
Northrop Frye Newsletter

Volume 5, Number 2

Summer 1993

Frye's Notebooks

This issue of the *Frye Newsletter* is devoted to a selection from one of Northrop Frye's notebooks. At least since his undergraduate years at Oxford, Frye regularly kept notebooks. The eighty-three have survived are now among the Frye Papers at the Victoria University Library. They come in various sizes, shapes, and lengths. Some contain only a few paragraphs; others run to several hundred pages. Unlike the diaries (there are six diaries among the Frye Papers), the notebooks are generally undated, though internal evidence makes it possible to determine at least the approximate dates of composition. Typically the notebook entries are related to Frye's writing projects. Some, in fact, are drafts of essays and talks, even of several of Frye's books. But most contain a series of more or less discontinuous entries. "All my life," says Frye in an entry below, "I've had the notebook obsession manifested by what I'm doing at this moment. Writing in notebooks seems to help clarify my mind about the books I write, which are actually notebook entries arranged in continuous form. At least, I've always told myself they were that" (para. 326).

What follows are some entries from Notebook 1993.1, a 216-page holograph notebook containing 747 paragraphs—more than 61,000 words altogether. Entries were made to this notebook over the course of about five years, during the time that Frye was working on *Words with Power*. One entry is dated "Aug. 30/88," but the earliest entries seem to have been written in 1986 and the latest ones in 1990.

A number of the entries bear directly on the themes of *Words with Power* and with Frye's various plans for organizing the book. Some entries clearly make reference to the various drafts of the book. I have omitted almost all of these paragraphs, as well as a series of paragraphs on Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*, Henry James, and a number of papers Frye was working on during the time he was writing in the notebook.

The notebook itself is quite neatly laid out. Frye numbered each of the pages and skipped a line between the entries. Always one to conserve paper, whether he was typing or writing by hand, Frye filled up the entire page from margin to margin. Although his handwriting is sometimes difficult to decipher, generally speaking the later notebooks are easier to read than the earlier ones. There are only a half-dozen words (none in this selection) that I've not yet been able to decode in Notebook 1993.1. The annotations are not yet complete, but readers may find that the notes on pp. 37 ff. will clear up some of the references and allusions. I have added the paragraph numbers in square brackets, and everything else in square brackets is my own. I have replaced Frye's own occasional square brackets with braces: { }.

A plan is now underway to publish a substantial portion of the notebooks, as well as a number of other materials among the Frye papers, including the correspondence between Frye and Helen Kemp in the 1930s, Frye's undergraduate papers, his diaries, and his professional correspondence. Once the papers have been catalogued and indexed they will be available for inspection (except for a small portion of restricted material) at the Victoria University Library. Access to the Frye papers requires the permission of the librarian, and those wanting to quote from the papers must secure the permission of the executors of the Frye estate. My thanks to Jane Widdicombe for permission to print this sampler (approximately one-third of the total), which will give readers an idea of the kind of material contained in the notebooks.

Notebook 1993.1

[1] Orare est laborare. Working at what one can do is a sacrament.

[4] The story element in myth (*mythos*) links it to folktales. The function of literature is to recreate the myth behind the ideology. All poets are affected by the ideologies of their time, but criticism discovers layers of meaning (Hopkins' underthought and overthought, Derrida's deconstruction) distinguishing the two.

[7] The language of ideology, being thesis-language, contains its own opposite. Ideology functions properly in a tolerance that tries to contain the opposite. Dogmas that exclude the opposite are pernicious. The worst are those that back up political dogma with a religious or quasi-religious one.

[8] Religion may be an "ultimate" concern, as Tillich says: it can be a primary one. We can't live a say without being concerned about food, but we can live all our lives with concerned about God, impoverished as such a life would be.

[9] Faith being a secondary concern, faith and doubt interpenetrate. "There is a God" already contains the statement "there is no God." Dogma, accepting one and forbidding the other, creates hysteria, as it disturbs an imaginary social consensus to admit the opposite.

[11] The hysteria of dogmatism results from asserting that the sword is unified when it's actually divided. The next stage is pathological, projecting the minority voice on someone else. Thus the Jew because the scapegoat for the voice inside the Nazi that kept saying "this racism is a lot of crap, and you know it." Faith made wholly ideological, and separated from primary concerns, turns into anxiety. Some of this of course is fairly harmless.

[16] Two proto-myths are enfolded in the P account [the "Priestly" creation story in Genesis 1]: one, as is generally recognized, is the myth of creation as the killing of the dragon of chaos. This is alluded to in the Psalms and prophets. The other is the son standing straight up to push apart his naughty fucking parents. Here the "firmament" separate two "water" (male and female according to Enoch).

[23] I am naturally interested in the rapprochement of religion and science, but the Tao of Physics people seems to grab something denatured and out of its cultured context from Taoism or Zen or Vedanta. I think cultural specifics like Exodus and gospel mean something, and I want to use them.

[24] These people (David Bohm, Karl Pribram) also talk about dismantling the ego-centered thinker. What interests me here is the old chestnut about criticism as a parasite activity. Perhaps criticism is the opposite of parasitism: it tries to be a transparent medium for the poets, many of whom are in the “egotistical sublime” area. For some writers, at least, the ego may be a necessary spark plug to get the engine turning over. But the egocentric (Leavis) is apt to be a judging critic, perverting the whole operation.

[25] Well, I’ve certainly said a good deal about the way the ego buggers up the creative insight, in, for instance, Yeats and Whitman. The present critical scene is typical what the scrambling of egos produced: a sense of infinite complications where you’d have to master (and note that word) five hundred books before you could even get started.

[26] It’s doubtless my own ego that wonders why critics didn’t feel more called to order by the piece I did for the PMLA centenary.

[29] Structures of concern can’t be rationalized: the incest taboo isn’t based on any intuitive knowledge of what inbreeding results in: and the horror of sodomy, beyond the fact ass-fucking is a dirty business, is not because it’s “unnatural” but because it’s a parody of Jesus with his male beloved disciple, his “don’t touch me” as his last words to a woman, and his (or somebody’s) insistence that his mother was a virgin and his father not his father.

[32] A literary metaphor is hypothetical only: this was as far as I got with the AC [*Anatomy of Criticism*] set up. But Theseus’ lunatic and lover are behind the poet, suggesting an existential identity beyond the literary kind. The relation of the existential lover and the hypothetical identity of the metaphor is deeply involved in poetry (Donne’s Canonization and Extasie). Theseus trying to keep it all within the orbit of his authority, hence “lunatic,” but mystical identity above time and space is what’s involved.

[33] It follows, of course, that every work of literature is a meditative focus. One can develop the hypothetical seed of metaphor into another dimension. This is a very long shot so far: I’ve always thought of identification *with the literature*, putting yourself in place of the hero, as the depth of absurd immaturity; clearly I mean something else.

[37] The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail is an extraordinary piece of Romantic Esauism, a counter-myth of Jesus as the returning rightful heir. I’m not shocked by the suggestion that Jesus had a physical wife and children, but his “blood line” would have got mixed in average humanity pretty damn soon. It’s just one more guess about the historical Jesus, derived from Gospels that don’t care about the historical Jesus.

[40] The *Gestalt* of a complex metaphor is the closest we can get to the sense of the integrity of a verbal structure. Integrity is not, or doesn’t commit one to, cult of holism. I have an integrity, as long as I’m alive, that I won’t have after I’m dead. But it doesn’t follow that, with my deafness, fallen arches, burpy stomach and limp prick, I’m a “perfect whole.” The critic looks for the inner integrity which is also the vitality of the literary work. At the top level—Dante, Shakespeare and romance—this includes a very high degree of wholeness in the imagery. But the wholeness isn’t an end in itself: it just leads more readily to higher levels.

[44] Criticism approaches a literary work which is a metaphor-cluster made explicit. Why do we need the critic? Because there’s so much implicit in the metaphor-cluster that he didn’t make explicit.

Mainly, of course, the relation of contexts, to other cultures, of words. “Deconstruction” is such a dreary negative word for all this.

[49] One thing that HBHG [*The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*] did for me was start me thinking about the vividness and integrity of mythical history, e.g., the British history that revolves around Arthur. When I picked it up I thought oh God: not another book about Cathars and Templars and Grail romances and Freemasons and Rosicrucians. It was, but it was better than most such books because it was hitched onto an Antichrist figure.

[50] So far I’ve considered only the negative Antichrist, in Blake’s terms, the deified Caesar who’s only Caligula or Nero dead. I’ve not thought seriously about the *contrary* Christ, the Herrnmoral Nietzschean Antichrist of the “blood line.” Such a Christ would be as Nietzsche saw, a Dionysus, a dying and reviving god, not a god of resurrection. Margaret Murray’s horned god would be another form of such a figure: it didn’t exist as the centre of an actual cult, I should think, but as an informing myth it would have great power. That is, there wasn’t any horned god on one dimension of reality, but the witch-hunting torturers had one in their minds, in whose name they were committing their atrocities, and who responded to them from the women they tortured.

[53] I’ve said many times that man is born lost in a forest. If he is obsessed by the there-ness of the forest, he stays lost and goes in circles; if he assumes the forest is not there, he keeps bumping into trees. The wise man looks for the invisible line between the is and the is not which is the way *through*. The street in the city, the highway in the desert, the pathway of the planets through the labyrinth of the stars, are parallel forms—see the title of my *Festschrift*. Note how Yeats’ Dialogue of Self and Soul splits between a soul who seeks the not-there and a self who returns to the there, and accepts, like Nietzsche, going in circles as a heroic occupation.

[58] But I have an uneasy suspicion that I’m making the same oversimplified mistake I made in FS [*Fearful Symmetry*] and GC [*The Great Code*]: establishing the polarizing of the apocalyptic and demonic and not paying enough attention (a) to the contraries (b) to the analogy of Generation identified by Christianity with the Old Testament.

[62] *The Turn of the Screw* is placed in an Edenic setting with preternatural children. Quint and Jessel are the “evil” forces dragging them backward; the governess is the “angel” pulling them forward into experience, equally destructive and menacing. The fairy-tale setting gives us the withdrawn master who won’t and can’t be bothered about anything. One can oversimplify the story by reading Q & J as objective haunting evil spirits, or by reading everything as the governess’s neurotic projections, who creates the evil she thinks she fears. Notice what a high opinion of her the man has who reads her story to the group. And Miles *was* kicked out of school: it’s not simple neurosis.

[63] I’ve often noticed how stories with a strong mythical (plot) emphasis are placed in a framework, or are assumed to be told to the writer, or discovered by him in a drawer, etc. Look up that storm story, where there are four or five wrappings. It’s as though we were supposed to dig for the story underneath the ideological surface: a model of what “deconstruction” ought to be.

[65] Evidently Gadamer’s book is one of the places I should look for the concern of play; it’s a link between two of my sources, *Homo Ludens* and the *Critique of Judgment*. And I shouldn’t overlook the connection between value-judgments and the defence of ideology. Bruno’s polarity has two aspects:

the antithetical opposition of two halves of the same thing, and the final separation of life and death. Vico's repetition in different modes (displacement).

[67] Note the significance of the frozen plot (*Waiting For Godot*) as a kind of parody of the Gestalt of the metaphor-cluster. It's not really frozen: as everyone knows, WG is wonderfully effective drama—but it employs that convention. Its temporal dimension is in the “waiting for”: it's leading us up to a post-play event that doesn't take place. Something similar in HJ's [Henry James's] *Beast in the Jungle*.

[68] In my two stages of referential meaning the first suggests not a monomyth but a holomyth: a map of the whole country. Looking up a place on that map isn't “pigeon holing,” but trying to find a context for it. I think the Bible provides at least a survey of a holomyth. I must find out why the Marxists (Walter Benjamin) regard myth as a dragon of oppression to be slain by some ideological knight.

[70] The big hurdle is knowing what literature to use for examples of the E-A-P-H [Eros-Adonis-Prometheus-Hermes] part. If I were following my nose, I'd be reading Henry James, and wishing to God I'd not only read more of him, but remembered more of what I did read. I've always had the greatest difficulty figuring out what he was going on, at the most superficial level. So the Awkward Age and The Sacred Fount and a lot of others just went up the spout.

[71] The reason for this last note is this: Henry James has certain recurrent, almost obsessive themes. One (Portrait of a Lady, etc.) is the sunken Atlantis theme: fresh innocent *and wealthy* American girl goes to Europe, turns down all the decent offers she gets, marries some very dubious count de Spoons character, buggers up her whole life, that's all for now, kiddies. Another (What Masie Knew, etc.) is the clairvoyant observer theme, often a child. Sees all, knows all, tells all, does bugger all. But the one that fascinates me is The Sense of the Past theme, where somebody meets himself in a different time (SP itself) or in a parallel world (Jolly Corner) or meets the nothingness which is the essence of himself (Beast in the Jungle).

