
Northrop Frye Newsletter

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Frye Opens Embassy Lecture Series

On 14 September 1989, Frye opened the Embassy of Canada’s lecture series in the new Embassy’s theater at 501 Pennsylvania Avenue. His address, “Levels of Cultural Identity,” is published in this issue, beginning on page 2.

Frye Collection at Victoria University

The Victoria University Library at the University of Toronto has recently published, under the direction of archivist Debra Barr, a *Guide to the Canadian Manuscript Collections in the Victoria University Library* 1988 (388 pp.). The Frye papers in the collection, described on pp. 122-73, have been arranged according to the following categories: correspondence (the Guide includes a selected list of correspondents), literary manuscripts, professional material, personal material, material about Frye, and material sent to Frye by other authors. This extensive collection of documents, which occupies more than 10 meters of shelf space, contains a number of Frye’s annotated typescripts and drafts of articles. In the introduction to the exhibition catalogue, Robert C. Brandeis notes that “the Northrop Frye Collection at Victoria University Library is the most comprehensive collection of manuscripts, typescripts, and correspondence in existence in an academic institution.” An exhibition of selected materials in tire collection was on display in the E. J. Pratt Library, 22 September 1989 through 6 November 1989. Institutions may request copies of the *Guide* by writing Dr. Brandeis, Chief Librarian, Victorian University Library, 71 Queen’s Park Crescent East, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1K7.

Frye Centre

The Northrop Frye Centre at Victoria University of the University of Toronto was inaugurated on 22 September 1989. The purpose of the Centre is to support activities that arc akin to the thought and writings of Northrop Frye. To date the Centre has undertaken two initiatives: the creation of a research grant competition for faculty members at Victoria University and the awarding of travel stipends for visiting scholars at the Centre.

Professor Jane Millgate of the English Department at Victoria University presided over the ceremonies inaugurating the Centre. Dr. Eva Kushner, President of Victoria, welcomed the several hundred guests in attendance, outlined the Centre’s current and future programs, and named the members of the Centre’s Advisory Board; Robert Brandeis introduced the Northrop Frye Exhibit in the E. J. Pratt Library; and Robert D. Denham spoke on “Northrop Frye in Our Culture.”

The 1989-90 visiting scholars at the Frye Centre are Frihun Rinner from Innsbruck, Austria; Grant McCracken from Guelph, Ontario; and Anna Makolkin from Toronto. Tibor Fabiny from Szeged, Hungary, will become a visiting scholar in April 1990.

The Centre is financed by voluntary contributions. Those interested in helping support the Centre should address their inquiries and donations to Dr. Eva Kushner, President, *Victoria University*, 73 Queen’s Park Crescent, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1K7. Telephone: (416) 585-4510/4511.

Honorary Degrees

Since 1957 Northrop Frye has been awarded thirty-six honorary degrees. They have come from the following colleges and universities:

Carleton University, (1957) LL.D.
 University of Winnipeg (then United College) (1958) D.D.
 University of New Brunswick (1960) D.Litt.
 Queen's University (1962) LL.D.
 Mount Allison University (1962) D.Litt.
 University of British Columbia (1963) D.Litt.
 University of Manitoba (1964) D.Litt.
 St. Lawrence University (1966) D.Litt.
 Princeton University (1966) L.H.D.
 University of Chicago (1967) L.H.D.
 Dartmouth College (1967) D.Litt.
 University of Saskatchewan (1968) LL.D
 Franklin & Marshall College (1968) LL.D
 University of Victoria, B.C. (1969) LL.D
 Acadia University (1969) D.Litt.
 University of Western Ontario (1969) D.Litt.
 York University (1969) D.Litt.
 Middlebury College (1969) D.Litt.
 University of California, Irvine (1969) L.H.D.
 University of Windsor (1970) D.Litt.
 University of Waterloo (1972) D.Litt.
 Boston College (1972) L.H.D.
 Harvard University (1972) D.Litt.
 Coe College (1976) L.H.D.
 Royal Military College of Canada (1976) LL.D.
 University de Sherbrooke (1976) L.H.D
 University of Toronto (1977) D.Litt.
 Bates College (1978) L.H.D.
 University de Montreal (1980) D. de l'U
 Eastern Michigan University (1981) D.Litt.
 Columbia University (1983) D.Litt.
 McGill University (1983) D.D.
 Arizona State University (1985) L.H.D.
 Athabasca University. (1985) Dr. of Athabasca University
 Oxford University (1987) D.Litt.
 University of Bologna (1989) L.H.D.

Levels of Cultural Identity

Northrop Frye

I suppose that nowhere in the World is there a relationship between two countries even remotely like that of Canada and the United States. The full awareness of this relationship is largely confined to Canada, where it has churned up a good deal of speculation about "the Canadian identity," the extent to which Canadians may be said to be different from non-Canadians, meaning, ninety per cent of the time, Americans. I am not concerned with this approach to the question, which seems to me futile and unreal. A nation's identity is (not "is in") its culture, and culture is a structure with several distinct levels. On an elementary level there is culture in the sense of custom or lifestyle: the distinctive way that people eat, dress, talk, marry, play games, produce goods, and the like. On this level culture in Canada, including both English and French Canada has been practically identical with the northern part of American culture for a long time. This fact is not, in my view, one of any great significance. The time is past when we could speak of the "Americanizing" of this aspect of Canadian life: what faces us now is the homogenizing of the entire world, including the United States, through twentieth-century technology. Today Canadians, like other people, are hardly more Americanized in their lifestyle than they are Japanned or common-marketed.

Then there is a middle level of cultural identity, which is the product of tradition and history, and consists of the distinctive political, economic, religious, and other institutions that shape a nation's life and give direction to the main currents of its ideology. This is an area where Canadians have always felt beleaguered and threatened by American influences, and where, by an inevitable irony, that influence keeps increasing through divisions among Canadians themselves. In every part of Canada there are strong separatist feelings, and separatism can lead only to increased American penetration, especially economic and ideological. This is not to say that such penetration must be sinister, merely that it is the opposite of what separatism aims at.

Finally, there is an upper level of culture as the product of a nation's specialized creative powers. In Canada it seems to be particularly literature, painting, film, and radio drama that have attracted most attention, both within the country and outside it, and we should now add architecture, as this building [the new Canadian Embassy] is one of three at least to achieve such recognition in the present year. In theory, culture in this more specific sense is the product of the people as a whole and the shared heritage of all the people. In practice, it is the product of an often neglected minority, and in its appreciation there is a strongly elitist element. To bridge this gap between theory and practice is largely what the process known as education is all about.

The middle level, the specific nation formed by a historical process, is the place where the conception of "Canada" is to be found, but it is not the place to look for cultural symbols. Those come from either the lifestyle level or the creative level. On the lifestyle level, Canada has shown an extraordinary ability to absorb ethnic groups without essentially violating their folkways. The treatment of the indigenous peoples is an exception to this that I shall return to later. But the Icelandic and Ukrainian immigrants of the nineteenth century, the Italians and Portuguese and Jamaicans of the twentieth, have been able to preserve much of their lifestyle cultures: the extent to which they have been crushed, as just said, is due to world-wide rather than national pressures. The same thing was true of the original British and French groups: in fact John Kenneth Galbraith, with no sense of incongruity, wrote a book called *The Scotch*, which was concerned entirely with a community of Scottish origin in southern Ontario.

In lifestyle culture there is little that is typical of Canada as a whole: a satiric revue of forty years back called *Spring Thaw* pretended to make a search for authentic Canadian symbols, and emerged with a mounted policeman and a bottle of rye. Canada is the Switzerland of the twentieth century surrounded by the great powers of the world and preserving its identity by having many identities. Its distinctive identity is represented by its creative culture, in its literature and painting and the other arts just mentioned.

As for the American awareness of Canada, one may say that Americans are conscious of Canada first of all as insulation. And perhaps one should not ignore the importance of Canada as a geographical object, apart from its inhabitants, in sealing in the United States on one point of the compass much as the oceans seal it in on two others. The physical existence of Canada helped to confirm the American sense of separateness from the world up to the earlier decades of this century, and perhaps later had something to do with the fact that the Cold War remained relatively cold. But of course there are people in Canada, and it has been of immense benefit to the United States, whether it knows it or not, to have across its northern border not merely a friendly ally but another nation with a different history and traditions, closely related to and yet contrasting with its own.

The contrasts related to what I have called the middle level of culture, the distinctive paths formed by history. The American revolution was a Whig revolution, and one of the things it revolted against was the mercantilist theory that the function of colonies was merely to produce raw materials. English Canada was settled, in upper Canada and much of the Maritimes, largely by disaffected Tories. These made common cause to some degree, with their former enemies in French Canada, who felt doubly betrayed, lost by the lack of interest in Canada shown by the government of pre-revolutionary France, and secondly by an atheistic French Revolution. It is perhaps fair to say that France has never shown any real concern for Canada since, except when promoting its own interests. And English-speaking Canadians, even those who remained uncritically loyal to Britain, had to put up with massive ineptitude, indifference, and an attitude that showed much more respect for the independent United States than the dependent colonies. The feeling of not being wanted except as a place of exploitation, forms a ground bass under Canadian themes, and among other things has forced Canada to retain its dependence on commodity exports which makes its economy so different from the American one.

One always has to oversimplify situations like this, unless one is writing scholarly history, but in the forming of Canada there was something like this Tory-Whig division of ideology, and one that went much deeper than the Republican-Democrat or Conservative-Liberal divisions arising later in the separate countries. The revolution produced a written constitution and a deductive attitude to social problems, whereas the Canadians, in rejecting the revolution, adopted something more like an Edmund Burke theory of a continuous contract including the dead, the living and the unborn, an unwritten constitution based on precedent, and a tendency to look for solutions to crises by safeguarding the rights of both sides. Canadian history is a series of ad hoc compromises, in contrast to the American practice of re-interpreting and amending an eighteenth-century document. Each crisis brings with it a settled belief in the minds of most Canadians, that this is really the end, that the country is at last irremediably torn apart by its own inner contradictions. So far such feelings have proved to be mistaken, but if a sculptor were making a statue symbolizing Canadian loyalty to Canada he might well portray someone holding his breath and crossing his fingers.

The entrenched Tory oligarchy in nineteenth-century Ontario, known as the Family Compact, provoked a rebellion of sorts in 1837, though the history of that rebellion, at least in Ontario makes very curious reading. Canadians have always refused to believe in any kind of political logic, whether the logic of revolution or the logic of repression. The liberal opposition that began to take shape was continentalist in tendency and some of the more myopic liberals, such as the English Goldwin Smith, who resided for some time in Toronto before going to Cornell, assumed that the union of the British colonies was a chimerical fantasy, and that annexation to the United States was only a matter of time. But even Toryism in Canada has always had a radical element in it that opposed American tendencies from the left as well as the right. This element emphasized the gross inequalities of wealth and privilege building up in the United States, and it was more aware than the liberals of the aggressive and imperialistic side of American development. The Monroe doctrine, through much of the nineteenth century, seemed to imply that Americans were claiming the right to exploit the New World for themselves. The effects in Canada included the War of 1812, the Fenian raids, the "Fifty-four forty or fight" crisis, and various other incidents. But as regards Canada the United States seems to have realized very early that, to paraphrase Clausewitz, economic penetration

is the continuing of war by other means, and with a far greater chance of success.

There was also the Canadian opposition to slavery. During the Civil War, the liberal John Stuart Mill in England attacked the Tories of his time for supporting the South and rejoicing over the apparent disintegrating of the great republican experiment. One might have expected Canadians to take a similar view, and some did, but Canadian volunteers produced a sizable contingent for the Union army. Much earlier, the Nova Scotian writer Haliburton, who was about as Tory as one could get, made his stage American Sam Slick refer to the Fourth of July as “fifteen millions of free men and five millions of slaves a-celebratin’ the birthday of liberty.”

