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The Golden Carp and Moby Dick: Rudolfo Anaya's Multi-Culturalism

Theresa M. Kanoza
Lincoln Land Community College

In *Bless Me, Ultima,* Rudolfo Anaya presents a world of opposites in the New Mexican village of Guadalupe. The parents of the young protagonist Antonio have strikingly different temperaments, as dissimilar to each other as the backgrounds from which they hail. Maria Luna Marez, the pious daughter of Catholic farmers from the fertile El Puerto valley, steers her son toward the priesthood and a ministry in an agrarian settlement. Gabriel Marez, Antonio's adventurous father, is descended from a long line of nomadic horsemen; he expects his son to share his wanderlust, and he hopes that as compadres they will explore the vanishing *llano* (plains). The thrust of Anaya's *bildungsroman,* however, is not that maturation necessitates exclusionary choices between competing options, but that wisdom and experience allow one to look beyond difference to behold unity.

Historic continuity and spiritual harmony are recurrent strains in much of Anaya's work as he often laments man's weakened connection to the earth, to the past, and to the myths that reveal the proper balance of the cosmos. In "The Myth of Quetzalcoatl," Anaya criticizes the heavy toll which economic and political realities exact from the fragile landscape of the Southwest and its ancient cultures, but, a conciliator, he also cites some merit in change. Rather than condemning or shunning innovation, as do many who, like Anaya, want to protect an endangered heritage, he advocates a measured application of modernization. "Technology may serve people," he reminds those whom he claims are wont to retrench in the old ways, but "it need not be the new god" (198). Likewise, informed engagement in the legislative process, a political reality of the here-and-now, can serve the cause of preserving the landscape and the cultures it sustains. Anaya urges that just as the present can safeguard the past, historical awareness can "shed light on our contemporary problems" (198). He reaches back through the centuries to the Toltec civilization of Tula to bring instructive parallels to bear on current rapacious materialism in the

United States (199). As a writer, Anaya practices the rich admixing across time and space that he preaches, for his novels of the American Southwest blend diverse cultural strains. In *Bless Me, Ultima* he draws deeply on Native American mythology and Mexican Catholicism,[1] and, though the novel is written in conventional English that the protagonist deems a "foreign tongue" (53), the prose is to be read as a translation of the Spanish which most characters speak. When his characters use English, they typically engage in code-switching.[2]

Bless Me, Ultima has earned acclaim for its "cultural uniqueness" and is lauded for such distinctive Chicano features as its use of Aztec myth and symbol, its thematic emphasis on family structures, and its linguistic survivals. Furthermore, Anaya is renowned as one of the "Big Three" of the Chicano canon, alongside Tomás Rivera and Rolando Hinojosa (Sommers 146-47). Set in a sacred place imbued with a spiritual presence and long inhabited by indigenous peoples, his book presents a world where the Anglo is of little consequence to its strong Chicano characters.[3]

Yet this highly celebrated ethnic novel also reveals the strong imprint of Anglo-American belles-lettres. Many critics observe Anaya's reliance upon James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to relate the anguished rites of passage of his own protagonist.[4] Both Antonio Marez and Stephen Dedalus ask bold questions about the nature of good and evil as they examine their roles within the families and Church that circumscribe their lives. William Faulkner, John Steinbeck, and Katherine Anne Porter, among others, have also been cited as literary influences on Anaya.[5] But in a novel that uncovers shared tenets among seemingly discordant worldviews by an author who prizes cross-cultural connections, Anaya goes even further afield in choosing his literary models. *Bless Me, Ultima*, lauded as a masterpiece of the margins, also evokes that text which is most often cited as the epitome of the white, northeastern literary paradigm—Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*.[6] Both novels tap into biblical and mythological archetypes as their main characters plumb the mysteries of creation. In their quests for experience, knowledge, and mastery, the protagonists in each book break religious taboos and push the limits of human awareness as they try to fathom the unknowable mind of God. In fact, both novels have drawn similar criticism for their weighty, abstract subject matter and for their individualist rather than social focus.[7]

