CHAPTER - 1

Introduction:

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I

Northrop Frye, as a critic, underwrites an irony: he is regarded simultaneously, as an intellectual rebel who pioneered the autonomy of literary criticism, and is dismissed as an obscurantist who championed the Grand narrative based on archaic ‘myths’: it is he who was responsible for leading criticism out of ultra-formalist textual obsession of the New Critics, by way of slaughtering a whole host of theoretical Holy Cows and it was also he whose influence withheld, for a long time, the entry of Structuralism into the American academia. There is a strange historicity that engages his project, which is ambitious in its dimensions and audacious in its scope: in the year 1957, he stormed the intellectual world with publication of the Anatomy of Criticism; in the very same year New Criticism was brought to its climax, by Wimsatt and Brooks in their magnum opus Literary Criticism: a Short History. This lets the apotheosis of the New Criticism eerily coincide with its apocalypse. Towards the end of his career, he engaged himself, dialectically, with the post-modernists: he joined ranks with them in their tirade against the cultural hang-over of the Renaissance in the shape of rationalism as distilled from the Hellenic heritage of the Europe; at the same time, he continued to contest sincerely the attempts to decentre logos (in its Christian connotation) from the Western consciousness. This makes him an ambiguous figure in the post-modern context. It is no more academically fashionable to work
a project on Frye: Terry Eagleton asks about Frye’s works, ‘but how many students of literature today read them?’ (Literary Theory 199). Yet, he remains one of the most quoted and most translated intellectuals of the Western world. The present critical establishment seems to maintain an uncanny conspiracy of silence about Frye; like the archetypal Platonic poet Frye is, simultaneously, praised and banished from the Academia’s ideal kingdom.

The aim of the present project is to rescue Frye from this limbo of silence and situate him at the centre of contemporary polemics. This proposes to be an attempt to assess Frye’s achievements in the historic context of its evolution. Thereby, it tries to prove his relevance for the arguments informing the current literary and cultural debate. Therefore, the project starts with a survey of the Archetypal and, its cognate, the Myth criticism in whose womb his theoretical postulates hastened towards birth. Then it tries to map Frye’s own responses to the intellectual challenges of his time; through his sweeping schemata, his social commitments, his secular spiritual aspirations articulated through his passion for the Bible; his theoretical splendour, and his pragmatic forays into individual text and authors.

This chapter concerns itself with the first of these items i.e. the growth of the critical imagination of Herman Northrop Frye in its mythopoeic (i.e. archetypal and myth-critical) context. It then attempts to show Frye’s profile as a critic and intellectual and his international presence, which goes a long way towards justifying the rationale behind a project on Frye, as the present one.
Archetypal theory and criticism, although often used synonymously with myth theory and criticism has a distinct history and process. The term "archetype" can be traced to Plato (arche, "original"; typos, "form"). But the concept gained currency in twentieth-century literary theory and criticism through the work of the Swiss founder of analytical psychology, C. G. Jung (1875-1961). Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1916) and J. G. Frazer's *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (2 vols., 1890, 3rd ed., 12 vols., 1911-15) are the texts that formed the basis of two allied but ultimately different courses of influence on literary history.

Jung most frequently used "myth" (or "mythologem") for the narrative expression, "on the ethnological level" *(Colected 9, pt. i: 67)* of the "archetypes", which he described as patterns of psychic energy originating in the collective unconscious and finding their "most common and most normal" manifestation in dreams (8:287). Thus criticism evolving from his work is more accurately named "archetypal" and is quite distinct from "myth" criticism. For Jung, "archetype is an explanatory paraphrase of the Platonic *eidos*" *(9, pt. i: 4)*, but he distinguishes his concept and use of the term from that of philosophical idealism as being more empirical and less metaphysical, though most of his "empirical" data were dreams. He modified and extended his concept over the many decades of his professional life, often insisting that "archetype" named a process, a perspective, and not a content.

The first systematic application of Jung's ideas to literature was made in 1934 by Maud Bodkin in *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry*. "An attempt is here made to bring psychological
analysis and reflection to bear upon the imaginative experience communicated by great poetry, and to examine those forms or patterns in which the universal forces of our nature there find objectification" (vii). This book established the priority of interest in the archetypal over the mythological. The next significant development in archetypal theory that affected literary studies grew out of the effort made by U.S.-born and Zurich-trained analyst James Hillman (b. 1924); the effort was "to move beyond clinical inquiry within the consulting room of psychotherapy" to formulate archetypal theory as a multidisciplinary field (Archetypal i). Hillman invokes Henri Corbin (1903-78), the French scholar, philosopher, and mystic known for his work on Islam, as the "second father" of archetypal psychology. As Hillman puts it, Corbin's insight that Jung's "mundus archetypalis" is also the "mundus imaginalis" (that corresponds to the Islamic "alam al-mith") was an early move toward "a reappraisal of psychology itself as an activity of poesis" (24).

Hillman also discovers archetypal precursors in Neoplatonism, Heraclitus, Plotinus, Proclus, Marsilio Ficino, and Gimbattista Vico. In Re-Visioning Psychology, the published text of his 1972 Yale Terry Lectures (the same lecture series Jung gave in 1937), Hillman locates the archetypal neither "in the physiology of the brain, the structure of language, the organization of society, nor the analysis of behavior, but in the processes of imagination" (xi). Archetypal theory then took shape principally in the multidisciplinary journal refounded by Hillman in 1970 in Zurich, Spring: An Annual of Archetypal Psychology and Jungian Thought. According to Hillman, that discourse was anticipated by Evangelos Christou's Logos of the Soul (1963) and extended in religion (David L. Miller's New Polytheism, 1974), philosophy (Edward Caseys Imagining: A Phenomenological Study, 1976), mythology (Rafael Lopez-Pedraza's Hermes and

These archetypalists, focusing on the imagination claim kinship with semiotics and structuralism. Their discourse is conducted in poetic language. Their notions of "soul-making" come from the Romantics, especially William Blake and John Keats: "By speaking of soul as a primary metaphor, rather than defining soul substantively and attempting to derive its ontological status from empirical demonstration or theological (metaphysical) argument, archetypal psychology recognizes that psychic reality is inextricably involved with rhetoric" (Hillman, *Archetypal* 19).

This burgeoning theoretical movement and the generally unsatisfying nature of so much early "Jungian literary criticism" are both linked to the problematic nature of Jung's own writing on literature, which comprises a handful of essays: "The Type Problem in Poetry," "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry," "Psychology and Literature," "Ulysses: A Monologue," and "Is There a Freudian Type of Poetry?" These essays reveal Jung's lack of awareness as a reader despite his sense that they "may show how ideas that play a considerable role in my work can be applied to literary material" (*Collected*15:109n). They also attest to his self-confessed lack of interest in literature: "I feel not naturally drawn to what one calls literature, but I am strangely attracted by genuine fiction, i.e., fantastical invention" (*Letters* 1:509). This explains his fascination with a text like Rider Haggard's novel *She: The History of an Adventure* (1887), with its unmediated representation of the "anima." As Jung, himself, noted: "Literary products of highly dubious merit are often of the greatest interest to the
psychologist" (Collected 15:87-88). Jung was also more preoccupied with dreams and fantasies, because he saw them as products of the unconscious, in contrast to literature, which he oddly believed, citing Joyce's *Ulysses* as an example, was created "in the full light of consciousness" (15:123).

Issues of genre, period, and language were ignored or subjected to gross generalization as Jung searched for universals in as disparate as the fourth-century *Shepherd of Hermas*, the *Divine Comedy*, Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499), E. T. A. Hoffmann's tales, Pierre Benoît's *L'Atlantide* (1919-20), and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "Hiawatha," as well as works by Carl Spitteler and William Blake. But the most enigmatic literary text for Jung's life and work was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust*, not because of its literary qualities but because he sensed that the drama expressed his own personal myth (Letters 1:309-1Q). Further, the text offered confirmation of the only direct contribution Jung made to literary theory: a distinction between "psychological" and "visionary" texts (Collected 15:89-90). This heuristic distinction was formed, solely on psychobiographical grounds: Did the text originate in, the author's experience of consciousness and the personal unconscious or his experience at the level of the archetypal collective unconscious? And concomitantly, on which of these levels was the reader affected? Confirmation of this theory was Jung's reading of *Faust*: part one was "psychological"; part two, "visionary." Thus Jungian theory provided no clear avenue of access for those outside of psychology, and orthodox Jungians were left with little as models for the psychological analysis of literature. Many fell prey to Jung's idiosyncrasies as a reader, ranging widely and naively over genres, periods, and languages in search of the universal archetypes, while sweeping aside culture-and text-specific problems, ignoring his own role in the act of
reading. It was a kind of literature-as-therapy; it had the effect of keeping, archetypal criticism on the margins of academic discourse and outside the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines and departments. Bettina Knapp's 1984 effort at an authoritative demonstration of archetypal literary criticism exemplified this pattern. Her *Jungian Approach to Literature* attempts to cover the Finnish epic *The Kalevala*, the Persian Atar's *The Conference of the Birds*, and texts by Euripides, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Michel de Montaigne, Pierre Cor-neille, Goethe, Novalis, Rabbi ben Simhah Nachman, and W. B. Yeats. Despite frequently perceptive readings, the work is marred by the characteristic limitless expansionism and psychological utilitarianism of her interpretive scheme.