The point all this is leading up to is that the continuity of certain British elements in Canadian life are not simply vestigial relics of Canada’s colonial past or reactionary nostalgia. One very obvious example is the retaining of the monarchy, along with a Governor-General as, so to speak, the resident Canadian crown. When there is no question of British rule any more, keeping this memento of the fact that we were once a British colony is one way of qualifying the extent to which we are now an American colony. In any case the monarchy in both Britain and Canada seems to be genuinely popular, its connection with an aristocratic class having largely disappeared.

The monarchy is a symbol of a national unity transcending the conflicts of all political and religious pressure groups. The corresponding symbol of such a unity in the United States is the flag, something Canada did not even have until it acquired one along with the new Third World nations a quarter-century ago. Thereat point about a monarchy is that it puts the cult of personality where it belongs, in the area of ceremonial symbolism. A flag however useful for covering the mental nakedness of political speeches, lacks the accessibility of a personal symbol like a royal family: it is pointless to complain about it, and impossible to gossip about it. A parliamentary system, where a leader stands or falls with his party, reduces the personality cult in other ways, although there is a growing emphasis on leadership conventions and the like in Canada which reflects America, influence.

Then again, Canada has had, for the last fifty years, a Socialist (or more accurately Social Democrat) party, which is normally supported by twenty-five to thirty per cent of tire electorate, and has been widely respected, through most of its history, for its devotion to principle. Nothing of proportional size or influence has emerged among socialists in the United States. When the CCF, the first form of this party, was founded in the nineteen-thirties, its most obvious feature went largely unnoticed. That feature was that it was following a British rather than an American tendency, trying to assimilate the Canadian political structure to the British Conservative-Labour pattern. The present New Democratic Party, however, never seems to get beyond a certain percentage of support, not enough to come to federal power. Principles make voters nervous, and yet any departure from them towards expedience makes them suspicious.

The American ideology of assimilation, expressed in such phrases as “hundred per cent American,” “un-American activities”, and the like, can hardly operate in Canada, with its roots in a coalition of two founding groups. Recently Canadians have become aware that a large proportion of the population, including of course the indigenous peoples, comes from an ethnical and linguistic background which is neither English nor French. Hence the policy of bilingualism, so sharply intensified in the Trudeau era, has been qualified by the newer buzzword of “multiculturalism.” In Toronto, for example, where the teaching of French in elementary schools is heavily stressed, the Italian-speaking population is much greater than the French-speaking one. The result, or so an irritated educator once remarked to me, is to send an Italian child to school to destroy his native language and make him illiterate in two others. Not drat it is all that easy to destroy a native language.

I am entering an area here which is thickly sown with emotional minefields, and any advance into it has to be cautious. I have first to return to my three levels of culture, a level of lifestyle, a level of ideology and historical process, and a level of creativity and of education in the arts and sciences. On the level of lifestyle there are immense pressures towards uniformity, including uniformity of language. Economic forces in particular make for increasing centralization. One frequently sees the statement that such trends are changing and becoming more decentralized, but applied to Canada the statement is nonsense.

The creative arts, on the other hand, have to be planted in a very limited environment. Literature, in particular, is intensely regional in Canada, as it is in the United States, and even in the much smaller Great Britain. Canadian critics have realized for a century that the more Canadian a writer tries to be, the less chance he has of becoming a really distinguished writer. The reason is that the conception “Canadian” belongs to a different aspect of culture, and can have little direct or positive influence on the creative one. At the same time, the *aggregate of* writers in Canada will produce a Canadian body of literature, which is felt by both Canadian and non-Canadian readers to be distinctive of the country.

Regional literature grows out of provincial literature. The provincial writer assumes that literary standards have been established for him outside his environment. English and French writers in nineteenth-century Canada both tended to follow models in their ancestral countries. But the notion of meeting established external standards is a fallacy: literature changes too rapidly, and standards are no longer mainstream influences by the time the provinces get around to imitating them.

As a provincial culture matures, it becomes more aware of the variety of new ideas and ideologies, new techniques of narrative, new forms of imagery, that are sweeping across the world, and it begins to respond to them and become part of an international idiom. Such an idiom does not, like lifestyle fashions in food or clothing, make for uniformity or mass production: it works in quite the opposite direction, though in ways too complex to go into here. What it does not do either, or does very seldom is uproot the writer from his localized place in his own community. There is a curious law in culture, at least literary culture, which says that the most specific settings have the best chance of becoming universal in their appeal. It is clear that a multiplicity of ethnical backgrounds is highly favorable to a culture, and any writer or artist will exploit everything he has that is distinctive in his regional, ethnical, or religious background. But as he matures as a writer and his horizon expands, he wants to be read on his

own merits and not as an ethnic specimen, however unusual. Similarly with the consumer. A reader interested in Canadian literature may feel in the position of one who has bought a box of candy and discovered from the fine print on the box that he has acquired a melange of twenty-three food, chemical, and additive substances. But he still expects some unity of taste in the final product, not a mere recognition of the subtle contributions made by invertase or lecithin. As for minority languages, they seem to be one area where privatization actually does seem to work. I think that among the Celtic languages in the British Isles, Welsh has fared better than Irish, because Welsh has been spoken and studied by the people who wanted to speak and study it, whereas Irish was made compulsory in schools and given the rank of an official language, to the great detriment of its popularity.

There remains, however, the unique historical development which has made Canada a bilingual country with two recognized Canadian languages. I suppose no reasonable Canadian denies the extraordinary advantages of a bilingual culture, despite all the complaints one may hear in English Canada about “shoving all that French down our throats,” though those who use such phrases are unlikely to have much French in their throats. Corresponding complaints can be heard in French Canada. But one should keep in mind the different aspects of cultural life already referred to, and the fact that a creative benefit may be a political burden. The conception “Quebecois,” for example, belongs culturally to the area of political leverage, not to anything genuinely creative.

Many languages, including earlier English, have no word for space but only for place, or space-there. For the imagination of, say, Shakespeare’s original audience, the entire cosmos was filled up by objects or beings with assigned places. Nature abhors a vacuum, the philosophers said, at a time when vacuum and empty space meant much the same thing. But as the influence of Copernicus and Galileo began to make itself felt, the imaginative responses changed. The French who settled Quebec and Acadia belonged to the seventeenth-century world of Descartes and Pascal. Descartes was, I think, the first to make the conception of space as pure extension, apart from whatever it contained, functional in philosophy. Pascal, certainly no Cartesian, expressed his terror of “these empty spaces” and their silence, in one of the most famous epigrams ever uttered. By “these empty spaces” he meant much more than what is now called “outer space” beyond the sky, but the phrase reflects a time when, to adapt a remark of Blake, the human imagination was beginning to be more impressed by the amount of space between the stars than by the stars themselves.

It was the sense of space without place, descended to earth to become the natural environment, that confronted the Canadian imagination in its formative years. A universe of places means a hierarchical universe: earlier human imagination was dominated by the sense of a natural hierarchy, with everything occupying the place that God had assigned it. As the sense of natural hierarchy waned, distinction of ranks in human life seemed increasingly to be imposed simply by human will expressed in violence. Some time ago I used the phrase “garrison mentality” to describe the psychological effects in Canada of the Anglo-French wars, fear of Indian attacks, and protection against an implacably indifferent nature, with its cycle of intense heat, intense cold, and the coming of spring along with the black flies. I grew up in a town in the Maritimes about thirty miles from where, in the eighteenth century, a French and a British fort scowled at each other across the isthmus that separates New Brunswick from Nova Scotia. It was an eloquent if primitive symbol of the “two solitudes” that Hugh MacLennan later described in his novel of that name about Anglo-French relations in Montreal. Similar survivals of this “two solitudes” construct were still all around me in my early years. My phrase, however, has been rather over-exposed since, and like other overexposed images has got blurred and fuzzy, its specific historical context being usually ignored.

As I understood it, a garrison brings social activity into an intense if constricted focus, but its military and other priorities tend to obliterate the creative impulse. In one brief interval of relaxation, after the peace of 1763, a novel called *Emily Montague* was written by a woman named Frances Brooke in the garrison town of Quebec. It is not only the first novel written in Canada; it is one of the earliest novels to be written anywhere. But a more typical garrison attitude survived psychologically in the rural and small-town phase of Canadian life, with its heavy pressures of moral and conventional anxieties. Canadians are now, however, one of the most highly urbanized people in the world and the garrison mentality, which was social but not creative, has been replaced by the condominium mentality, which is neither social nor creative and which forces the cultural energies of the country into forming a kind of counter-environment.

The same paradox of space without place confronted American life too, but the Americans lived in a two-dimensional country, and were able to fill up their empty space more systematically, with the aid of a frontier. Canadians were compelled by geography to live in much more scattered communities, the main divisions of the country being widely separated from one another. The writers or speakers who eventually emerged from this environment were confronted first of all by the physical problems of being able to communicate at all. De Tocqueville, in his magisterial survey of democracy in America, says only one thing about Canada, but what he says bears on our present point. “In Canada,” he says, “the most enlightened, patriotic and humane inhabitants make extraordinary efforts to render the people dissatisfied . . . more exertions are made to excite the passions of the citizens there than to calm them elsewhere.” He is speaking mainly of French Canada, but the remark applies to the whole country. One reads between the lines the desperate frustrations of the earlier communicators, and the massive indifference of those they attempted to address. The silence of the eternal spaces remained at the bottom of the Canadian psyche for a long time, and in many respects is still there. Communication is of course a major preoccupation, almost an obsession, with Canadians, but in the nineteenth century the impressive part of it was a matter of building railways and bridges and canals. Articulate communication has now taken its normal place in Canadian life, but with rare exceptions Canada has avoided the movements of mass hysteria that have swept over the United States so frequently during the last century.

Some time ago, in looking through an anthology of American poetry, I came across Theodore Roethke's poem "Journey to the Interior." The "interior" in this poem is both a landscape and a psyche, but the journey is out of the self and not into it. We begin with the image of driving a car or jeep over rough and dangerous roads. Then the car goes faster and soon we are traveling at a breakneck speed past a place where "some idiot plunger" had previously met his death. The car disappears and the poet's spirit expands to become merged with the nature around him, as all the dormant powers within him break into renewed life. I had read the poem before, but had not realized how superbly it caught a dominant mood in American imaginative experience: the conquering of nature through the sheer force; of technology, the exhilaration of danger and high speed that comes as technology develops, and the arrival through the speed at an ecstasy of an expanding consciousness.

I remembered too that there was a Canadian poem also called "Journey to the Interior," in Margaret Atwood's first volume, *The Circle Game*, so I turned to it. Here the "interior" is again both psychic and physical, but the journeying narrator is apparently walking through woods, moving very cautiously as much aware of the rough going and the tangles of branches as her counterpart, but with a total uncertainty about her direction. The Atwood narrator wonders if she is going in circles; Roethke speaks only of "detours" in a straightforward quest. But if the Atwood traveler has no trust in direction she is intensely aware of presences, which may be menacing presences. It is important, she says, to keep one's head but *useless*, perhaps dangerous, to call out or utter words in such a wilderness. Roethke in contrast, is aware of no presence except his expanding self. I am not of course comparing the poems in merit, merely looking at them as documents illustrating two kinds of sensibility. Both poems come from the sixties, Roethke's being a late poem, composed near his death, and Atwood's being early and experimental. I know how easy it is to deceive oneself in such matters, but I feel sure that one sensibility represents something centrally American as it was twenty years ago, and the other something centrally Canadian. One is preoccupied with speed, machinery, progress, and intensity of consciousness, the other with loneliness, diffidence, uncertainty of direction, and a divided consciousness. In the twenty years since then great changes have come over the imaginations of both countries, to the point almost of a merging of attitudes.