But to detect a Melvillian influence in *Bless Me, Ultima* is not to charge Anaya with being derivative, nor is it a back-handed attempt to "prove" the universality of the traditional canon by asserting that it presciently accommodates the Chicano experience. For in many

ways, Anaya's book testifies to the triumph of the Chicano cosmology. As presented by Melville, the negative romantic and "sick soul,"[8] the world is a place of horror and despair; Anaya, revealing his Jungian bent as he taps into the collective unconscious, finds vigor, beauty, and order there.[9] Indeed, Anaya's text reads as though he, along with Ishmael, has survived the wreck of the *Pequod* but that he has lived to articulate the harmonies of the universe which Melville's sailors could not recognize. In *Bless Me, Ultima,* Anaya reconciles into a unified whole the dichotomies which loom chaotic and rend the cosmos in *Moby-Dick.*

Both Melville's Ishmael and Antonio Marez, the schoolboy protagonist of *Bless Me, Ultima,* are novices. Generally untrained in the ways of whaling, Ishmael proves to be a quick study after signing on as a deckhand aboard the *Pequod.* He is ostensibly in pursuit of whales and then more specifically *the* whale, after Ahab commandeers the crew to his own vengeful mission. But more significantly Ishmael pursues experience and wisdom, goals which make him a milder version of the blasphemous Ahab, who lashes out at the Godhead to avenge his own human limitations. Antonio, also seeking to understand the complexity of life, tracks a fish of his own, the legendary golden carp, the avatar of an Aztec nature-god.[10] By sighting the river-god which swims the waters that surround Antonio's village and by pondering its history of sacrifice for the salvation of others, Antonio hopes to learn the secrets of the universe. His journey into paganism is an exhilarating quest but one which induces guilt and anxiety as he breaks the first commandment of his Christian faith.

Guadalupe, an isolated village that is set apart from the greater New Mexican landmass by a river which encircles it, is at once as insular and internally diverse as the *Pequod,* the island-ship which sails the world's oceans. Melville's sailors represent widely differing nationalities and religious beliefs: Ahab is a Quaker-turned-atheist, and Ishmael a Presbyterian; the harpooners are described as heathens, Queequeg as a Polynesian idolater and cannibal, Daggoo as a "gigantic, coal-black negro-savage," and Tashtego an "unmixed Indian" (107). Of Ahab's secret East Indian crew, Fedallah, a Parsee, is a fire-worshiper. Although not as wildly diverse, a varied constituency also comprises Antonio's world. Besides the stark differences in the mores and temperaments of the peaceful farmers who are his maternal relatives and his raucous, rootless paternal uncles who ride the *llano,* Antonio finds sharp contrasts among his friends. Catholic and Protestant classmates taunt each in the schoolyard about their conflicting beliefs of heaven and hell, while those secretly faithful to the cult of

the golden carp, such as Cico, Samuel, and Jason, are contemptuous of these arcane concerns. Children of no particular religious persuasion, some of whom are eerily animal-like in appearance and endowed with preternatural strength and speed, watch the squabbles in amusement. All are terrified by the three Trementina sisters, who are legendary for practicing black magic.

Both Melville and Anaya ascribe a mystical, seductive beauty to the natural world—or more specifically to bodies of water—for, as Ishmael explains, "meditation and water are wedded for ever" (13). In "Loomings," the first chapter of *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael describes the magnetic pull of the ocean. Seeking a spiritual sustenance not found in the commerce that occupies them during the workweek, "crowds of water-gazers" gather at the wharfs during their leisure. Ishmael pronounces these "thousands upon thousands of mortal men fixed in ocean reveries" (12) to be narcissists, for they seek in their reflections thrown back by the mirror-like "rivers and oceans...the ungraspable phantom of life...the key to it all" (14). Ishmael, of course, is no exception to these questers. Hoping to learn the secrets of the "wonder-world," he says he is drawn to the whaling voyage by "a portentous and mysterious monster [that] raised all my curiosity" (16).

