CONCLUSION
CHAPTER X

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We have seen that Frye's entire critical enterprise centres on four essays in the Anatomy of Criticism namely, Historical Criticism, Ethical Criticism, Archetypal Criticism, and Rhetorical Criticism.

The first, which can be considered his basic essay, 'historical criticism', presents a theory of modes, mode being defined as "a conventional power of action assumed about the chief characters in fictional literature, or the corresponding attitude assumed by the poet toward his audience in thematic literature". The modes, whether tragic fictional, comic fictional, or thematic, tend to move in historical sequence, thus: myth, romance, high mimetic, low mimetic, and ironic generally succeed one another in time.

Frye's second essay, 'ethical criticism' develops a theory of symbols, and underlines the necessity of polysemous meaning, of a sequence of contexts or relationships in which to place a literary work for consideration of its narrative and meaning. In chapter number five, we have seen that by symbol Frye means "any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention". In modification of the 'medieval scheme,' Frye classifies five
contexts or "phases" of meaning: literal, descriptive, formal, archetypal, and anagogic, and connects these phases to ironic, low mimetic, high mimetic, romantic, and mythical modes respectively. The symbol, working upward through the five phases, is treated as motif, sign, image, archetype, and monad.

Frye's third essay, 'archetypal criticism' demonstrates the usefulness of the above mentioned categories. In this essay, Frye imparts clarity to the dark area of literary criticism that has been concerned with "myth", "archetypes", and "ritual". The "archetype" for Frye, is literary, and not primordial. It is "a symbol, usually an image, which recurs often enough in literature to be recognizable as an element of one's literary experience as a whole."

Frye divides his essay on archetypal criticism into two parts: theory of archetypal meaning and a theory of mythos. Mythos represent an archetypal narrative such as comic, romantic, tragic, or ironic. The archetypal meaning is explored by Frye in terms of its imagery: apocalyptic, demonic, analogical. The structure of this imagery, its dianoia, is set forth largely in Biblical typology. Frye examines these structures in different movements in the mythoi, in their cyclic succession of the Spring of Comedy, Summer of Romance, Autumn of Tragedy, Winter of Irony and Satire.

Frye's final essay, 'rhetorical criticism', presents the Theory of Genres, basing the generic distinctions in literature upon what Frye terms "the radical of presentation", i.e. the
conditions set up between the poet and his audience. In this theory, a rhythm of recurrence is used to define different *epos*; of continuity, prose; decorum, drama; and association, lyric. The encyclopaedic forms—scripture, quest, ironic, epic—constitute Frye's categorizing vision, with its predilection for largeness and completeness.

Beginning with a simple aim of presenting a synoptic view of the scope, theory, principles and techniques of literary criticism, the above referred four essays systematically map out, in Frye's own terminology, the hypothetical verbal structure of literary criticism as an autonomous humanistic discipline. In the words of Harold Bloom, the four essays constitute "an attempt at pure critical theory, a trial summary of ten years labor by an imagination whose power and discipline are unique in contemporary criticism".

This ambitious enterprise helps Frye 1) to put forth his vision of the unity and autonomy of the arts; 2) to establish the necessity of interpreting art-works without the aid of deterministic or extra-artistic beliefs; and 3) to base the structure of criticism upon a total experience of literature itself.

The theoretical grammar evolved by him in this context serves both as a useful handbook for the study and analysis of literature and literary criticism as well. In his review of *Anatomy*, Harold Bloom remarks, "The major value of Frye's *Anatomy*
is constructive, based as it is upon the inductive survey of the whole of literature... The minor value is descriptive, and equally relevant: a clear introduction to the structural principles of literature....". Comparing Frye's poetics to Tovey's 'Encyclopaedia Britannica' Bloom observes that "like Tovey, Frye has given a rational account of the structural principles of a Western art in the context of its heritage, Classical and Christian in the case of literature. But unlike Tovey", he further says, "Frye has had to work alone, for the primitive science of literary criticism, still in its state of naive induction, has not yet got round to the naming of parts".

Bloom thus sees Frye's poetics as a kind of compendium, a reference book to the practitioners of archetypal criticism and even to other forms of art-criticism. Among the beneficiaries he includes those who are motivated by the desire to have a rational account of Western art in the context of its own heritage.

II

Archetypal criticism in Frye's view provides an effective means of knowing the structural principles of literature because it deals with literature in its larger contexts. Proceeding from this assumption, Frye has attempted an elaborate theory of literary criticism, giving archetypes a central place in his criticism.
The literature-archetype relationship contemplated by Frye has earned him the label of an archetypal critic, though Frye himself refuses to commit to any known school of literary criticism. As a literary theorist, Frye's objectives have been firstly, to rehabilitate criticism as an independent activity related intimately to larger human perspectives; secondly, to formulate a comprehensive and systematic theory of criticism independent from value judgements, and thirdly, to raise criticism to the status of physical sciences, by enlarging the scope of criticism itself. He states, "by criticism I mean the whole work of scholarship and taste concerned with literature which is a part of what is variously called liberal education, culture, or the study of the humanities".

These broad objectives and his commitment to the pursuit of 'liberal education, culture and the study of humanities' enabled Frye to make spacious claims not only about literature, but also about the role of the literary critic. Frye thus claimed that "Literature is not the piled aggregate of works but an order of words". Literature imitates the total dream of man..."; Poetry unites total ritual, or unlimited social actions, with total dream, or unlimited individual thought". Secondly, in his introductory chapter titled 'Polemical Introduction' of the Anatomy, he presents quite a convincing argument concerning the role of literary critic:

When Ibsen maintains that Emperor and Galilean
is the greatest play and that certain episodes
in Peter Gynt are not allegorical, one can
only say that Ibsen is an independent critic
of Ibsen.

This means an artist, however objective in his approach, may
never be an authentic critic of his own work; he may either be
misleading or indifferent. In a way, Frye presents the critic
with a destiny of his own, and not "as a parasite or artist
manque", nor does he restrict the art of criticism to "ritual
masonic gestures, to raised eyebrows and cryptic comments and
other signs of an understanding too occult for syntax".
Convictions such as the ones outlined in the above passage
probably prompted Frye to take a broad and somewhat inclusive
view of art-criticism:

I should want the discussion to be as
uninhibited as possible...I have no itch to
demonstrate that my views are 'right' and that
those who disagree with me are 'wrong'... Nor
do I wish to correct others for 'misleading my
position'. I dislike and distrust what is
generally implied by the word 'position'.
Language is the dwelling-house of being,
according to Heidegger, but no writer who is
not completely paranoid wants his house to be
either a fortress or a prison.