Given this background, it is not surprising to find in a 1976 essay entitled "Jungian Psychology in Criticism: Theoretical Problems" the statement that "no purely Jungian criticism of literature has yet appeared" (Baird 22). But Jos van Meurs's critically annotated 1988 bibliography, *Jungian Literary Criticism, 1920-1980*, effectively challenges this claim. Despite his deliberately selective focus on critical works written in English on literary texts that are also written in English, van Meurs, has collected 902 entries. Of this, he identifies slightly over 80 as valid and valuable literary criticism. While acknowledging the grave weaknesses of much Jungian writing on literature as "unsubtle and rigid application of preconceived psychological notions and .. schemes" resulting in "particularly ill-judged or distorted readings," van Meurs still finds that "sensitively, flexibly and cautiously used, Jungian psychological theory may stimulate illuminating literary interpretations" (14-15). The critical annotations are astute and are surprisingly thorough and suggestive. Van Meurs also resurrects successful but neglected early studies, such as Elizabeth Drew's of T. S. Eliot (1949), and discoves value in reductionist and
impressionistic studies, such as June Singer's of Blake. He notes that Singer's *Unholy Bible: A Psychological Interpretation of William Blake* (1970), though oversimplified in its psychobiographical approach and its treatment of characters as psychological projections of the author, does make original use in a literary context of such Jungian techniques of dream interpretation as "amplification" and of such fantasy-evoking procedures as "active imagination."

Van Meurs's bibliography conveys the great variety of Jungian writings on literature even within one language. He increasingly recognizes potential for further development and use of Jung's ideas, and the growth in numbers of literary scholars falling under the influence of Jung. A few names form a core of writers in English (including many Canadians)—Martin Bickman, Albert Gelpi, Elliott Gose, Evelyn Hinz, Henry Murray, Barton L. St. Armand, Harold Schechter, and William Stein—though no single figure has attracted the attention of academic literary specialists, and there is no persistent commonalities to fuse them into a recognizable school. To date, the British *Journal of Analytical Psychology* and the refilled American *Spring: A journal of Archetype and Culture* are the best resources for archetypal criticism of literature even though only a small percentage of their published articles treat such topics.

Thus, with the archetypal theorists multiplying across disciplines on the one hard and the clinically practicing followers serving as critics on the other, archetypal literary theory and criticism flourished in two independent streams in the 1960s and 1970s. The 1980s saw a new, suggestive, and controversial direction in archetypal studies of literature: the feminist one. With some of its advocates supported by early publication in the journal *Spring*, feminist archetypal theory and criticism of literature and the arts emerged full-blown in texts: Annis Pratt's
Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction (1981), which self-consciously evoked and critiqued Maud Bodkin's 1934 text; Estella Lauter's Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth Century Women (1984); and Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht's Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-Visions of Jungian Thought (1985). This last text explicitly named the movement and demonstrated its appropriation of archetypal theory for feminist ends in aesthetics, analysis, art, and religion, as well as in literature.

Feminist archetypal theory, proceeding inductively, restored Jung's original emphasis on the fluid, dynamic nature of the archetype. It drew on earlier feminist theory as well as the work of Jungian Erich Neumann to reject absolutist, a-historical, essentialist, and transcendentalist misinterpretations. Thus "archetype" is recognized as the "tendency to form and reform images in relation to certain kinds of repeated experience," which may vary in individual cultures, authors, and readers (Lauter and Rupprecht 13-14). According to this definition, the concept becomes a useful tool for literary analysis. It explores the synthesis of the universal and the particular, seeks to define the parameters of social construction of gender, and attempts to construct theories of language, of the imaginal, and of meaning that take gender into account.

The rise in the 1980s of the reader response theory and consequent impetus for canon revision have begun to contribute to a revaluation of Jung as a source of literary study. New theoretical approaches appear to legitimize orthodox Jungian ways of reading, sanction Jung's range of literary preferences from She to Faust, and support his highly affective reaction to Ulysses.
And new theories increasingly give credence to the requirement, historically asserted by Jungian readers, that each text elicits a personal, affective, and not "merely intellectual" response. Even French feminist Julia Kristeva has praised a Jungian contribution to feminist discourse on the maternal: it is the recognition that the Catholic church's change of signification in the assumption of the Virgin Mary to include her human body represented a major shift in attitude toward female corporality (113).

Archetypal criticism, construed as that derived from Jung's theory and practice of archetypal psychology, is a much misconstrued field of inquiry with significant but still unrealized potential for the study of literature and of aesthetics in general. Two publishing events at the beginning of the 1990s in the United States may signal arrival this kind of archetypal criticism through its convergence with postmodern critical thought, along with a commensurate insistence on its roots in the depth psychology of Jung: the reissue of Morris Phillipson's *Outline of a Jungian Aesthetic* (1963) and the appearance of Karin Bamaby and Pellegrino D'Acerino's multidisciplinary, multicultural collection of essays, *C. G. Jung and the Humanities: Toward a Hermeneutics of Culture* (1990).

At mid-century, Canadian critic (1912-91) introduced new distinctions in literary criticism between myth and archetype. For Frye, as William K. Wimsatt and Cleanth Brooks put it, "archetype, borrowed from Jung, means a primordial image, a part of the collective unconscious, the psychic residue of numberless experiences of the same kind, and thus part of the inherited response-pattern of the race" (*Literary Criticism* 709). Frye frequently acknowledged debt to Jung, accepted some of Jung's specifically named archetypes (i.e. persona, anima, counsellor and shadow) and even referred to his own theory as "Jungian criticism" (*Anatomy* 29). This, as a practice, was subsequently followed in some handbook of literary terms and histories of literary criticism, including one edited by Frye himself, which obscured crucial
differences and contributed to the confusion in terminology reigning today (see C. Hugh Holman and William Harmon, *A Handbook to Literature*, 5th ed., 1986; and Northrop Frye, Sheridan Baker, and George Perkins, *The Harper Handbook to Literature*, 1985). Frye, however, notably in *Anatomy of Criticism*, essentially redefined and relocated archetype on grounds that would remove him unequivocally from the ranks of "Jungian" critics by severing the connection between archetype and depth psychology: "This emphasis on impersonal content has been developed by Jung and his school, where the communicability of archetypes is accounted for by a theory of a collective unconscious—an unnecessary hypothesis in literary criticism, so far as I can judge" (111-12). Frye, then, first misinterprets Jungian theory by insisting on a Lamarckian view of genetic transmission of archetypes, which Jung explicitly rejected, and later settles on a concept of "archetype" as a literary occurrence per se, an exclusively intertextual recurring phenomenon resembling a convention (99).

On a general level, Jung's and Frye's theorizings about archetypes, however labeled, overlap, and boundaries are elusive, but in the disciplines of literature the two schools have largely ignored each other's work. Myth criticism grew in part as a reaction to the formalism of New Criticism while archetypal criticism based on Jung was never linked with any academic tradition and remained organically bound to its roots in depth psychology: the individual and collective psyche, dreams, and the analytic process. Further, myth critics, aligned with writers in comparative anthropology and philosophy, are said to include Frazer, Jessie Weston, Leslie Fiedler, Ernst Cassirer, Claude Levis-Strauss Richard Chase, Joseph Campbell, Philip Wheelwright, and Francis Fergusson. But Wheelwright, for example, barely mentions Jung (*The Burning Fountain*, 1954), and he, Fergusson, and others often owe more to Sigmund Freud,
Ernest Jones, *Oedipus Rex*, and the Oedipus complex than to anything taken from Jung. Indeed, myth criticism seems singularly unaffected by any of the archetypal theorists who have remained faithful to the origins and traditions of analytical psychology—James Hillman, Henri Corbin, Gilbert Durand, Rafael Lopez-Pedraza, Evangelos Christou.