[79] So many dreary disputes in 20th c. French literature where we have non-Marxist writers saying they just want to be apolitical and neutral, with the Marxists telling them that “neutral” statements are just as political ones. Of course they are. They're the other half of the Marxist ideology, and just as essential to it.

[81] I'm at the age to reread the books I've forgotten: when an undergraduate F.H. Anderson told us to read Havelock Ellis' Dance of Life, and I read it with interest, but picking up a second-hand copy in a bookstore, I found I'd totally forgotten it, yet its spattery encyclopaedic style has certainly influenced my idiom, and it begins by saying that the fundamental arts are dancing and building (my freedom and shelter concerns). A footnote includes the sexual concern (mating dances of birds). (Unfortunately the stinker who sold the shop the book has razored out five pages, so I'll have to find another copy {I won't keep a mutilated book on my shelves}).

[82] The close relation between dancing and sex comes out in the dancing figure of the Song of Songs, and of course the food concern is not only in the hortus conclusus, fons signatus verse (and possibly the “garden of cunts” one) but in the fertility-land attributes too of the Bride. Ruth has the fertility theme in the harvest imagery and the son born late to “Naomi”: also sex and shelter are linked for a woman (cf. the phrase *femme couverte*): cf. the cloak of Boaz spread over Ruth.

[93] I am told that the structure of the Anatomy is impressive but futile, because it would make every other critic a Gauleiter of Frye. People don't realize that I'm building temples to—well, “the gods” will do. There's an outer court for casual tourists, an inner court for those who want to stay for communion (incidentally, the rewards of doing so are very considerable). But I've left a space where neither they nor I belong. It's not a tower of Babel: that tries to reach something above itself: I want to contain what, with a shift of perspective, contains it. Why am I so respected and yet so isolated? Is it only because I take criticism more seriously than any other living critic?

[99] The opening sentence of AC [*Anatomy of Criticism*] said I attached no particular importance to the construct *qua* construct. I think I've got past that now, and that it's only by means of such dizzyingly complex constructs that one can ever get anything substantial out of criticism. Those who appear not to have such a construct, like Johnson, are attached to an ideology: those who do often don't get it worked out, like Coleridge.

[101] I used to say that the Reformation ideology leaned to the past and Marxism to the future: but maybe all ideologies lean to the past in the end. Marxists are a lot hazier about the future socialist society than about the horrors of “revisionism,” or escaping the weight of the sacred texts. Jews, too, with their future Messiah.

[102] “Dialogue”: an overworked buzzword referring to the interpenetrating of opposites in ideology.

[103] I'm wrong about religion as an ultimate but not a primary concern. Where did I come from and where am I going are primary concerns, even if we don't believe there are any answers. But if only the social institution answers, the answer is ideological only. Maybe that *is* something we learn about only from literature, but God, the digging & borrowing to get at it!

[105] I shouldn't have to say that I'm not postulating a golden age of pure myth with no admixture of ideology; but because of the extraordinary adherence of some readers to such inferences, I do have to say it. Such an age is like the Garden of Eden, not a description of anything that happened in the past, but a postulate that makes what follows more intelligible: that raises the question of the function of postulated myths, which will bear thinking.

[106] The Bible is soaked in ideology from beginning to end: that's what symbolized by the great trial metaphor that runs from God's contract with the adam to the Last Judgment, where Christ appears in the quite impossible role, for him, of a judge (“who made me a judge and a divider over you?”).

[107] I seem to be now in a more fertile & receptive state, more ready to respond to suggestions from what I read in literature. I've spoken of wanting to do an essay on Samuel Butler, for many reasons (Jerry's Festschrift, my own 4K course, etc.). I dislike him & often find him a bore, because he's a milder version of what I so detest in Wyndham Lewis. He isn't as consistently perverted or petty-minded as Lewis, but he has something of Lewis' quality of writing from a primary motivation of envy. Miss Savage & he agree solemnly that *Middlemarch* is a very bad novel, & so through most writers. Even when he expresses admiration there's an underlying current of “Oh, sure, but don't forget how important *I* am.” His cult of Handel is not an exception, because it's merely a device for depreciating other music. In theory, I don't care what a writer is *like*: in practice, some types put me off. It's part of his inability to know where paradox stops, like his paradox that when it comes to intelligence, nature loves a vacuum if it's inside the skull.

[108] If there's no real difference between creation & criticism, I have as much right to build palaces of criticism as Milton had to write epic poems. My whole and part interchange works here too: inside the Anatomy, everyone is a disciple & to some degree a captive of Frye—every writer has a captive audience—but surely one can finish the book & then do as one likes, with something of me inside him. If he doesn't have something of me inside him, he won't, at this time of history, have anything of much use to say as a critic.

[109] The Buddhists keep saying, with tremendous and unending prolixity, that the subject-object duality is horseshit. Okay, it's horseshit: what's so infernally difficult about it? The fact that it's so difficult to overcome derives from the fact that the metaphorical kernel of subject & object is the contrast of life & death. The person for whom that's disappeared really is a sage.

[110] I'm beginning to feel that the schematic structure of the Anatomy is a key to a much larger principle. People don't have to remain doorkeepers in it forever, as in Psalm 23: they can go out to build palaces of their own. I suspect also that the key to philosophy is the exact opposite of what philosophers do now. It's the study of the great historical systems, each of them a palace and a museum, that's genuine philosophy. At a certain point they interpenetrate into a house of many mansions, a new Jerusalem of verbal possibilities, but that's a tremendous state of enlightenment.

[112] Henry James' pansy mannerisms and distilled snobbery don't put me off as much as Butler's inverted snobbery about the upper class: the latter, however disguised as parody, is the real pain in the ass. Because that's the Englishness I had to put up with when I was principal.

[115] Why is earth a middle-earth in all mythology? Because of the psychological-cosmological correspondence. The lower world is the unconsciousness, the surface world the waking consciousness, the upper world the superconscious. I've said that cosmologies are, though literary in origin, ideological in intent (because hierarchical), so they conflict with science as pure mythology doesn't, & disappear. That seems to remove the objective aspect of myth, leaving only the psychological aspect, the kingdom of Jung. What doesn't disappear, I suppose, is the social hierarchical structure that projected the cosmology in the first place, the kingdom of Marx and Freud.

[117] Freud & Marx are the thinkers who demonstrated the hierarchical & exploiting element in psychological & social setups (cosmological is the ghost of the social and the projection of the psychological).

[118] I think there are two degrees of hierarchy. Underneath the Freud-Marx one is another that Freud didn't see & Marx didn't care about, the hierarchy of man on top of woman. The true symbolic relation, male as central and female as circumferential, then comes to light. The woman poet's business is circumference, as Emily Dickinson said. There are two perversions of this: one is Blake's Female Will, which keeps man an embryo, the other is the male will, which tries to expand into and dominate the circumference. Berkeley says too that "all speech concerning the soul . . . is metaphorical."

[122] In the next few days I must do a blitz on this infernal book, get its main construction lines blocked out, & then start reading. I think that writers who move from "naturalism" to ironic myth are a good place to start, notably Strindberg, Ibsen & Henry James. Melville for a separate project I have in mind. The HEAP [Hermes, Eros, Adonis, Prometheus] keeps reforming & dissolving: the E & P are clear enough, the other two not. Keep wondering if HJ's occult stories don't go in the H direction.

P is focussed on the ladder-scale chain of being, *social* hierarchy, all universes of degree, & takes off from the P creation narrative. E also has a ladder, thanks to Plato, takes off from the J narrative, & is based on sexual hierarchy. God is “male” because nature is “female”: inclusive language is superstitious nonsense, taking a metaphorical structure to be real. The sexual fall not only put man on top of woman, it also turned God into a sky-god on top of a cursed (for a time) Mother Earth. Adam is the threefold sexual male, to use Blake’s language; the adam is fourfold humanity.

[123] The question of play, of it’s not really happening, is inseparable from all cultural development. In an Aztec ritual a man is flayed alive & the priest puts on his skin. Spring festival, you see: put off the old man & put on the new, reviving what’s dead in a new form. O.K., but if you were to watch such a rite being performed, the beauty & appropriateness of the symbolism is not what would strike you most forcibly. Here as everywhere the literal-minded is the bloody-minded. The only thing we can take literally in the gospels is the crucifixion.

[124] Berkeley’s *Sirius* is chain-thinking, but less hierarchic than the chain of being. He transforms air & fire into principles rather like those of yin & yang in Chinese mythology, then distinguishes the hidden fire that pervades all things & the spirit of life from its epiphany or manifestation as light. (The latter is caused by the entry of fire into air: epiphanies depend on sexual processes, evidently.) I must stop reading at random so much, but note the figure of the inner circumference full of eyes (207), the FW [*Finnegan’s Wake*] top sawyer figure (241), the remarkable anticipation of Samuel Butler (257), and the conception of “laws” of nature as a grammar (252).

[135] Laforgue, according to his translator, said, or spoke of “lightning flashes of identity between subject and object—the attribute of genius.” That and the paragraph in Butler’s WAF [*The Way of All Flesh*] are two source-points—if I can find the phrase in Laforgue.

[136] They say that Stonehenge & the Great Pyramids show immensely sophisticated astronomy & mathematics. That’s out of my orbit: patterns normally become more schematic & comprehensive as culture matures. Their greatest point of elaboration is just before they’re about to be pushed out of science or history. Also, the point about archetypes is not that they’re built into the human mind, but that they are communicable through recognition. The primary area of communication is conscious: it isn’t a case of deep calling to deep. If half the world uses an archetype & the other half doesn’t, it’s clear that it can mean something to that other half. The mystique of the unconscious has bedeviled myth critics. If you find fragments of a huge myth in primitive times, the process that put it all together is most likely to be in Shakespeare or Wagner or someone producing a waking dream for conscious minds.

[138] My objections to Jung are not to him but to my being called Jungian: I’m not much interested in alchemy and I don’t want *literature* to be turned into a psychological allegory of individuation. On the other hand, once I move back from literary to existential metaphor I’ll come very close to it.

[142] I suppose the vogue for deconstruction has to do with its Romanticism: it takes off from the Romantic conception of creation as something opposed to *the* creation.

[144] The fussy conventionality of so many novelists goes with their ideological anxieties. My copy of *The Awkward Age* is a paperback with the back cover talking about the “vicious, immoral” society in it. I don’t really see that, at least compared to what vicious & immoral behavior could be like. They wash,

and their sentences parse: they don't murder or rape. But then, when I read *Mansfield Park* I thought the Crawfords much higher human types than Fanny & Edmund.

[147] The interpenetration of work and play is also the interpenetration of necessity and freedom. If we define genuine work as creative act (vs. drudgery or exploited & alienated work), what we have to do and what we want to do are the same thing.

[148] There are books on near-death experiences, but no return from actual death, so death is still a mystery, & the helpful spirits & tunnels with light at the end may be reconstructions—anyway, we can't prove they aren't. Same with dreams. All we know of dreams is what the waking mind remembers, & we can't prove it's not reconstructing. But if so, why reconstruct in a language so different from its own? Why do we never (apparently) dream in prose sentences or explicit statements? That's connected, I think, with the mythological basis of the arts, and the fact that they can't be finally reduced to ideological products. (You can't "return from the dead" by definition: if you do you're not dead, even if you're as stinky as Lazarus.)

[149] *Ne sutor ultra crepidam* is a silly motto: if you observe it all you will ever hear is "Ow! My feet!"

[150] The dream, then, expresses desire, concern, warning, quite genuinely, but always in a slightly oblique language. There is only one gate of dreams, horn on one side and ivory on the other. But then there's the image-cluster that generates myth & addresses the waking consciousness. The two factors affecting the content of the dream, the events of the previous day and repressions going back to early childhood, correspond to the ideological and the mythological perspectives.

[162] Interesting how some people (Rimbaud, Christopher Brennan) break out from a religious background to explore their gifts, then existentially when they've finished writing go back into it, or do something silly like Wallace Stevens. Link with a reader's withdrawal from Hopkins' Catholicism or Milton's Puritanism.

[163] In a recent discussion an O. T. scholar who's made a neo-fundamentalism out of what used to be a liberal position—i.e. we now know about the historical background, or will after we've sifted through fifty tons of sewage from Scoopadacrap, Turdistan. Milton & Blake didn't have the knowledge we now have, she said. As for St. John of the Cross, his ignorance of all the village fertility songs bit makes him ridiculous. I found myself so close to defending Bloom's "misreading" thesis that I wonder whether, like most post-Frye conceptions, it doesn't fit the Bible primarily.