Evidently, Frye wanted to uphold his eclectic position by
refusing to be attached to any 'position' and he did not want to
be branded as a champion of one or the other kind of critical
schools. This also makes it clear that he wanted to establish a
system of his own in the tradition of Aristotle though in the
opening pages of the Anatomy he remarks that the book "forced
itself" on him when he was trying to write something else.
Considering the magnitude of the impact of his work and the influence it wielded on the contemporary generation of critics, Frye's statement on this point appears to be rather too modest. Commenting upon the ingenuity and originality of critical vision of Frye, Robert Denham observes: "The ambition to write on such a broad front, as Frye himself points out, makes a critic particularly vulnerable to objection. But in Frye's case the risk has been worth taking: a great mind has produced a great body of knowledge which will continue to instruct and delight so long as critics ask questions and dream dreams". We have no difficulty in agreeing with this observation of Denham. Frye himself has stated that "The irrefutable philosopher is not the one who cannot be refuted, but the one who is still there after being refuted". Frye is still there even after being refuted!

Given the quantum of critical strictures Frye's works have attracted over the years, it is no wonder that many scholars and critics were particularly impressed by the non-judgemental quality of Frye's system. Frye's pursuit of 'liberal education, culture or his study of humanities' and his admitted propensity to spatialize literature and his genuinely humanistic approach which proclaims that an understanding of literature is indeed of great human importance have led critics and scholars, in their turn to spatialize him. At this point, a reference to some appreciative remarks on Frye showing the respect that Frye's work commands as against the strictures passed by some discerning critics against Frye's system would help us understand Frye's
estimation among critics better.

III

It is possible to identify and place the critics of Frye in two broad groups. Among those who approve of Frye and his methodology of art-criticism are Robert Denham, Murray Krieger, Walter Jackson Bate, Harold Bloom, Steve Polansky et al. It is proposed to consider the opinion of these critics first.

Making a 'provisional' assessment of Frye's works Denham observes

First, Frye's work is of practical value, a system of terms and doctrines and a method which can be used to answer one kind of critical question. Second, his criticism is a creative achievement in itself; it has final as well as instrumental value. And third, his writing taken together forms what might be called a metacriticism, reaching far beyond literature itself in an effort to account for and defend all the products of human culture. In this respect, Frye provides a meaningful apology for the humanities and a way of doing criticism on a grand scale.

And continuing his comments upon Frye's reputation as a critic, he further observes: "... the editors of a recent anthology of modern criticism refer to Frye as an "indispensable" critic, linking him with Eliot, Pound and Richards as the "major" critics of our age. "More than any other critic" they say, "he stands at the center of critical activity". Denham also defends Frye against "those who have found Frye's work to be the New Criticism writ large ..." In Denham's view, those critics "have
committed the error of misplaced emphasis. "My own view," he says, "is that Frye will be seen historically as having moved far beyond the New Critical assumptions because he is primarily interested in asking questions different from those of the New Critics". In other words, Denham does not agree with critics who support the formalism of New Criticism whose approach to art-criticism was text-oriented in that it reduced criticism to explication or close analysis of the text. Secondly, they entertained a belief that these were the pre-eminent tasks of any critic. As against this, Denham maintains that "Frye has helped us to see that there are other ways of talking meaningfully about literature".

Denham, thus, seems to be favouring the multivalent approach adopted by Frye in analysing a literary work.

Another influential critic who studied Frye's works and wrote substantially on him is Murray Krieger. In his general assessment of Frye's critical methodology, Krieger makes the following observations:

There has first been complaint that he neglects and at times flatly denies, the critic's task of evaluation; but the complaint is often accompanied by the acknowledgement that he sometimes speaks about taste and judgement. There has, secondly, been the complaint that in centering upon the literary relations of literature, he irrevocably separates literature from its relation to life, from its mimetic responsibility, but the complaint is often accompanied by the admission that he, sometimes uneasily, wants it tied to life, even in the name of mimesis. It has thus been charged that, while he emphasizes now one and now the other of these
desirable opposites, he cannot fuse them systematically; that he has not shown, "the actual being only a part of the possible". "Literature... neither reflects nor escapes from ordinary life". There has, thirdly, been the complaint that Frye's archetypal interests cheat the individual work of its uniqueness by seeing it only as another translation of the universal story; but this complaint should be accompanied by an awareness that Frye does attend to detailed meaning-functions in the more minute levels of "phases" which he attributes to the many-sided literary symbol.

The convictions outlined in the above passage indicate that by and large critics have taken divergent views and have often resorted to contradictory views about Frye's methodology of art-criticism. Frye's capacity as a system-builder, his vision and his power of imagination have perhaps been best articulated by Krieger himself when he concludes:

Frye's incomparable power among many of us may well be traced, as Geoffrey Hartman suggests to his universalism, his system making daring, his unmitigated theoretical ambition, his unlimited reach—even where some would say it has exceeded his grasp. His power may be traced also, as Angus Fletcher and Hartman both suggest, to his revitalizing the flow of a romantic sensibility and vision that the critical tradition after Eliot, with the austerity of its would be classicism, had too long congealed.

Krieger's observations on the transcendental aspects of Frye's 'incomparable power', his 'universalism' and 'theoretical ambitions' find support in Denham's comments too, when he states that "Frye's ideas had far reaching consequences. "An entire generation of literary critics", he says, "has found his work to
be useful and challenging. The practical effect of his criticism, however extends far beyond its application to individual literary texts, having influenced the nature of curriculum and provided model for educational programs in the humanities.

Similarly, commenting upon the pervasive influence of Frye's works, Walter Jackson Bate observes that "...Frye's work represents one of the most impressive achievements in the recent history of criticism. He is probably the most influential critic in English since the 1950s. Certainly, in the English-speaking world", he further maintains, "Frye's importance since 1957 is unique".

Echoing a similar belief, Harold Bloom too remarks: "Frye is the legitimate heir of a protestant and Romantic tradition that has dominated much of British and American literature, the tradition of the Inner Light, by which each person reads scripture for himself or herself without yielding to a premature authority imposed by Church or state or school. This is Frye's true greatness, and all who teach interpretations are indebted to him for precept and for example". Continuing his argument he remarks that Frye "has earned the reputation of being the leading theoretician of literary criticism among all those writing in English today". And Steve Polansky speaks of Frye's influence on Bloom saying:

It is my contention that Frye's is a profound and pervasive influence on the theory of criticism and poetry Bloom is later to develop; an influence that works both positively and negatively, and that extends, clarifying and demystifying as it goes into the reaches of Bloom's theory that seem most
In his review of *Anatomy of Criticism* which he called "A New Poetics", Bloom said of Frye, "his is an imagination whose power and discipline are unique in contemporary criticism".