### III

Myth criticism designates not so much a critical approach in literary studies as the convergence of several methods and forms of inquiry about the complex relations between literature and myth. So heterogeneous are these inquiries, connecting with so many interdisciplinary issues, that it is perhaps best to think of myth criticism as the locus for a series of complex and powerfully suggestive questions. Is myth embedded in literature, or are myth and literature somehow coextensive? Is myth (from Greek *mythos*, "tale, story") inescapably narrative in form? Is all literature susceptible to myth criticism? How self-conscious are literary artists in the use or incorporation of myth? How does myth in, or as, literature evolve historically? Does a single governing myth, a "monomyth," organize disparate mythic narratives and dominate? And most fundamentally, what does "myth" mean in the context of literary criticism? The divergence in answers to this last question has been so great, raecourse to different disciplines (philosophy, anthropology, psychology, folklore) so various, that the question becomes a veritable enigma.
A characteristic Romantic and post-Romantic tendency in defining myth is the denial of euhemerism, the theory that myths can be explained historically or by identifying their special objects or motives. The resistance to such reductionism is perhaps strongest in the work of the philosopher Ernst Cassirer, whose monumental *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* is given over in its second volume (1925) to the proposition that "myth is a form of thought" By this Cassirer means to insist that myth is a fundamental "symbolic form" that, like language, is a means of responding to, and hence creating, our world. But unlike language, or at least the language of philosophy, myth is nonintellectual, nondiscursive, and is typically imagistic. It is the primal, emotion-laden, unmediated bodying forth of experience. As a consequence, for mythic consciousness there is no reflective separation of the real and the ideal. The mythic "'image' does not represent the 'thing'; it is the thing" (2:38). This literal, as opposed to representational, quality of myth suggests that literature that taps into the recesses of mythic consciousness will reveal in powerful fashion the "dynamic of the life feeling" (2:38), which gives meaning and intelligibility to our world. Myth, understood in this honorific rather than pejorative sense, has profoundly influenced numerous literary critics and theorists. Isabel MacCaffrey, for example, insists in her study of *Paradise Lost* that the Christian myth at the center of the epic is not for Milton an oblique representation but rather the "direct rendering of certain stupendous realities now known only indirectly in the symbolic signatures of earthly life" (30). It was for this reason, she feels, that Milton was obliged to give up earlier allegorical plans for the poem: mythic material is simply inaccessible to allegory or metaphor, because it is itself their "cause." A poetic method that emphasizes the separation of "idea" and "image" runs exactly counter to a mythic conception, which insists on their identity.
The other highly influential, nonreductionist theories of myth come from the fields of anthropology. The French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss whose extensive work with South American tribal societies has yielded extraordinary analyses, argues that the meaning of myths lies not in their manifest content but rather in their underlying structure of relations. It typically works to mediate between polar extremes - raw and cooked, agriculture and warfare, life and death. In other words, the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction. Ultimately this leads Levi-Strauss to the notion that the structure of myths is identical with that of the human mind. Thus the mythopoeic (mythmaking) imagination, its structure and operations, is reflected in the structure and symbols of actual myths.

The very power of Levi-Strauss's argument about the nature and function of myth has made it difficult for literary critics and theorists to incorporate or utilize his accounts in a sustained fashion. His abstract notion of "structure" is derived by analogy from Ferdinand de Saussure's enormously suggestive conception of linguistic structure. While appealing to the more systematic semioticians and structuralists, this is less accommodative to the reliable definitions of literary form and structure in "mature" or sophisticated literary traditions. Eric Gould presents in *Mythical Intentions in Modern Literature* an intelligent and sympathetic account of Strauss's thought about myth and its relation to literature. But finally he can do little more than point to the anthropologist's rather dispiriting conclusion that myth survives only tenuously in modern fictional forms and that the novel is a literary genre that "tells a story that ends badly, and ... now, as a genre [is] itself coming to a bad end" (95). Gould's more optimistic conclusion— that literary studies can have in common with Levi-Strauss's mythography a self-conscious interpretive posture—seems only vaguely useful.
For literary criticism perhaps the most productive anti-euhemerist idea is that of a "collective unconscious," a racial memory, consisting of "primordial images" or archetypes. These find expression in characteristic forms— the Earth Mother, the divine child, the wise old man, the sacrificial death of the god, the mandala, the satyr or man-animal monster, the cress, the number 4—which provide the primordial elements in the myths and narrative constructions of widely different cultures. Although Jean Piaget and others have expressed skepticism about the universality or "racial" quality of Jung's archetypes, his archetypal vocabulary is now widespread in the discourse of those who might be called myth critics, including the most influential member of that group, Northrup Frye. Frye and others are attracted to Jung's theories not only because of the richness of imagery and narrative elements ("mythologems") but because these theories, like those of Cassirer and Levi-Strauss, command for myth a central cultural position, unassailable by reductive intellectual methods or procedures. By entitling the third essay of Anatomy of Criticism "Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths," Frye suggests a conceptual means of drawing individual and apparently unrelated archetypal images—the fundaments of psyche and culture—into a coherent and ultimately hierarchical framework of "mythoi," organizing not only individual literary works but the entire system of literary works, that is, literature. Thus works in the "realistic," or representational, mode (the ill-fated "modern" novel Levis-Strauss speaks of) stand in opposition to the "mythical mode," which, are about characters having the greatest possible powers, who act "near or at the conceivable limits of desire" (136), and, also, are the "most abstract and conventionalized" (134). The abstract and conventional qualities Frye attributes to the mythic mode in literature are ultimately reflective of the irreducible and inescapable place of myth itself. So conceived, Western literature, massively funded by the
powerful myths of the Bible and classical culture, might be thought of as having a "grammar" or coherent structural principles basic to any critical organization or account of historical development. Frye ultimately identifies the "quest-myth" in its various forms as the central myth (mono-myth) of literature and the source of literary genres. It is at once the logical conclusion of his approach to myth criticism and the source of ongoing debate.

No brief account can begin to do justice to the massive conceptual power and richly varied suggestiveness of Frye's theory of myths. If occasionally the schematization seems excessive or arbitrary, Frye's efforts nonetheless suggest how powerfully myth can organize our thinking about literature and about culture. His four "mythoi," or "generic narratives" (spring: comedy; summer: romance; autumn: tragedy; winter: irony and satire), have proved central in the ongoing project of rehabilitating genre theory. And his conviction that the "total mythopoeic structure of concern" extends beyond literature to religion, philosophy, political theory, and history suggests how myth criticism may ultimately connect with a larger theory of culture.

Frye's particular critical and theoretical project has stimulated enormous scholarly activity. But he has had considerable company in defining the possibilities for literary myth criticism. Leslie Fiedler argues that contemporary criticism has lost its way by failing to see how Plato's "ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy" is really a dispute between logos and mythos "as to which was the primal word" ("No! In Thunder" 1.518). Answering predictably and claiming that "mythos created poetry," Fiedler appropriates Jung's archetypes and Crocean intuitionism to define myth and thereby free poetry from the enervating embrace of logos (science, rationalism, logic). Having succeeded so welding opposing mythos to logos, however,
Fiedler comes perilously close to paralyzing criticism. His own critical project survives chiefly with his notion that literature comes into being only with the imposition of a "Signature" upon mythic materials, a "Signature" being the "sum total of individuating factors in a work" (1:537), the sign of the Persona. The insistence on both signature and myth, or archetype, with the predominance of each varying in individual literary works, creates a useful critical spectrum.