[169] The terrible power of words to inflame the emotions: words, like electricity, can illuminate and kill. A metaphor can kill a man, as Wallace Stevens says. At present I am deeply worried about Helen, for quite valid reasons. But because I have a certain facility with verbal formulas, I can talk myself into tears (perhaps ultimately into nervous collapse) at any time. Similarly in my prayers for her recovery. I see nothing wrong with such prayers—the first part of Jesus' Gethsemane prayer is a precedent. But I don't "wrestle all night" with God in prayer, because if I did it would just be a rhetorical embellishment of "Do this because I want it, or feel sure I want it, very much." And God knows too much about rhetoric to be impressed by it. I suppose there's a link here with the sentimental: the self-indulgent rhetorical amplification of nostalgia or the like. If Helen died and I had to pack up all her little trinkets, even a song I regard as cheap and silly, like "Among my Souvenirs," would work on me like a psychedelic drug. What I should feel is rather "If I didn't have to do this for her, she'd have to do it for me, and I'm in better shape to do it at present." Note too that while it is very natural, if one has

had a religious conditioning, to ask God for help or thank him for an upturn in fortune, he is not asked or helped in a human vacuum: the good will and skill of doctors and nurses is a highly relevant factor. And of course it's all wrong to pray for miracles, in the sense of interruptions into the order of nature. Miracles are epiphanies, not primarily favors. (Mustard seed?)

[170] This is not a diary, but Helen is dead. Not of cancer: she died in peace, I was told. Her Alzheimer fantasies were already turning her against me: she seemed to feel I could get her out of hospital if only I wanted to. It's better for her to go now than to go through the final Alzheimer cycles, and it was very like her to slip out of the world so unobtrusively. I know nothing: Ned's "iron door" doesn't budge a crack. I think I know when she died—3:10 p.m. AEST,—but that may be an illusion. But they say there are helpers, and for gentle and poor a spirit there must be. Much hunch is that grief of survivors, being so largely self-pity, distresses, perhaps even impedes, progress to a world that makes more sense. I know that she would forgive me my sins of indolence and selfishness in regard to her, and therefore God will. I hope only that she knows now that I genuinely loved her very dearly, so far as human frailty permits. God bless, protect, and keep her among his own. I hope to see her again; but perhaps that is a weak hope. Faith is the hypostasis of what is hoped for, the elenchos of the unseen. The only thing truly unseen, the world across death, may, according to my principle, be what enables us to see what is visible. I dreaded seeing her in the hospital, because she never smiled at me: she would smile at Jane, but I couldn't keep the worry out of my face and tone, and I bored her. Besides, when Jane told her she was in hospital and had to get better before she could go home, she said "I can take that from you." When I tried to say the same thing, she said "Don't be so portentous." It was the last thing she said to me, and it sounds like an oracle. Meanwhile there is Jane, a daughter sent by God instead of nature. Guardian angels take unexpected but familiar forms, as in Homer.

[171] When I speak of helpers I am, of course, thinking of the books of reports from those who have nearly died and come back. Of course nearly dying is not evidence about actual death. But then, we do not know what we dream: we know only what our waking consciousness thinks it remembers of what we have dreamt. William James speaks of dreams of writing works of immense significance that were only the silliest of jingles when he "remembered" them afterwards. Something in that significance was there and didn't get through. Most, perhaps all dreams, have to pass through the gates of ivory, and whatever gets through the gate of horn is literature.

[172] The creatures that turn up in seances are probably evil & mischievous ones, not the people they profess to be, whatever they know or pretend to know. Not all: the Witch of Endor seems to have evoked the genuine Samuel. But real spirits are only disturbed by this. I want Helen's feet to be kept in the way of peace. She will speak when the time comes.

[173] It was, as we say, "the best thing that could have happened," that Helen should have died when she did. Why is it that an event which shows the care and the mercy of God would be the most hideous and insensate of crimes if I had taken her life instead? One of those questions so obvious that we forget ever to ask it: it's not as easy to answer as all the automatic answers that come pouring out suggest. Is it another dimension to God as scapegoat, bearing the sins of mankind? I suppose "vengeance is mine" is in a similar category.

[174] Meanwhile, let's think about the one idea all this grief has brought me so far. I said in GC [*The Great Code*] that the invisible world in the Bible was not a second order of existence, as in the Platonic tradition, but the means by which the visible world becomes visible, as the invisible air is the medium

of visibility. The only really invisible world is the world across death: is that what makes us to see the seen? Is the invisible world the world of faith (pistis), as in Plato, that is the *elenchos* of the unseen?

[175] My suggestion that grief for the dead impedes and disturbs them may of course be the grossest and coarsest of superstitions: one has to try out such things to see if they have any resonance. But grief emphasizes the pastness of the past, and so works against the mythical imagination. Helen was—that's the beginning of tears and mourning. Helen is. What she is, perhaps, is a central element in the unseen which will clarify my understanding, if such clarification is granted me. My whole and part conception may have a link with this. It is right to pray to God, because God is the unity and totality of all this: but the perspective can reverse into millions of presences—the saints, in short. Helen would smile at the notion of being a saint, but I suspect that sanctity is something created by love, not necessarily some kind of essence.

Christ leads us through no darker rooms
Than he went through before.

[178] One thing involved here is the “what’s really going on” fallacy. What’s really going on is a cluster of illusions. I don’t think it’s an illusion that I loved Helen, but it wouldn’t certainly be an illusion to claim that I always did the best I could for her. Of course it’s always an advantage to become aware that an illusion is one.

[188] The judgment & trial legal metaphor of the Bible comes from the impossibility of reshaping the past after death. My indolence all too often made life much duller for Helen than it should have been: when I realized this I tried to “make it up” to her, to reshape time into a more comfortable context for her. Death puts an end to all that: never again can I do anything for her in this world, and the fact rebounds on me as a judgment. With her Alzheimer broken will and my own spinelessness leading us both to deadlock, we were both in a sense marking time. Perhaps every death has something of divorce about it: the kind of inevitable parting of ways that is parodied by suicide. On a more cheerful side, the last “m’amour” fragment of Pound reveals (though Pound may not have known it) the profundity of Blake’s “emanation” conception: the objectivity one identifies with, with the woman one loves as its incarnate centre.

[191] I don’t know why I’ve spent so much time on Rimbaud and Mallarmé when it’s so clearly Laforgue who has all the answers. The ego (Moi) is, he says, Galatea blinding Pygmalion (i.e. the created world turning objective), and nobody can do anything about it. “God is dead” is a stupid formula: all Xy turns on how man tried to kill God and failed. But the fact that the earth is dead is a very profound one. Laforgue was also a student of Hartmann, whose book I must look up: Hartmann says the unconscious knows nothing of sin (or evil, I forget which). That is, in the descent quest there’s a world below the rational separating of “good” (on top) from “evil” (below). Christian in the valley of the shadow was troubled by the blasphemies and obscenities whispered in his ear, “for verily he thought they had proceeded from his own mind.” A modern reader would feel that verily they had, and that for the author of *Grace Abounding* it was inevitable that they should. But the story of Christian came, according to Bunyan’s own metaphor, from a dream world deeper than that valley.

[192] The Hindu conception of “prana” makes the objective metaphorical link between “spirit” and air more explicit. In Xy there’s the “blood of Christ” metaphor, the antitype of the O. T. ban on feeding on the blood of animals (i.e. identifying with the objective: the blood is the life, and eating or drinking is identifying with the natural life through killing). Some of these reflections come from

reading Huxley's *Island*, an elaboration of the Dostoevsky "Dream of the Ridiculous Man" theme. Huxley is not completely free from the silliness of, say, *The Genius and the Goddess*, but still this book is a serious one, and perhaps his best.

[193] In a more sensible Christian world people would move in and out of Catholic and Protestant lifestyles, instead of all this ideological crap about once-for-all baptism or conversion, always having to be either in or out of the church. Maybe that will happen when we get rid of the religious-secular antithesis, stop thinking that "Why does a God permit so much evil and suffering?" is a serious question, and start asking the question in its genuine form: "Why do *we* permit so much evil and suffering?"

[196] To remember without being bound to the past: to anticipate without being bound to the future.

[198] How tedious is death. Death and his brother sleep. Sleep for me is a series of dreams in which Helen is alive and we're talking and planning things together. Then I wake up hearing reason say "You will never see her again," without bothering to add "in this life." Reason makes the rest of me puke. Love is strong as death: now that makes sense. I take pills, of course, but a drugged stupor is not sleep. Nor is a spirit with a cremated body dead. Ay, madam, it is common.

[203] Since Helen's death I've felt my love for her growing increasingly beyond the contingencies of the human situation. I begin to understand more clearly what Beatrice and Laura are all about. If the relation is reciprocal there is nothing to regret beyond the inevitable mechanisms of regret.

[204] Dialectic as language and dialectic as decision: Hegel & Marx. They both breed persecution when they're pre-apocalyptic—i.e., when one element is accepted and the other condemned.

[205] The Crucifixion is the story of how man tried to kill God and failed. But as that God was man as well, it follows that wars and massacres and holocausts, apart from all their evil and horror, are simply *futile*. I don't want to make that a smug statement, but I think it's part of the picture.

[206] I want, of course, to write one more major book, concerned with the relation of religion to literature. So far the articulating of this book eludes me, though the fragments that have come clear seem to have the requisite originality. The opening is all right: there are two parts to it, *Myth and Metaphor*. The first part speaks of myth as having an ideological function, in contrast to folktales & legend, but being superseded as language by dialectical prose. The poet to this day owes his authority to the preserving of mythological language. This makes him more primitive, but prevents him (and society) from pure ideological obsession. The units of poetry are metaphors, which in literature are hypothetical only, but are attached to what I call existential metaphor, the "lunatic and lover" of Theseus speech.

[213] This book should start with the integrity of the Bible, then use literary analogues to show its relation to literature. The more usual procedure of gathering a mass of anthropological analogies & throwing them in the general direction of the Bible is interesting & useful, but not my concern. I don't care what the Fatass tribes in New Breakwind believe about the proper time for planting yams: I care about how Jacob's ladder informs Dante, Yeats, Eliot & Pound. The same thing would be true of psychological data like Jung's libido book. I think the general *grammar* of mythology is something that's really been done.

[214] I've said that I have hope about another life, but I don't have faith, in the Hebrews sense of a hypostasis of hope. The furthest I can get is a negative faith: I do *not* believe that those ten squalid and humiliating days in the Cairns hospital is the total end of a lovely and lovable human being. (Total for all practical purposes: Butler & others would talk about surviving in the memory of others, but miserable comforters are they all.) But when people talk of recognition scenes & such I can't commit myself. She's in heaven, Catherine said: but I don't know where (or what) heaven is, or whether the word "where" applies to it.

[215] All I can do is define my hope. I didn't want her to go on living her way through the Alzheimer. I don't want her back with *that*: I'm not sure that I'd even want her back in the frailty of the human condition. The Helen I now love is someone whose human faults & frailties count for *nothing*: the word "forgiveness" I shrink from, because it implies that I'm in a superior position. I think (with Keats) that life may be purgatorial in shape, only I'd call it a vale of spirit (not soul) making. I think of her as someone for whom the full human potential is now able to emerge. Perhaps my love and the affection so many had for her helped to do that for her, being the same kind of thing that the R. C.'s [Roman Catholics], with their mania for institutionalizing everything, identify with masses & prayers for the dead. If so, then she's an angel, not to be worshipped, according to the N. T., but an emancipated fellow-creature. Martyrs don't necessarily believe in rewards for martyrdom, but they may behave *as* though they were citizens of a bigger multi-dimensional world than their persecutors.

[223] What do I want? I *don't* want the poor lamb back with her Alzheimer condition, or at all in any world she'd have to be dragged back to. I just miss her, and the miss is a blank in nature. I've accused myself of murdering her, at least to the point of understanding what Eliot was getting at in *Family Reunion*. Like Harry in that play, I have to learn to accept the Furies as Eumenides. But I find all my ideas regrouping around her in a way I can neither understand or explain. The sermon, for example, was all about her, & so will this book be if I write it. She's now a C of L [Court of Love] mistress, like the dead Laura or Beatrice. I think the judgment phase may be over for me, at this stage anyway. I helped murder her, but she was, I think, happier with me than she would have been with the other men interested in her. And perhaps I love her now in a way that I couldn't have loved her before she died. I don't want her to come back to me, unless she has her reasons for doing so, but if/when I go to her it will be all right. (It's still hope, not faith. I don't even know if it's right to say "help thou my unbelief," because that could lead to self-hypnotism. The Holy Spirit has to take charge here.) Meanwhile, some of my letters advise thinking about our happy days together: that's like advising a starving man to remember that wonderful meal he had three months back (Job 29).