Along the same lines, George Woodcock too remarks that..."Frye has exemplified more effectively than Wilde himself the latter's argument that criticism is primarily a creative process, leaving its masterpieces to impress and move by their skill and grandeur long after their subjects have ceased to interest us".

Donald R. Riccomini argues that although Frye's theory is more complete and comprehensive than that of the structuralists because it submits "the displaced substituted text to the archetypal centre, the diachronous to the synchronous", it shares with structuralism a common participation in the 'metaphysics of presence'"

Critics like Krieger have charged Frye for being too schematic. Krieger observes that "the educational possibilities of his work have been largely responsible for the reduction of certain isolated aspects of his theories into fixed and simplified programs. His large-scale categorizing, the tendency to outline, the invention of a nomenclature - all have misled the pseudo-scientific among his followers into making of him a framework for teaching and for literary study".

Frye's own answer to this charge is:

Every critic tries to be coherent and
consistent, and to avoid contradicting himself. Thus he develops his insight into literature out of a systematic framework of ideas about it. But some are better at concealing this framework than others, especially those who are unconscious of it, and so conceal it from themselves".

In support of his own argument on the 'schematic' nature of his writings, Frye continues further:

The system was there for the sake of insights it contained; the insights were not there for the sake of the system".

And finally moderates his defence saying:

Actually I am grateful to be read on any terms, but the role of system and schema in my work has another kind of importance. Whatever light it throws on literature, it throws a good deal of light on me in the act of criticizing. It is the schematic thinker, not the introspective thinker who most fully reveals his mind in process, and so most clearly illustrates how he arrives at his conclusion.

Frye's penchant for systematization is based on his concern for coherence, consistency, and avoidance of self-contradiction in his writings; secondly, he was aware of the fact that his critical enterprise was the outcome of the insights he himself had gained in the early part of his literary career. In order to translate these insights into practice and to concretize his vision into a commonly perceptible and acceptable form, he had to evolve a definite methodology; thirdly, Frye wanted others to accept him on his own terms, like some critics who create taste by which their works are to be judged. Given the magnitude of his critical enterprise and the influence it wielded among the contemporary
critics and scholars, Frye's efforts in building or evolving a system of his own by which he could make himself convincing to others or, 'to most fully reveal his mind in the process' is perfectly justified.

Impressed by Frye's achievements, critics like Frank McConnel have gone to the extent of comparing Frye's works to those of Darwin, Descartes, Noam Chomsky and Einstein. A mere glance at some expressions of admiration, linking Frye with such personalities would make this clear. For example, comparing Frye's methodology with that of Darwin, McConnel comments, "The great initial panachea of Frye's work was that he seemed to have discovered and articulated a true science of criticism, in the sense that Darwin had developed and articulated a science of biological change. In the "Polemical Introduction" to the Anatomy, Frye sometimes attains an almost Darwinian synthesis of diffidence and breathless revelation".

McConnel further compares Frye with Descartes saying "... This makes sense of the assertion by many reviewers that the Anatomy caused a "Cartesian revolution" in criticism.... For, like Descartes in the Discourse on Method, Frye managed to take an objective intellectual structure (criticism, or comparative religion or anthropology - or all three at once) and make a matter of the encounter between that structure and the individual adverting mind..." Similarly, he compares Frye to Noam Chomsky and observes that Noam Chomsky "effected the same revolution in linguistics that Frye had performed in literary criticism."
Chomsky's attempt to render linguistics "scientific" not only redirects the course of modern language theory: it also is deeply humanistic, with its daunting array of trappings that resemble symbolic logic. And reverting to Einstein, McConnel observes: "In Anatomy of Criticism, Northrop Frye effectively presents a unified field theory of literature. Just as Einstein believed that the four (Frye's magic number) elementary forces could ultimately be explained by a single formula, so did Frye in the Anatomy argue that all texts, even the most vulgar and most unofficial, ultimately find their place in the canon of literature.

According to A. Walton Litz, Frye "shares with his modern predecessors a post-Romantic view of the poem as an autonomous organism, which exists independently from the intentions of its creator". A similar view is also shared by Steve Polansky when he argues that Frye's critical apparatus is inclusive enough to deal not only 'Romantic' tradition but even with any literature outside it, for "while Frye seems most comfortable with this 'Romantic' tradition, his theory is useful in treating works of almost any genre or period".

Commenting on Frye's inclination on Romantic sensibility and his contribution to the study of Romanticism, McConnel observes: "In his book Fearful Symmetry (1947) Frye had magisterially established William Blake as one of the major intellects in English Literature, a man who willed himself to see all previous writing as a single mighty text in whose continuing organic
growth he could participate. And in his later criticism Frye himself acted out his central perception of the Blakean imagination. McConnel concludes his argument saying that "Frye taught us... that we have the right to know, and to employ, all available information about the structure of human consciousness, and furthermore he taught us that this is not an arbitrary subjectivism, but is in fact the proper task of criticism altogether."

Thus, a consideration of the foregoing argument raised by the appreciative critics of Frye would reveal that, by and large, they tend to agree on the following points:

i) Frye has quite successfully put forth and established his vision of the unity and autonomy of arts;

ii) art-works are to be interpreted without the aid of any extra-artistic beliefs or deterministic methods;

iii) Frye's method is of practical value and a creative achievement in itself;

iv) Frye has moved far beyond New Critical assumptions so far as literary analysis of any art-work is concerned;

v) Frye has been responsible for revitalising the flow of Romantic sensibility and vision, particularly post-Eliotian critical tradition;

vi) Frye has exemplified that literary criticism is primarily a creative process, and

vii) Frye's system has been responsible for providing a useful model for educational programs in the humanities.

We have no reservation whatsoever in agreeing to the basic points raised by the appreciative critics in praise of Frye's system. It is not a mean achievement on Frye's part to deviate
from the 'traditional Anglo-Saxon commitment to interpretation' or, 'from the dominant critical tradition - from Hulme through Eliot to the New Critics' as argued by William Righter and Murray Krieger, or, to 'upset the whole basket of New Critical, Eliotic, "neo-classical" literary values that preceeded him' as opined by Imre Salusinszky, and 'still be there' even 'after being refuted' by his non-appreciative critics! However, some of the claims made by critics like Frank McConnel have the effect of pushing Frye's critical system to its extreme. For instance, McConnel eulogizes Frye for causing a kind of 'Darwinian', 'Cartesian', 'Chomskian' and an 'Einstenian' revolution in literary criticism. Such tall claims made by McConnel seem to be rather exaggerated in nature.