Many other modern myth critics and theorists, from the Cambridge Ritualists down to the present, have suggested productive ways of speaking about myth in literature and the connections between literary mythopoeia and the materials explored by other disciplines in our intellectual culture. C. L. Barber, for example, has explored the ways Shakespearean comedy achieves a characteristic "release" leading to social clarification; this "release" is related in turn to a ceremonial, ritualistic, finally mythic conception of human life that was evolving rapidly into a historical, psychological conception among the educated classes of Shakespeare's society. More recently Rene Girard has taken up a wide-ranging investigation of the central cultural role of ritual sacrifice and its relation to myths, especially those prominent in Greek tragedy. Arguing that this ritual is society's effort to deflect upon a relatively indifferent or "sacrificeable" victim the violence that would otherwise be vented on its own members, Girard offers deeply suggestive commentary on such plays as Ajax, Medea, and, most impressively, Oedipus Tyrannos. Even in so effectively establishing connections between ritual and myth on the one hand and tragic drama on the other, however, Girard is at pains to acknowledge the distinctively literary qualities of the plays, what he calls the "essentially ant mythical and antir ritualistic inspiration of the drama" (95). Girard's most important critical claim is that the depiction of the ritual victim, or "scapegoat," must be seen in drama not as simple superstition, a crude mythic
holdover, but as the metamorphosis of earlier "reciprocal violence," a communal violence "more deeply rooted in the human condition than we are willing to admit" (96).

Although "myth criticism" no longer enjoys its earlier vogue, its legacy is powerful. Frye's work remains deeply influential; critics of Shakespearean comedy or Paradise Lost must still come to terms with the arguments of Barber's and MacCaffrey's studies; Girard continues to be a striking presence on the contemporary critical scene; and many individual critical studies concentrating on mythic themes, as well as on the formal or generic consequences of those themes, form an important part of the exegetical tradition. This seems to be particularly true for studies of modernist and American literature. It is likely that the future of literary myth criticism will be determined by the vitality of mythography as a concern in other related or allied fields, as well as by the heuristic power of the questions such criticism can generate. One of the most important of these questions asks about the degree of mythic "self-consciousness" in literary texts. Is literature mythopoeia or mythology? In other words, is literature a creation or a reflective use of mythic materials? The nineteenth-century philologist and student of myth F. Max Müller proposed a distinction between the "mythic" and the "mythical" that gave early form to precisely this issue. And subsequently many critics have insisted on the very different ways in which myth is conceived and appropriated by Homer and Sophocles; Virgil and Milton; T. S. Eliot; Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Thomas Mann, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The peculiarly self-conscious and individual myth systems of poets such as William Blake and W. B. Yeats also beg the critical question sharply. In turn, other critics have asked how the Western myth tradition has underwritten canon formation and how, for example, black and feminist literatures are to be understood in relation to, and in conscious rebellion against, this tradition. If one accepts that the
proposition "myth is literature" is itself an aesthetic creation and hence defines further creative possibilities, then the question of mythic self-consciousness becomes particularly exigent. In short, complex critical and theoretical questions about myth and literature continue to be asked. The susceptibility of literature to forms of myth criticism depends upon the persuasiveness of answers to such questions, as well as upon the success of literary theorists in appropriating the empirical and conceptual investigations of myth by other disciplines.

**IV**

As a young professor, Frye was influenced by the structures in the works of Sir James Frazer and Oswald Spengler, though he was repelled by many of their concepts. He was also working on a campus where many colleagues were engaged in constructing encyclopedic, interdisciplinary studies: Charles N. Cochrane and Eric Havelock in classics, Harold Innis in political economy, Marshall Mcluhan in English. When Frye began to publish, particularly in *Canadian Forum* (a political and literary magazine of Social Democratic slant which he later edited), he showed encyclopedic interests as well, writing as frequently on music, the visual arts, and political matters as on literary topics. From 1942 on, he composed many versions of his book on Blake; in 1947, *Fearful Symmetry* appeared, twenty years after his interest in Blake was first aroused. In a 1986 review of Paul de man's *Rhetoric of Romanticism*, Frye observes that "most Romantic-centred critics have one figure that they use as a Virgilian guide through its contradictory mazes, and for de Man that figure is Rousseau" (52). For Frye, that figure is Blake. At the end of "The Survival of Eros in Poetry," there is a transcript of questions addressed to Frye in 1983, including
one asking whether his critical theory is Romantic, to which Frye replies, "Oh, it's entirely Romantic, yes." He goes on to agree that his theory probably differs little from Blake's, "because I've learned everything I know from Blake" (32). In *The Great Code* (1982), he states that what he learned from Blake, medieval exegetes, and "certain forms of Reformed commentary" (xvii) was how to read the Bible typologically and how to adapt the medieval fourfold interpretation of the Bible to poetic texts. Thus, his debts to Blake and the Bible are one: "In a sense all my critical work beginning with a study of Blake published in 1947, and formulated ten years later in *Anatomy of Criticism*, has revolved around the Bible" (xiv).

In clarifying Blake's poetry, Frye was intent upon helping readers to recover "a lost art of reading poetry" (*Fearful* 11), an art that depends upon counterpointing narratives and metaphors. "The contrapuntal symbolism of the Renaissance fell out of favour" (164) in the Augustan age, to be rediscovered by the Romantic poets. What the reader may learn of counterpoint from Blake is "that all poetry is allegorical" (9) and that major writers such as William Shakespeare and John Milton "require [of their readers] something of the allusive agility that the reading of Blake demands" (374). Such adroitness in analogical reading develops the reader's ability to understand polysemous meaning, as medieval and Renaissance audiences did. He or she will read any literary work first in terms of its linear units of narrative, then in terms of its spatial structure of imagery, then in relation to those structures in other works of the same genre, and so on, to the structures of the literary universe itself. Such recurrent units are what Frye calls the archetypes of literature. As Tzvetan Todorov argues in *Literature and Its Theorists*, for Frye "every text is a palimpsest" (91), and "all textuality is intertextuality" (96).
Frye reads Blake's poetry as organized on one myth (i.e., for Frye, one narrative), a reworking of the biblical one of creation, fall, redemption, and apocalypse, and juxtaposes that temporal narrative with the spatial paradigm of Blake's images on four levels: a redeemed apocalyptic world, a level of unfallen Nature accessible to the mind, a fallen world of time and space, and a demonic world of isolation. This model of narrative and imagery (Aristotle's *mythos* and *dianoia*) becomes the center for the structure of all Frye's subsequent work, developed in varying degrees but always present, whether in particular studies of Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, or Wallace Stevens or in general studies of critical theory. The hero's quest, through the levels of the fourfold world and back, becomes the radical narrative that he explores thoroughly in his works on romance, most schematically in *The Secular Scripture* (1976). His theory of a historical development of literary modes as a series of displacements of the hero as god originates in the exposition of the seven stages of Albion in *The Four Zoas*. Frye modulates that sequence into Vico's four stages — stories of gods, aristocratic heroes, and the people, followed by a *ricorso* through chaos back to the beginning — to arrive at the five stages of the development of modes in Western literature in the first essay of *Anatomy of Criticism*: myth, romance, high mimetic, low mimetic, irony. In such works as *A Study of English Romanticism* (1968) and *The Critical Path* (1971), Frye finds Blake's patterns in other Romantic poets. Through their works a mythology, or cluster of narratives, shifts the focus from the traditionally objective God and Nature to the constructs of the human imagination that are the organizing forms of the culture and civilization in which we live. The pivotal age for the modern world, then, is the Romantic period, because its poets stopped projecting their own creative powers outward and began recalling those powers into the human imagination. The narrative quest in literature since the Romantic period has therefore been an internal one. The influence of Oscar
Wilde's criticism on these conceptions is evident early and is repeatedly acknowledged throughout Frye's career, as in *Creation and Recreation* (1980), in which he describes Wilde as "one of our few genuinely prophetic writers" (5). After *Fearful Symmetry*, Frye extended his study of myth to literature as a whole. He published preliminary articles that were later collected in *Fables of Identity* (1963); the full argument appeared in *Anatomy of Criticism* in 1957. In *Anatomy* Frye argues that criticism, like any science should be developed descriptively and that value (judgments, though inevitably made by critics in the process of exploring their ideas, should not be the basis of the structure of poetics. Many critics, among them Harold Bloom, Geoffrey H. Hartman, Frank Lentricchia, Murray Krieger and Todorov have described the appearance of *Anatomy* as revolutionary, because Frye rejected the subordination of literary criticism to any other conceptual framework: "Criticism, rather, is to art what history is to action and philosophy to wisdom: a verbal imitation of a human productive power which in itself does not speak" (*Anatomy* 12).