[224] I don't see how deconstruction techniques fit the Bible at all: you have to start with a *visible* text by an author you can "supplement," and such a text doesn't exist. "The Word made flesh" certainly sounds like the supreme logocentric claim, but there isn't any "transcendental signified" except the Father, who disappears into the Word. So I think there must be what Derrida doesn't allow: a polysemous structure that directs all the "deconstruction." On the other hand, the excursus on Gen. 6:1-4 in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley* is a deconstruction of it in a way that none of her other purely literary references, such as the one to *Coriolanus* even approach. Incidentally, this is a quite different question from that of popularity as the direct expression of an archetype.

[229] Surely, if "deconstruction" starts with a construal text, that text prescribes a direction for deconstruction, otherwise you wander forever in a wilderness of words. Such a direction involves one at once in polysemy, whatever the particular steps in the verbal ladder may be. Surely too the

conception of “supplement” indicates this. I suppose the traditional fears about how “dangerous” a speculation may be if it doesn’t stay on the track provoked this reaction.

[236] I may be heading for the grossest kind of illusion here, but I still wonder about Helen’s functioning as a Beatrice: it may be nonsense for a man of 75 to talk about a “new life,” but all I want is a new book. With God all things are possible. Beatrice was mainly a creation of Dante’s love; my love recreates Helen in the sense of recognizing that if a world exists that she’s now in, she’s an angel. Her human frailties, as I’ve said, are now *nothingness*: only what she really was remains. (My own weaknesses & guilt feelings, of course, have greatly increased.) She didn’t read my stuff, of course, & didn’t need to, but she respected what I did very deeply. So although both of us were physically infertile for many years, perhaps another Word can still be born to us, like Isaac.

[241] I wish my mind were clearer about Derrida: it’s silly to make him into a sort of critical Antichrist trying to abolish incarnational texts. To me all texts are incarnational, and the climax of the entire Christian Bible, “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” is the most logocentric sentence ever written. My only hunch is the one I’ve recorded: that if you start with one text rather than another, that text prescribes a certain *direction* of comment & deconstruction & what not, and the direction reduces to a polysemous pilgrimage. You can’t just wander in the wilderness of words forever. A lot of post-structural stuff seem to me just irresponsible and undirected polysemy.

[247] I think it’s Norbert Wiener, the cybernetics man, who says that communication overcomes entropy. Not always: as with water & fire in the Bible, there’s a dead word and a living word. Some books are “dead things,” in Milton’s phrase, forgotten or surviving arbitrarily in the memory: others take us in the opposite direction from death. What Derrida is attacking is the fallacy that to have a living word you have to have a living person speaking it. The living speaker is only a symbol of a creative word that keeps throwing up supplement after supplement, yet always in a specified direction.

[248] And just as there is a living word and a dead word, so there are living and dead thoughts. A handful of dead hair comes out of my comb every day, yet I still have hair. A sewer of dead thoughts, verbal shit, flows through my mind constantly: I hope there are other kinds. The repetitive and endlessly recycled thoughts are part of this too. One should remember that thoughts are not just ideas: I hope, for example, that I have discovered something of the reality of love in losing Helen. That’s not just a neurotic return on myself: I think I’ve also got a clearer notion of what Beatrice & Laura were all about.

[253] The two dragons I want to kill are Bultmann’s “demythologize” and Derrida’s “logocentric.” The Bible is myth from Genesis to Revelation, & to demythologize it is to obliterate it. The climax of the (Christian) Bible is “The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us,” which is the most logocentric sentence ever written. But I must be careful to make sure I understand them & am not just saying that my views of mythos & logos are different.

[254] I have ideas about the Bible and ideas about various works of literature. But if I can’t really connect them I don’t have a book. What made me think I did have one? The four levels and their inversion, mainly. At present I have three parts. One: the elements, which are myth (concern), metaphor (identity) and symbol (polysemy). Two: the crucible, the narrative from creation to apocalypse: the sexual symbolism, from the initial two creation myths to the final wedding in Revelation: the remythologized world. Three, the products or precipitates: these seem to converge on Dante, Shakespeare romance, Milton & Blake, the Romantic revolution, Mallarmé & (perhaps)

Laforgue, the Eliot-Yeats-Joyce complex. God, if I have a book here, help me & guide me in the writing of it: if what I have is a pretentious fantasy, guide me into something genuine as an offering to you and a memorial to my lost love, whom I hope and trust is lost to me only and found by and in you, and by me again later.

[259] I suppose the principle of deconstruction is that all “literal” meaning, in the ordinary sense, is a *projection* of a metaphorical verbal body. Examples are the “always” and “anyway” of pilgrimage or journey metaphors. What we take “literally,” in this sense, is the direction of the metaphors suggested by the author, without examining further. Poetry is language where this procedure is obviously inadequate. Every narrative is thus a selected or chosen arrangement of metaphors.

[261] The Egyptian Book of the Dead seems to be a gigantic gnosis in which the dead man recovers the powers of all the gods, partly by knowing their names, partly by having lived without what is later called mortal sin. Many affinities with yoga, especially in samyama, the acquiring of the power of what one concentrates on. Patanjali speaks of the elephant’s strength: perhaps the animals of Egyptian religion have a similar meaning. (In later chapters there are “books of breathings,” regarded as a great secret.)

[265] By the standards of conventional scholarship, *The Great Code* was a silly and sloppy book. It was also a work of very great genius. The point is that genius is not enough. A book worthy of God and of Helen must do better than that.

[270] I suppose the basis of the apophatic, contemplative, “hid divinity” tradition is the implication in Paul that “we are known,” that God already has total knowledge of us. What you do, then, is turn off the chatter in your mind, which is making more noise than a punk rock band (“drunken monkey,” the Hindus call it) and relax into the divine knowledge of us which is one of the things meant by a cloud of unknowing. Not as easy to do as it sounds: I’ve never known an instant of *real* quiet in my mind.

[271] Jaynes’ book: the purely negative terms “hallucination” and “schizophrenia” overlook the constant tradition in poets to get *past* the tyranny of consciousness and reinforce it with a driving power that may not pull us back to the “bicameral” state but certainly isn’t satisfied with the linear-discursive processes of the conscious mind. Plato, as he says, adopted Theseus’ lunatic-lover-poet triad; there were the “Muses” in Greece & the C of L [Court of Love] mistresses; there was the Romantic conception of “imagination”; there were the symboliste efforts to abandon the ego; there was surrealism and kindred movements in this century. Christ in the gospels, notably John, is portrayed as someone in whom the “right lobe” of the brain has completely taken over: he can do nothing except what he sees the Father do. John in particular seems to be trying to force us to say: if this man wasn’t what he said he was he was certainly the most deranged lunatic on record, unless his evangelist was, & the general ambience of the story seems to rule out paranoia on so titanic a scale.

[273] I’m beginning to get glimpses of the main theme of this book: a mythical approach that’s on the other side of consciousness from whatever Jaynes is talking about. The first stage of this is the violation of historical fact: the “it’s just a myth & didn’t really happen” stage. I got some of this into GC, along with the warning that Bultmann’s effort to resolve the deadlock by “demythologizing” wouldn’t work. But here the “imaginative” way of reading the Bible is to be coordinated with the same way of reading literature, where, in Jungian terms, not the conscious ego but the superconscious individual directs. The way the Marxists cling to “historicity,” which they make practically a synonym of Marxism, indicates that history is something to be transcended, not simply opposed.

[281] The old idea that all kinds of mysteries of knowledge can be extracted from myth is, in modern terms, the fact that discursive prose is verbal work, while myths, like literature, are verbal play, & consequently can be “deconstructed” endlessly. Except that in practice you have to set up a straight polysemous path from your construal starting point. This conception of play integrates the kookiest notion of criticism into the centre of contemporary theory.

[285] Why do people call *me* anti-historical”? I talk about myth, and it’s myth that’s anti-historical. It’s the counter-historical principle, just as metaphor is the counter-logical principle. History doesn’t repeat itself: history repeats myth. (It’s not simple repetition, though: it’s not a *da capo* aria but a theme with variations.) As I’ve often said, you never get logic in literature: what you get is what Susanne Langer would call virtual logic, a rhetorical illusion of logic. Similarly you never get history in literature: you get virtual history, history assimilated to myth.

[288] Thorkild Jacobsen’s book *The Treasures of Darkness*, a sensitive and imaginative book about Sumerian and Akkadian culture, if somewhat over-bemused by Otto’s book on the holy, says that two themes seem to assimilate the whole pantheon of gods, the wedding song and the underworld descent. That’s my Eros-Adonis axis, of course, and it unites the primary concerns of life, food and sex, with its primary anxiety and ultimate concern, death, and the passage through death. I should start thinking in terms of primary anxieties: they help to show how Tillich’s “ultimate concern” is also a primary one.

[290] The greatest literary genius this side of Blake is Edgar Allan Poe—that’s why he’s regarded as fit only for adolescents, or French poets who don’t really know English. I don’t apply this to the poetry, but there’s no prose tale, however silly, that doesn’t hit an archetype in the bulls-eye. The allegedly humorous story “The Spectacles,” about a man so short-sighted he falls in love with his grandmother, is an example: there’s even a reference to Ninon de Lenclos. I’ve recorded elsewhere what I got out of the domain of Arnheim story.

[304] Marx owes his colossal status as a modern thinker to the incisiveness with which he exposes the gap between the ideology of capitalism and the primary concerns of food and shelter that it overrides. Thus he begins with “commodity” in its secondary & primary references (reminding one of Faulconbridge’s speech in *King John*, even though “commodity” means something rather different there).

[313] If we find it difficult to tell the dancer from the dance, why should we destroy our vision of the gospel by trying to separate the word from the speaker of the word? All those words are coming from inside ourselves. That is, the existential metaphor is evoked by the verbal one, and we join in the play, or dance.

[314] Jesus is not “a” historical figure: he’s dropped into history as an egg is into boiling water, as I said, and essentially “the” historical Jesus is the crucified Jesus. One can understand why the Gnostics tried to insist that the crucifixion was an illusion, but nobody can buy that now. The pre-Easter Jesus answers the question: “Can a revolt against Roman power succeed?”

[315] The answer is no, and the pre-Easter Jesus sums up the history of Israel, which is a history of “historical” failure.

[321] Ideological statements deny what they say, and so can affirm by denying. When Rilke says his angels aren't Christian he's also saying that they damn well are. Similarly with Mallarmé's "scarecrow" God.

[324] So that leaves only allegorical, topological and anagogic. I used to call "literal meaning" allegorical, which is true, but of course real allegory is typology, and I wrote about that in GC [*The Great Code*], which has its faults, but I think if revised could be a very great book. The present book is topological. It's concerned with figures of speech; it's moral and answers the question *quid agas?* (The answer is: restore primary concerns to their primary place.) Also, apart from the Trinity, which seems to be organizing the book, everything seems to be running in threes.

[325] That means that an anagogic book to follow this one is a theoretical possibility, and here's a letter from my old student Merv Nicholson urging me to write just such a book. Before I was out of my teens I'd thought that Anatole France's *Jardin d'Epicure* was in form the kind of book I'd like to write (no, later than my teens). Later (much later) I read Merejkowski's book on Atlantis, and thought that would be a model if the main subject were less crackpot. (Also, I'd want the Anatole-France-type book written by somebody (maybe me) with a real brain, not that languid God in his noodle). But I suppose Nietzsche, especially the *Gaya Scienza*, would be the real model.

[326] So the anagogic book would be aphoristic, obviously, and all my life I've had the notebook obsession manifested by what I'm doing at this moment. Writing in notebooks seems to help clarify my mind about the books I write, which are actually notebook entries arranged in a continuous form. At least, I've always told myself they were that. For GC [*The Great Code*] I tried a different experiment: typing notes. They started off in the regular way, but before long I realized that I was just draining the "drunken monkey" babble of the so-called conscious mind off my skull. It didn't really work: I wanted to destroy those notes. The aphorism book is the "twilight" of my ogdoad fantasy, always thought of in my "seven or eight" terms as something perhaps not reached.

[327] I'm not wise enough to write a wise book (wisdom soon gets beyond words anyway) nor learned enough for an erudite book. What I might have is the rhetorical craftsmanship that's more relevant to such a job than either. Of course, it would mean living longer.

[330] Regarding the bottom of p. 101 [paras. 326-327]: if Kundalini woke up in my balls and shot all the way to the thousand-petalled lotus or whatever the hell in my noodle, I'd doubtless be a far better visionary, but I wouldn't necessarily be a better writer, any more than I'd be a better pianist. Those things are separate crafts. The distinction may not work with sacred books, which makes things tougher for theory.

[338] (I may have this.) When I first began to think about a book on the literary context of the Bible, the literary critics specifically interested in the Bible were few and apologetic; today they are many and confident. The number coming the other way, from Biblical scholarship to an interest in literary criticism, has increased proportionately. I am now therefore not a speaker of a prologue but a member of an aging chorus. Of course every scholar of senior years living in the nineteen eighties has lived through forty or fifty such revolutions even in the fields that directly concern him. This particular revolution may confirm the accuracy of my instincts thirty years ago, but does little for me now. However:

Set the word and its origin and put the maker in his place.