Given the inclusive nature of his critical enterprise in that it covers and makes place for the analysis of practically every kind of literary work and, considering the spate of sweeping statements of admiration from critics like Harold Bloom, Murray Krieger, Robert Denham, Frank McConnel, Frank Lentricchia, Walter Jackson Bate, Steve Polansky and so on, Frye could perhaps be called a system-builder in his own right in the tradition of Aristotle and Kant and could more appropriately be called the Aristotle of contemporary literary criticism.

Critics of the second group, namely, Frederick Crews, Catherine Ellis, Jonathan Culler, Richard Finholt, Murray Schwartz, Walter Davis, Angus Fletcher and Tzvetan Todorov do not agree with Frye's
critical system. A study of their view-points on Frye's methodology would make this clear.

Crew's objections to Frye's critical method are based largely on the assumption that contemporary criticism has paid too little attention to the direct experience of literature. Crews turns to psychoanalysis for the explanation of his theoretical foundations. Crew's insistence on direct experience of literature compels him to give utmost significance to the creative process and the response of the audience. For him, the psychoanalytic explanations of the nature and origin of art is as significant as any study of the work itself. He criticizes Frye's *Anatomy* for not properly conceiving the function of art and calls it "anaesthetic", thus,

A criticism that explicitly or implicitly reduces art to some combination of moral content and abstract form and genre conventions is literally an anaesthetic criticism. It insulates the critic and his readers from the threat of affective disturbance.... All literary criticism aims to make the reading experience more possible for us but anaesthetic criticism assumes that this requires keeping caged the anxieties that the artist set free and then recaptured.

This means, in Crew's view, criticism should aid the reader's perceptions by making 'the reading experience more possible for us', whereas the 'anaesthetic' criticism, as he calls it, does just the opposite, i.e. it runs away from experience. Crew attributes Frye's system to the latter kind, i.e. a "procedure for cataloguing various forms of the contest". Crews concludes his argument on the point maintaining that a "psychoanalytic oriented criticism would be a better method for
interpreting responses".

Thus, it is easy to see that Crew's position as regards using an extraliterary framework, one that is neither derived from literature nor primarily meant to apply to literature, is diametrically opposed to that of Frye who believes that critics should not stray outside literature in developing their fundamental principles.

Crew's main complaint is that Frye does not give importance to the affective or pleasure function of art and his overemphasis on procedure, schematization and various forms of the contest is at the cost of feeling and experience, the two vital ingredients in the appreciation of any art-work.

Much in the same way, Murray Schwartz too argues: "Frye's style of impersonal categorization amounts to the commission of Whitehead's "fallacy of misplaced correctness" because it posits the reality of literature as "outside" of the actively synthesizing personalities of individual readers". This means, in Schwartz's view Frye ignores the total response of the individual reader.

Walter A. Davis maintains that in Frye's theorizing "the universality of the system has been purchased at the cost of the phenomenon and of any meaningful principle of artistic individuation, let alone the possibility of man's existential and historical integrity".

Davis's objections to Frye's system are similar to that of Schwartz in that he too believes that in Frye's methodology of art
appreciation "particularity is sacrificed and concreteness of artistic individuation is ignored."

Evans Watkins sees Frye's theory as "representative of a preoccupation with method in contemporary criticism which reduces the felt intimacy of human activities to a mere model which is embarrassingly vague at best and is motivated by a desire to evade aesthetics and philosophy." Louis Mackey argues "for the ironic fictionality of Frye's Anatomy through a critique of criticism as differance".

William K. Wimsatt declared that "the mode and myth schemas of Anatomy of Criticism to be so muddled, incompatible and mutually-contradicting as to be an "embarrassment", whereas Tzvetan Todorov argues that "Frye's classifications are not logically coherent, either among themselves or individually". Commenting on Frye's critical system, Angus Fletcher argues that "Frye lacks a developed phenomenology of reading". Along the same lines, Marshall Grossman opines that "... Frye's four essays, with their proliferation of polarities, which generate implicit maps, and tables, are notoriously resistant to paraphrase".

In his essay 'Northrop Frye in Modern Criticism' Wimsatt charges Frye with inconsistency; "He can and is willing to distinguish 'ephemeral rubbish', mediocre works, random and peripheral experience, from the greatest classics, the profound masterpieces in which may be discerned the converging patterns of the primitive formulas. At other moments however, he says that
criticism has nothing whatever to do with either the experience or the judging of literature. The direct experience of the literature is central to criticism, yet somehow this center is excluded from it". The effect, Wimsatt concludes, is that the reader remains unsure whether Frye "wishes to discredit all critical valuing whatever, or only the wrong kinds of valuing". Thus, in Wimsatt's objection, one can trace two lines of argument. In the first argument he charges Frye for discriminating great words from not-so-great-works. In the second argument he criticizes Frye for maintaining that criticism has nothing to do with judgement of literature. This puts us in an ambiguous frame of mind. Finally we are left in the lurch. After such desparaging evaluation Wimsatt however comes to a moderate position. This in a way becomes a self-defeating exercise.

Wimsatt develops another objection related to Frye's preoccupation with myth, conventions and isolation of literature from its social context. He accuses Frye for ignoring history and "imprisoning literature in a timeless vacuum of archetypal myths". Wimsatt articulates this objection in the following words:

The Ur-Myth, the quest Myth, with all its complications, its cycles, acts, scenes, characters, and special symbols, is not a historical fact. And this is so not only in the obvious sense that the stories are not true, but in another sense, which I think we tend to forget and which mythopoeic writing does much to obscure: that such a coherent, cyclic, and encyclopaedic system, such a
monomyth, cannot be shown ever to have evolved actually either from ritual, anywhere in the world, or ever anywhere to have been entertained in the whole or even in any considerable part. We are talking about the myth of myth. As Frye himself, in his moments of cautionary vision, observes, the 'derivation of the literary genres from the quest myth is 'logical', not historical. [but], if we take Frye at his word and attempt to deduce his system 'logically' we will reject it, for the structure which he shows us is... divided between, truisms and ad libitum fantasy.