According to the Canadian economist Harold Innis, the development of techniques of communication tends to create a "bias" in culture. There are two main biases according to Innis, a bias toward time and a bias toward space. Innis felt that the Canadian sensibility has a time bias and the American a spatial one. This is not as a rule the type of observation that I find very cogent, but let us follow it up for a moment. It may seem to contradict what I said earlier about the impact of space on the Canadian imagination, but the contexts are very different.

Countries that have a long record of oppressive foreign rule are intensely aware of their history: Ireland and Poland are obvious examples. Nations expanding into empires think in terms of acquiring space, and English Canada felt something of this by proxy when it was part of a British empire on which the sun was alleged never to set. French Canada, on the other hand, has been very conscious of its history and traditions: Quebec automobile license plates still bear the motto *je me souviens*, I remember. But in fact all Canada, with its sense of precedent and continuous contract, seems oriented to history in a way that the United States until quite recently, never has been. The sense of irreversible progress that has been so central in American imagination seems to carry with it the sense of an escape from history itself.

The bias toward time may become neurotic, preoccupied with Don Quixote's vision of some imaginary historical idea that ought to exist now. Ideological terrorism in particular is usually inspired by an obsession with reshaping the past. But the same bias may go in a genuinely creative direction, recognizing that it is tradition more than anything else that creates identity. From about 1960 on English Canada began to achieve something of the sense of self definition that French Canada had had for much longer, and a renewed historical sense began to realize how much Canadian cultural traditions had been mutilated by the coming of two European peoples who refused to continue, in fact did their best to extinguish, the culture of the Indian and Inuit peoples already there.

Of course appreciation for the arts and culture of native peoples has not been lacking. The Haida mask from the early documentary *The Moon's Necklace* has been practically a Canadian logo for some time, and the outpouring of Inuit (Eskimo) sculpture and painting has been one of the most remarkable cultural developments in modern history. A great deal of scholarship has been devoted to wheeling the oral literary culture of the indigenous peoples, who of course still produce it. What is more recent is the sense of the absurdity of regarding native peoples as foreigners, and their culture as an exotic curiosity. Clearly it forms a tradition which should be at the headwaters of our own and should be absorbed into our traditions in the same way that English and French traditions are. In Canadian literature, one could point to many examples of such absorption in the work of Susan Musgrave, John Newlove, Robert Kroetsch, M. T. Kelly, Yves Theriault, and others. Even careless popularizers are more hesitant about writing such sentences as "Jacques Cartier was the first man to set foot on Canadian soil," which were fairly frequent usage not so long ago. Even when the word "white" was inserted the implication "first genuine human being" was often there.

But the new sense of cultural kinship with the indigenous people was not really an expanded historical or temporal awareness: it was part of a new attitude to space, specifically the space within Canada. The closer relationship of the indigenous peoples to their natural environment was what gave them anew significance in Canadian imagination. The nineteenth-century sense of a hostile and amoral nature, the early twentieth-century sense of a land of mystery with its huge and so seldom visited lakes, rivers, and islands, has been almost reversed in a world where anything that is natural may be precious. Rupert Brooke spoke seventy years ago of the "unseizable virginity" of the Canadian landscape, but this will hardly apply to a situation in which even uninhabited land may still be polluted.

Of course a concern for the environment is a worldwide movement, politically as well as culturally, but the Canadian economy has been marked by a peculiarly reckless exploiting of natural resources, in which trees, fish, and forbearing animals were sacrificed on a scale that has left a cultural residue of intense guilt feelings in the Canadian

consciousness. There has hardly ever been a time when Canadian writing has not expressed some resentment or apprehension at the treatment of the environment. But it is fairly recently that large numbers of people have come to feel that the exploiting of nature is just as wrong and immoral as the exploiting of other human beings. There is an essay by Heidegger, "The Origin of a Work of Art," which has been a strong influence on two very distinguished works of Canadian criticism, Dennis Lee's *Savage Fields* and Bruce Elder's *Image and Identity*, the latter concerned mainly with film. Heidegger's argument turns largely on a distinction between "World" and "Earth." "World" means the universe of human consciousness, "Earth" the universe of animals, plants, and inanimate nature. "World" tries to dominate and enslave "Earth," but "Earth" has its own modes of survival, and it is dangerous to violate it beyond a certain point. In a poet of an older generation, E. J. Pratt, the main themes are still "World" themes. He wrote narrative poems about whaling expeditions, shipwrecks, the building of the Canadian Pacific railway, the martyrdoms of Jesuit missionaries in which the Iroquois are assimilated to a mindless and ferocious nature. But even he has a late poem called "The Good Earth" in which he warns:

Hold that synthetic seed, for underneath
 Deep down she'll answer to our horticulture:
 She has a way of germinating teeth
 And yielding crops of carrion for the vulture.

In the last two or three decades there has been a remarkable growth of the feeling that "nobody owns the earth," as Bill Bisset says (a poet who chooses lower case and unconventional spellings). There have been startling works of fiction, such as Marion Engel's *Bear*, where an erotic relation between a woman and a pet bear has clearly an allegorical implication that Canadians have to learn to love their environment instead of exploiting or ignoring it. Some poets, again, have internalized the nineteenth-century landscape, with all its fears and loneliness, realizing that the real fears are there and not outdoors. The development in painting has run closely parallel. When I spoke in Washington some years ago, there were two exhibitions of Canadian painting on view, representing two phases of "World" culture in Canada. One was concerned with the early twentieth-century painters, the "Group of Seven" and their contemporaries, who were the pictorial successors of the explorers and missionaries of earlier centuries. The other and more highly publicized exhibit gave us the Clement Greenberg version of painting in Canada, the trend to abstraction which was at once the climax of the "World" view and the beginning of something else, although the something else was even then much more present in Canada than the exhibit suggested. Techniques in painting and film of directly confronting natural imagery, such as the one often called "magical realism," are part of the evidence that a new kind of spatial consciousness has come into Canadian imagination, in all its arts, and has given it a new confidence and stability.

I spoke earlier of the Tory ideology in early English Canada: it was never associated with an aristocracy, though some of the Family Compact may have regarded themselves in that light. But of course their Tory counterparts in England did include a good many of the aristocracy, who devoted a large part of their energy to preserving their game, working up anxieties about poachers and the like. Consciously, there was nothing to this but the selfishness and arrogance of privilege, a subculture of what Matthew Arnold accurately called "Barbarians." But in unconscious symbolism there was some preservation of "Earth" from the encroachments of "World." Canadian consciousness may be slowly moving toward a conception of Canada as something like a gigantic national park, with a string of cities along or near its southern border. Some years ago Buckminster Fuller used the metaphor of "spaceship earth," but this suggested an overcrowded ship with all its space outside. The writers, painters, and film-makers whose function it ought to be, in part, to tell us what the rest of the public will be thinking fifty years later, are providing us with a different metaphor, an internal reservoir of space, an "Earth" that can live with "World."

Great changes have come over the American consciousness too in the last few decades, and I suspect that the more strident and readily politicized issues, such as feminism or racial prejudice, are not the really underlying ones. I spoke earlier of a certain sense, in American imagination up to about 1950, of outrunning history, of a linear progress that would still move in a straight line even if it were headed for disaster. It seems to me that the Vietnam War has brought about the beginning of a profound shift of perspective. In the days when I taught for brief periods in American universities, my students would ask me if I noticed any difference between American and Canadian students. I said that students conditioned from infancy to be part of a world empire must necessarily be very different from students conditioned to be part of a secondary power, observing history from the sidelines rather than playing a major role in it. But I think American consciousness since then has acquired a new sensitivity to history, including its own history, and seeing its recent ascendancy as part of a parabola that goes up and comes down. History has no record of any empire that did not, qua empire, decline and fall, and the process is still inevitable, even though the decline and fall of the Russian and Chinese empires has still to come. There is nothing to regret in this, because the phrase decline and fall, in this context, means only the straightening out of priorities, throwing away phony ones and, with luck, acquiring more genuine ones.

Of course it takes some effort to become more self-observant, to acquire historical sense and perspective, to understand the limitations that have been placed on human power by God, nature, fate, or whatever. It was part of President Reagan's appeal that he was entirely unaware of any change in consciousness, and talked in the old reassuring terms of unlimited progress. But the new response to the patterns of history seems to have made itself felt, along with a growing sense that we can no longer afford leaders who think that acid rain is something one gets by eating grapefruit. I wish I could document this change from recent developments in American culture, but I am running out of both time and knowledge. It seems clear to me, however, that American and Canadian imaginations are much closer together than they have been in the past.

I make no apology for having talked mainly in terms of the creative aspect of culture. In the first place, you can get better informed political commentary by turning on a television set. In the second place, imaginative developments give one thereat clues to political and economic ones. Third, and most important to me, fifty years of leaching have only confirmed my conviction that only the arts and sciences are stable social realities: everything else simply dissolves and re-forms. The world of 1959 is no more like the world I was born into in 1912 than it is like the Stone Age, but nothing has improved since then except scientific and scholarly knowledge, and nothing has remained steady except human creative power. The students crushed under tanks in Tienanmin Square may have been, in a way, as much in the grip of illusion as the thugs who crushed them. But they showed very clearly that all human beings want the same things, freedom and dignity and decent living conditions, that those are very simple and reasonable things to want, and that nothing but the release of the power to apply our knowledge and creative energies can get them. If the process I have tried to trace in the cultural history of Canada and the United States has any validity, that is what it has for its moral.

Book of Revelation: A Review-Essay on John Ayre's *Northrop Frye: A Biography*
By Michael Dolzani

On 20 October 1989 John Ayre's long-awaited biography of Frye was published by Random House of Canada. (472 pp. Hardcover. \$28.95 Canadian dollars). As the *Newsletter* goes to press, the U.S. rights have not yet been sold. Readers may obtain a copy, however, from Loghouse Bookstore, 497 Bloor St. West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1Y2. Our reviewer, Michael Dolzani, teaches literature and creative writing at Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio

We are lucky to have this book, much less to have it as good as it is. In the first place, John Ayre has done an enormous amount of what seems careful and thorough research, unearthing documents even Frye was not aware still existed. He has visited sites, conducting interviews before everyone connected with Frye's early life was dead. And he has completed and published his study in the teeth of persistent setbacks as discouraging as some of those that Frye, as we find out in this fascinating narrative, has faced himself.

In addition, we are fortunate that Northrop Frye's story has been filtered through a narrative consciousness as reliable as Ayre's, so that the reader is not constantly having to correct mentally the effects of bias and distortion. Ayre suffers neither from hero worship nor from the desire to be superior to his subject that afflicts the biographers of many creative people. The fact that he is not a literary academic allows him the gifts of detachment and an unassuming air, no pun intended. Yet he has clearly read and assimilated every word of Frye's writing—a formidable, though rewarding, task.

But most of all we should be thankful that Ayre saw through Frye's repeated conviction that his life was without interest because without external incident. With all due credit to Ayre's skill at contriving to make it so, who would have thought the life of Northrop Frye would turn out to be such an absorbing, even dramatic, story?

The plot of the first half of the story is that of a *Bildungsroman*, an account of the growth of a creative mind, a growth that climaxes in some sort of epiphany resulting in a conversion to religion, to art, or, in Frye's case, to both. But the obstacles to this growth were far more severe than has been generally realized. One obstacle was a bitter and tragic family history. Another was the sterile waste land of Frye's social environment while he was growing up, particularly the moralizing fundamentalist Methodism of small isolated towns in the Maritime provinces of the 1920s and 1930s. Ayre is good at showing how Frye's entire life work has been, at least on one level, an effort to recreate, without rejecting, his evangelical background. The most serious obstacle was poverty, which came close to making his pilgrimage toward the University of Toronto, his eventual base of operations, a "journey without arrival." Frye's surviving letters and essays from his undergraduate days are filled with the excitement of a person who has found where he belongs, both intellectually and socially; they resound with a sense of mental horizons opening in all directions. But the exhilaration masks the constant worry from semester to semester whether he would be able to return. Indeed, financial hardship and anxiety did not fade away for a surprisingly long time, until the late 1940s.