Later in "The Mast-Head" when Ishmael is assigned watch high above the ship's deck, he experiences the dangerous allure of pantheism. As a meditative man surrounded by the glory of the universe, he fears he could lose himself both literally and figuratively in the beauty of nature.

> Lulled into such an opium-like listlessness of vacant, unconscious reverie is this absent-minded youth by the blending cadence of waves with thoughts, that at last he loses his identity; takes the mystic ocean at his feet for the visible image of that deep, blue bottomless soul, pervading mankind and nature; and every...undiscernible form, seems to him the embodiment of those elusive thoughts that only people the soul by continually flitting through it. In this enchanted mood, the spirit ebbs away to whence it came; becomes diffused through time and space.... (140)

To yield rationality to revery, Ishmael cautions, is to lose one's footing and plummet to the sea; to merge with the natural world is to surrender one's distinct identity. He concludes his warning with the stern note, "heed it well, ye Pantheists" (140), and Melville proves that it is advice best followed. In "The Life-Buoy," a subsequent chapter, a crew member who passes into a "transitional state" while posting lookout from the crow's nest falls to his death in the sea.

A pantheistic-like spirituality is an equally strong contender for

the religious affections of the soul-searchers in *Bless Me, Ultima*. Anaya handily debunks the merits of dogmatic Catholicism in the cold and ineffectual Irish priest whose sole method of reaching his first communicants is a meaningless catechism. The children respond by rote but have no deeper understanding of the faith to which they are being indoctrinated; Father Byrnes neither encourages nor facilitates any fuller awareness. Antonio's pathologically devout mother, though honest and loving, is further testament to the Church's ineffectuality and harm. A fearful, superstitious woman for whom religious devotion means passivity, she is the epitome of weakness that Melville derides in Roman Catholicism as "feminine...submission and endurance" (315).

Worship of nature—wild, free, and seemingly benevolent—is an attractive alternative to the Catholicism which many in Antonio's world find stifling. (The parish church, in fact, is described as dark, dank, and musty). But Anaya, like Melville, also conveys the danger of a spirituality derived from nature. When the cult member Cico seeks to convert Antonio to his pagan beliefs, he is careful to caution the initiate about the possible hazards that loom in a mystical merger with the natural world. Like Ishmael, Cico is a "water-gazer," one who is drawn to the river by its "strange power [and] *presence*" (*Bless* 108). He recounts to Antonio that he became spellbound while perched on an overhanging cliff high above the hidden lake, and that he only narrowly resisted the strange music that beckoned him to the depths below: "It wasn't that the singing was evil," Cico explains. "It was just that it called for me to join it. One more step and I'da stepped over the ledge and drowned in the waters of the lake" (109).

Actual fatalities follow Cico's close call. Narciso, a cult member (whose name echoes the narcissists who gaze into the water to find their bearings at the outset of *Moby-Dick*), is, like the drowning victim of Melville's "Life-Buoy," trapped in his own "transitional state." Pegged as the pathetic but good-hearted town drunk who has lost control over his faculties, Narciso is eventually murdered by the villainous Tenorio Trementina. Another casualty of nature-worship is Florence, Antonio's friend, whose tortured boyhood has destroyed his faith in God. Though scornful of the limitations and cruel paradoxes of Catholicism, Florence is no simple heretic. He searches for "a god of beauty, a god of here and now...a god who does not punish" (228). He is drawn to the lake, much as Antonio and Cico are, but, unable to resist the beckoning water, he drowns. Florence's death dive is described as an underwater exploration that lasts too long.

In seeking to resurrect the spirit of the land and the power of ancient myth, Anaya is certainly sympathetic to Cico, the believer in

"many gods...of beauty and magic, gods of the garden, gods in our own backyards" (227). Yet when Cico counsels Antonio to renounce Christ, whom he calls a jealous deity that would instruct his priests to kill the golden carp, Anaya does not endorse this exclusionary vision. For though Cico observes the link between the natural and the divine, he does not recognize the affinity between Christianity and the indigenous spirituality. The kinship of Christ with the nature-god, who transformed himself into a carp so as to live among and protect his people who were likewise transformed into fish as punishment for their sins, is lost on Cico.