Wimsatt's scathing attack on Frye's system that 'such a monomyth cannot be shown to have evolved either from ritual, anywhere in the world, or ever anywhere to have been entertained in the whole or even in any considerable part' goes to the very roots of Frye's theoretical foundations. One may agree partially with Wimsatt's observations that Frye's methodological structure of art-criticism cannot be empirically proved.

We also accept the argument of Wimsatt that in his overemphasis of myths and conventions Frye overlooks the history part in the artistic experience and seems to be evolving a historical argument. This objection is valuable, but then, Frye's argument is also valid for the myths, conventions and patterns identified by Frye are equally significant. Frye justified quite convincingly in giving much importance to myths and conventions and patterns in the understanding, analysis and appreciation of any literary art-work in a way that no other critic has done so far.
William Righter believes that Frye’s work, turns away from the traditional Anglo-Saxon commitment to interpretation. It has been an almost unchallenged presupposition of our critical thought that criticism is some sort of second-order language which comments on, explicates, or explains something quite distinct from itself: a literary work which is assumed to be an imaginative creation of the first order. Frye violates this presupposition in two important ways. First, in spite of individual insights of the greatest interest he is hardly concerned, especially in the Anatomy, with particular literary works and their interpretation. He almost reverses the process.... The literary work acts as the explanation of a symbolic scheme, making the critical work the first order of a language on which the example acts as the commentary.... Secondly, his lack of concern with particular literary works and his breadth of concern with literature as a whole have created his own intensely personal form of metacritical language, perhaps of a third order, working at a higher level of abstraction than we normally expect of critical thought.

Thus, Righter seems to strike at the root of Frye’s critical system when he raises following four points.

1) Frye deviates from the traditional system of literary analysis of a given work, including the one adopted by the New Criticism. New Criticism is a text-oriented approach which upholds the autonomy or self-sufficiency of literature and prescribes a close analysis of a literary text to arrive at an understanding of configurations underlying it. In Righter’s view, Frye is ‘hardly concerned with particular literary works and their interpretation’.

2) Frye’s lack of concern with the study of particular literary works and their interpretation is of a different nature, though these works may provide ‘individual insights of the greatest interest’.

3) Frye is concerned more with literature as a whole rather than any particular literary work. This
turn, compelled Righter to say that Frye has developed a 'form of metacritical language of a different critical order'.

4) Frye's system works 'at a higher level of abstraction' meaning thereby that it deviates from the established conventions set up by the practitioners of literary criticism.

Probably, the reason why Frye differs quite radically from the traditional practitioners of literary criticism is that Frye views criticism as a creative process. In fact, he has quite frequently emphasized this aspect when he argued on the necessity of breaking down the barriers that separate the artist from the critic and "become more detached from the romantic mystique ones". This view is also explicit in the two passages quoted below from the Anatomy:

The conception of the critic as a parasite or artist manque is still very popular, especially among artists. It is sometimes reinforced by a dubious analogy between the creative and procreative functions, so that we hear about the "impotence" and "dryness" of the critic, of his hatred for genuinely creative people, and so on. The golden age of anticritical criticism was the latter part of the nineteenth century, but some of its prejudices are still around.

If I have read the last chapter of Finnegans Wake correctly, what happens there is that the dreamer, after spending the night in communion with a vast body of metaphorical identifications, wakens and goes about his business forgetting his dream, like Nebuchadnizer, failing to use, or even realize that he can use, the "Keys to dreamland". What he fails to do is therefore left for the reader to do. The "reader suffering from an ideal insomnia, 'as Joyce calls him', in other words the critic. Some such activity as this of forgiving the broken links between creation and knowledge, art and science, myth and concept, is what I envisaged.
for criticism".

The two quotations cited above from the opening and closing pages of the Anatomy, amply demonstrate that Frye never regarded criticism in any way either as sub-creative, or, in contrast to the creative forms of writing such as poems and novels. In fact, this view is also explicit in the last chapter of Anatomy where he argues that literature can be viewed from one of two principal perspectives, the Aristotelian or the Longinian. The difference between the two, according to Frye, is whether art is seen fundamentally as product or as process. In the Aristotelian tradition, nature has reference to the physical order, or to structure and system. In the Longinian tradition, it refers to the total creative process. Frye argues that criticism, like literature, can also be discussed in terms of either product or process, either detachment or participation. "The disinterested critical response", he says, "is fundamental, but never an end in itself, for the ultimate aim of "literary education is an ethical and participating aim". Evidently, Frye believes in the Longinian tradition of criticism as a creative process.

But Righter is not the only critic who dubs Frye for turning away from the traditional 'Anglo-Saxon commitment to interpretation.' Krieger too expresses a similar belief when he argues that

"...Frye's flight from the dominant critical tradition—from Hulme through Eliot to the New Critics...preceeded the fervent revolution he perpetrated. His departure accounts for the
true basis of their resistance to him and his sway. About no claim are... more constant or even dogged than the claim that poetry should reveal, and should be limited by, our worldly experience... These theorists speak as with one voice for the true poet's capacity to respect the drag of material reality, to convert the handicaps of a finite existence and a finite language into victories of an imagination that never forgets or rights its basis in common experience".

In this context, a remarkable distinction has been drawn by Krieger between the traditional theory and Frye's theory. Diagrammatically the two theories are represented as under:

**Traditional Theory:**
```
| Critic | Work | World |
```
```
/---------------------------/        
| Literature, Culture: |   |
| The world reconstituted |   |
| in response to human |   |
| dream of man. |   |
```

**Frye's Theory:**
```
| Critic | Work |
```
```
| Reality Principle | Work |
```

In Krieger's own words: "In traditional modern theory the critic is seen as viewing the individual work in its relations to the actual world of experience (including the work of art) even as that world is in part defined by the work in its internal relations. The endless variations among such theories depend on how these relations achieve their definitions and their priorities. According to the revolutionary theory of Frye the critic is first
seen making a downward movement to the work and the world.... The critic too moves through the lowering displacements of the individual work, the limitations placed on its measurings and movements by its discreetness, its persistent attempts to become a unique self-enclosure. As man, the critic makes a similar downward movement through the unresponsive realities of the unelevated the unresponsive world". In other words, Krieger describes the critic as making two movements. In the first movement, he has, as a critic descended to the work. But in course of his second movement, the upward return, the critic need not relate work and world to one another "since both are to be dissolved into something higher". That ‘something higher’ in Krieger’s view, is the world of literature, of culture, of dream and so on. This means, in the last stage, both critic as critic and critic as man return to the imaginative world, to the world as man wills to have it. Krieger then concludes that "Frye and the modern critical tradition then should, in their opposition, come to be recognised as utter alternatives".