Similarly, he also broke the newly ascendant New Critics' isolation of individual works from each other and ended their denigration of Romantic theories of poetry and the imagination, while incorporating into his treatment of rhetorical criticism their emphasis on close reading of the figural structures of texts. Among others, A. Walton Litz, Ian Balfour, Daniel O'Hara, and Krieger have also argued that this revolution made possible such later ones as Structuralism and Deconstruction as well as renewed interest in Phenomenology and Hermeneutics. Frye, however, sees these later movements as incomplete, because they "still seem only incidentally interested in literature itself and in what it does or can do for people" (*Spiritus* 106). It is nonetheless true that one of Frye's objectives in *Anatomy* is to bring together as many possible
critical approaches and methods as he can. Todorov insists that this syncretizing tendency does not lead to relativism, but that "rather than being a priori obligation, truth becomes the common horizon of a dialogue where different truths come into contact, it is what makes such dialogue possible" (101-2). On the other hand, in *Critical Understanding* Wayne Booth speaks for others as well as for himself in describing Frye's claims to pluralism as illusory and in asserting that Frye, like all "intelligent monists" (16), is not, as he suggests, accommodating all critical positions but affirming the ultimate truth of his own.

Frye defines the genre that gives its title to *Anatomy* in his discussion of the four forms of continuous prose fiction as the one that "relies on the free play of intellectual fancy ... presenting us with a vision of the world in terms of a single intellectual pattern" (310). The vision in his instance is from the perspective of the total structure of criticism. If the first essay is temporal, the second is spatial in its patterning of the symbol (for Frye, the basic literary unit) on the medieval four levels of interpretation. The first level is split between the descriptive sign, which moves centrifugally outward to other areas of discourse, and the symbol as motif, which moves centripetally into the language of literature. Then the symbol is treated as image, which includes formal or rhetorical analyses; next the symbol is treated generically in terms of its place as archetype; finally, on the anagogic level, the symbol is revealed as a microcosm of the literary universe itself. In the third essay, Frye explores the variations of the pregeneric mythoi of comedy, romance, tragedy, and irony or satire on a wheel of the parallel seasons beginning with spring; these mythoi lie behind all narratives. Frye also elaborates the archetypal imagery that embodies Aristotle's dianoia, the meaning of those myths from apocalyptic at the top of the wheel to demonic at the bottom. In the fourth essay, he writes on genre both in poetry and in
prose. In the "Tentative Conclusion," he widens the reference of his anatomy to all verbal structures, to a verbal universe beyond the literary one (352-53).

Many critics have been uneasy with what they have taken to be the static nature of the paradigms Frye elaborates and their isolation from the world of Becoming. In After the New Criticism, for instance, Lentricchia states that "Frye's entire literary universe (the real structure') stands isolated in its autonomous space, the river of time running far distantly beneath it" (15). Yet Frye strives to energize his model with such words as "counterpoints," "resonates," "drive," and "desire"; he conceives this model to be both diachronic and synchronous at the same time: "The mythos is the dianoia in movement; the dianoia is the mythos in stasis" (83). Frye varies this statement again and again in later writings, as in "Cycle and Apocalypse in Finnegans Wake" (1981): "And yet Vico's cyclical conception of historical process is really a vision of time within a spatial metaphor, and Bruno's conception of the identity of polarized opposites is a spatialized subject-object confrontation dissolving back into a temporal flux" (18).

Only the mentally awakened reader can hold these tensions in the energy of his or her imagination, the imagination that is described as the source of all energy in Frye's essay on Kant "Literature as a Critique of Pure Reason" (1983). Frye resists a social resolution in a synthesis of the contending opposites: "An older, and perhaps wiser philosophical tradition [than the Hegelian-Marxist one] tells us that the synthesis in fact never comes into existence and that antithesis or tension of opposites is the only form in which [the ideal society] can exist" (Critical 168). A fitting emblem of Frye's model is the gyroscope (seemingly static when revolving most
rapidly), the title and central metaphor of a play by the Canadian playwright James Reaney, that is organized in Frye's narratives, images, and metaphors. Todorov uses a similar metaphor, the Viconian spiral, in describing Frye's method; Frye himself has repeatedly used Jerome Bruner's spiral curriculum to characterize his own circling back to restate earlier positions and to develop them further by doing so.

Indeed, Bruner's theory is important in Frye's working out of his own thoughts on the social function of literary criticism, particularly in *The Critical Path*. What criticism can do is to awaken students to successive levels of awareness of the mythology that lies behind the ideology in which their society indoctrinates them. A society must have myths of concern, Frye concedes, but a myth of freedom is equally needed if its citizens are to perceive these myths as archetypes, not stereotypes. Education, then, is the source of social freedom, and the universities are the dynamo of education. It is in this area that Matthew Arnold's influence may be discerned, especially in his concept of the four powers of conduct, beauty, truth, and social manners. From the 1960s on, Frye used public lectures and the media to extend education in mythology to a wider audience; he campaigned relentlessly to demystify criticism and to bring it to the largest possible number of people. The lectures in *The Educated Imagination* (1963) were first delivered as Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio lectures; between 1968 and 1977 Frye served as a member of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunication Commission, the regulatory and policy-making body for broadcasting. Balfour, in the fifth chapter of his study of Frye, gives the fullest account of Frye's function as interpreter between writer and audience in his reviews of Canadian writing over the decades of his career. Two collections of those reviews and essays are *The Bush Garden* (1971) and *Divisions on a Ground* (1982).
After Frye's death, the novelist Margaret Atwood was quoted as saying that his greatest influence on Canadian writers was in his having treated writing as a serious occupation. His doing so was especially important in the decade of the 1950s, when he reported on the year's work in poetry for the annual "Letters in Canada" section of the University of Toronto Quarterly. His analyses are detailed and encouraging, while never failing to urge the development of greater skills in technique. In his "Conclusion" to the revised edition of Literary History of Canada, published in 1976, he celebrates what he calls the new professionalism of Canadian poets, referring to the advance in technique and craftsmanship that had resulted from the deepening awareness on the part of Canadian writers that structure and content are one and that the constructive power of the mind that unites them is the imagination. Frye's own writing on Canadian literature had much to do with this increasing professionalism.

Frye's first "Conclusion" to Literary History of Canada (1965) is dedicated to defining Canadian culture by contrasting it to the American. The Americans have proceeded deductively from the eighteenth-century a priori ideas of their Revolution. The Canadians, whose loyalist forebears rejected that revolution, have moved inductively and expeditiously through their subsequent experience; unfortunately, those are only sophisticated, nineteenth-century ideas, thought out in the vast emptiness of an often terrifying and primitive nature. Frye argues that the result has been that Canadians have been forced to ask not Who am I? but Where is here? It was necessary, therefore, to develop technology in transportation and communication to evolve a vocabulary and grammar to answer that question. Out of the demands of conceptual and rhetorical language to express this have come the theories of Innis and McLuhan. But Frye
argues that the early Canadian preoccupation with formulating, asserting, and defending social and moral values created a garrison mentality in the literary mind that operated on the level of the conceptual rather than the poetic and thus revealed its origin in history rather than in myth. Consequently, Frye sees the coming to maturity of Canadian poets and novelists as a result of their moving back from history and argument to the more primitive metaphorical mode of thinking. "Literature is conscious mythology" becomes a refrain in this essay, as he insists that a mature literature presents an autonomous world of the imagination that gives readers a place from which to see their actual world. Recovering this power to think metaphorically opens the gates of the garrison mentality and frees writers and readers alike from conformist assertions. Only then does writing cease to be a rhetorical contest and become what he calls it in his second "Conclusion," an expression of play, which is, for Frye, the highest form of the serious. Ever the optimist, Frye found in the Canadian literature of the last few decades a steadily increasing playfulness.

Frye returns to his beginning in *The Great Code* (1982), as he counterpoints once more his theories of narrative, language and metaphor, typology, and polysemous interpretation in a detailed study of the Bible. The form of *The Great Code* is itself an emblem of Frye's criticism. The two testaments are reflected in the binary structure of the book, "The Order of Words" and "The Order of Types." The first part moves through chapters on language, myth, metaphor, and typology; the second part explores the same topics in reverse order. The result is, as Frye notes, a structure of double mirrors reflecting each other rather than any "outside." So, in narrative, the types in one testament become the antitypes in the second, the continuity of the myth of the whole Bible being U-shaped. The quest of descent and ascent is the pattern of romance that Frye
has so frequently discussed, and yet again it is the reader who becomes the hero of that romance in search of identity. And it is typical of Frye that the quest ends in the mode of comedy, the mode of freedom, renewal, and joy. Balfour is as precise as he is witty in entitling his chapter on this work "The Great Coda: The Bible and Literature."