With his blindered vision, Cico is reminiscent of those Melville characters who also reduce the complex unity of the world to polarities. Richard Slotkin has named "consummation" as the main thrust of *Moby-Dick*, a merger conveyed through such metaphors as the Eucharist, marriage, and, more literally, the hunt. But he explains that, finally, Melville delivers no such consolidation since his characters achieve no lasting spiritual balance or cosmic bonding. Ishmael, for example, heeds too well his own warning to pantheists. While he warns that mysticism can leach away individuality, he also bemoans social interdependence as one of life's "dangerous liabilities" (271).[11]

Ahab, like Cico, is unable to reconcile seeming opposites; like Ishmael, he perverts the notion of unity. If Ahab sees a "common creaturehood" with Moby Dick, his own self-loathing forces him to destroy what he perceives as an extension of himself (545). And if Moby Dick is an avatar of God and the wound it inflicts is a punishment, the whale represents the power which Ahab covets and can attain only by subduing. For the monomaniacal sea captain, there is no coexisting with the white whale, no possibility that Moby Dick is a mediator between the human and the divine. Ahab believes he must either kill the whale, or be killed by it. His binary vision makes him hopelessly paranoid: what he cannot fully understand he construes as malign and warranting pre-emptive destruction.[12]

It is Ultima, an ironic counterpart to Ahab in their shared capacity as mentors, who teaches Antonio to look beyond difference to recognize transcendent parallels. Though their respect for life varies greatly and, indeed, their worldviews clash, the *curandera* (medicine woman) of the New Mexican *llano* and the captain of the *Pequod* are similarly enigmatic and powerful figures. Their marred outward appearances attest to their intense engagement with life—Ahab with his ivory leg and the scar that runs the length of his body and Ultima with her shrunken frame and wizened face. Both are cut off from family. Ahab was orphaned before his first birthday, and as an adult he chooses Moby Dick and the sea over the wife and infant son he

leaves in New England. Ultima, aged and apparently childless, is homeless until Antonio's father Gabriel moves her from the unsheltered *llano* into his home in Guadalupe.

The most significant parallel the two share is their own hybridity from which they draw their awe-inspiring strength. Captains Bildad and Pelag, the *Pequod*'s owners, aptly sum up Ahab's contradictory nature: "He's a grand, ungodly, god-like man.... Ahab's been in colleges, as well as 'mong the cannibals" (76). "Old Thunder" vows to lash out at the sun should it insult him, a threat he later carries out by smashing the quadrant that requires him to rely on the heavens to determine his bearings in the sea. Yet he clearly "has his humanities," as when he consoles the crazed Pip or recalls the warm home he has left behind. He is vulnerable too, dwarfed and deformed as he is by his uncontrollable obsession. Such dualities within Ahab do not comport well; they are in constant conflict and drive him to war with the universe. His internal chaos manifests itself in his fractious nature, which causes him to perceive a fragmented outer world. He will brook no compromise nor accede to any mediation: Moby Dick is pure evil and Ahab must destroy him, or lose his life trying.

Ultima is not without her own dark side, since she too encompasses dualities. "La Grande," as she is called, is part saint but also part witch. Her ability to cast out demons and to remove curses derives from her own acquaintance with evil. Yet her dualities do not taint or confound her; they complement her. In fact, her understanding of evil enhances her capacity for goodness. Recognizing that the disparate elements of creation work in concert, she instructs Antonio to respect rather than to fear difference, for "we fear evil only because we do not understand it" (236). Her universe, in all its splendid diversity, is coherent, not chaotic.

In the broad sweep of Ultima's vision, cooperation rather than competition is the driving force of the cosmos. For her, pagan and Christian precepts are not mutually exclusive. Whereas Cico counsels Antonio to renounce the Christian trinity as impostors so that he might pledge his faith to the golden carp, Ultima, who also worships the golden carp, integrates her heterogenous beliefs. As Cordelia Candelaria observes, Ultima's spirit, embodied in the owl which always hovers near her, suggests at once Christ as dove and Quetzalcoatl as eagle (*Chicano Literature* 39). There is no hypocrisy or sacrilege as she joins Maria in praying to the Virgin of Guadalupe, nor in her attendance at Sunday mass with the Marez family. Yet as much as she is a companion to the devout Maria, she is the compatriot of Gabriel, the begrudging Catholic and restive villager. He is unfulfilled by the Church and reluctant to join Maria in praying the rosary.

