inherent things that happen in society. Thoreau's view of living, shares a lot in common with Walden on matters growth. Growth to them is a continuous process with the difference coming in when stages of development are looked at. According to this article, the philosophies propagated here surround the mechanics of life, development and how society deals with different phenomena.

Both have built their premise on the chlorophyll metaphor and Walden focuses on it from the very beginning where he gives the image of a plant which grows upward and downward. "Obviously, Thoreau does not suggest that man is a plant. Rather, he makes an analogy between chlorophyll and the spark of the divine that flames in man" (Hamby 3) His major concern is the fact that man should not put a lot of effort on the root or labor but rather, concentrate on the stem and flower which signify his thoughts and appreciations. Thoreau on the other hand uses the chlorophyll metaphor to imply that man should use his degenerate state for self improvement, according to the analogy, "our best approach towards self-improvement

involves transcending our degenerate state, a process not unlike photosynthesis” (Hamby 3). He thus leads man towards the synthesis nature where man is supposed to make good use of things that are at their discretion for their own good. In order for a person to accomplish their tasks, they ought to use that which is at their disposal. The natural world is part of the resources which are meant to lead a person to a higher understanding and therefore use it to reach a higher reality.

Thoreau continuously uses metaphors and they become more complex with time. The metaphor concerning the pond is one of the complex one which both talk about. Thoreau described Walden’s pond and goes on to say that he felt like casting his hook upward into the air and downward too, “ cast my line upward into the air, as well as downward in to this element, which was scarcely more dense” (Hamby 4) . Walden’s pond on the other hand is filled with a lot of tide action which is an indication that there are more natural forces involved. His pond has been personified and does not age. There is a synthesis therein between nature and a higher reality as well as nature and man. The ponds serve as an embodiment of truth which should guide humanity.

Thoreau shows the reader the attitude he has towards man’s potential “ by means of his metaphor, to an under-standing of his attitude toward man's potential” (Hamby 5). Man can reach a higher reality just like he demonstrates using Walden’s pond (Hamby 5). During winter when the pond is dormant, a rebirth is anticipated and spring brings forth a different dimension towards life, a rebirth which he says “ During the winter season, the dormant time of the pond, Thoreau has a sense of anticipation and

apprehension. He is eager for the rebirth, the ascension, the transcendence, which spring offers both in the traditional sense and in his special dimension (Hamby 5- 6).” The rebirth signifies how human life dies down to its roots but then by the grass coming out, human life comes out fresh and better than ever. Summer brings back life and from the winter and spring, there is an interconnectedness of how things happen and this unity of nature is pointer to a higher reality (Hamby 6). A year completes its cycle and therefore man completes his too and therefore returns to his universal innocence. This completion signifies the universal innocence which keeps improving as the cycle and seasons come and go.

Life is a cycle, and it can be lived positively however good or bad it is. It is about taking about turn one can meet it and live it. Self actualization can be reached in the mind and then a person can make the best out of it. Through metaphorical synthesis, life has been elaborated systematically yet beautifully.

Work Cited

Hamby, James A. Thoreau's Synthesizing Metaphor: Two Fishes With One Hook. Pdf File