And yet in the midst of personal difficulties, exacerbated by economic depression and the gathering shadows of war, the total vision that each of Frye's books attempts to unfold in a different variation broke in on him in a series of increasingly clarified epiphanies. Frye has claimed that he never had a conversion experience, but he means in the fundamentalist sense. Actually, he had several; only they had the effect of expanding his mind imaginatively rather than contracting it dogmatically. In fact, the notion that he would later term "demonic parody" dawned quite early: the circuit rider on the fields of Saskatchewan in his early twenties had already been made aware by Blake that when most people think they are being religious they are really worshipping the devil.

Finally, Frye underwent a period of crisis that should be neither exaggerated nor underestimated. Remarkably comparable to the crisis undergone by Blake when he was stalled on *The Four Zoas*, nursing a sick wife, and harassed by poverty and wartime hysteria, Frye's crisis produced a remarkable series of letters to Helen Kemp. The letters are not only part of a quiet but memorable romance; they are also unguarded and self-revelatory in a way untypical of Frye before or since, reminding me somewhat of a similar series of letters by the young Dylan Thomas to Pamela Hansford Johnson. Isolated from Helen, jobless and prospectless, unable to make progress with the work on Blake to which he had dedicated himself, Frye turned inwards towards self-analysis. Ayre suggests that it may be significant that Frye's love for Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* dates from this period. He also notes that Frye was shrewdly perceptive of his own strengths and weaknesses. Frye never doubted his own genius; what he doubted was the strength of character to make good use of it, fearing that what he saw as a mysteriously persistent indolence would forever sap his will and prevent him from becoming productive. Frye has been persecuted no doubt by the

Protestant work ethic; but more profoundly he has also been haunted by the parable of the buried talents that directed the lives of Milton and Blake. One of the major revelations of the biography is that some twenty books and hundreds of shorter pieces have been turned out by a man with a constant tendency to accuse himself of lack of discipline. Out of this crisis also, however, came the insight that made the writing of *Fearful Symmetry* finally possible: the crucial distinction between the imagination and normal egocentric consciousness. One of Ayre's best remarks is that *Fearful Symmetry* could in a way be considered a commentary on *The Four Zoas*: that is because the same crucial distinction clarified itself definitively in Blake's mind during the writing of that poem, causing him to abandon it and begin two new poems, *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, whose hero was Los, the creative imagination.

The publication of *Fearful Symmetry* marked a turning point. Frye has by that time crystallized his vision and also mastered the techniques of articulating it to others. Blake praises those who "keep the Divine Vision in time of trouble," and this might well serve as the plot summary for the second half of the book. A sense of the social relevance of his vision is what has enabled Frye to survive the incomprehension and even hostility directed toward every one of his books without exception. Anyone thinking this a paranoid statement should consult Robert Denham's *Bibliography*: reading though the major reviews of *Anatomy of Criticism* in my twenties almost dissuaded me from going on to graduate studies in literature. Dishearteningly, the most positive responses to Frye have often—though not always—come from second-raters, a tendency culminating in the Fryedolatry of the sixties. I had heard of this groupie phenomenon but had not realized how absurdly far it had gone. True, it lasted only a brief time; but combined with the fact that limited intellects often gravitated to Frye because they could use his archetypes as cookie cutters and his categories as pigeonholes, its excesses made a reaction inevitable. With friends like these, etc.

Two things have carried Frye through the depressing experience of being at once famous and, in ways that really matter, disregarded. One is a satiric sense of humor; since his early articles, this has been reined in—to my wistful regret, occasionally—but never abandoned. The other is his sense of social mission, his drive to build Jerusalem through the power of language. His impulse at any rate is to turn outward, as if uneasy about the potential narcissism of being too introverted. Perhaps this accounts for his curious wariness of Jung, the only one of his mentors about whom he seems to harbor a touch of Bloom's anxiety of influence. He once replied to a student who said she'd look for the kingdom of heaven inside herself, "Then you'd be cross-eyed." After what I have been describing as his period of crisis, the only time he got cross-eyed again himself was a period of limbo between finishing *Fearful Symmetry* and starting on the *Anatomy*, when he actually kept a diary for a few months and even analyzed his dreams. But that was highly atypical; most of the time, even his mentors have been historically rather than psychologically oriented—Spengler, for example, whose influence on the young Frye turns out to have been startlingly intense, perhaps for a while even the equal of Blake's. Frazer is social rather than psychological in reference, and Frye kept an eye on other writers, ancient and modern, with a theoretical view of history, from St. Augustine down to Toynbee and F.S.C. Northrop.

Ayre's book has a few minor faults and only one limitation. It appears to be complete: the only incident I noticed missing is the meeting—if you can call it that—with Wallace Stevens, a delightfully absurd fiasco along the lines of the meeting of Joyce with Proust. (Frye was in the back row when Stevens delivered a lecture by "muttering it into his shirt collar." When Frye was introduced he was at a loss for anything to say, as he had not heard a single word of the delivery. Stevens proceeded to ask about business contacts he has made when he last visited Toronto—around 1908.) The prose, though generally readable, is not one of the book's strong points. There is uncertainty about the use of "who" and "whom," and about the punctuation of restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses. Occasional sentences cause the reader to squint, at times even to wince: "He scribbled a few notes about his idea but remained illusive about its nature in his writing" (176); "Frye milked the incongruity himself" (367). But this is minor, for the most part.

The one real limitation is related to the fact that Ayre nowhere really declares what he thinks of Frye's vision. Perhaps he has even tried not to have an opinion, on the assumption that this will increase his objectivity. But it is not really possible to approach any subject without a perspective, and since scholarship, like nature, abhors a vacuum, what has at times rushed into the absence is the kind of common-sense perspective that Blake dubbed the corporeal understanding: the attitude of ordinary experience, of the uncreative ego. An occasional lack of sympathy with Frye's more visionary side eddies and swirls through the description of Frye's books and their ideas, or at least so it appears to me.

What is wanted is certainly no blind adulation—Frye has had nearly a lethal dose of that already—but criticism on his own terms, whether accepting, qualifying, or rejecting, and not in the terms of the very perspective he has judged inadequate and has tried all his life to turn inside out.

It may be too much to ask of a biographer that he rise, if not to the stature of his subject at least to the occasion of writing about him. But a few model biographies—Ruby Redinger's of George Eliot, Alan Walker's of Liszt—show that it can be done. And a serious risk ensues if it is not done, that of reducing the subject by evaluating him in terms of the common denominator. As Frye points out in *Fearful Symmetry*, it is the creative genius who forms the standard for society, not the average person. What is wrong with most biographies of creative types is that the reverse is assumed, deliberately or unconsciously. When this happens in Ayre's biography, Frye's notion of the transformative power of metaphor is first partially misunderstood (on the grounds that Frye has been inconsistent about distinguishing it from magic), and then judged as "necromancy" (385).

The most frequent term applied to Frye in the biography is "arrogant," which occurs over and over. Now, Ayre clearly likes and admires his subject, and the arrogance he refers to is not personal; actually, he is at pains to insist that, Freudians and other skeptics to the contrary, Frye is really the honest, generous, self-effacing nonegotist he appears to be. The arrogance is intellectual, and consists of two things: a refusal to bow before supposedly absolute limitations of fact and logic, and a refusal to come down to the level of average understanding. Evaluating the first criticism will involve a discussion of the visionary premises of Frye's writing; let us turn briefly to the latter.

The young Frye admittedly had a certain Blakean brashness, the cocksureness of the genius who knows that he is both smarter and saner than anyone around him; one of his earliest heroes was Shaw. The love of playing devil's disciple had roots in Frye's reaction against the Methodist repressiveness of his upbringing, was encouraged by Blake, and is no doubt in part a compensation for the famous Frye shyness—although it is worth wondering whether it is not also a partial cause of that shyness: I suspect that Frye has learned to restrain his natural impulses in both critical and social situations because he has learned that the full force of his brilliance, intensity, and satiric sense of humor can alarm some people, especially those already intimidated by his critical reputation. Frye is at times praised, and accurately enough, for his serenity, a serenity born of detachment; but there is also a boldness that, when it emerges in print, as it does in *Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*, some readers interpret as smugness, as talking down, etc. Ayre is smarter than that, but he does seem critical of something he sees in Frye's personality. I think he may fail to recognize the difference between an intellectual arrogance that is merely a power complex and a kind of unshaken belief in one's gift, one's vision, one's vocation, that is an absolute prerequisite for any creative person who must keep the Divine Vision in time of trouble.

Consequently, a fair amount of unfairness creeps into the margins of the text. Frye is called "petulant" when he defends himself—for once—against what he is quite right to call a flow of abusive nonsense directed against him (351). Criticizing the counterculture in the sixties, "Frye seemed to be trying to make a virtue of plain old middle-class coziness with attendant soft bed and personal library" (323). His own "solution for regeneration" is called "curious, even absurd" (324); "Frye was looking as ever for the apocalypse, but only if he could see it rise from the safe shores of academicism" (315). Academicism, arrogance, and naivete combine to cause what Ayre thinks of as Frye's obscurity: "As usual, Frye was expecting too much of his readers" (254); he had "no sense of the confusion of the audience" (375); "his efforts to be understood usually resulted in bafflement" (232). Possibly too much credit is given to the complaints of students; not being a teacher, Ayre may not realize that it is a favorite tactic of students to blame their passivity and natural inertia on the teacher: "It's not our fault; he teaches over our heads." It is an automatic assumption of the biography that failure of comprehension is always the fault of the writer, never of the laziness, ignorance, and mental blocks of students, auditors, and readers. The customer is always right.

And what of the more serious protest, by no means limited to Ayre, that Frye's vision denies ordinary perception and simple common sense in its idealistic drive towards a total unity of literary and cultural experience? This is the crux in any discussion of Frye, and, although Ayre's reactions are again fairly marginal, often confined merely to the negative connotations of the descriptive words he uses, he seems to remain skeptical. All of Frye's early influences—the Bible, Dante, Spenser, Blake, Frazer, Spengler, Emile Mâle, Eliot, Wilson Knight, and so on—drew Frye precisely because they imitated a total unity of literary and cultural experience, based on a common vocabulary of universal symbols (the archetypes); and yet the universal pattern was not static and uniform but dynamic, allowing for infinite recreation of the same into new forms. Ayre calls this "flirting with outright mysticism" (206). He cites Frank Kermode's version of the usual objection: that such a unity is bought only at the price of ignoring differences, particularities, conflicts, anything that will not fit into the scheme (265).

One willingly concedes that this version of "interpretation," of everything being connected within a larger design, is difficult to express coherently, pulling as it does in the opposite direction to the natural entropy of ordinary experience. Works of literature that articulate it, such as Blake's *Prophecies*, *Finnegans Wake*, *Gravity's Rainbow*, tend to be erudite and interwoven, though by no means life-denying or alienated from universal human experience. From the beginning, Frye was in the intimidating position of Coleridge, with his never-attempted treatise on the Logos: everything seemed to be part of a single book so gigantic that it was unwriteable. It is amusing to find Frye thus toying, for most of his life, with abortive schemes for expressing what he calls the "encyclopedic": interconnected volumes identified by letters or symbols, extended sequences Wagnerian in their ambition, complex studies that have never materialized; these no doubt have added fuel to his burning self-accusations about lack of discipline. In fact, Frye's greatest achievement as a writer may be to have conquered this obstacle, partly through the discipline of teaching, partly through his musical sense of form—although it has to be reconquered in each new book: he says that he always begins like a kitten snarled in a ball of yarn.