Instead he draws spiritual sustenance from the *llano*, where he finds "a power that can fill a man with satisfaction." Ultima, who participates in Catholic rituals but whose faith is never dictated by dogma, shares Gabriel's reverence for the untamed plains and responds in kind to his praise for the land: "and there is faith here...a faith in the reason for nature being, evolving, growing" (220). The merger of her pagan and Christian beliefs is complete in her answer to Antonio's plea, which is the title of the novel. As she offers her blessing, she adopts the cadence of the Catholic benediction and invokes her own secular, benevolent triune: "I bless you in the name of all that is good and strong and beautiful" (247).

As Ultima's apprentice, Antonio learns that Christianity and native mythology are compatible. Initiated into the awareness that the whole is comprised of its many parts, he resolves as well the conflicting agenda his parents set for him. When Antonio dreams that he is being riven by his parents as each issues a self-interested plan for his future, Ultima intercedes on his behalf. Maria claims that her son is a true Luna, a child of the moon who was baptized by the holy water of the Church and thus destined for a vocation as a priest; Gabriel counters that the boy, like all Marez men, is a product of the restless saltwater sea, and that he is therefore meant to ride the plains. Ultima refutes his parents' false and limiting dichotomies to reveal an underlying mystical holism:

> You both know...that the sweet water of the moon which falls as rain is the same water that gathers into rivers and flows to fill the seas. Without the waters of the moon to replenish the oceans there would be no oceans. And the same salt waters of the oceans are drawn by the sun to the heavens, and in turn become again the waters of the moon. (113)

Ultima's insight into the harmony of the universe is the understanding which Ahab lacks. Her cosmology features no aspect of creation as foreign, superfluous, or malign, for each has a contributing and complementary role. "The waters are one," she tells the relieved Antonio. "You have been seeing only parts...and not looking beyond into the great cycle that binds us all" (113). Just as Antonio comes to comprehend the kinship of the golden carp and Christ,[13] he realizes the obvious—that as the offspring of his mismatched parents he is living proof that opposites can integrate. As Ultima's eventual successor, he will grant his mother's wish for a priest by ministering to the needs of others and by mediating between the earthly and the spiritual; and, blending his Christianity with pagan mysticism, he

will fulfill his father's desire for an heir who is in touch with the supernatural forces of the land.

The union achieved in Antonio Marez is always thwarted in *Moby-Dick*. Aboard the *Pequod*, co-mingling is misconstrued as a blurring of identity that threatens the extinction of the self, or as a dominion over another. Queequeg's taste for human flesh and Stubb's relish for freshly killed whale meat further perverts the Eucharist into cannibalism. Suggestions of fertility and fruition merely tease, as in the crew members' coming together to manipulate the spermaceti in "A Squeeze of the Hand," a pleasurable and erotic bonding but one that is ultimately frustrating and unproductive.

That Ahab works against rather than with nature is clear in his uneasy alliance with the instruments by which he navigates the seas, such as the quadrant that he destroys and the compass which reverses itself. The interchange over the ship's log and line, tools for gauging speed and direction, further reveals that he is out of sync with the dynamism of the universe. When the rotten line snaps and the log is lost, Ahab announces that he "can mend all" (427). The claim is self-delusory, since Ahab, having denied the synergism in the complex world around him, cannot forge the vital nexus he desires. In proposing to "mend the line" as he reaches out to Pip, who then urges that they "rivet these two hands together; the black one with the white" (428), Ahab suggests that he will continue and fortify his lineage through crossbreeding. But the union will not hold: the partners are not of sound mind as they take their vows. One is "daft with strength, the other daft with weakness." Reeling in the broken line as Ahab departs with his young black "mate," the Manxman prophetically observes, "here's the end of the rotten line.... Mend it, eh? I think we had best have a new line altogether" (428). The prognosis for any new hybrid "line" is grim, since Ahab persists in seeing the world as inexorably oppositional: He dies pursuing the whale that he maintains is wholly evil, the ship and crew go down, and Ishmael, the lone survivor, is left afloat on a coffin until the *Rachel*, on its own death watch, picks him up.