So counsels the Sepher Yetzirah (Book of Creation), a pioneering work of Kabbalism that uses the letters of the Hebrew alphabet as symbols for the creative principles of the world. I have taken its advice to refer to the ordering of one's own mind, and in that context have tried to follow it.

[347] I've been called a (Platonic) dualist, but I'm not one, and neither was Plato. There is only one form of dualism, the Cartesian cloven fiction of subject & object, a formidable barrier to thought because our language is Cartesian. But it isn't dualism to say that an embryo and a baby live in different environmental worlds, not to say that before and after death are also different worlds. I said that, dammit.

[348] Erich Heller remarks of such poets as Rilke that they emphasize "praise," but intransitively: they don't praise God or nature or any object. The objective of praise is still in the split Cartesian world. It's what one praises *from* that counts. In the Bible that source is God, who doesn't love anything because he is love.

[349] I've just finished rereading Bulwer-Lytton's *Strange Story*, and followed it with Ayesha of Richer Haggard. In spite of all the kitsch and turgid Victorian rhetoric, I found them, especially the first, quite rewarding. I'd forgotten, or thought I'd forgotten, that the end of Lytton's story is set in Australia, just before the gold rush there. The hero, with his wife dying (in an undisplaced story she would die, whether she came back to life or not), discovers some gold, but throws it away impatiently. On August 4, 1986, Jane & I were taking a bus tour around Cairns. The hospital had encouraged us not to hang around. At 3:10 p.m. I knew it had happened: I was standing on a bridge over a gorge, and flung an Australian penny into it—a gesture I've never really understood: it certainly wasn't "for luck."

[355] The ladder is a vertical line cutting through the mythos at a point between past-fixated wisdom and future-fixated prophecy. That's a cross that may give me my four sections: Hermes-authority in the top, Prometheus-revolt in the bottom; past-centered renewal (Adonis) and future-centered redemption (Eros). Hermes is the north-west quadrant (past & authority), Adonis south-west (past & recurrence), Prometheus south-east (future & revolt) Eros north-east (future & redemption). This reverses the Hermes-Adonis relationship in my traditional doodles.

[372] What attracts me about Valéry is (a) his secularizing of all the religious metaphors of Mallarmé (b) his continuing of the Boehme tradition. Mallarmé really does talk sometimes as though he thought literature was a "substitute" for religion, though of course no "substitute" can have more than an *ersatz* reality. I suppose he would say, if he were using my terms, that literature is the antitype of what religious symbolism hazily points to. This is a defensible view in itself, but criticism has further to go than that.

[373] Well, Valéry: at the end of his *Ébauche d'un serpent* he says:

Cette soif qui te fit géant,
Jusqu' l'Être exalte l'étrange
Toute-Puissance du Néant!

I suppose this is the same serpent that bites the narrator near the beginning of *La Jeune Parque*. We start out with things like "nature abhors a vacuum," which is a metaphor. As metaphors are for practical purposes the elements of language, they can't be broken down into more elementary units: they can only be rearranged. One rearrangement is "God made the world from nothing. "What was God before he made the world? Boehme says "a nothing longing to be something." At least that

seems to me what his is a metaphor for. This is one of the metaphors of the *via negativa* that extends from John of the Cross to Taoism with its *wu wei* notion: by doing nothing everything is done. The Abbé Sieyès uses similar formulas for his “Third Estate” epigram.

[374] In Valéry the principle of nothing becoming something is associated with the serpent of self-conscious knowledge. So it’s in the direct line of Sartre’s Being & Nothingness, which in turn takes up Shakespeare’s “nothing” as the total alienation of the ego deprived of its identity (symbolized in Lear or Richard II, by the loss of one’s social function).

[378] I wonder if I’m not still revolving around the Burnt Norton schema of plenitude & vacancy, The reversal or reality & illusion, the way of work & creativity. The *via negativa*, the way of Mallarmé’s Igitur & Valéry’s Teste, is the everything-out-of-nothing aspect. Perhaps “symbol” is the key to plenitude and “spirit” to vacancy. And, of course, perhaps not. Try again. I got some intuitions out of Poe’s Domain of Arnheim long ago on the transformation of nature.

[379] All reading begins in the revolt against narcissism: when a book stops reflecting your own prejudices, whether for or against what you think you “see in it,” & begins to say something closer to what it does say, the core of the reality in the objective aspect of it takes shape & you start wrestling with an angel.

[380] I’ve been reading Jung’s autobiography (dictated mostly to a colleague at the age of eighty, but by a long way his best book). He says that that Kenya tribe he visited had a word meaning, more or less, God, which they applied to the sun, but only to the sun at the instant of rising, and to the moon, but only when the moon was in a certain phase at a certain place in the sky. In our object-obsessed language we say “those guys worship the sun, & maybe sometimes the moon.” We overlook the fact that for them a “god” is not just an object, or even an object at all: it’s an event or epiphany of what may be an object. The event or epiphany is primary, also more primitive: its objective aspect coincides with a subjective moment of self-awareness.

[389] I think “deconstruction” is something literature does to itself, whether with anxiety or without it. As a critical technique it seems to me popular because facile, a “new criticism” analysis with no holds barred. Of course I may be wrong: this nearly always includes an unspoken “but I damn well don’t think so.” Not in this case, though: I’m really very uncertain. But my theory of modes seems to me better because it follows a pattern that literature itself creates; in criticism, the medieval four levels theory (the “levels” metaphor is expendable) supplies a rationale for the procedure.

[393] Things seem to be clearing up around my Utopia, one of them being the contrast between software & hardware Utopias. The latter are future-oriented, & dependent as they are on mechanism, they raise the connection with the mechanical that all portrayals of life without self-conflict provide. More’s title indicates that the transcendence of time & space can come only from the *nowhereness* of the soul, the “nothing” that Sartre found in consciousness. Sartre’s final commitment to Communism was a contemptible betrayal of his own principles, the “inauthentic” lying to oneself under the pretext of being practical & expedient. One doesn’t feel that More’s defence of the status quo was a self-betrayal of that kind. It wasn’t that he died a martyr to the status quo, but that there was nothing to betray his principles *to*, unless one considers H8’s [Henry VIII’s] self-deification something.

[394] Huizinga’s play thesis is deeply involved in this book: one thing is ritual play, as at a convocation, where the pretence that degrees are being conferred at that moment is a *symbol* of a certain process. I

suppose this comes under the whole business of sacramental symbolism, the analogy of religion where there is any religion: in Marxist countries demonstrations and the like are symbols within the analogy of solidarity.

[397] I seem to be moving toward some kind of final statement, but it doesn't have to be a single unified statement. The book these notes are preoccupied with is the main job, but there's a number of other things I want to do that this book can't cannibalize. The education hamper-spanker is on its way, but there are still over twenty unpublished, or rather unreprinted, essays. Most of them will probably get absorbed in *Words with Power*, but some won't: the Wagner, the Morris, the Vico perhaps, the Vico-Bruno-Joyce, the Castiglione, the Mores' Utopia paper I'm doing now, the Wiegand lecture the Royal Society symbols paper, the Smith paper perhaps—that's nine, even if the others (Ontario 1784-1984, the short lyric introduction, the Tuzo Wilson assignment), get squeezed out, and the various religion papers (Montreal, Chicago, Vision-Belief, Way, Ladder, etc.) get absorbed in here. I think the Ruth paper will still make a tenth.

[401] I've just read Maureen Duffy's *Erotic World of Faerie*: a long, dull, bad book. But I read it through because it touches on material I want to deal with. Curious how plodding down the centuries equipped only with Freudian reductionism produces an exact counterpart of the old dream books written for servant girls. Hair = pubic hair; cannibal giant = daddy; bitch-witch = weaning mother; journey, dark man in your life, good fortune would produce the same structure. Maybe this *is* all the fairy world amounts to; if so, the hell with it. But I don't believe it. In Spenser the Quixote romance apparatus contributes a "Faerie" world that's a Purgatorio of England itself, i.e., England rearranged into a moral pattern. More's *Utopia* (and other Utopias) likewise. A narrow approach, but a genuine one as far as it goes.

[403] Faith, the schoolboy said, is believing what you know ain't so. That's why some people, including me and, I gather, Paul Ricoeur, have switched to hope as the real basis. Hope doesn't assert: it says Perhaps A, but then, perhaps B. A sympathy note after Helen's death told me the veil between life & death was very thin. To me it's as thick as the distance to the next star. But if the two possibilities, of nothingness and of something that makes sense, weren't equally present, the mind couldn't grow. If I *knew* that there was nothing, my motivation for going on by myself would drop to zero. If there is something, and I *knew* what that something was, the next life would be essentially the same as this one. So the mystery in death guarantees the liveliness of life.

[404] I've been more or less an unconscious advocate of holism, assuming that everything worked together for the wholeness of the whole, which is Platonic, or that wholeness was what made the work organic & not mechanical, which is Coleridgean. What I now feel is that wholeness is a mimesis of objectivity. It disintegrates when the subject starts merging with it.

[410] If Hegel had written his Phenomenology in *mythos*-language instead of in *logos*-language a lot of my work would be done for me. The identification of Substance with Subject-Spirit in the Preface is mythically the central issue of the Reformation, overthrowing the sacramental "spiritual substance" of the Eucharist & replacing it with the growing Spirit that takes over the Subject.

[419] Wonder if Hegel has any clear idea of *where* spirit takes over from soul. Eliot at least would locate such a point: the *Ara vos prec* in Dante.

[421] “From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit.” That’s Michael instructing Adam, of course: note that you’re going up Plato’s divided line. Shadows are eikasia; flesh is pistis; truth is dianoia, spirit (in this context) is nous. Or truth could be the trustworthy world of pistis and flesh the individual consciousness or soul-body unit.

[424] The best known of all Oriental stories is the one about Chuang Tse dreaming he was a butterfly, and, waking, not knowing which was dreaming which. But this must be badly translated: it can’t be an either-or question. The real question was asked by the butterfly in Chuang Tse, and was: “Isn’t that big lout of a larva awake yet?”

[425] God must be thought of as the inconceivably transcendent: all thoughts of that psychotic ape homo sapiens being divine have to be dismissed. The sheer bumptiousness of Carl Sagan and others who want to communicate with beings in other worlds amazes me. They should be saying: look, there are several billion Yahoos here robbing, murdering, torturing, exploiting, abusing & enslaving each other: they’re stupid, malicious, superstitious and obstinate. Would you like to look at the .0001 per cent of them who are roughly presentable?

[428] I gather that Bhaktin’s [sic] “dialogism” is gradually replacing “deconstruction as a buzzword. Of course there’s dialogue between writer & reader, but much more goes on than that: it’s more like an interpenetrating of identities. Montaigne’s “consubstantial” remark shows that the writer’s ego and the reader’s ego *can’t* interpenetrate: they’re like the old-style atoms, or, more accurately, like the Leibnizian monads. In this century we have to forget that “atom” means the unsplittable (or did mean it) or that the individual is the “individable.” Two egos identifying would be like two billiard balls copulating.

[431] Why the inhabitants of Easter Island put up all those immense statues is a profound & inscrutable mystery. Almost as profound and inscrutable as why anybody would carve a gigantic head of Theodore Roosevelt on a mountain in South Dakota.

[433] I am 75 years old, and my wife is dead. There are a lot of what look like winding-up symbols—the Italian conference, the G. G. medal, the Oxford degree, the San Francisco meeting—but I know they’re not connected to other symbols or processes. I have what seems like one more major book in me, which I might conceivably finish before too long—perhaps by the time I reach the age at which Helen died. I don’t feel suicidal: I just have no more resistance to death, though of course I still have the normal anxieties about it.

[434] I’d like to tidy things up, not leave a mass of irrelevant papers behind. In addition to *Words with Power*, I’d like a volume of 12 essays completed. Four on Utopian and social model writers, two Renaissance and two Victorian: More, Castiglione; William Morris, Samuel Butler. The last isn’t completed yet. Four on special topics: at present, the Book of Ruth, Blake, Wagner’s Parsifal, Joyce. Four theoretical: the Wiegand, the Smith College, the Royal Society symbolism paper will be three of them. In Italy I was presented with the proposal to do something on the short story. I had previously thought of writing about Henry James’ ghost stories, treating *The Sense of the Past* as what his whole work was leading up to, from this point of view. An extension of this to “American Gothic,” starting with Poe and including Hawthorne & Melville might touch on some of the things I’ve always wanted to do—Biblical typology & *Clarel* in Melville, for instance. I don’t know about that: *Clarel* seems obsessive, and *Israel Potter* perhaps a shaggy dog irrelevance.