Someone really ought to challenge the thought-cliche that seeing differences and "uniqueness" is the task of criticism. After all, any idiot can do that: differences are relatively obvious. But that is exactly their appeal in an academic system in which survival depends upon publication. Of course, using archetypes and classifications as rubber stamps has the same democratic appeal in reverse: anyone can do it, for stereotyped unities are also obvious and easy to describe. What Aristotle called the true mark of genius is seeing patterns within differences, as poets do through metaphor. But such genius is not repeatable; its method cannot be formularized, making criticism as much an art as it is in an inductive or deductive science or a professional industry. *Fearful Symmetry* and *Anatomy of Criticism* are not, Ayre complains, the handbooks dealing with superficial readers' difficulties that they were originally intended to be. No, they are something much greater, something that makes handbooks possible by grounding them in a theoretical context. Once Frye realized the artistic element in his criticism, he was able to dispense with the long-lingering desire to write fiction.

But formal unity was never Frye's whole interest: the charge that he is an ivory-tower formalist who divorces literature from life is going to look pretty silly if criticism ever reaches any degree of maturity. The problem that realists and social activists, whether old-style or poststructuralist, have with him is that he relates literature to life in a way more subtle than they have been able to follow. As *Words with Power*, Frye's forthcoming work on the Bible, will make even clearer, the archetypes and categories of literature express primary human concerns: that life is better than death, happiness better than misery, freedom better than slavery. One could add: that food and shelter are better than starvation and disease, love better than selfishness, community better than authoritarianism or anarchy, creative work better than hedonism or alienated labor, genuine intellect better than cold rationalism, responsibility better than lust for power. These concerns have exceeded the possibility of any society in history to gratify them; in the end, they exceed the possibilities of ordinary experience altogether: if nothing else, we all die. What the forms of literature and culture express,

then, is the vision of a creative power driven by concern both to climb and descend a vertical ladder, the *axis mundi*, beyond the limits of ordinary experience. On its upper reaches lies the vision of a better, more human world, where primary concerns are not doomed to perpetual frustration: this is the realm of comedy and romance. On its lower reaches are the visions of tragedy and irony; Frye does not denigrate them, as Ayre seems to think, but merely relativizes their importance as part of a wider picture. Nor is Frye's love of satire a contradiction of his preference for comedy and romance. Frye's attraction to satire lies in its central position, halfway between comedy and romance on the one side, tragedy and irony on the other, giving it a unique double perspective. Many of Frye's favorite satires, such as *Finnegans Wake* and *Gravity's Rainbow*, can be read as visions of total unity and nihilistic disintegration at the same time, depending on whether it is the imagination or the ego's corporeal understanding that is doing the reading. Frye's central notion of demonic parody has arisen from this doubleness.

But the upper levels of vision are not pre-existing places or states: whether Platonic or Christian, such a projecting of the image into the external world is a type of wish-fulfillment supernaturalism that Frye rejects. Comedy and romance provide us only with models, possible positive choices, as tragedy and irony provide negative models. The realm of greater being or identity is not "there": it is not some heaven we can go to or some God who can come down to redeem us. As the title of *Words with Power* indicates, all that we have is a buried creative potential within us. Drawing upon this hidden, poorly understood, and largely neglected source of power, we must actively construct what better world or greater identity we wish to have. It follows that what is true in life is true in criticism: the categories and archetypes are not pre-existing forms "out there" in the text somewhere. Despite what most people still think, they are powers of seeing, latent in the imaginations of writers and readers—although not simply subjective on that account. There is nothing deterministic about them; they are possibilities: we may choose to see this way. We may choose to see literature as an interconnected "order of words" instead of as a mere chaotic pile of works; we may choose to see mythic and metaphoric depths lying beneath the surface of a text, a surface that may be disfigured by individual egoism or collective ideology. The fact that the constructive power is buried within lends a new importance to the myth of a creative descent, discussed in the final two chapters of *Words with Power*.

The point of all this for Ayre's biography? Ayre calls E. J. Pratt's "The Truant" "a gritty mishmash of romantic clichés" (181), but it is those clichés by which Frye has lived his creative life. The truant's cry, "No! by the Rood, we will not join your ballet!" is a constructive act, the choice of a higher vision over the lower vision of nihilism incarnate in the Great Panjandrum. It is an act of creative arrogance, and to estimate such arrogance wrongly is to distort what is most valuable in Frye. Of course, passive resistance is how society usually responds to its creative people, and is the real form of the anxiety of influence. The kind of Oedipal patricide that Harold Bloom describes is really the defensive reaction of the ego against what Blake alternately calls the Divine Vision, the Imagination, or the Real Self; idolatry is merely a reaction formation having the same origin. But the reverse is possible as well: a patriarchal society may conceive of the Divine Vision as a kind of *puer* or divine child, in which case the Son may be crucified all over again—in the name of "maturity," of "common sense," of simple "not having time for all that." These are the voices of the reductionism Blake called the Spectre of Urthona. The reverse of society's anxiety of influence about the creative power in art and life is recreation, that sense of "the same anew" which Northrop Frye has been expounding and demonstrating to us for over fifty years.



Caricature by Don Evans

Frye Bibliography

The list that follows continues the supplements to the Frye bibliography that have appeared in previous issues of the *Newsletter*. Entry numbers, as well as cross references (C2, M10, etc.), either follow or extend the system of classification in Northrop Frye: *An Annotated Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources* (Toronto: U Toronto P, 1987), or else they refer to previous entries in the *Newsletter*. I thank those who have sent me materials on Frye,

particularly Tibor Fabiny for his information about things published in Hungarian; and I invite readers to send me copies of materials for inclusion in the next supplement. (Ed.)

Primary Sources

A. Books

A3. "The Keys to Dreamland" from *The Educated Imagination* reprinted in *Dreams and Inward Journeys: A Reader for Writers*. Ed. Marjorie Ford and Jon Ford. New York: Harper & Row, 1990, 59-67.

A23. *Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*. Selections from the chapters on *Romeo and Juliet* and *Measure for Measure* were published in *Globe and Mail*, 13 Sept. 1986: F1, F3, and 20 Sept. 1986, FT

A23e. *Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*. Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989. vi + 186 pp. Paperback edition of A23.

A23f. *Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1986. vi + 186 pp. Paperback edition of A23a.

A25. *Mito metafora simbolo*. Trans. Carla Pezzini Plevano and Francesca Valente Gorjup. Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1989. 218 pp. Wrappers. A collection of five published and seven previously unpublished addresses, along with a preface by Frye (see D297).

Contents:

The Mythical Approach to Creation (I177)

The Expanding World of Metaphor (D284)

Vision and Cosmos (D281)

The Symbol as a Medium of arrange (I171)

The Stage Is All the World (I180)

The Survival of Eros in Poetry (D787)

The Bride from the Strange land (I175)

Il Cortegiano (C9)

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (I123)

Cycle and Apocalypse in *Finnegans Wake* (I173)

Blake's Bible (I193)

The Meeting of Past and Future in William Morris (D272)

D. Essays and Parts of Books

D18. "Canada and Its Poetry" rpt. in *Towards a Canadian Literature: Essays, Editorials, and Manifestos*. Vol. 2. Ed. Douglas M. Daymond and Leslie G. Monkman. Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1985, 340-52.

D118. "The Structure and Imagery of *The Faerie Queene*" reprinted in *Edmund Spenser*, ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House, 1986, 23-40. In the "Editor's Note" Bloom says, "Frye, the Ruskin of our day, has been the fountainhead of so much recent criticism of Spenser." Bloom also acknowledges "how profoundly [his own essay in the volume] is indebted to the earlier criticism of Northrop Frye, and to *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) in particular."

D143. "Elementary Teaching and Elemental Scholarship." Seven paragraphs reprinted as "Elementary Teaching" in *Prose Models: Canadian, American, and British Essays for Composition*. Ed. Gerald Levin, et al. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Canada, 1989, 56-59.

D154. "Conclusion" to *Literary History of Canada* rpt. in *Towards a Canadian Literature: Essays, Editorials, and Manifestos*. Vol. 2. Ed. Douglas M. Daymond and Leslie G. Monkman. Ottawa: Tecumseh Press, 1985, 340-52.

D233. The Hungarian translation of F's "Conclusion to *Literary History of Canada*," previously announced as forthcoming, was published in *Helikon* 34 (1988): 166-73.

D293. "Don't You Think It's Time to Start Thinking?" *Toronto Star* 25 Jan. 1986. Rpt. in *Canadian Content*. Ed. Sarah Norton and Nell Waldman. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1988, 234-35. A reprint of approximately half of a 1985 interview, "Northrop Frye Talks about the Role of the Humanities" (G53)

D294. "Preface." *From Coburg to Toronto: Victoria University in Retrospect: The Sesquicentennial Lectures, 1986* by A. Brian McKillop et al. Toronto: Chartres Books, 1989, 7-9. Comments on the growing pains of Victoria College as it became a part of a federated university system and on its "ability to adapt to altered social conditions." Sees some of the changes that have occurred at Victoria as inevitable, but laments the loss of the honor course and the reduction of the federated universities to residential centers.

D295. "La bibbia di Blake." *Allegoria* 1 (1989): 39-66. A translation by Francesco Guardiani of "Blake's Bible." For annotation, see I193.

D296. "The Dialectic of Belief and Vision." *Shenandoah* 39, no. 3 (1989): 47-64. For annotation, see I184.

D297. "Premessa." *Mito metafora simbolo*. Trans. Carla Pezzini Plevano and Francesca Valente Gorjup. Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1989, 7-8. Explains, in connection with the essays collected in this volume (see A25), that although F has been labeled a myth critic because of his interest in narrative and other kinds of conventions, his broader concern is with the "reshaping of literature into a different conceptual framework, with the object of telling us something about literature and its cultural context." Notes that both parts of the book reflect his interest in the mythological and metaphorical aspects of the Bible.

F. Miscellaneous

F2. "The Bob," F's report on an annual Victoria College satirical and musical show, written for *Acta Victoriana* in 1931, was reprinted in an article entitled "Most Likely to Succeed" in *Toronto* 3, no. 11 (Feb. 1989): 30-33,50.

G. Interviews

G64. The correct reference for this previously annotated interview is: *Quaderni d'italianistica* 9 (Autumn 1988): 316-26.

G66. "Northrop Frye." Interviewers: Christopher Webber and Stuart Inglis. *Impulse* 15, no. 3 (1989): 76-80. F responds to a series of questions about the Biblical and artistic responses to nature.

G67. "Northrop Frye." Interviewer: Bill Moyers. *A World of Ideas*. Ed. Betty Sue Flowers. New York: Doubleday, 1989, 494-505. F replies to questions about Canadian and U.S. culture and mythologies, leaders in the modern world, teaching, the relation of the human and the divine, and the Bible.

H. Sound Recording, Films, and Videotapes

H67. "Literature as Critique of Pure Reason." Toronto: Faculty of Arts and Sciences, 1982. An audio recording of the Wiegand Foundation Lectures. Audiocassette no. 400481 in the in the University of Toronto Audio-Visual Library. For published version of the lectures, see D274.

H68. *The Great Teacher: Northrop Frye*. Toronto: CBC Television, 1989. An 87-minute film by CBC-TV producer/director Harry Rasky, aired on CBC on 25 December 1989.

H69. *William Blake: Prophet of the New Age*. A program broadcast on 12, 19, and 26 March 1987 on the CBC Ideas series. Montreal: CBC Transcripts, 1987. Produced by Damiano Pietropaolo. CBC Ideas transcript 4ID7-197. Includes comments by F, among others, on why we should read Blake ("because he's one of the half-dozen people in the world it makes sense to read"), and on Blake's ideas of reality as a human construction, natural religion, the states of innocence and experience, the symbolism of Orc and Urizen, revolutionary movements, the Bible and Milton's view of the Bible.