When in *Bless Me, Ultima* the townspeople of Guadalupe object to the sacrilegious over-reaching of science as manifest in the atomic bomb tests that are conducted south of their town, they could easily be describing Ahab's quest for omniscience. "Man was not made to know so much," they contend. "[T]hey compete with God, they disturb the seasons, they seek to know more than God Himself. In the end, that knowledge they seek will destroy us all" (183). Ahab, dissatisfied with what he deems his lowly place in the universe, seeks mastery through destruction. In contrast, Antonio, who, like Ahab,

pursues and attains wisdom, is not antagonistic in his search for knowledge. He comes to luxuriate in the synchronized workings of the world, for he credits Ultima with having taught him to "listen to the mystery of the groaning earth and to feel complete in the fulfillment of its time." Through her he learns that his "spirit shared in the spirit of all things" (14).

Communion in *Moby-Dick* is perverted by a murderous urge; man's relationship to nature and to God is adversarial, and his goal is destruction or the absorption of another. True "marriage," Richard Slotkin asserts, occurs only when there is a mutual acceptance of each by the other, in which neither is destroyed (554). *Bless Me, Ultima* achieves this beneficent reciprocity. In tune with the cosmic harmonies, Antonio joins together diverse and discordant beliefs, temperaments, and values, for he realizes that he can "take the llano and the river valley, the moon and the sea, God and the golden carp—and make something new" (236). His communion is neither conquest, as it is for Ahab, nor the cancellation of the self, which Ishmael fears; it is true consummation.

In *Bless Me, Ultima,* Anaya's method is his message. The worldview which Antonio achieves by reconciling a host of opposites is repeated in Anaya's own literary multiculturalism. Influenced by Biblical and Indian mythology, Spanish lore, and the traditional canon, Anaya reveals his pluralistic cultural consciousness. He attains the "integrity of memory" which coheres across boundaries of time, ethnicity, and ideology.[14] Such mutually respectful and beneficial co-existence is the mode of being that Anaya advocates for Chicano literature in the United States, even as he seeks a broad readership for his work.[15] Chicano writing need not be self-sequestered nor shunted aside by others under a dubious celebration of "difference" to be legitimated, nor should it be stripped of distinguishing characteristics so as to gain entry into the traditional canon. "I believe that Chicano literature is ultimately a part of U.S. literature," Anaya maintains, continuing to see the whole as the sum of its parts. "I do not believe that we have to be swallowed up by models or values or experimentation within contemporary U.S. literature. We can present our own perspective.... But ultimately it will be incorporated into the literature of this country" (Bruce-Novoa 190). The thematic and tonal links between *Moby-Dick* and *Bless Me, Ultima*—as well as their divergent outlooks and resolutions—attest to cross-cultural interconnections amid rich heterogeneity.