[436] When I was in Japan I visited a Buddhist temple, several buildings all dignified, rather sombre, and in exquisite taste. At the top of the hill it was on was a Shinto shrine, incredibly gaudy, as though it were made of Christmas candy, the bushes around having rolled-up prayers tied to every twig, like women with their hair in curlers. My immediate feeling was that it was good-humored and disarming: I had no hostile or superior feelings about it at all. So why did hostile and superior words, like “superstitious” and “vulgar” start crowding into my mind? Did *God* tell me he thought it was superstitious and vulgar?

[437] I was reminded of this when I started reading *Steppenwolf*. I started that in the sixties, when every fool in the country was trying to identify with Steppenwolf, and abandoned it after a few pages. I couldn't stand the self-pitying whine of someone totally dependent on middle-class values but trying to develop his self-respect by feeling hostile and superior to them. I was hearing that whine all around me at the time. The next stage, also obvious in Hesse's text, is when you try to raise your opinion of yourself by despising yourself. Like the wrestler: “I got so fuckin' tied up all I could see was a big arse in frunna me, so I takes a bite out of it, and, Christ, it was me own arse.”

[438] I'm getting along better with *Steppenwolf* now because my own hostile feelings toward it have minimized. One lives and learns: one doesn't learn very much, but one lives.

[441] I regret very much that the gospel reports Christ as saying that the sin against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable. The sin against the Holy Spirit *is* original sin itself. Perhaps it can't be “forgiven,” but it must be annihilated, or the whole Christian structure, which depends on a love that forgives *everything*, is a lot of balls. That's what I think, anyway. An unpardonable sin means a stinker God, and I will never accept such a creature in the Christian setup.

[442] Footnote on Steppenwolf: what I said about it over the page [para. 437] was utter crap, and I didn't abandon it after a few pages: I read it through, and, as my marginal notes show, with appreciation. Funny how screen memories work: I resented the student hysteria so much in the sixties, and some of them (at Rochdale, e.g.) made a cult of Hesse. So the remark about the wrestler biting his own arse comes home to roost. Not that I think now that *Steppenwolf* is really a great or profound book, but he's aware of his own irony.

[443] “She died young.” The only she in my life died at seventy-six, which in some terms would be a full life. And she wasn't murdered: I refuse to believe that. But everyone who dies loved dies young (to the lover at least).

[445] I will try to make this book make sense to me: that's all I can do to make sure it will make sense to readers whose reading is important to me. To say that the others no longer matter doesn't mean I've turned arrogant: it means I've stopped feeling masochistic about them (i.e., “it's my fault for not being clearer; if I just rewrite it once more,” etc.).

[446] Confronted by the mysteries of birth and death, one may feel (*I may feel*) I wish I knew it all. It may be that it's unknown because it's not an objective body of knowledge to be known: perhaps it's a process of being realized out of an illusion. It won't be known until we've finished working on it: the simple way to interpret “finished” is to identify with physical death, but maybe it's a bigger process than that. I wish John had reversed the syntax he assigns to Jesus: the truth is what makes you free, *and then* is known. Cf. Jung's notion of sermons addressed to the dead, as though they had something to learn from the living as well as the other way round.

[448] I know from experience, and I've read the statement often enough, that if one could turn off the incessant chatter in one's psyche one would be well on the way to freedom. In all my life I've never know an instant of real silence. That, of course, is because I've never gone through the years of discipline and practice in meditation. To come to it cold (as I've said in another notebook) would be like rolling back the waves of the Red Sea and walking across the bottom.

[449] And yet I wonder if there isn't a contrast between chatter and inner dialogue, and that the latter is important to preserve. Chatter is (a) mechanical, triggered by the associative mechanisms that psychology has studied from Hartley to Pavlov. And (b) it's partly repressed, conforming to censorship but full of disguised malice and resentment. The psyche is a Tower of Babel, a structure of pride and dictatorship with a "babble" of voices inside, all unintelligible to each other. Perhaps the ideal is a Quaker meeting, silent until the Spirit speaks from somewhere.

[450] In public school there was an attempt to teach writing by a "forearm movement," starting with the whole arm instead of making twiddly voluntary movements with the fingers. I knew I would never learn to write this way, and as far as my observation went nobody else did either, even the teachers. But they worked out better compromises than I did. What I didn't of course realize was that this was really a "Zen" technique, based on the principle of letting the writing emerge from the arm. Perhaps if I had learned to write this way I'd have become a poet or novelist instead of a critic: perhaps some ability to draw would have emerged, instead of the total inhibition of that faculty which has always mystified me.

[451] And perhaps if from early youth I had practised regularizing my breathing—just regularizing it, not trying any fancy yoga tricks—instead of spending my entire life in short pants, I'd have developed an inner authority despite my physical weakness and outgrown the masochistic self-betrays that have tripped me up at intervals all my life. God, the things the bull learns the first and only time he is in the ring.

[452] I may be nearing the end, although my powers seem to be as lucid as ever. After finishing Blake I faced the critical Y. Either spread into general theories and make endless mistakes in detail, or dig into one period and do it thoroughly. I chose the former: many of the mistakes I have made have been pure laziness, and could have been avoided. But I think perhaps no one else could have done what I have done, and I think perhaps what I have done has been worth doing. R. I. P.

[453] I'm taking this tone because some of the things I've done recently have been really good: I can still do my job. And I think the first four chapters of WP [*Words with Power*] are good. But that second half haunts me with the feeling that I've tackled too big a job, which probably means that I ought to rewrite it on a different basis—if I can find the basis. I think it's somewhere in the part of Eight that keeps eluding me.

[454] I recently heard of a little boy who drew five horizontal lines on a piece of paper and told his mother it was a picture of a fox hiding behind a fence. The mother said: "I see the fence all right, but where's the fox?" The child protested: "But I *told* you; he's *hiding behind* it." If I knew the answer to that one I'd know more phenomenology than Husserl, and more of the noumenal world than Kant.

[455] Speaking of Kant, it's curious how writers do the opposite of what they're trying to do, often along with what they're trying to do. The question "Is there, or is there not, a God?" is the ultimate in

verbal unreality: hell itself cannot contain its utter futility and emptiness. Kant wrote his first two critiques to try to make it less unreal by showing that such a question could never have an answer. Along with doing this, he raised the same question again in the form “Is there, or is there not, a noumenal world?” (Because God, according to practical reason, is to be found only there.) Note that I repudiate the phrase “trying to do” when applied to Shakespeare: it applies only to proposition-writing, conceptual or rhetorical, at least when it concerns great writers.

[456] Similarly, Mallarmé fascinates me because he shows that as soon as poetry becomes pure it’s abolished as poetry, and something transcendent (what “would have been the truth,” as he said) appears that the pure poem is a symbol of. It’s not for nothing that “aboli” is one of his favorite words.

[459] Adele Wiseman says, referring to her Winnipeg schooling, “many teachers are teachers because they can’t bear to have their small certainties disturbed, and want only to imprint them on the unresisting young.” That would apply to others besides teachers: she never had to endure the appalling series of parsons I was dragged off to by mother—or perhaps I’m just being romantic about rabbis. (Mother was deaf—a blissful advantage—but she could see, & what she saw was a symbol of her father.)

[460] Speaking of rabbis, I heard of a married couple of Polish Jews picked up by the Nazis, the man sent to Dachau & the woman to Auschwitz. Miraculously they both survived & both remarried, assuming the other was dead, & both had children. The woman discovered the existence of the first husband & consulted a rabbi. He said there must be *no* direct connection of any kind with him, otherwise she’d be adulterous & her second-marriage children bastards. Nothing to me what Jews do or think: I simply note how frenziedly anxious humans are to catch themselves in rat-traps, and how eagerly they interpret the will of a God who could *only* be a shit and a stinker.

[461] Note to cheer myself up with: I’m not a great 17th c. poet like Milton, or a great 18th c. visionary like Blake, but I am a great 20th c. reader, and this is the age of the reader.

[468] Well, I’ve entered the Elizabethan age. Not one atom of my feeling for Helen has changed: neither is my feeling that we’re linked somehow in the spiritual world. But my notions of spiritual union may have clarified: there is no spiritual marriage because marriage has to be ego-centered and a mutual possession. In *that* world all books lie open to one another. (Donne’s image, like Dante’s in Par. 33 & Montaigne’s, makes the book the image of completed man. Perhaps this is a *Three* point: Three is a short chapter.)

[472] It doesn’t matter how often I’m mentioned by other critics: I form part of the subtext of every critic worth reading. Aug. 30/88.

[473] Why are Marxist & Freudian approaches to criticism so sterile and so quickly exhausted when Marx & Freud themselves are so endlessly suggestive and illuminating? I suppose because the centre of gravity remains in Marx or Freud and turns all literature into an allegory of Marxism or Freudianism. (I think something similar is true of feminist criticism, even if it has as yet no comparable third figure.) So I ought to know how silly it would be to turn my book into any sort of Biblical or Christian allegory.

[476] The notion that being involved with an infinite personality is an infringement on man's "freedom" seems to me exquisitely idiotic. What has "freedom," at any recorded period in history, ever meant for more than one per cent of the total population? What did it really mean even for them? Certainly freedom is one of my primary concerns, but it always includes deliverance from everything society thinks is freedom.

[485] I don't think it's coincidence or accident that feminism and ecology should become central issues at the same time.

[492] American civilization has to *de-theatricalize* itself, I think, from the prison of television. They can't understand themselves why they admire Reagan and would vote for him again, and yet *know* that he's a silly old man with no understanding even of his own policies. They're really in that Platonic position of staring at the shadows on the wall of a cave. The Pope, again, is another old fool greatly admired because he's an ex-actor who *looks* like a holy old man.

[493] Watching a television panel of journalistic experts discussing the (Bush-Dukakis) election, it seemed to me Plato's cave again and Plato's eikasia, or illusion of two removes—show business about show business. All one needs to know about such horseshit is how to circumvent whatever power it has. I'm trying to dredge up something more complex and far-reaching than just the cliché that elections today are decided by images rather than issues—they always were. It's really an aspect of the icon-idol issue: imagination is the faculty of participation in society, but it should remain in charge, not passively responding to what's in front of it. Where does idolatry go in my argument? End of three?

[510] God's power work only with wisdom & love, not with folly and hatred. As 99.9% of human life is folly & hatred, we don't see much of God's power. He must work deviously, a creative trickster, what Buddhists call the working of skilful means.

[511] Mystery of evil: nature is said to abhor a vacuum, but astronomers say there are black holes, and there must be moral black holes too, like the arse of Satan Dante crawls out of.

[512] (Yeats buried in a Christian churchyard.) As for Nietzsche, he may have believed or tried to believe, that the perpetually dying Dionysus affirmed life and that the Christ of the Resurrection denied it, but that hardly makes him an "Antichrist. Hitler is an example of the kind of thing the N. T. means by Antichrist.

[517] There are obvious Freudian reasons {except that I've forgotten what they are} for the appeal of detective stories: Freudianism itself owes much of its popularity to the same kind of appeal, Freudian therapy of a neurosis being essentially a search for who done it in childhood. Or what done it.

[526] Critics may ignore the language of *Myth and Metaphor*, but no poet can possibly be a poet of any significance who does not learn to speak it constantly and consistently.

[528] Nothing I know of in literature comes anywhere near expressing this ultimate fusion of Word and Spirit, this final push past the *mysterium tremendum*. It would be Stevens' great poem of earth, which isn't here yet, and Mallarmé's.

[538] Stevens' "great poem of earth" probably can't be written, because the narrative has to end with a vertical vision looking up & down. Even *War & Peace* ends with the contrast between those two

states (*Mir* in Russian means a lot of things besides peace). Mallarmé's "great work" certainly wasn't written, but maybe a comparative study of the Bible and the literature we have may give critics, *in critical terms* only, some notion of what it would be like in outline.

[544] I think I understand what Jung means by animus & anima, but I don't believe that only a man has an anima and only a woman an animus. I think everybody has both.

[545] I'd like to get rid of the blocking metaphors about the burden of the past, maintaining standards, keeping up traditions, & other euphemisms for staggering under guilt feelings. This again connects with my use of the Bible. In its historical & ideological context the Bible is male-centered, white-centered, Christian-centered, theist-centered. In its mythical & metaphorical contexts these limitations become metaphors for something that includes what they exclude. Perhaps the centres carry the predominant emphasis in the culture of the past: as Newman said of English literature, the bulk of it will always have been Protestant. One has to recreate. That's why, of course, there's so much yapping about deconstruction and, more especially, "supplements." The real supplements are implied in the text, not in the psychology of the writer.

[547] The interchange of whole and part I've mentioned is an extension of what is called in criticism the hermeneutic circle. How do we understand the wholeness of a work of art? By studying the parts. But how do we understand the significance of the parts? By studying the whole. There is a vogue now for deprecating holism, but it is an indispensable metaphor: if we want education we also want a "university," despite the miscellany of activities; if we look at the stars, we want to feel that we live in a "universe," despite the discouraging number of galaxies. Apart from that, "we are all member of one body" is the extension of holism from literature into life. There can be no sense of exhilaration, no expansion of the spirit, without wholeness.