Thus, it is easy to see that by fielding Frye as an ‘utter alternative’ to modern critical tradition, Krieger wants to raise Frye to the highest pedestal in the field of literary criticism. By implication, this also means that Frye’s ‘revolutionary theory’ is quite unique, complete in itself and capable of withstanding all kinds of strictures and indictments against it.

We have no difficulty agreeing with Krieger’s elevation and
fielding of Frye as an 'utter alternative' to modern critical tradition, or with Righter’s dubbing of Frye for turning away from the traditional 'Anglo-Saxon' commitment to interpretation. However, we would find it difficult to agree with Righter’s concluding remarks on Frye's achievements that Frye's work is a "perversity of invention", and an "eccentric episode in literary history". On the contrary we feel tempted to share the note of optimism aired by Krieger himself when he states that "...critics who tried to take Frye whole could not... put him to their uses; they could only apprehend him aesthetically as having the unusable completeness of a poetic entity..." He further argues that as critics, "we have been using him by putting him to our tests, we have not paused sufficiently to accommodate ourselves to him or him to the total march of critical theory. Few except the most faithful (and these therefore too uncritically) have selflessly tried to uncover the source of his power, together with the cost—the expense in theoretical soundness—which that power extracts". Krieger concludes his argument on this point saying "we must attempt that critical search, however, with a daring if not, alas, with a wit that matches his wit".

A summary of the argument put forward by the non-appreciative critics of Frye would centre on the following points:

i) Frye's overemphasis on procedure and schematization is at the cost of feeling and experience; in other words, he does not give importance to the affective or pleasure function of art and thus ignores the total experience of the reader.
ii) In Frye’s methodology of art-appreciation, ‘particularity and concreteness of artistic individuation is sacrificed’.

iii) The myth and mode schemas of Frye’s system are mutually-contradicting and logically incoherent either among themselves or individually.

iv) Frye lacks a developed phenomenology of reading and his ‘coherent’, ‘cyclic’, ‘encyclopaedic’ system has no historical foundation.

v) Frye turns away from the traditional ‘Anglo-Saxon commitment to interpretation’ and from the ‘dominant critical tradition’ from Hulme through Eliot to the New Critics.

Notwithstanding all the critical strictures against his system, like the ‘irrefutable philosopher’ determined to be there even ‘after being refuted’ Frye continues to defend, in the face of such critiques, the underlying continuity and validity of his systems. Stating his case quite forcefully and with a pointed reference to the Anatomy he affirms in the process that his hypotheses have an empirical foundation:

Anatomy of Criticism presents a vision of literature as forming a total schematic order, interconnected by recurring or conventional myths and metaphors, which I call "archetypes". The vision has an objective pole: it is based on a study of literary genres and conventions and on certain elements in Western cultural history. The order of words is there, and it is no good trying to write it off as an hallucination of my own. The fact that literature is based on unifying principles as schematic as those of music is concealed by many things, most of them psychological blocks, but the unity exists and can be shown and taught to others, including children. But, of course, my version of that vision also has a subjective pole: it is a model only, colored by my preferences and limited by my ignorance. Others will have
different versions, and as they continue to put them forth the objective reality will emerge more clearly.

Frye's claims on the 'unity' of his system and his 'subjective pole' underlining his personal preferences are perfectly justified. As to his second claim that 'others will have different versions' is quite evident from the myriad expressions of admiration offered by the discerning critics on Anatomy. For instance, A. Walton Litz opines that "...Anatomy of Criticism is a major work of enduring importance... it is the first great work of English or American literary criticism not produced by a practicing artist, and signals a decisive turn toward the continental model". Rene Wellek argues that "Northrop Frye's immensely influential and highly ingenious Anatomy of Criticism wants to abolish all critical judgment in favour of a concept of literature that makes it an organ of myth-making, a part of man’s dream of self-definition. The result is that he can discuss any fairy tale, legend or detective story as if it were on an equal footing with the greatest works of Dante, Shakespeare or Tolstoi". Continuing his argument further, he opines: "In Northrop Frye's Anatomy of Criticism, the cycle of nature rules over all literature. The book does much more than the title seems to promise. It is a theory of literature as existing in its own universe, no longer a commentary on life or reality, but containing life and reality in a system of verbal relationships".

Commenting on the impact created by the Anatomy in the English curriculum, Salusinszky observes: "...as the most systemic
treatise on poetics since Aristotle, the Anatomy was one of the great forces behind the establishment of the field now called "critical theory" - a field which has since grown so crowded that periodic crises can be announced in it. The Anatomy demonstrated that, even if we cannot agree about critical methodology, we can at least disagree about critical methodology, and the institutional effects of this demonstration can now be seen in the English curriculum of every major university in the world". Salusinszky concludes his observation saying, "There can be little argument about the fact that Frye has been the most influential critic since the Second World War". Hazard Adams believes that "The most comprehensive effort to gather the strands of romantic and postromantic literary theory together under the guiding terms "symbol" and "allegory" has been Northrop Frye's Anatomy of Criticism. Fletcher observes that "The Anatomy combines multiple techniques and outlooks". He further maintains that "The Anatomy is useful to literary history and more narrowly to literary history, because it can take the form of utopia... By analogy the Anatomy would present a vision of the end toward which criticism tends, especially if criticism is conceived as a socially complex enterprise". He then concludes the argument saying, "The Anatomy of Criticism is indeed its authors' own mental analogy and presents his thoughts as a single intellectual pattern. More exactly this is a Blakean mind informed by mythopoeic prophecy..." Lentricchia opines that "The consistency of Frye is the consistency of an idealism in extremis. Anatomy of Criticism is poised crucially in 1957, looking at once backward to traditions in
The first chapter of the thesis is aimed at introducing Frye. While doing it we traced his background, followed his literary career, referred to the early influences on him and recorded his achievements as a major critic. The chapter further gave an outline of New Criticism against which Frye had developed his critical theories by pointing out the inadequacies and shortcomings in the New Critical practice. It was maintained that Frye's critical system emerged as an appropriate response to Formalism and New Criticism.

The second chapter traced the historical evolution of the archetypal criticism and evaluated it in the light of critical observations by various critics on the subject. A discussion on Frye's view of archetypal criticism is followed by a study of his theory of archetypal meaning and *mythos*. The chapter thus attempted to situate and evaluate Frye as an archetypal critic.