I. Manuscripts

I215. "Literary and Mechanical Models" (1989). Typescript, 21 pp. Presented at The Dynamic Text: The Combined 16th annual ALLC Conference and the 9th International Conference on Computers and the Humanities, 6 June 1989, University of Toronto. Reflects on the uses that the computer, as a mechanical intelligence, has in scholarship and on the limitations of philological criticism of the *Wissenschaft* variety. Relates the advances in technology during the twentieth century to his own critical career and to the concerns of humanists generally.

I216. "Afterword to Ethel Wilson: *Hetty Dorval*" (1989). Typescript, 4 pp. Comments on Wilson's treatment of the two main characters in her novella and on the social and natural environments in which the action of the story takes place. "*Hetty Dorval* is a typical first novel of a writer of great ability and a sure sense of direction." Forthcoming in 1990.

I217. [On the Bible] (1989). Typescript, 12 pp. Transcribed by Jane Widdicombe from a talk presented by F in Venice, Monday, April 17, 1989. A brief overview of some of the ideas developed at length in *The Great Code*: the difference between the descriptive, dialectical, rhetorical, and ideological uses of language, on the one hand, and its mythical and metaphorical (poetic) uses, on the other; the social implications of the poetic nature of biblical language; the biblical concepts of faith and hope and their relation to illusion (i.e., to the imaginative way of arranging words in metaphorical and mythical language); and the aspect of biblical language that moves it beyond the poetic toward kerygma, a proclamation of which is the vision of love.

I218. "Marconi Conference, Bologna, April 27, 1989: Technology and Literature" (1989). Typescript, 9 pp. An abbreviated version of "Literary and Mechanical Models," I215.

I219. "Preface" (1989). Typescript, 8 pp. A preface to a collection of essays, edited by Deanne Bogdan et al., "concerned with uniting two areas of humanistic education": the theory of criticism and the theory of reading.

I220. "Preface" (1989). Typescript, 3 pp. The preface to a collection of essays translated into Italian (A25). For annotation, see D297.

I221. "Convocation Address, University of Bologna" (1989). Typescript, 9 pp. Moves from Dante's views about the difference between Latin and vernacular Latin, or between private and public communication, to a discussion of the influence of technology on communication generally. The technology of the media has the potential for active and creative responses, but we must constantly be on guard against those forces that hypnotize active responses and that seek to control the media for tyrannical ends. This address was delivered on the occasion of F's receiving an honorary degree from the University of Bologna, 24 April 1989. To be published by the University of Bologna.

I222. "Speech at the Canadian Embassy, September 14, 1989" (1989). Typescript, 25 pp. Examines Canadian culture from the perspective of three different levels (culture as custom or life style, culture as ideology, and culture as creative power) and considers the differences between Canadian and American attitudes and traditions on each level. Considers the way that the Canadian imagination has been shaped by its response to the environment, contrasting the attitudes in Roethke's "Journey to the Interior" with those in a poem by Margaret Atwood of the same title. Sees the dawning of a new attitude in both Canadian and American culture toward the preservation of the natural environment. Published in this issue of the *Newsletter*, beginning on page 2.

J. Unpublished Correspondence

J11. University College, University of Toronto, Office of the Principal. 1. F to Clifford Leech, dated 7 November 1964. ALS. 1 p. Agrees to deliver the Alexander Lectures.

Secondary Sources

K. Books and Collections of Essays

KI. Ayre, John. *Northrop Frye: A Biography*. Toronto: Random House Canada, 1989. 472 pp. Hardcover. Traces the evolution of F's ideas and reputation from his beginnings in Moncton, New Brunswick, through his Oxford years and the writing of his books, to his arriving at a place of honor among the world's great thinkers. Excerpts from the book appeared as "A Singular Mind" in the *Globe and Mail*, 28 Oct. 1989: C1, C5. Reviewed by Michael Dolzani in this issue of the *Newsletter*.

Other reviews:

Marchand, Philip. "If You Can't Stand the Heat Then Stay Away from Frye." *Toronto Star* 9 Dec. 1989: J2.

Pugsley, Alex. "On the Eighth Day He Created Biography." *The Varsity* 1 Dec. 1989: 6.

Robertson, P. J. M. "How a Critic's Life Can Imitate Theory." *Globe and Mail* 21 Oct. 1989: C19.

Stevens, Paul. "Cracking the Frye Code." *Toronto Star* 9 Dec. 1989: M6.

K3. Additions to reviews of David Cook, *Northrop Frye: A Vision of the World*.

Booth, William T. "Landscape with Politicians." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 35 (Winter 1987): 117-22.

Balfour, Ian. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 28, nos. 1-2 (1987): 97-98.

KII. Additions to reviews of Robert D. Denham, *Northrop Frye: An Annotated Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*

Fee, Margery. *Malabar Review* 84 (Fall 1988): 166.

Johnson, G. A. *Canadian Historical Review* 1988:235.

L. Essay and Parts of Books

L629. Tibor Fabiny's article, "Northrop Frye és a mítoszkritika" [Northrop Frye and Myth Criticism], previously entered as forthcoming, was published in *Helikon* 34 (1988): 314-16. Examines F's creative contribution to twentieth-century criticism, concentrating on the *Anatomy* and *Ps* books on Shakespeare.

L668. Péter Pásztor's essay "Northrop Frye, az irodalomtudomány és a Biblia," previously entered but not annotated, is a discussion of *The Great Code*. Pásztor considers F's views on the language and imagery of the Bible and applauds F for focusing on the permanent aspects of literature. Considers F to be a "typical Protestant thinker" struggling with the aftermath of liberal theology.

L711. Ann Arundel County Public Schools, Curriculum Writing Committee. *Literary Archetypes: Advanced Placement English Curriculum Guide*. Annapolis, 1985. 203 pp. The course described in this guide, based on F's work, is organized around his four narrative forms: romance, comedy, tragedy, and satire.

L712. Barilli, Renato. "Le tesi di Frye di McLuhan a confronto: In Canada Platone dialoga con Pound." *Il Corriere della sera* 26 May 1989: 3. Observes that the Canadian environment is reflected in the theoretical works of F and McLuhan: their thought is open to every contemporary cultural situation and offers profound insights to people of all cultures.

L713. Bogdan, Deanne. "From Stubborn Structure to Double Mirror: The Evolution of Northrop Frye's Theory of Poetic Creation and Response." *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 23 (Summer 1989): 33-43. Revised version of L57.

L714. Cameron, Barry, and Michael Dixon. "Introduction: Mandatory Subjective Manifesto: Canadian Criticism vs. Literary Criticism." *Studies in Canadian Literature* 2 (Summer 1977): 137-45 [138-39]. Ask whether F's views on the achievement of Canadian literature need to be reconsidered and whether the criticism of Canadian literature continues to "reflect the dated letter" of his judgments in *Literary History of Canada* and to "ignore the liberal spirit of his general theory."

L715. Capusan, Maria Voda. "Limvaj, mit si critica literara." *Steana* 37 (Sept. 1986): 52.

L716. Cavell, R. A. "Et in 'Acadia' Ego': An Integrative Approach to Canadian Literature." *Spicilegio modemo* 17-18 (1982): 12-18. Argues that F's views on Canadian literature are closely connected to the literary theory of *Anatomy of Criticism*. As a comparatist, F suggests that "integration of Canadian literature into the European literary tradition must be the initial premise of a study of what is uniquely Canadian about our literature."

L717. Coulter, James A. *The Literary Microcosm: Theories of Interpretation of the Later Neoplatonists*. Leiden, Brill, 1976. 5-6. Draws upon F's distinction between "Iliad critics" and "Odyssey critics." Argues that these two opposing critical modes "were already present in ancient literary theory."

L718. Fabiny, Tibor. "Northrop Frye—magyarul" ["Northrop Frye in Hungarian"]. *Idő nélküli világ*. Supplement to vol. 9 of *Harmakdor*. Szeged, Hungary: Atilla József Univ., 1988, 1-2. Points to F's significance as a critic and notes that this publication (C13) includes the first selection of F's work in Hungarian.

L719. Goddard, Barbara. "Structuralism/Post-Structuralism: Language, Reality and Canadian Literature." *Future Indicative: Literary Theory and Canadian Literature*. Ed. John Moss. Ottawa: U Ottawa P, 1987, 25-51 [27-33]. As background for looking at the poststructuralist critical practice in Canada, traces the differing perceptions that Canadian critics have had of F, as well as their differing critiques.

L720. Grant, John E. Review of *Romanticism and Contemporary Criticism*, ed. Morris Eaves and Michael Fischer. *Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly* 22 (Spring 1989): 124-32 [132]. Observes that F's contribution to this volume, "The Survival of Eros in Poetry" (D287), covers some familiar territory (the four levels of imaginative reality). Notes that the current critical "opinion makers" are not much attracted to F's kind of criticism with its Romantic and Arnoldian assumptions. Contrasts F's position with that of the New Historicists, but maintains that F remains "a great reader of literary works as the are, from their own point of view."

L721. Guardiani, Francesco. *La meravigliosa retorica dell' Adone di G. B. Marino*. Firenze: Olschki, 1989. Chapt. 3, devoted to an analysis of Marion's *L'Adone*, is based on F's theory of language in the first chapter of *The Great Code*. Argues that just as Dante's language is allegorical, its chief metaphors corresponding to the "this is put for that" model, Marino's language is symbolically allusive, its metaphors expressed by the "this is like that" structure.

L722. _____. "Nota a Frye." *Allegoria* 1 (1989): 60-66. Recalls F's commitment to teaching at all levels in order to emphasize the nature of his liberalism and to correct the false view that his vision of literature is just another ideology.

L723. Hagey, Rebecca. "Codes and Coping: A Nursing Tribute to Northrop Frye." *Nursing Papers/Perspectives en nursing* 16 (Summer 1984): 13-39. Argues that the theory of interpretation in F's *The Great Code* can be useful in the art of nursing, for the dramatic narratives that are shaped from the nurse-patient relationship attend to images, structures of meaning, symbolic codes, and transformations; and these things are more important in nursing care than rigid models and mechanical procedures for diagnosis.

L724. Hardin, Richard. "Archetypal Criticism." *Contemporary Literary Theory*. Ed. G. Douglas Atkins and Laura Morrow. Amherst: U Massachusetts P, 1989, 42-59 [52-55]. Traces F's views on the structure of imagery, narrative, and myth, and summarizes his approach to Milton's *Lycidas*. Glances at F's relation to historical and biographical criticism.

L725. Helwig, Maggie. "The Prospero Figure: Northrop Frye's Magic Criticism." *Canadian Forum* 67 (Oct. 1987): 28-32. Claims that although F's work has links with Rosicrucian and Gnostic thought and with Kabbalism and Zen Buddhism, "his ultimate loyalty is to the riddle, the koan, the outrageous statement that leaves you blinking at a suddenly wider world."

L726. Kevan, Martin. "St. Agnes' Eve; or, Criticism Becomes Part of Literature." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 35 (Winter 1987): 37-56. An ironic account of F's theories of the imagination, identity, and desire, in the form of an epistolary narrative addressed to F himself. The imaginary writer, "Virginia Cousins," recounts her efforts to understand her own life through F's principles of romance. But she fails, and so she concludes, having lost her senses and her virginity, that all romantic literature and criticism should be burned.

L727. Kiss, Atilla, and Sándor Kovács. "Rend a káoszban" ["Order in Chaos"]. *Idő nélküli világ*. Supplement to vol. 9 of *Harmadkor*. Szeged, Hungary: Atilla József Univ., 1988, 46-51. An afterword to a collection of F's essays (see C13). The authors provide an introduction to the *Anatomy* and contend that F has created a "culture-theory as metacriticism."