[549] When I started criticism I knew that there was a difference between "creation" and criticism because I myself was neither a poet nor a novelist. I knew that I was just as "creative" as though I were, but I worried then, as was appropriate for the time, that criticism was regarded as parasitic. Now the perspective has reversed, like one of those trick drawings, and now, in the phrasing above, the poet must die that the critic may live. Criticism's paradoxical task is to indicate the boundaries of literature by obliterating them, just as one may indicate the existence of Russian literature to English readers by translating Tolstoy into English.

[550] Translation is a key word now: the Bible attracted me because, poetic as it was, it seemed the essence of translatability. The critic translates literature into another linguistic structure (basically descriptive, but adapted to its figurative subject) that joins literature to other aspects of culture.

[551] I wish my notes weren't so damn elliptical: re Jung, top of 165 [i.e., para. 544]: the metaphor or fantasy of being of complementary sex doubtless throws the conception into higher relief, though the conception is only incidentally sexual. And the burden of the past is echoed in Bloom's anxiety of influence. Incidentally, the burden of the past-oral myths inevitable. (This way of writing is trendy now, but it's a most irritating form of rib-nudging.)

[554] The great intuition I got from Spengler, and later from Vico, was the sense of every historical phenomenon being symbolic of every other phenomenon contemporary with it. That's more or less what neo-historicism has got into now, the Marxist element in it having forgotten that it once had a transcendent perspective on history.

[558] Freud was a conservative pessimist transformed by disciples into a revolutionary optimist; Marx was a Utopian transcender of history transformed into a determinist of “historicity.”

[559] Derrida says structuralism is wrong because you can't get outside a structure to examine it. That's a misleading metaphor: you enter a structure from the “inside” & it becomes a part of you. Only it doesn't stop at the individual, but creates a spiritual substance: it's one's infinite extension.

[561] We're possessed by the quiet of the “silent night” incarnation vision, with its peace & good will, & forget the verse in the Book of Wisdom it's linked to. The arrogant, boastful, jealous, trickster God can descend in some very unexpected ways. The God descending in the whirlwind to Job is in a way more malicious than Satan, but he completes Job's protest for all that.

[564] (Recap.) There has been a good deal of discussion over Poe's story The Purloined Letter: does the letter, for example, represent a clitoris or a phallus? I am not much excited by such critical allegories; but if we must have allegories, a story of a verbal message that everybody wants to kidnap, but can't because they can't find it, & can't find it because they can't see it, & can't see it, not in spite of the fact that it's staring them straight in the face, but because it is, is much closer to the kind of thing I've been talking about. After all, a letter *is* a verbal message.

[565] A certain amount of Platonism is inevitable with social institutions: every student, every churchgoer, every voter, has some *idea* of the university or church or government which is not destroyed by the pedantry or stupidity or dishonesty that he finds in the operating institutions.

[573] The Orientals say you should get outside the rush of thought through the mind, & realize that it isn't you thinking—in other words all such gabble is at best ideologically conditioned, at worst just ego-shit. Stream-of-consciousness means something that's never really conscious. The verbal sewer is an infiltration of “historicity” into the individual: it's nonsense to say we can never get clear of it.

[591] I keep notebooks because all my writing is a translation into a narrative sequence of things that come to me aphoristically. The aphorisms are in turn preceded by “inspirations” or potentially verbal *Gestalten*. So “inspiration” is essentially a snarled sequence. Many of the nuts and cranks who write me letters are inspired, but can't get to the verbalizing stage. Some of them are nuts because they accept the pernicious Shelleyan fading-coal fallacy, and think they're descending to commonplace when they attempt sequence.

[599] So Nietzsche's remark that it's hard to get rid of God as long as we believe in grammar does contain a genuine intuition, silly as it sounds. There's no reason I can see to want to “get rid of” God, and grammar isn't a thing one believes in; but I have always made an order of words part of my thinking, and have always suspected that my “verbal universe” was the creation. The metaphors surrounding music: harmony, correspondence (i.e. counterpoint), scale, concord (cf. the Russian *mir*) belong here too.

[600] This sounds as though I were heading for a Platonic conclusion, with a duality of form above and whatever it is below. But Platonism, like Judaism, is full of the legal fallacy, that right action is informed by words. It doesn't go through the two Beulah gates of ivory and horn. I think Platonism's context is the continuity of institutions, as in a previous note [para. 565]. The authoritarian fallacy

always assumes this kind of descent: it thinks of man as responding, whereas it's really God who responds, Blake's eternity in love with the productions of time.

[605] My sequence leaves out the drama and the symposium: the Platonic dialogue, in particular, moves toward some kind of epiphany. Plato does not speak in his own name, so he's beyond the logocentric and in the imaginative area. The epiphanic climax even links him to the kerygmatic. Links also with polytheism & discussion of gods among themselves in Homer; links with Kierkegaard's "aesthetic" writings under pseudonyms; links with the Book of Job and with the conclusion to my book, which so far is a fucked-and-far-from-home mess.

[609] This Chaos book I've been reading quotes von Neumann as saying that science doesn't explain or interpret: it makes (basically mathematical) models. I think a model-book (on Utopias) lies ahead of me: its main elements I have, but the fact that *every* work of fiction is a Utopia, i.e. a nowhere, a description without place, hasn't really sunk in yet.

[617] Two things in Plato that keep haunting me: why the tragedy-comedy business at the end of the Symposium, and why the Thoth-writing business at the end of the Phaedrus? The first attracted Fred Sternfeld, who said who said only Shakespeare and Mozart had done it. I wonder if it has something to do with the chronicler of Socrates, who put him into dialogues resembling comedies and also spoke of his tragic death. I've long realized that the second was in part an ironic comment on the rhetorical speech that Socrates' friend brings along with him to "refresh his memory." But there's something more I haven't got.

[619] Does it matter whether Jesus' feeding multitudes with practically no food happened or not? Answer: the story is profoundly and suggestively true if it did not happen, and quite unbearably cheap and vulgar and silly if it did happen.

[621] In an age of primary concern the hewers of doctrine and the drawers of boundary lines seem deficient in charity.

[636] I used to say that hypocrisy was really a virtue, meaning it as half a joke. But when our worst impulses start clamoring that they're our "real" feelings, we realize how debased reality can be even when it's real.

[649] My approach to faith turns it into *gaya scienza*, a joyful wisdom: most of the conventional approaches turn it into a burden of guilt feelings. Critics who distrust me because I don't seem too worried about inconsistencies (Murray Krieger, Bill Wimsatt) can't tune into this notion of faith as a dancing ballet of intuitions, affirmations, counter-affirmations, "doubts" or retreats from dogma, & a pervading sense of "anything may be 'true' or 'false,' but whatever it is, the whole pattern has a design and a movement."

[651] I have never understood why that blithering nonsense "the medium is the message" caught on so. Apparently the terms "medium" and "message" are being aligned with "form" and "content" respectively. And while it would make sense to say that form and content are inseparable, a medium is just that, a medium. It's a vehicle, a transmitter, a means of communicating words and sounds and pictures. It is not and never can be a form. The form of a verbal message is as verbal as its content. The content of a musical message, say a Mozart quartet, is a musical form. It may be heard in a concert hall or over the radio or read as a score in a book, but such varieties of media touch neither

form nor content. On Magritte's pipe principle, the content of a picture is not the objects it represents, but its form or pictorial organization. But painting itself is not a medium: painting cannot be a means of transmitting painting.

[652] The same data that demonstrate the non-existence of God to Ivan Karamazov demonstrate his existence to Alexei, and there is no third criterion to appeal to, even if Dostoevsky himself agrees with Alexei.

[653] Reading a "Leavisite" attack on me: Canada is full of critics who are like those bright blue recycling boxes: they diversify the scene even though there is never anything in them but junk.

[654] I suppose a central question, in *One*, which I ducked, is: what mode does criticism itself belong to? It's the activity, I think, that inter-relates the modes and demonstrates their mutual interdependence. *Literary* criticism, in my approach to it anyway, has the specific task of inter-relating the imaginative to the other three. Distinguishing without dividing, the critic separates mythology from ideology, concrete metaphor from abstract argument, self-contained language from servomechanistic description.

[658] Why can't I learn languages? Because I can't bear to read anything unless it contains potentially something I can base a critical judgement (no) aphorism on. You can't find such material in the opening pages of a Russian grammar. In other words, pure vanity.

[659] The yogis claim that the most childish thing you can say is "I wish." If you want something, either go after it or get past the stage where you think you want it. Bullshit. The minute you say "I wish" you're starting to construct a model. It may be only a Land-of-Cockaigne model, but it's the beginning of imaginative life. The thing is that when it leaves the imaginative and enters the practical sphere (which is what the yogis are talking about) it becomes the "I want it all and I want it now" motto of yuppie-puppies. And that *is* childish.

[660] I've been resisting playing the piano for so long that I will perhaps never get any skill back. I don't know why, but instead of relaxation it's become a mechanism for churning up the gibbering monkey's recital of embarrassing memories. My adolescent interest in Classical music (I could never hear anything in popular music but an unpleasant noise) was obsessive, a reaction against Monctonian parental & school environments. I was never very good: my sense of rhythm was poor and I have always been too lazy (and weak) to play up to speed and volume. I had dreams of being a great composer but never worked at them as I worked at my writing. Why this furtive scurrying approach? Far worse, I can't play in public because the same gibbering monkey sits at my ear and says at intervals "all right now, it's time for you to make a mistake."

I always really wanted it this way: I wanted to read everything and scurry over the top of the keys. This caused conflicts when I finally did take lessons. I've been wondering recently if my relation to my brother had anything to do with it. He left some music—I remember Mendelssohn's Rondo Capriccioso and Raff's Amloreley-Fals—which convinced me that he was a very able pianist. But perhaps he wasn't: perhaps he just bought them and didn't play them. Anyway, my mother's feeling that she had only one son and that I was a second-rate substitute for him (God provided the substitute, but God can be a pretty blundering fool in evangelical minds) may have affected me in some ways. Fortunately I was always too indolent & selfish to make silly efforts about it, trying to "prove" myself and the like.

[661] The Bible *is* a colossal literary tour de force, whatever “more” it is, and the canonical instinct is so sure, in the large view, as to suggest a direct intervention by God. I don’t see this in the Koran, & I don’t see how anybody could see it in the Koran. But what does this lead to? Apparently to the reflection that God is exactly like me: in a world howling with tyranny and misery all he cares about is getting his damn book finished.

[667] It would be nice if God willed that I should write a Century of Meditations. But I wouldn’t want to plan such a book as a dumping ground for things I can’t work in elsewhere or as a set of echoes of what I’ve said elsewhere.

[668] Such a book would feature (a) completely uninhibited writing, like my notes on the romance book (b) completely uninhibited metaphor-building, as in some of my undisplaced plot-reconstructions. Ideally it’s a book to be put away in a drawer and have published after my death.

[671] God, it would be wonderful to write a whole book in the discontinuous aphoristic form in which things actually come to me: I’d still have the sequence problem, but not the crippling angel of continuity to wrestle with. The hell with it, at least for now.

[675] We went to Simcoe “for Easter,” and Elizabeth wanted to go to Arizona “for Christmas.” Curious how much holidaying consists of running away from holy days.

[676] Another dream book of mine is a novel where the hero dies, or eventually discovers he’s dead, and is about the world of the dead and the appearance this world makes from that perspective. I dislike Charles Williams, but I have to admit he had the guts to try this. The point would be to make it all like Alice’s Wonderland, so good-humored the reader wouldn’t think “morbid,” & yet so convincing he’d shiver.

[677] The hell with that. Prometheus is emphatically a trickster figure, though he tricks gods rather than man. So my last chapter is really the defining of the trickster element in God himself that I mentioned earlier. Nietzsche & others are tricked into being Christian missionaries.

[694] I think I’m about ready to absorb Dante into the book now: reality is heaven, hell, & the purgatorial process. Hell doesn’t “exist,” but it’s the world we *have been* making and ought to stop making. It’s the pure past, the bottom of God’s revelation to Job. Blake’s doctrine of Los’s hell, where no hair or particle of dust can pass away, overlooks or does something else with hell: a hell of the past that never passes away is as irresponsible a nightmare as Dante’s in the ordinary reading (including mine). The phrase in *Jerusalem* is “the outward shadows of possibility.” I still think the *Inferno* was a monstrous concession to stupidity and malice, but I hardly see what else he could have done.

[697] It is true that I attempt overviews, and my style in consequence features what are called, in the sweeping cliché of tunnel vision, “sweeping generalizations.”