The third chapter began with a historical overview of Myth–Literature relationship. It focused on the study of myth, elaborated Frye's notion of myths and referred to his classification which was mainly based on the linkage shown by him between specific myths and specific literary genres or forms. In the concluding section of the chapter a discussion of Frye's two central notions, the myth of concern and the myth of freedom was
done elaborately to show that they relate different literary genres to these two central forms of myth.

Chapter five discusses Frye's theory of symbols which shows his division of five phases of myths namely literal, descriptive, formal, mythical and anagogic. The chapter further refers to Frye's emphasis on the need for polysemous meaning of text and considers his attempt to situate a literary work in its narrative context or in its narrative sequence of meaning.

Chapter six examines Frye's theory of genres which is founded on the generic distinctions in literature termed by Frye as 'the radical of presentation, 'the condition set up between the poet and his audience'. The chapter further discusses Frye's theories of four types of generic rhythms namely, recurrent rhythm, rhythm of continuity, rhythm of decorum and rhythm of association.

While dealing with Frye's views on literary criticism, chapter seven throws light on the following four basic literary concepts in Frye's critical framework: i) his views on critical autonomy or literary autonomy; ii) his argument that criticism is a science; iii) Frye's critique of value judgments, and iv) Frye's view of imagination. The chapter deals with Frye's attempt to establish the identity of criticism as an autonomous discipline and examines his claim that criticism should restrict its relationships to other disciplines by upholding its own independence.

Chapter eight studies the applied criticism of Frye. By focusing on Frye's study of three authors, namely, Milton,
Shakespeare and Eliot, it is argued that Frye's applied criticism is quite in tune with his theoretical criticism and that there is a commendable harmony between his theoretical and practical criticism.

Chapter nine deals with Frye's writings on Literary History. It develops an argument that Frye did not lack a historical perspective as claimed by critics like W.K. Wimsatt. The second part of the chapter studies Frye's writings on Bible and Literature.

The concluding chapter brings together the different threads of arguments developed in nine chapters that precede it. It takes an overview of some basic questions raised by several critics of Frye and finally attempts to situate and evaluate Frye as a literary critic of great standing.

V

Frye's work marks a definite, indeed a total break with the main endeavour of Anglo-American critical theory. Unlike Eliot's ' impersonality theory', Richards's 'scientific method', Arnold's 'class-configurations' or Murry's 'inner-voice' and 'mystical experience', Frye preferred to develop a more comprehensive theory of art. He attempted to work out, like a syncretist, a rational synthesis of various principles and techniques of literary criticism by taking for consideration the whole phenomena of literary experience, isolating in the process each genre, myth and archetypal literary symbol and then relating them back to literature as a whole. He organized his findings
into specific categories and finally came up with four critical approaches that would eventually form the basis of his four central essays, namely, 'Historical', 'Ethical', 'Archetypal', and 'Rhetorical' criticisms. The first of it, 'Historical Criticism' deals with the modes in literature; the second essay, 'Ethical Criticism' studies symbols in literary works; 'Archetypal Criticism', the third essay, relates to myths, images and archetypes; and finally, 'Rhetorical Criticism' concerns with the genres and generic classification of literary works. Frye ascribed each of these four approaches a definite place in his hypothetical structure but put a particular emphasis on literary archetypes and their relationships to myths.

Impressed by Frye's pre-occupation with archetypes and myths, Wayne Rebhorne was tempted to remark, "... Frye's penchant for plunging beneath the surface of particular works to bring up the pearls of their mythic structures has been both a source of wonder and the cause of many raised critical eyebrows".

Frye began with the simple aim of presenting a 'synoptic view of the scope, theory, principles and techniques of literary criticism' and wrote 'A Polemical Introduction' and a 'Tentative Conclusion' to defend this aim. Frye's four critical essays also systematically map out the hypothetical verbal structure of literary criticism as an autonomous humanistic discipline. Published together in book form in 1957, these essays comprise his poetics, Anatomy of Criticism, a non-judgmental theory of literature, a book that established beyond doubt not only Frye's
own brand of 'Archetypal Criticism' as a force to reckon with, but also as "existing in its own universe, no longer a commentary on life or reality, but containing life and reality in a system of verbal relationships".

Though the four essays of the Anatomy constitute the main plank of Frye's entire critical enterprise and each essay in itself constitutes a distinct school of thought, Frye has consistently maintained his eclectic position quite admirably by refusing to be branded as a champion of one or the other schools. His pre-occupation and over-emphasis on archetypal interest however, have clouded his approach to individual texts and secondly, earned him the label of a Jungian critic. But this seems to be only a partial assessment of Frye in which his total achievement as a critic is not taken into account. When Frye speaks of archetypes, he is referring not the Jungian concept of racial consciousness, but to certain typical images such as the sea or the forest that recur repeatedly in poetry. Frye believes that in literature, the repetition of such common images of physical nature cannot be explained away as mere coincidences. In his view, each is an "archetype" or a "symbol" which connects one poem with another and thereby helps to unify and integrate our literary experience. Besides, Frye himself warns us quite specifically that his use of the terms "myth" and "archetype" should not be taken as an indication that he is Jungian like Maud Bodkin, "whom... I resemble as much as I resemble the late Sarah Bernhardt".

294
Frye's greatness as a literary critic is to be gauged not only from his achievements alone, but also from the strategies that he had employed to achieve critical precision. Like a visionary who saw "the truth early and has found no reason to change his mind in any important respect", Frye discovered the following four things.

(a) the art of literary criticism was not only misunderstood but was also in disarray mainly on account of a gap in communication among the critics;

(b) in order to bridge this gap, it was felt necessary to develop "a coordinating principle, a central hypothesis which, like the theory of evolution in biology, will see the phenomena it deals with as parts of a whole".

(c) each critical school had its own specific theory but there was no general framework to measure it by; and

(d) the measure he wanted to devise had to be broad enough to include, in the words of Denham, "the dialectically opposite emphasis: the moral and social reference to criticism, taste and "positive" value judgments; the centrifugal aspect of literary meaning; ideas about the autonomy and the scientific nature of criticism, about value judgments and about literature as self-contained, and ...a breadth of reference which permits him to discuss literature in both its poetic and its more-than-poetic contexts".

No other critic, we believe, has so far attended to such intricate questions more uncompromisingly than Frye. In a way,
this itself marks his invaluable contribution to the field of literary criticism. The passage cited above also implies that Frye's critical plan was extremely ambitious. No wonder that critics and scholars found his achievements too colossal and often too "resistant to paraphrase". Milind Malshe, even while eulogising Frye's critical enterprise comments over this aspect quite convincingly when he states,

One of the most important polycentric schemes developed in the twentieth century is that of Northrop Frye. It is impossible to discuss briefly the intricacies of a scheme as complex as the one presented in the *Anatomy of Criticism*.