Notes

1. Carmen Salazar Parr explains that, more specifically, the Indian lore reflects Nahuatl thought, that of the Mexican and Central American tribes (139).
2. Translating and discussing "Degradacion y Regeneracion en *Bless Me, Ultima,*" by Roberto Cantu, Cordelia Candelaria notes Cantu's more grim observation about language use in the novel. Claiming that Antonio undergoes a loss of spirituality, Cantu cites a progressive absence of Spanish after Antonio enrolls in school as evidence of this decline. See "Anaya, Rudolfo Alfonso," *Chicano Literature* 47.
3. The setting of *Bless Me, Ultima* is often regarded as a world apart, a separate and protected enclave. The German critic Horst Tonn, however, detects the encroaching Anglo presence—in the highway that runs near the idyllic town of Guadalupe, in the tours of military duty which Antonio's three older brothers must serve during World War II, and in the atomic bomb tests run close to the Marez's New Mexican village.
4. Raymund Paredes's "The Evolution of Chicano Literature" and Robert M. Adams's "Natives and Others" explore Anaya's ethnic distinctiveness as well as the influence of Anglo-American writers upon his work.
5. Candelaria notes the influence of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha stories in the way characters from *Bless Me, Ultima* return in *Heart of Aztlan* (1976). In Anaya's third novel, *Tortuga* (1979), Candelaria finds echoes of the persistent turtle from *The Grapes of Wrath* and of Katherine Anne Porter's use of a hospital as a microcosm of humanity in *Ship of Fools*. See "Anaya, Rudolfo Alfonso, *Chicano Literature*.
6. Anaya's graduate work in the 1960's emphasized the traditional canon, and he cites an abiding interest in American Romanticism. See Juan Bruce-Novoa, "Rudolfo A. Anaya," *Chicano Authors* 188.
7. Paul Lauter maintains that literature of the American Renaissance is tantamount to escapist fiction in its portrayals of single (white) males striking out for a frontier of some sort—the sea, the woods, the prairie. Many minorities, he reminds us, faced the other side of the adventure, invasion. Lauter contends that for them, "individual confrontations with whales or wars were never central, for the issue was neither metaphysics nor nature but the social constructions called 'prejudice,' and the problem was not soluble by or for individuals...but only through a process of *social* change" (16). Hector Calderon uses Anaya and *Bless Me Ultima* as examples of a too-heavy emphasis on meditative abstractions and individualistic introspection. Antonio's egocentrism, Calderon claims, comes at the expense of a collective vision (112-13).
8. See William James for a discussion of the opposing temperaments, sick souls and healthy minds.
9. Candelaria discusses Anaya's use of Jungian themes in "Anaya, Rudolfo Alfonso," *Chicano Literature* 36-39. In "Rudolfo A. Anaya," *Dictionary of Literary Biography* she is critical of Anaya's penchant for happy endings, which, she charges, gloss over unpleasant or grim realities. Anaya's search, Candelaria contends, "always finds its uplifting grail of enlightenment and happiness. Alienation, irony, ambiguity, and the myriad uncertainties of a dynamic cosmos, whether ancient or modern, seem to lie beyond the boundaries of his fictive universe" (34).
10. Herminio Rios and Octavio Ignacio Romano connect the myth of the golden carp to Atonatiuh, the first cosmic catastrophe in Nahuatl cosmology (ix).

11. On numerous occasions Queequeg and Ishmael are happily in sync and mutually served by each other, as in "The Monkey Rope" for example. Yet Ishmael remains ambivalent at best about their interdependence. Consider D.H. Lawrence's reading of Ishmael's casual regard for Queequeg after bunking with him at the Spouter-Inn in "A Bosom Friend": "You would think this relation with Queequeg meant something to Ishmael. But no. Queequeg is forgotten like yesterday's newspaper. Human things are only momentary excitements or amusements to the American Ishmael" (147-48).
12. See Slotkin's discussion of Ahab's Puritanical response to the spirit of nature, which allows only two lines of action: he can either be nature's captive or its destroyer (547-48).
13. Vernon Lattin, rather than seeing Antonio's accommodation of Christianity and pantheism, contends that Antonio rejects the Church to embrace the pagan gods. Likewise, Raymund Paredes sees Antonio affecting no reconciliation of his parents' conflicting ambitions for him. He maintains that "at the end of the novel, Antonio rejects the confining traditionalism of the Lunas in favor of the Marez's doctrine of personal freedom" (101).
14. Explaining the "integrity of memory" and its role in canon revision, Annette Kolodny urges Americanists to dissociate themselves temporarily from reassuringly well-known texts to become immersed in the unfamiliar. The result she foresees is an awareness made full by interconnections and new decipherings previously unrecognized.
15. William Clark explains that Anaya, "wanting to reach a wider audience," has recently completed a six-title contract with Warner Books. The mass marketing deal includes paperback and color-illustrated hardcover editions of *Bless Me, Ultima* (24).

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