L728. Kroetsch, Robert. "Learning a Hero from Northrop Frye." *The Lovely Treachery of Words: Essays Selected and New*. Toronto: Oxford UP, 1989, 151-62. Originally presented as a paper at the international conference devoted to F's work in Rome, 25-27 May 1987. Reviews "the complex involvement in the lessons of Northrop Frye" by a group of Canadian writers, including himself. Concludes that in the single book that emerges from F's many books, F himself becomes the Canadian epic poet.

L729. La Polla, Franco. "Il gran chirurgo della letteratura." *Il Resto del Carlino* 24 April 1989. A feature story on F's work from the *Anatomy* to *The Great Code*, written on the occasion of his receiving an honorary degree from the University of Bologna on 24 April 1989.

L730. Lee, Alvin A. "Victoria's Contribution to Canadian Literary Culture." *From Coburg to Toronto: Victoria University in Retrospect: The Sesquicentennial Lectures, 1986* by A. Brian McKillop et al. Toronto: Chartres Books, 1989, 69-86 [69,77-78]. On F's deep and pervasive influence at Victoria University and beyond: F's "mind, with ever-expanding erudition but no diminishing of imaginative energy, has moved for more than a half-century over most of the verbal lore of our civilization, illuminating, defining, and providing daring syntheses."

L731. Malachy, Thérèse. *Molière: Les Métamorphoses du Carnaval*. Paris: Nizet, 1987, 28-29. Sees in Molière's plays a validation of F's account of the structural principles of comedy.

L732. Marchand, Philip. *Marshall McLuhan: The Medium and the Messenger*. Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1989, 105-6. In the context of a discussion of McLuhan's belief in a Masonic conspiracy, remarks that McLuhan "never abandoned his belief that his great rival in the English department at the University of Toronto, Northrop Frye, was a Mason at heart, if not in fact." Comments on the strained relations between McLuhan and F, leading eventually to McLuhan's requesting that a panelist on a forum devoted to F's *Anatomy* read McLuhan's response to the book as if it were the panelist's own.

L733. Müller, Marianne. "'A Self-Contained Literary Universe': Zur mythologisch-archetypischen Literaturbetrachtung von Northrop Frye." *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 36 (1988): 227-34. After placing F's work in the context of structuralism and myth criticism, provides a Marxist critique of F's entire enterprise, especially as it applies to Canadian literature: F's "making absolute the continuity of literary structure corresponds with the bourgeois democratic fear of the discontinuity in social structures, the fear of breaking with the past . . . Frye's confirmation of continuity springs from the late bourgeois absence of an Ideological historical consciousness and corresponds to a conservative desire for security in a changing world."

L734. _____. "Weltliteratur als 'in sich geschlossenes literarisches Universum'? Zur mythologischen Literaturbetrachtung Northrop Fryes." *Zeitschrift für Germanistik* 9, no. 2 (1988): 156-61. Presents the same argument that appears in L732, though the essay is organized a bit differently

L735. _____. "Northrop Frye's 'Secular Scripture': Structural Principles of Literature." *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Gesellschaftsw. R.* 33, no. 4 (1988): 437-39. Reviews the differences between the New Criticism and F's archetypal criticism and glances at some of his assumptions about the importance of conventions. Concludes that F's "overemphasis on the persistence of conventions of literary structures results from his ignoring the process of men's material life and its changes. Nowhere in Frye is there an analysis of the relation between the inner literary structure and the process of real history."

L736. New, W.H. "Codes of Myth." *A History of Canadian Literature*. London: Macmillan, 1989, 229-33. Points to the influence of F's theory of cultural coherence on the work of Douglas Jones, Gwendolyn MacEwen, Jay Macpherson, and James Reaney.

L737. Paine, Charles. "Relativism, Radical Pedagogy, and the Ideology of Paralysis." *College English* 51 (Oct. 1989): 557-70 [566-67]. Claims that F's view of literary culture in *The Educated Imagination*, which "proposes something like a criticism machine" for punching out interpretations, does not account for the relation between the imaginative and material worlds. F reifies the "imaginative system."

L738. Ricciardi, Caterina. "Anatomia di un mandala: Il modello critico di Northrop Frye." *L'esotismo nelle letterature moderne*. Ed. Elemire Zolla. Naples: Liguori, 1987.

L739. Ross, Malcolm. "The Imaginative Sense and the Canadian Question." *The Impossible Sum of Our Traditions: Reflections on Canadian Literature*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986, 145-62 [148-51]. Questions the opposition F establishes between the political unity of Canada, which exists at the national level, and its cultural identity, which is regional. Ross also takes up this issue in "Canadian Culture and the Colonial Question," pp. 163 ff.

L740. Stuewe, Paul. "Northrop Frye and the Perils of Literary Transposition." *Clearing the Ground: Literature after "Survival."* Toronto: Proper Tales Press, 1984. A slightly expanded version of L501.

M. Reviews

M10. THE GREAT CODE

M10.79. E. W. Mandel's "Tautology as Truth and Vision" rpt. in Mandel's *The Family Romance*. Winnipeg: Turnstone Press, 1986, 135-39.

M10.154. Contat, Michel. "Une lecture mythologique et littéraire de la Bible." *Le Monde* 15 Feb. 1985: 21. 1000 words. Review of the French translation. Notes that F is "without doubt the most influential critic in the English language," one whose prestige is comparable to that of Lévi-Strauss in anthropology. Comments on Todorov's introduction to the translation and on F's unforgettable style. Provides a sampler of quotations from the book, selected for the "pleasure, curiosity, interest, and amusement they provide."

M10.155. Cresti, Roberto. *Il Verri* 3-4 (1987) 177-81.

M10.156. Eladan, Jacques. "La Bible: Code Littéraire." *Tribune Juive* [Paris] 28 June 1985. 350 words. Review of the French translation. "A very important and original book by the greatest living critic writing in English." F gives us an antidote to the negative prejudices of Voltaire and the German critics.

M10.157. O'Malley, Thomas P. *America* 151 (10 Nov. 1984): 306. In a list of books for recommended leisure reading, O'Malley gives a brief overview of *The Great Code* and then remarks: "There is a conversation going on between the Old and New Testaments not often attended to; Professor Frye prepares the ground for hearing anew this important theological dialogue."

M14. NORTHROP FRYE ON SHAKESPEARE

M14.36. Anonymous. *Book World* 14 Aug. 1988: 12. Brief review of the paperback edition.

M14.37. Basile, Jean. "Personne ne parle de Shakespeare comme Northrop Frye." *La Press* [Montreal] 10 Sept. 1988. 750 words. Review of the French translation. Comments on the background knowledge F brings to the plays and on his lively prose style. "Although he is a humorist, he remains a scholar."

M14.38. Bellemare, Yvon. *Quebec Francois* Oct. 1988: 9. 300 words. Review of the French translation. Comments briefly on F's historical and structural approach.

M14.39. Gliatto, Tom. *USA Today* 4 Oct. 1988. Brief review of the paperback edition.

M14.40. Gorse, Oliver. *Idler* 12 (Mar.-Apr. 1987): 61-62. 600 words. Quarrels mainly with F's view that Shakespeare's plays are primarily plays.

M14.41. Grivelet, Michel. *Etudes Anglaises* 41, no. 4 (1988): 482-83. 250 words. Notes F's emphasis on the theatricality of Shakespeare. Although these lectures were delivered to undergraduates, that fact doesn't detract from the book's important ideas. "It's a book you can't miss, particularly because of the way it deals with the controversial plays."

M14.42. L., D.J. *Kliatt Young Adult Paperback Book Guide* January 1989. 120 words. Says F's "lectures are both rich in insight and compelling in their clarity."

M14.43. M., R. C. *Academic Library Book Review* June 1987:20. Brief notice.

M14.44. Ouellette, Fernand. *Liberté* 27 (June 1985): 115. Review of the French translation. Comments briefly on F's approach to studying the form of the Bible through its myths and metaphors.

M14.45. Rees, Joan. *Notes and Queries* 35 (June 1988): 220-21. 860 words. Says that the "students who heard these lectures are likely to have been both stimulated and flattered at being invited to share the company of a well-stocked mind moving easily in a world of high literary culture," but that others will find the book less rewarding. Thinks, therefore, that it would have been better to let the lectures remain on tape.

M14.46. Stephenson, James. *Library Journal* 111 (1 Oct. 1986): 97-98. "Frye's work is completely accessible, its style crisp and engaging. Most of all, it is full of basic 'good sense' about our most abused literary figure."

M14.47. Timpone, John. *Shakespeare Bulletin* Mar.-Apr. 1988: 26. 970 words. "This is a good undergraduate course on ten Shakespeare plays and would make a good companion volume to anyone's Signets, New Ardens, or Evans." Emphasizes how the book can teach students to see and read Shakespeare's plays.

M23. ON EDUCATION

M23.1. Czarnecki, Mark. *Vic Report* 17 (Spring 1989): 7, 15. 1150 words. Calls attention to F's role as a teacher, his understanding of the three levels of education, his reaction to the student unrest of the 1960s, and his commitment to academic freedom, which is always in conflict with society's ideas about the socially adjusted citizen.

M23.2 Robinson, T.M. "What the University Can Teach the World." *Globe and Mail* 5 Nov. 88: C21. 600 words. Summarizes the educational issues that have occupied F from the 1960s through the 1980s, and calls attention especially to the separation F makes between the "world" and the Platonic forms "education" and "university." Says the essays "are a provocative, often brilliant and engagingly written . . . statement of a view of education that can claim an illustrious history . . . but they will fail to quiet the qualms of those convinced that universities have as much to learn from the world as they have to teach it."

M23.3. Yan, Peter M. "Education Individual Duty for Frye." *the newspaper* [Univ. of Toronto], 7 June 1989: 7. 350 words. Notes that in this collection, which "covers familiar territory," F's "main point is that education is not primarily an intellectual exercise, but a social one as well."

N. Dissertations

N41. Galloway, Priscilla. "Sexism and the Senior English Literature Curriculum in Ontario Secondary Schools." PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1977. 19-31. Maintains that "the most limiting aspect of Frye's perspective and the major source of concern about his influence on English curriculum arises specifically from the fundamental androcentricity of his position." F's male-normative view of the world is seen in his almost exclusive use of literature by men, his reliance on the patriarchal substructure of biblical and Greek mythology, his use of sexist language, and his defining of women from a masculine, nonreciprocal perspective.

N42. Holden, Michael. "Literary Theory and the Education of English Teachers: An Analysis of Theories of Literature Presented in Selected Texts on Literature and Its Teaching." PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1973. 196 pp. See especially chapters 3 and 4. Holden argues that "the synoptic literary theory of Northrop Frye provides one theoretical scheme capable of comprehending" the opposing views of the needs and experience of the student, on the one hand, and the formal analysis of literature, on the other. Uses F's theories for developing a systematic framework for studying literature and applies the framework to eight sample texts.

N43. Nighswanger, Daniel Lee. "Mythos and Metaphor in the Apocalypse: Northrop Frye's Literary Criticism Applied to the Book of Revelation." MA thesis, Wilfred Laurier University, 1984. 158 pp. Examines Revelation in terms of F's categories of structure (mythos) and symbol (metaphor). Compares his approach with that of four other commentators: R. H. Charles, A. M. Farrer, N. W. Lund, and V. Eller.

P. Miscellaneous

P200. Adachi, Ken. "Frye Finally Wins Elusive Award for Best Non-Fiction Book of '86." *Toronto Star* 28 May 1987: H1. News story about F's receiving the Governor-General's award for *On Shakespeare*.

P201. _____. "Northrop Frye at Harborfront." *Toronto Star* 15 July 1985: D2. On F's hosting the memorial segment of a Toronto series featuring readings by immigrant writers.