 Words with Power (1990) is a companion to The Great Code in which Frye parallels the way in which the Bible "is held together by an inner core of mythical and metaphorical structure" (102) with the way in which Western literature is constructed. It is, Frye states, "something of a successor also to the much earlier Anatomy of Criticism (1957). In fact ' it is to a considerable extent a summing up and restatement of my critical views" (xii). Whereas in Anatomy Frye defended the integrity of criticism in relation to literature, he now resists the attack on the integrity of literature by critics who fail to address the total coherence of the body of criticism and yield to "the popularity of rather aimless paradoxes that take us from 'everything is text' to 'nothing is text' and back again" (xix). Frye continues to find the coherence of criticism and of literature in the mythology at the center of every society. For Western societies, the first and fullest expression of that mythology is the Bible. In every verbal utterance, Frye postulates five linguistic modes, though differing in degrees and developing in history. The descriptive mode of science is the latest, preceded by the conceptual mode of history and philosophy, the rhetorical mode of ideology, and the imaginative mode of the poetic. Beyond the imaginative is a fifth linguistic mode, which Frye calls the kerygmatic and for which he suggests prophetic and metaliterary as synonyms.
The title of his last work is adapted from Luke's description of how Jesus' parabolic preaching at Capernaum was received by his auditors: "His word was with power" (4:32). Such power

"is of the imaginative mode, which does not address auditors/readers directly nor compel their belief but presents them with hypothetical poetic models. These models embody their primary concerns, their desires for food and drink, sex, property, and freedom of movement; they are condensations of myth and metaphor in an autonomous poetic world" (148).

Movement outward to other linguistic modes involves displacement. First, the pure metaphor becomes metonymic in the rhetorical mode, made to stand for secondary concerns such as patriotism or religious belief in a social environment. Rhetoric, used in the poetic mode as ornament, becomes a means of persuasion to compel belief in some ideology; for Frye, "an ideology is applied mythology" (23). Mythos is displaced further and is more fully subordinated to the authority of logos in the conceptual mode, in which a dialectic forces the separation of subject and object. History and philosophy are the expressions in argument and logic of this dialectic. Now it is the structures of logic that compel belief, though Frye argues that behind them may still be discerned myth and metaphor. The last linguistic mode to strengthen the dominance of logos is the descriptive, which scientists use to compel belief in facts.

Frye consistently differentiates his criticism from that of most critics by defining it as a criticism of metaphor, as opposed to the criticism of concept practiced by historians of ideas,
Marxists, structuralists, and followers Derrida. These other critics have their function in exploring the displacements of the poetic into the other three Linguistic modes, but they are also inadequate because they accept the subordination of *mythos* to *logos*, of the unity of myth and metaphor to the dialectic of subject and object in history, philosophy, and science. This subordination dates from Plato and Aristotle, and Frye finds it still dominant in Western culture (33). The Romantics attempted to reverse this relationship and to exalt *mythos* over *logos* once again; Frye endeavors to extend their enterprise in order to help readers perceive behind all verbal structures those myths and metaphors that maybe found in their pure state as "two aspects of one identity" (71). In responding to this pure model with heightened consciousness, readers may experience an epiphany going beyond the imaginative to the kerygmatic mode. Those who have criticized Frye as being antihistorical are answered by his insistence that it is only when readers dehistoricize experience that they escape the cycles of history and "become what they see" (84), transforming the poetic model into a model to live by. Through this existential metaphor, he affirms that "literature is a technique of meditation, in the widest and most flexible sense" (96).

In part 2 of *Words with Power*, Frye describes the model constructed out of counter-historical myth and counter-logical metaphor as the axis *mundi*. The model is the familiar fourfold one, and Frye traces one metaphor, an expression of one primary concern, for each level: mountain for freedom of movement, garden for sex, cave for food and drink, and furnace for property. Each is worked out from a central biblical example and explored through other examples from Western literature.
Frye's influence was, as Litz has argued, sweeping in the decade following the publication of *Anatomy*, and it has remained strong, as is evident in the huge number of entries in Robert Denham's bibliography. It is true that other critical schools have developed, and Frye himself was aware that some of their proponents have argued that his influence is over. "I am often described as someone who is now in the past and whose reputation has collapsed. But I don't think I'm any further down skid row than the deconstructionists" (Cayley 33). So long as readers focus on the literary structure itself, Frye will surely continue to be useful to them; and it is readers, and not other critics, that Frye always strove to reach. It is thus entirely fitting that his last publication should be *The Double Vision* (1991), consisting as it does of reworkings of public lectures in which he presents "a shorter and more accessible version of the longer books, *The Great Code* and *Words with Power*" (xvii).

V

When one stands back and looks at the overall contours of Frye's canon, one finds that he spent ten years developing the theory of archetypes, from 1947 when *Fearful Symmetry* appeared to 1957 when *Anatomy of Criticism* appeared with an essay entitled 'Archetypal Criticism.' He explained the term for another twenty-five years until *The Great Code* appeared in 1982, and there he abandoned the word, saying he would never have used it had he known how completely Jung's usage would dominate the field (48). He did not use the word at all in *Words with Power*, and this seems ironic because the book's second half, where Frye plays elaborate
variations on four biblical images, is probably the most sustained piece of archetypal criticism he wrote after *Fearful Symmetry*. From a long-range perspective, Frye took centre stage for a while as chief spokesman for archetypal criticism, but returned to his first vision of the mythological universe - a vision that he said first came to him at a very young age. His archetypal theory explained the analogical sort of thought that made his study of Blake possible.

Frye had spoken of the 'archetypal vision' in *Fearful Symmetry* (108), but he used the word 'archetypal' in a traditional Christian sense to refer to Jesus as the pattern of creation 'through whom all things are made' the original creative Word from which all other words have sprung. Here one is at the edge of cosmology, which archetypal critics ignore at their peril. Here one encounter the ancient theory (voiced by Martianus Capella in the Middle Ages and by Robert Fludd in the Renaissance) that there are three worlds: the macrocosm, the microcosm, and the archetype, which is to say, the great world of nature, the little world of human beings, and the world of God's mind. That is how the word 'archetype' is first used in Philo Judaeus's book *On the Creation of the World* (I, 69), and how it appears in Dionysius the Areopagite's commentary *On the Celestial Hierarchy* (II, 4). It refers to the world beyond the *primum mobile* that Dante enters in canto 27 of the *Paradiso*. The Christian *mundus archetypus* is close to Plato's world of the ideal form, and Plotinus spoke of rising above the physical world to its archetype (*Eaneads*, V. 1.4). Syncretic works drawing from Gnostic Christianity and Neoplatonism began to speak about the 'archetypal forms', as mentioned in the *Corpus Hermeticum*, (I.8a). In Neoplatonism, the logoi or seminal reasons (*rationes seminales*) were said to flow out of the archetype, through
the World Soul, and into the World Spirit, the last concept being close to what Shakespeare called 'great creating Nature' (*Winter's Tale*, IV. iv. 88,). The image in God's mind thus made its stamp on the creation, and for people in the biblical tradition, humankind was made in God's image (Gen. 1:26); for those in the Christian tradition, the ultimate human image is that of Jesus, who became the archetypal pattern for poets like Blake.

The archetypal cosmology was familiar to Frye from two scholarly studies that he recommended to his graduate students, one by Irwin Panofsky and another by Francis Yates. It was more familiar from the two poems he regularly taught. Milton's *De Idea Platonice* asked the question, where do ideas come from?, and imagined that the original 'archetype of man' (*hominus archetypus*) was still walking about somewhere in the wilds of creation. Yeats's *The Second Coming* evoked by its very title a 'vast image' which any Neoplatonist would recognize at once as an archetypal image because it came 'out of Spiritus Mundi.'