Nevertheless, a few instances where Frye has displayed the originality of his critical vision are worth mentioning here.

In chapter two, while discussing the idea of tragedy, we have observed that the task of rehabilitating comedy and placing it on par with tragedy was taken up for the first time by Frye. Frye has established that "comedy has as much dignity as the perennially favored tragedy". Impressed by Frye's unique contribution in this regard, critics like Rebhorne realized that Frye is not only "...the starting point for modern criticism of Shakespearean comedy and romance" but that "Frye's approach to the comedies is the inevitable point for all subsequent criticism which amounts anything at all".

Secondly, Frye has quite successfully established the importance of myths in the understanding of literature. He postulated that the study of myths helps us in classifying literary works in a better manner. They constitute not only the
integrating principle but also act as the very constructing principle of literature.

Thirdly, as regards the study of literary history, Frye postulated an altogether different method by showing preference for social values, norms, conventions and ideologies for the study of literary history of any particular age. Frye not only simplified but even enlarged the scope of studying literary history. Frye's method of studying literary history is thus more safe, objective in character and inclusive in nature. It helps a student of literature develop an objective and descriptive approach to the study of literature.

Fourthly, while classifying literary works into different genres such as tragedy, comedy et cetera, Frye has made a radical shift from the traditional Aristotelian notions. For Aristotle, the presence of hamartia or typical mental traits or mental make-ups determined the classification of literary works into a tragedy or a comedy. Instead of identifying character-traits of a hero, Frye preferred to concentrate on the actions of hero when he encounters a human or a natural situation.

In the ultimate analysis, how is one to judge such an 'intricate', 'complex' theory of art-criticism, the trial summary of ten years' labour? What criteria should one apply to evaluate a theory which not only scorns value-judgments but itself claims to be non-judgmental? Has Frye's 'enthymemic', 'polycentric' scheme made any significant contribution to the understanding of art in a way hitherto unknown? These questions
lead us to the question concerning the origin, nature, function, and characteristics of art.

For Frye art has its origin in nature. Frye's understanding of literary arts is a part of his larger understanding of man-nature relationship. In Frye's view, different forms of literature (comedy, romance, tragedy, and satire) and different phases of man's growth (youth, maturity, old age and death) have a link with nature's seasons (summer, spring, autumn and winter).

In his eagerness to explain literary works and different art-forms on the basis of his notion of man-nature relationship, Frye correlated the different genres of literature with different phases of mythology of seasons.

In Frye's view, nature enjoys a supreme position. All forms of art have necessarily to conform to the ways of nature and its effects on the life of man. Frye made an attempt to establish that it is possible to explain the complex phenomena of nature in a scientific manner. He has substantiated his arguments by giving us an elaborate classification of art-forms into drama, lyric and so on which is necessarily based on the linkage he had established between the seasons of nature and the human situations. These classifications establish beyond doubt nature's influences on art-forms and art-works and explain the nature of art conceived in a characteristic manner by Frye.

As regards the function of art, Frye believes that basically art has mainly two functions a) aesthetic and b) social. His stress on these dual functions of art (aesthetic and social)
distinguishes him from his predecessors such as the New Critics, the autonomists and the non-autonomists who took extreme and contending positions on the function of art. By emphasizing and merging the twin aspects (social and aesthetic) of art, it was possible for Frye to develop a more inclusive and educative approach to the problem of function of art.

VI

Fifties mark an important critical juncture in the history of literary criticism. New Criticism, the mainstream 20th century literary criticism, proved to be a spent-force by this time as it was unable to meet the literary challenges of the times. The approach of New Critics was essentially text-oriented as they upheld the autonomy or self-sufficiency of literature and prescribed a close analysis of a literary text to arrive at an understanding of configurations underlying it as the pre-eminent task of the critic. In their eagerness to believe that the critic's appraisal must not contaminate an understanding or experience of art by moral, social, historical or other material, they overlooked even the two most important and basic aspects of art, namely, the aesthetic and the social. Gradually, on account of their own inherent weaknesses, New Critics reached a point of exhaustion and by 1950s they were almost in a moribund condition.

At this critical juncture, an 'anti-New Critic', 'dissident', 'anti-academic' voice was needed to play a historical role: to 'salvage' literary criticism and restore it to its proper track.

299
Like a historical force cut out to play this historical corrective, Frye emerged on the scene at the precise historical moment and achieved this task in a clean and scientific manner. This was indeed, one of the greatest achievements in the history of literary criticism.

Unlike the autonomists, the non-autonomists or any of his predecessors, Frye did not take an extreme position but preferred a middle and a more reasonable path. He was not interested in studying literature per se, but was interested in dealing with it on its own terms and on its broader contexts. He viewed literature in two aspects, aesthetic and social and believed that it is possible to link the aesthetic aspect with the social aspect with the help of certain universals. Frye thus turned to myths and archetypes as his universals for the analysis of literature. Myths and archetypes, he noticed, could work not only as the substratum of art-works but they can also be considered as the foundations of literature. Secondly, by turning to myths and archetypes Frye was able to integrate not only the social and aesthetic perspectives but also could touch upon practically every significant aspect of literature. He observed that myths and archetypes were not limited by categories of specific time or specific space. They had a perennial life of their own, in other words, they would not fade away with the times. At the most, they could simply be "displaced or covered with the veneer of realism, making the new work credible, logically motivated, or morally acceptable to its audience". Frye thus, proved true to his own proclamation in the *Anatomy* that a person "can get the whole
liberal education simply by picking up one conventional poem and following its archetypes as they stretch out into the rest of literature". No wonder that his own original critical vision, i.e. his commitment and critical concern for "the whole work of scholarship and taste concerned with literature which is variously called liberal education, culture or the study of the humanities" became not only a source of inspiration and influence "on a generation of developing literary critics greater and more exclusive than that of any one theorist in recent critical history" but a "model for educational programs in the humanities".

Frye's achievement as a literary theory theorist was aptly described by Denham in these words: "A great mind has produced a great body of knowledge which will continue to instruct and delight so long as critics ask questions and dream dreams."

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Articles by

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murray Krieger</td>
<td>1 – 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northrop Frye</td>
<td>27 – 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angus Fletcher</td>
<td>31 – 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.K. Wimsatt</td>
<td>75 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geoffrey Hartman</td>
<td>109 – 131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northrop Frye</td>
<td>133 – 146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John E. Grant</td>
<td>147 – 188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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