P202. Anonymous. "Conferimento laurea ad honorem al Prof. Northrop Frye." *Bollettino Università degli studi di Bologna* 4, no. 6 (June 1989): 7-8. The text of the citation for the honorary degree F received from the University of Bologna on 24 April 1989.

P203. _____. "Lucid Northrop Frye Outshines Gilkey." *The Bishop* [Bishop's University] 21 Feb. 1974: 5. Story in student newspaper about F's lecture on myth at Bishop's University.

P204. _____. "Northrop Frye at 74: A Legend Just Can't Let Up." *The Gazette* [Montreal], 9 Aug. 1986: B9. A wire-service story, based on an interview, in which F chats about his teaching and his reaction to public acclaim. A shorter version of the same feature appeared as "Frye Does His Research in Mind, Not the Library" in the *Winnipeg Free Press* 8 Aug. 1986: 30.

P205. _____. "The Only Poem Northrop Frye Hasn't Read." *Toronto* Oct. 1986: 8. About a bit of doggerel entitled "Reflections on Spending Three Straight Hours Reading *Anatomy of Criticism*," circulated among Victoria College students. The complete text: "Northrop Frye / Whatta guy / Reads more books than you or I / Treats them with an equal eye / Archetypes are apple pie / Will she cry? Will he die? / Northrop never wonders why / Shakespeare cannot make him shy / Shylock's just like Captain Bligh / Value judgments are a lie / Find the patterns that apply / Squeeze out *Hamlet*, let it dry / Presto! *Catcher in the Rye*."

P206. _____. "University Opens Northrop Frye Centre." *Toronto Star* 22 Sept. 1989: E22. Brief note about the book and manuscript exhibition and the showing of the film by Harry Rasky, *The Great Teacher: Northrop Frye*, which were part of the ceremonies inaugurating the Frye Centre at Victoria University, 22 Sept. 1989.

P207. _____. "Frye/Chi e': Al college da maestro." *Il Resto del Carlino* 24 April 1989. A biographical sketch of F, published on the occasion of his receiving an honorary degree from the University of Bologna, 24 April 1989.

P208. _____. "Elogi internazionali a Lingue: Ca'Foscari come modello." *Gazzettino* 18 Apr. 1989. News story of F's having addressed a three-day conference in Venice, "Venice and the Study of Foreign Language and Literature," organized by the language faculty of Ca'Foscari. For F's address, presented on 17 Apr. 1989, see I217.

P209. _____. "Al professor Frye conferita laurea ad honorem." *La Repubblica* 28 April 1989: vi. News story about F's having received an honorary degree from the University of Bologna on 24 April 1989.

P210. Ashford, Keith. "Frye Tackles Great Identity Crisis." *Globe and Mail* 6 Apr. 1976. News account of *Journey without Arrival* (H44).

P211. Borsatti, Luciana. "Per gli italiani corso accelerate di lingua inglese." *Canova Venezia* 18 Apr. 1989. Includes a reference to F's address on the Bible, presented at the Ca'Foscari in Venice, 17 Apr. 1989.

P212. Knelman, Martin. "From the Frye Pen into the Foyer." *Toronto Life* 21 (Aug. 1987): 10. On F's absence (he was in Italy) from the Governor General's Literary Awards ceremonies.

P213. Laderoute, Bette. "People." *Maclean's* 98 (15 Apr. 1985): 32. News story about Chinese postgraduate student Chao Lien's meeting her literary hero and delivering him birthday greetings from her fellow students at Hubei University.

P214. McIver, Mary. "People." *Maclean's* 4 Nov. 1985:40. Brief news story about F's two forthcoming books, *On Education* and the second volume of his work on the Bible and literature. Asked about the increasingly large volume of his writings, F is reported to have said, "I have no reason to suppose that I will ever come to the end of my productive life."

P215. Gamester, George. "Fingers Was a Real Wizard at Keyboards, Not Smalltalk." *Toronto Star* 11 Nov. 1987:131. Feature story on F in which Fred Kirby and Kingsley Joplin recount their recollections of F at Victoria College.

P216. Quill, Greg. "Toronto Honors the Best with Annual Arts Awards." *Toronto Star* 23 Sept. 1987: F1. News story about F's having received an award for Lifetime Achievement-one of the 1987 Toronto Arts Awards.

P217. Stanley, Don. "Television." *Toronto Sun* 6 Apr. 1976. Review of *Journey without Arrival* (H44).

P218. Tasko, Patti. "Smartest 'Teddy Bear' Around." *Vancouver Sun* 8 Aug. 1986: D6. News story based on an interview with Frye. This is a shorter version of P204.

Making Literature Out of Frye— Continued

From the prologue to James Merrill's *The Changing Light at Sandover*. New York: Atheneum, 1984, p.3:

Saw my way
To a plot, or as much of one as still allowed
For surprise and pleasure in its working-out.
Knew my setting; and had, from the start, a theme
Whose steady light shone back, it seemed, from every
Least detail exposed to it. I came
To see it as an old, exalted one:
The incarnation and withdrawal of
A god. That last phrase is Northrop Frye's.

R.G. Everson's poem entitled "Report for Northrop Frye" appeared in *Delta* [Montreal] Jan. 1959: 28. The poem in full:

Opening with dynamite blast,
We grope in underground workings
To tunnel Labrador granite.

I find no fossil of igneous rock,
No curious paintings on broken walls,
No lock of hair or mythical token.

Nothing ever alive precedes man here.
If "Poetry can only be made out of other poems"
—In new space, to what may I refer?

We bring our own light to a dark place.
Crowbar, sledge hammer, pick
Pound Labrador granite.

We male sounds from Arctic silence.
Life is here and now—we bring it.
We bring men's laughter and good sense.

Frye and Barbecue

Sooner or later we were bound to get a postmodern critique of barbecue. Well, not really a critique but a parody of the inadequate attempts of various books on barbecue to capture the essence of barbecue as a thing in itself. To wit: Frank Gannon's "Mmm, Manor Simulacrum: Barbecue a Postmodern Grilling," in *Harper's* May 1989: 55-57. "The truth of the matter is," allows Gannon, "you've got to be very careful reading about barbecue if, for example, you've shared a lot of baby-back ribs and Brunswick stew with, to name one guy, Northrop Frye. That guy will wear

you out. Many times I felt like calling Frye on some of his ontological assumptions, but it's hard to get real motivated with a plate of pulled pork in front of you and a cold one in your hand. I remember a lot of great eating, lots of napkins, and plenty of cold ones with Northrop Frye."

Frygiana from Here and There

In *A Memoir of David Jones* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1981), William Blissett records the following reminiscence, in which he and David Jones were discussing Conrad: "David recalled a passage . . . from one of Conrad's prefaces. I interested him greatly by recalling an encounter that occurred one summer when I was teaching in Queen's University in Kingston. Having rented a house, I found myself gardening under the law while an elderly gentleman next door was gardening with love. We fell into talk, and one day he asked, 'Have you ever heard of a writer named Joseph Conrad?' I nodded. 'He was my next-door neighbour, in Kent. We would go for long walks from time to time and see ships making the turn between the Channel and the Thames. "Post," he would say, "Post, I have seen much of the world—"and he was a well-travelled gentleman, in the merchant navy—"I have seen much of the world but no sight to compare with that"

I enjoyed telling this because Mr Post's deliberate pace and South-of-England speech (without the intrusive 'eo' sound that causes flickers of annoyance in the rest of the English-speaking world) reminded me very much of David's own style of talk. Mr Post went on to ask me if I had heard of a university professor by the name of Northrop Frye. (Yes, I wrote my thesis under the direction of a great captain of academic industry, A.S.P. Woodhouse, and a coming young man, Northrop Frye.) 'Professor Frye gave a talk on the wireless, on Conrad, and mentioned a man named Ford, whose real name was Hueffer.' (Mr. Post said 'Hoffer.') 'I wrote to him and said that we all thought, perhaps wrongly, that Hueffer was a German agent, but he wrote back to say that such was not the case, that Ford, as he called him, was a loyal Englishman though of German origin, and that anyway Conrad would never have associated himself with a German agent, and I had to agree with that'."

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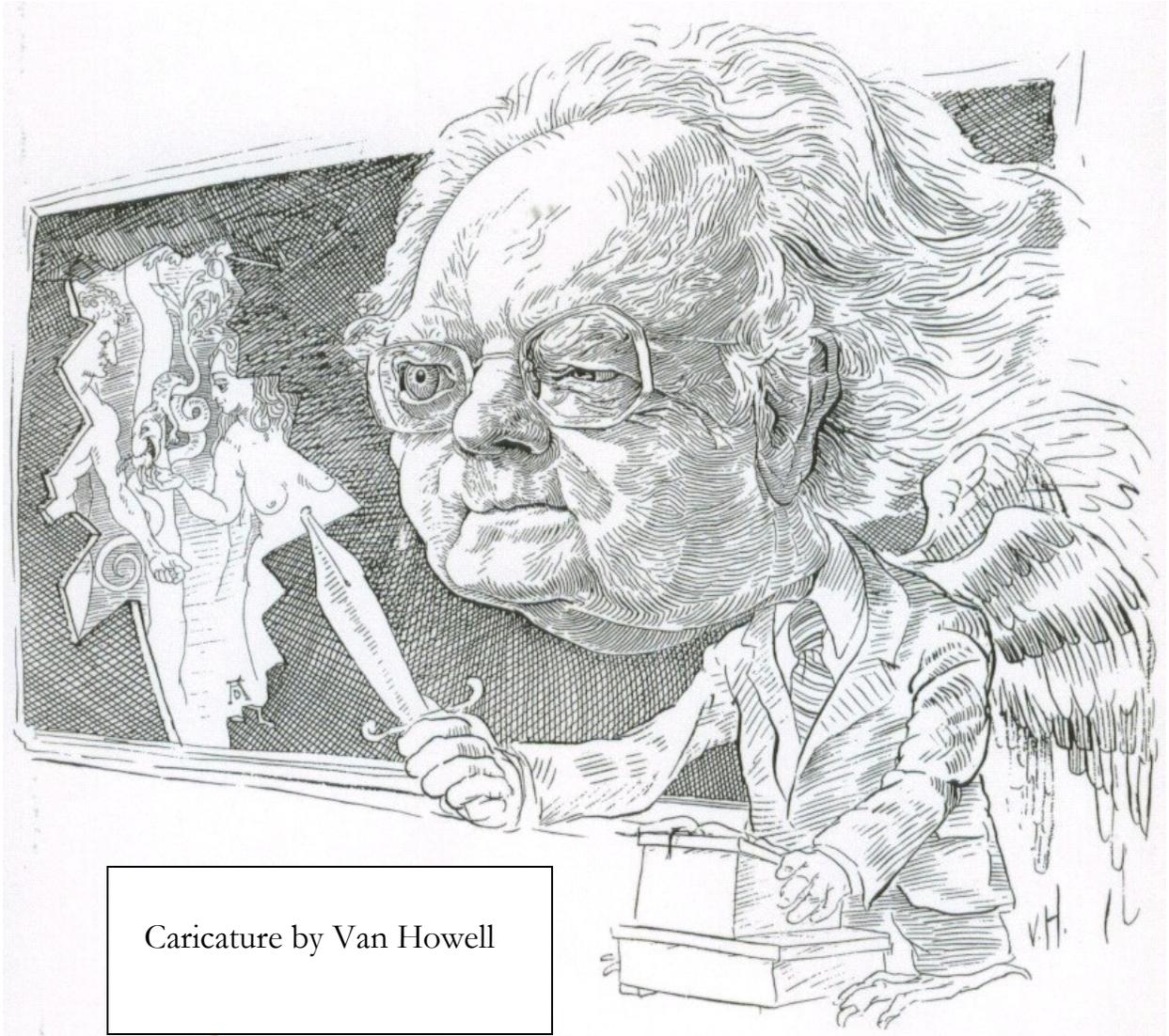
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