The 'archetypal world' belonged to the old cosmology that placed value 'up there' beyond the stars, and it hardly survived the Romantic revolution. C.G. Jung used geological, as opposed to cosmological, imagery when he spoke about archetypes residing in the substrata of the psyche; and his own ideas about the collective unconscious involved descent into an underground shrine or an old cellar, rather than ascent through the spheres. Frye sounded a bit old-fashioned using the old sense of 'archetype' even to explain Blake; he could hardly use it to explain modern literary criticism. Fortunately, as he found, the word 'archetype' had assumed a modern meaning in the eighteenth century. He discovered an example in James Beattie (*EAC,*
94), and in Samuel Johnson. Ironically, however, Johnson and Beattie used the word in the very way that Locke had used it in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Moreover, Locke used the term 'archetype' to explain that most un-Blakean of mental phenomena, the generalization. Locke wanted to show why people can communicate about justice and, in doing so, wanted to show where communication goes amiss and why language can only approach the ideal. He revived the old word 'archetype' but turned philosophy around by suggesting that the 'archetype' of an idea was not some pre-existent reality but what would now be called a social construction, to be arrived at by commonsense experience. Worst of all, for those who think Frye's criticism as emerging from Blake's 'case against Locke' the empirical Lockean archetype seems exactly what Frye began talking about in the fifties. When he spoke about the Cinderella archetype, for example, he was generalizing from his own reading experience, knowing that most of his readers would have had a similar experience of it. When he envisioned a science of criticism, he was building the case for Locke. To be sure, he did not take the Lockean tradition so far as did Kenneth Burke, who drew from Jeremy Bentham's theory of 'archetypation' as well as from Aristotle's concept of entelechy and proceeded to argue that critical archetypes were creations after the fact, 'mythic ways of formulating entelechial implications (or possible summings-up in principle) by translating them into terms of a vaguely hypothetical past' (*Dramatism and Development*, 43–4). However, inasmuch as Frye made the case for Locke he built a case against Jung, whose archetypes were as innate as the instincts, indeed were said to be images that the instincts have of themselves. On this account, of the innate versus the socially constructed, Jung's archetypes are fundamentally different from Frye's.
But that is not to say that they are incompatible. Reading Jung in English in the late forties, when Frye studied his work most intently, was very different from reading him even a decade later. Frye had to settle for incomplete and often inadequate translations, which were completely redone when Jung's collected works began to appear in English in the fifties. He therefore read Jung as he might have read a difficult foreign poet like Rilke. He poured over Jung's analyses of two dream sequences, the first from *Symbols of Transformation* and the second from the opening of *Psychology and Alchemy*. He could not have known at the time that the analysis in the second would be followed by a thoroughgoing study of alchemy that opened the symbolic world of the alchemists for the modern students of literature. Nor could he have realized that Jung did not use the term 'archetype' until a decade after *Symbols* was written. Frye only had Jung's method, which consisted in amplifying dreams with a wealth of learning from anthropology and religion, and by the late forties he felt he had the method for himself.

When *Psychology and Alchemy* appeared in something like its present form in 1953, as one of the first volumes in what would become Jung's *Collected Works*, Frye wrote the longest book review of his career, 'Forming Fours.' In the review, he described the structure of Jung's theory as he might describe the world of Dante or Blake; and although he was a bit overschematic, he was remarkably right. His one mistake of any significance was a common one, and reflected Frye's nervous memories of Nazism: he explained that Jung's archetypes came from the collective unconscious and complained that Jung assigned specific racial content to what should be the common possession of humanity. A critic can easily answer this complaint, as Eugene
Williamson has done, by drawing attention to the title essay in Jung's *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, but that essay was first published in German in 1954, the year Frye's review appeared, and was not available in English until the volume appeared in 1959, two years after Frye's comments reappeared in *Anatomy*. 'Jung's readers are still confusing archetypes with archetypal images; the archetypes are pure relationship like mother or lover, while the archetypal images contain content that the individual brings from his or her own sensory experience' (111-112). This confusion could be avoided by reading Jung's *Memories* (e.g., 347) or his contribution to *Man and His Symbols* (96), both published in the sixties, but Frye read little of Jung after the fifties.

Towards the end of *Fearful Symmetry*, Frye observed that 'psychology and anthropology have worked great changes in our study of literature' and suggested that the emerging criticism might cast light on more than literature. 'It is conceivable,' he said, 'that such a study - the study of anagogy, if a name is wanted - would supply us with the missing piece in contemporary thought which, when supplied, will unite its whole pattern' (424, 425). Frye soon assigned the word 'anagogy' to its medieval sense of a divine overview and began using the word 'archetype' instead.

For his second appearance at the English Institute, in 1950, he wrote 'Blake's Treatment of the Archetype.' Towards the close of his paper, he drew parallels between Jung's *aнима* and Blake's emanation, and stated that Blake's poetry 'consisted almost entirely in the articulation of archetypes' (189). But lest he should sound like a Jungian, he hastened to add: 'By archetype I
mean an element in a work of literature... which can be assimilated to a larger unifying category.'
And here he came to a critical act of faith: no archetype, no totality; and its corollary: no totality,
no science of criticism. He had wrestled with the problem since chapter 1 of Fearful Symmetry,
where he tried to explain how his own cultural associations could open up Blake's world and
cautioned that source-hunting was for literalists and that with a poet as symbolically
sophisticated as Blake the 'analogue' was all (11).

In the late forties, 'archetype' was the magic word, and Frye's contribution to The Kenyan
Review series entitled 'My Credo' was naturally enough 'The Archetypes of Literature.' Fressed
for further definition, he presented The Literary Meaning of "Archetype" at the MLA
convention in 1952, and from there it was only a short step to Anatomy and its 'Theory of
Archetypal Meaning.' It is no surprise that he dropped the term 'archetype' in the end if one
remembers that his career followed the myth of return, which in his case meant back to Blake.
The word 'analogy,' with its link to the Logos, will become a more important word for Frye's
readers.

Archetypal criticism, so called, has gone out of fashion during the last decade or two, partly
because poststructuralism has rejected the very possibility of a 'totally intelligible' criticism such
as Frye hoped to derive from archetypes, and partly because the old determinisms that he
rejected - Marxism, Thomism, and the like (AC, 6,17) - have been replaced by the new
determinisms of race, class, and gender. These critics resist anything that smacks of elitism. It is
commonplace to say, as Charles Baldick does in The Concise Oxford Book of Literary Terms,
that archetypal criticism is reductive and ignores 'cultural differences' (17). These changes
remind a remark, that Alfred Harbage made in the early fifties, not long after having been
selected over Frye for a Shakespeare position at Harvard, that 'literary criticism was in need of a word like 'anarchetype' to account for radical innovations in the drama' (Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, xii). At about the same time, Leslie Fiedler was drawing his distinction between the archetype and the writer's signature on it (No! in Thunder, 309-28), which was not wholly unlike Eliot's distinction between the tradition and the individual talent, and Frye had rather more sympathy with these later distinctions.

Although many critics now seem bent on something like Harbage's 'anarchetypes,' some genuine archetypal criticism continues to be written after the school of Frye. To give only two recent instances: Femi Euba has written a book on the 'origins and development of satire in Black drama' which relies on Frye for its conception not only of satire but of its archetypal victims (chap. 3), and Meredith Powers has drawn upon Frye's later theories of codified literature in a book on the heroine archetype in the West. Further archetypal criticism is being written after the school of Jung, and it seems likely that rye's legacy as an archetypal critic will remain linked with Jung's.

Frye and Jung had a remarkable amount in common. They both grew up in relative isolation, in religious families of limited means; both came into their own at university, and both found that they needed to go their own way. In the shorthand of Jung's character typology, both were introverted thinking intuitives. Both were strongly attracted to mystical religion yet felt compelled to write in the language of science in order to win acceptance for their ideas, and both stepped outside that science in their last days. Leaving aside those scientific and positivistic
anxieties it can be found that they have more and more in common. When Jung turned from 'the language of science' he told his 'personal myth' in his *Memories* (3), and it turned out that he had lived a life of allegory: he had made the Orphic quest to rescue his anima from the underworld of the unconscious. Meanwhile, as Frye withdrew from his more polemical public persona and spoke more as a representative of his generation in Canada, he got past the anxiety about personal readings and what he had called impressionistic criticism. He had long resisted comparison to Maud Bodkin, an early proponent of reader-response criticism, in part because she was professedly introspective; but he came to admit that his own views are also personal. In giving up their claims to scientific authority, then, Jung and Frye spoke even truer of the unconscious and the imagination, respectively, and thus proved the old Romantic axiom of Emerson's *American Scholar*: the further one descends into oneself, the more one speaks for all selves.

The Jungians who seem to have learned Jung's lessons best are those who have followed their own quests; and of these, the most helpful for literary critics in may well be James Hillman, whose archetypal psychology is premised on what he calls 'the poetic basis of mind.' Hillman realized early on that 'all ways of speaking of archetypes are translations from one metaphor to another' and therefore talked explicitly about 'the genres and *topoi* in literature' (*A Blue fire*, 23). Hillman, for one, has drawn upon the work of Jung's friend Henri Corbin, a French scholar who discovered the archetypal imagination at work in the devotional literature of Persia. Corbin was scholar enough to recognize that he was describing the Neoplatonic concept of the *mundus archetypus*, stripped of its early Christian colouring, and he was philosopher enough to suspect
that this sort of imagination is not the creation of the individual poetic genius. It is rather the creator of individual genius, as expressed in what he called the *mundus imaginalis* or 'irraginal world.' The imagination, he explained, 'is the mirror *par excellence*, where the images of the archetypal world have their epiphany; this is why the *mundus imaginalis* is the foundation of a theory of the imagination's knowledge and function (Barnford, 127).

Corbin's theory seems remarkably close to much that Frye held dear - to Blake's holy city of the imagination (called Golgonooza because it existed 'beyond time') and to Stevens's 'Description without Place' (which Frye taught frequently):

> Even the seeming of a summer's day
> Is description without place. It is a sense
> To which we refer experience, a knowledge Incognito,... (343)

This is a world that does not literally exist anywhere but exists forever as a consequence. This transpersonal world would seem to embrace the collective unconscious, on the one hand, and the Romantic imagination, on the other - indeed, would seem to show them in similar light. This may be why Frye saw 'no need for the conception of a collective unconscious, at least for a literary critic' (*AC*, 112). Like the unconscious, the literary imagination is both a process and a product, a power and an accomplishment. Like all true acts of the imagination, Frye's words and thoughts are always available in the archetypal world:
Permanent, & not lost not lost nor vanish'd, & every little act,
Word, work & wish, that has existed, all remaining still...
Shadowy to those who dwell not in them, meer possibilities:
But to those who enter into them they seem the only substances

(Jerusalem, plate 13, lines 60-1, 64-5)

VI

All these have led to, what we can describe as, Frye's International Presence; it points to the power with which his reputation has gone beyond the confines of the critical polemics and academic portals to the wider world of common readers and shows the avidness with which he is read and appreciated beyond the borders of English speaking nations.

'Frye's pervasive influence': that was the phrase used in the jacket copy of Northrop Frye and Modern Criticism, the proceedings of the 1965 English Institute session devoted to Frye's work. In his early fifties, Frye was already seen by the director of the session, Murray Krieger, as having 'had an influence - indeed an absolute hold - on a generation of developing literary critics greater and more exclusive than that of any one theorist in recent critical history' ('Northrop Frye and Contemporary Criticism,' 1). Anatomy of Criticism was clearly a book for its time, and the
theories developed there are, in this age of theory, no longer in the vanguard. Even so, the thirty books by Frye published since Anatomy have attracted wide readership, and The Great Code, a bestseller in Canada, was reviewed in more than 160 publications. Frye may no longer have a 'hold' on a generation of critics, but the efforts to grapple with his thought have not diminished in the past thirty years, and the bibliographic record of commentaries on Frye, of rereadings of Anatomy and his other books, and of applications of his theories suggests that he is still a large presence in Anglo-American criticism. The holding of an international conference on Frye's legacy, after his death, provided an occasion for reflecting on the question: how has Frye fared on the international scene?

One index of Frye's international presence is the degree to which his books have been made available in languages other than English. The first translations of Frye were in German: Anatomy of Criticism in 1964 and A Natural Perspective in 1966. These were followed by the French translation of The Modern Century in 1968. The next year three more of Frye's books appeared in French, two in Italian, and one each in Japanese and Spanish. Since that time there has been a steady stream of translation: except for the year 1982, at least one translation of a Frye book has appeared every year since 1971. In addition to German, French, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish, one can read Frye's books in Portuguese, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian, Danish, Dutch, and Korean. Altogether there have been fifty-one translations of his books. The Italians have been the most industrious, having translated sixteen books, followed by the Japanese with nine. Of the sixteen books Frye wrote before 1977, all but Spiritus Mundi have been translated into at least one language, and translations of the books written after that time continue to appear. One can read The Great Code, for example, in French, Serbo-Croatian, Italian, Dutch, Spanish,
and Danish, and a Japanese translation is under way. In addition, Frye's essays can be read in Hungarian, Chinese, Hebrew, Polish, and Turkish. In summary, Frye's work is now available in seventeen languages.

The reception Frye's work in countries as different as Italy, Japan, and India gives further evidence of his international standing. Baldo Meo has contended that there are only a few disciples of Frye's archetypal criticism in Italy. But the Italians have, nevertheless, shown an uncommon interest in Frye: they flocked to the lectures he gave in Italy in 1979, sponsored a conference on his work in 1987, have written widely about him (his Italian bibliography has now grown to almost 200 items), and awarded him the prestigious Mondello Prize in 1990. At Frye's death, the Italian media carried a dozen major stories about his life and career.

Similarly in Japan, Frye's ideas have been widely disseminated through the translation of his books there, and Shunichi Takayanagi reports that among Japanese students of English literature Frye's critical theories, as well as his role in the study of Romanticism, are well known. 'All the major Japanese newspapers,' according to Takayanagi, 'reported [Frye's] death' ('Northrop Frye and Endo Shusaku,' 3), and Eigo Seinen (The Rising Generation), a periodical devoted to English studies, recently published articles by five Japanese scholars in a special section entitled 'The World of Northrop Frye's Criticism.' Takayanagi himself has offered graduate seminars on The Great Code and Words with Power.

Frye's influence in India has been profound and far-reaching, especially in the 157 Indian universities where English is taught. His ideas were assimilated earlier in India than in most
countries, because the teaching of his criticism did not have to wait for translations to appear. Mohit Ray, in a paper presented at the Toronto conference, observed that Frye's popularity in India began not with Anatomy but with Fearful Symmetry. This was an important book for Indians not simply because it treated a seminal English poet but also because of 'the connections Frye had suggested between Blake and the Bhagavadgita' (The Influence of Frye,' 2). Fearful Symmetry, Ray continues, 'immediately found a place in all university libraries and gave a new direction to Indian literary criticism in regional languages. By the time English critics, mostly with a sound background of English education, became familiar with Frye as a critic, Anatomy of Criticism (1957) had appeared. The book more than fulfilled the expectations roused by Fearful Symmetry. Since literary criticism is a part of the M.A. syllabus in English in almost all the Indian universities, Anatomy of Criticism, soon after its publication was recommended as a standard reference book in most universities ... It will not be an exaggeration to say that [Anatomy of Criticism] revolutionized Indian literary criticism' (2,3).Ray goes on to trace the influence of Frye not simply in English criticism in India but in sixteen regional languages as well, concluding that after the publication of Anatomy and Fables of Identity, Indian literary criticism underwent a 'sea-change' (8).

The records of the reviews of Frye's books in foreign languages are sketchy at best, as there are no indexes to reviews in some languages; but more than 170 reviews in languages other than English have been recorded - reviews of both the English and the foreign-language versions of Frye's books. In addition, there is a long list of reviews written in English that appear in foreign-language periodicals. Although some of Frye's books have received little or no notice in other languages, others have been reviewed extensively.
Mario Praz was already writing about Frye in 1955, and in the late 1950s and early 1960s, other Italian critics, most notably Remo Ceserani, Beniamino Placido, and Claudio Gorlier began to take notice. Perhaps the most important early essay on Frye not written in English was Robert Weimann's 'Northrop Frye und das Ende des New Criticism' published in *Sinn und Form* in 1965. Throughout the late 1960s, *Anatomy of Criticism* having by then established itself, a number of essays began to appear in other languages, including Italo Calvino, 'La letteratura come proiezione del desiderio'; Helene Cixous, 'Une science de la litterature'; Gianni Celati, 'Archetipologia sistematica: Per una iniziazione all'opera di Northrop Frye'; Hiroshi Ebine, 'Northrop Frye and the Novel' (in Japanese); Pierre Dommergues, 'Northrop Frye et la critique americaine'; Maurits Engel-borghs, 'Frye en den mythekritiek'; Hiroshi Izubuchi, *Anatomy of Criticism* and Its Environs' (in Japanese); and Sonja Basic, 'Northrop Frye kao mitski i arhetipski kriticar.' From these beginnings the international response to Frye's work in non-English-speaking countries, during the past two decades, blossomed.

Influence and reputation are difficult things to measure, and even though Frye has entered into the common currency of criticism, we cannot yet speak with authority about how his work will be viewed fifty or one hundred years from now. Many stories are yet to be told: while these data tell little about Frye's influence, they, at least, do suggest a substantial world-wide visibility.