[698] Near the end of 1989: the text of WP [*Words with Power*] is roughly off my hands. I have a dozen or so essays worth reprinting. Emmanuel has made a request which is an unreasonable imposition, but in view of, etc., has to be taken seriously. I gave a lecture on More’s Utopia at Boston College which I later altered to an inaugural Newman lecture at McGill. I have very little use for Newman, but I can

use him for a partial interrogation of my views on Utopias or model communities and the university, along with a religious dimension totally different from his.

[702] I suppose what my bourgeois liberalism really amounts to is the sense of the ultimately demonic nature of all ideological constructs. In the 30s & 40s the Thomist one had Gilson & Maritain in the front line: they were gentlemen, of course, but a mean-minded fascism lurked in the background. I knew that the Thomist setup was an illusion, and that Marxism (which didn't have any gentlemen) would eventually be exposed as another illusion.

[705] At Princeton I bought four books to keep me up to date with the mid-50s: Maritain's, Malraux's *Voices of Silence*, Auerbach's *Mimesis*, and Curtius on Medieval literature and Latin. At that time Curtius was the only one I could read with any real profit: *Mimesis* was all very well but I was working on an anti-mimetic theory of literature; Malraux said a few excellent things, but was full of bullshit; Maritain, as I said, kept busting his skull against this preposterous "Art and Scholasticism" thesis, insisting that critical theory just had to come out of St. Thomas, who cared as much about the arts as I do about basketball league playoffs.

[709] Malraux says Spengler's book started out as a meditation on the destiny of art-forms, then expanded. What it expanded into, I think, was a vision of history as interpenetration, every historical phenomenon being a symbol of the totality of historical phenomena contemporary with it. That's what fascinated me, though of course I didn't know it for many years.

[713] Why write a historical novel when the pattern of history is fixed? That question perhaps indicates why that particular genre went out of style—until it suddenly revived with Umberto Eco's *Name of the Rose*. The idea is to set up a romantic myth in the middle of a historical situation.

[715] For mother's generation Scott was the pinnacle of serious secular reading: no one realized that he invented a popular formula, and isn't "serious" in the way Jane Austen or Balzac are. This point has been confusing me: it's involved me in one of those "revaluation" antics I detest so much, and which invariably appear when there's a confusion of genres. If Scott had been allowed in his day to be, if not "obscene," at least as sexually explicit as Fielding, he'd have been more centrally in the Milesian tales tradition.

[717] The "subject" swallows everything objective to it: hence the pan-historical critics of today, the Hegelian pan-philosophical absolute knowledge, the pan-literary universe which only three people understand: Blake, Mallarmé, and myself. The *final* answer, naturally, is interpenetration.

[718] Back to this silly creative-critical dichotomy: what's "creative" in me is the professional rhetorician, the saviour of occasions, the person in constant demand for convocation addresses, after-dinner speeches (which I almost never give) and church services. This stuff being mainly oral, the bulk of it has disappeared. (Into Los's Halls, I trust.) But it's what I really do best: I'm one of Jung's feeling types, a senser of occasions. My summing up of the "Options" U of T conference and the "Violence" CRTC [Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission] one showed me at my best: similarly with my Chancellor's greeting to the lyric conference, my Ben Jonson dinner speech, my "benedictions," etc. etc.: I'm usually first-rate at impromptu. I forget what point I was going to make of this.

[719] I've already said, in prefaces & the like, that I'd greatly prefer to see the occasion preserved: the lyric conference introduction is a good example. As a paper contributed to the conference, it looks rather silly, to me anyway. Naturally, I've had some resounding flops. I'm also particularly good, or used to be, at answering questions: my ability to translate a dumb question into a searching one has often been commented on. This should be leading to something useful, but it hasn't yet. The central thing is that my "creative" faculty is the power of *personalizing* occasions. My written texts are, whatever Derrida says, incarnational or prophetic, and reading them ought to lead to reincarnating them.

[721] I didn't need to travel as far afield as the Hindu hermit in search of the territorial imperative: every fucking couple wants privacy & darkness. That's "shame" only in a neurotic or Satan-inspired context. Incidentally, agape is sexless in the N. T. because spiritual intercourse simply interpenetrates: physical intercourse is impossible without penetration, invasion, or, if the woman is unwilling, violation. God screwed chaos for six days and separated on the seventh, panting. Chaos thereby split into cosmos, the child, and Schekinah, the surviving companion. The light and the dark, plenitude and vacancy. The prototypes of all the light and dark doubles—no, not quite.

[723] Interpreting "creator" as "maker" is vulgar: it reduces God to at least a demiurge or more often the watchmaker. God of Paley and the rest. On the human level we use "make" for the useful arts & "create" for the fine ones. Bach didn't make the B minor Mass: he brought it to birth in his mind, like a virgin mother: well: it had a father, the whole tradition of music up to his time.

[730] The first & last epiphanies of God, creation and apocalypse, correspond to the first & last appearances of the human being, birth & death. I'd like to know how far words can go in explaining the silences and mysteries surrounding these events. It's partly the old Mallarmé problem: black words on white space: what does the white space say? the nothingness from which the words emerge? What is said around the words? Mallarmé himself said that when you reverse black and white the white turns into the definitive book, the (rewritten) Torah. But.

[732] I may have this too: re the Paul de Man scandal: why should we expect public figures to be role models, exuding all the approved sentiments? His record could hardly be worse than Heidegger's, but who denies Heidegger's importance? Heidegger, Frege, Spengler, George, even Wagner: all people of great importance: every one a kraut chunkhead as dumb as the beer barrels in Munich. Jung too, for all his dodging. Sartre: the incarnation of the *trahison des clercs*, the juvenile delinquent of the intellect. Camus used to complain of being taken as a moral oracle, but that was just the public saying: "Sartre and Camus—well, at least Camus is a grown man."

[736] Blake was Xn because for him only Xy identified the divine and the human. His was probably a monophysite view, but the two-natures one may be just rationalized hierarchy again. He also clearly thought that only Xy had a real conception of spiritual substance (or reality). That's what I'm trying to get some notion of now: I'm reading the *Paradiso* for the somewhat unusual purpose of getting information about the spiritual world.

[737] Siger of Brabant, William of Ockham, Nicholas of Autrecourt, Peter Abelard, Meister Eckhart, Roger Bacon, Scotus Erigena: in all repressive societies most of the really first rate people are either accused or suspected of heresy.

[739] Well, I finished *The Double Vision*: I don't want to add another syllable to it, but I may get some flak of the "too difficult and too short" type. What I might consider is a fourth lecture on "The Double Vision of God." Here I'd pick up a theme from WP [*Words with Power*] about the Jehovah of the Old Testament being not God but an intensely humanized being as violent and unpredictable as King Lear. This came back to me when a publisher sent me *The Book of J*, a new translation of the Yahwist narrative, with a commentary by Harold Bloom. Jehovah is not a very likable character, because, like Lear before his abdication, he has no vulnerability, but just keeps on doing damn fool things. He is not a man, that he should repent, says one of his more nauseating flunkys.

[741] It's beginning to feel as though "The Double Vision of God" were on my next schedule: if so I'll get help with it; if not it'll end on the cutting room floor with no hard feelings. I should look at things like *Fear and Trembling*, which make a certain sense out of the old bugger's capers.

[746] Dante and the monstrous moral perversions of the priestcraft of his day compelled him to accept. Hell is human life as "mere nature," as Blake says: purgatory is the effort of the spirit to emerge from this. I have now a skin cancer and a hiatus hernia, besides other ailments—very petty compared to what other people have. If I say "thank God," it's only because that seems ordinary politeness; my thanks are really for the gift of life and consciousness, and I'm not fool enough to think my ailments are punishments or trials or that the fact that they're relatively minor has anything to do with my virtues or merits. Diseases are the revenge of nature for getting born: a lifetime of the nervous irritability of my lifestyle was bound to produce these particular diseases. If I recover, my spirit is throwing them off in an effort to continue life on this plane; sooner or later something will separate them for good. Even Lazarus, on the narrative level anyway, would have had to die again. So would all those healed of palsy and the like in the Gospels. *All* healing is casting out the devils of nature. *And* the psyche we acquire from nature.

[747] One very widespread myth (ancient Egypt, the Orient) is that the psyche consists of several elements, which break apart at death. Let's follow out the Oriental version for a bit. Everybody has, I've said, a lost soul, and should make sure it gets good & lost. When you bust up, the crucial question, as with multiple personality cases, is: which one is the real you? When Helen died, the real Helen became an angel in heaven. There was also a sulking and egocentric Helen, who would become a preta or unhappy ghost, and wander around Cairns for a few hours and then disintegrate. Lycidas was a Christian angel, a pagan genius, an absence, and a drowned corpse. Helen was a pile of ashes, an absence to me, and an angel: perhaps she's a genius to me (or anyone else who loved her and is still living or not living and still confused).

Notes

[24] *David Bohm*. Frye has in mind Bohm's *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (London: Ark, 1980), referred to earlier in the notebook.

[26] *piece I did . . . centenary*. "Literary and Linguistic Scholarship in a Postliterate World." *PMLA* 99 (October 1984): 990-95.

[37] *Holy Blood*. Michael Baigent, *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1982.

[53] *my Festschrift*. *Centre and Labyrinth: Essays in Honour of Northrop Frye*. Ed. Eleanor Cook et al. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1983.

[99] *opening sentence of AC*. The passage Frye has in mind comes from the last paragraph of the "Polemical Introduction" to *Anatomy of Criticism*: "Whatever schematization appears in the following

pages, no importance is attached to the schematic form itself, which may be only the result of my lack on ingenuity. Much of it, I expect, and in fact hope, may be mere scaffolding, to be knocked down when the building is in better shape” (29).

[106] *who made me a judge and a divider over you?* Luke 12:14.

[149] *Ne sutor ultra crepidam.* Let the shoemaker stick to his last.

[162] *Rimbaud, Christopher Brennan.* Rimbaud, according to his sister Isabelle, converted to Catholicism on his deathbed; other witnesses dispute the claim. John Christopher Brennan (1870-1932), the Australian poet, abandoned his Irish Catholic upbringing, but during the last desperate years of his life, he returned to the Roman Catholic Church.

[163] *Bloom’s “misreading” thesis.* Harold Bloom’s theory in *The Anxiety of Influence* and subsequent books that “strong” poets establish themselves by “misreading” or swerving away from the work of their precursors.

[169] *the first part of Jesus’ Gethsemane prayer.* Matthew 26:39: “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.”

[169] *wrestle.* The reference is to Jacob’s wrestling with the angel at Peniel “until the breaking of the day.” Genesis 32:24.

[170] *Helen is dead.* Helen Frye died on August 4, 1986, in Cairns, Australia.

[192] *prana.* Breath. In the Vedic writings, breath and wind are often identified.

[213] *Jung’s libido book.* C. G. Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious: A Study of the Transformations and Symbolisms of the Libido.* Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991. The book was written in 1912 and translated into English in 1916 by Jung’s disciple, Beatrice M. Hinkle. Forty years later Jung revised the work, which appeared in English as *Symbols of Transformation.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1956. [Vol. 5 in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung.*] Frye read the Hinkle translation in the 1930s.

[214] *Catherine.* Catherine Runcie, an Australian friend.

[215] *Keats.* The reference is to Keats’ letter to George and Georgiana Keats, February 14-May 3, 1919: “Call the world if you Please ‘The vale of Soul-making’ Then you will find out the use of the world.”

[223] *the sermon.* Frye is referring to the sermon he delivered at a service of thanksgiving at the Metropolitan United Church, Toronto, October 5, 1986. Excerpts from the sermon appeared as “The Dedicated Mind” in *Vic Report* 15 (Winter 1986-87): 12-13, and the entire sermon was published as “To Come to Light” in *No Uncertain Sounds.* Toronto: Chartres Books, 1988, pp. 27-37.

[247] *Norbert Wiener.* *Cybernetics; or, Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine.* 2nd ed. New York: M. I. T. Press and John Wiley & Sons, 1961. On entropy, see pp. 11, 56-57, 62, 64.

[271] *Jaynes’ book.* Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness and the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976.

[288] *Jacobsen’s book.* Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion.* New Haven: Yale UP, 1976.

[304] *Faulconbridge’s speech.* The reference is to the soliloquy of Philip the Bastard, Robert Faulconbridge’s half-brother, at the end of Act II of *King John.*

[321] *Rilke.* The reference is to a passage in one of Rilke’s letters to Muzot: “The ‘Angel’ of the Elegies has nothing to do with the Angel of the Christian heaven (rather with the angelic figures of Islam).”

[325] *Nicholson.* Mervin E. Nicholson wrote a dissertation under Frye’s supervision: “A Rock that Sparkles: *Eikasia* and *Dianoia* Imagery with Particular Reference to Keats and Stevens” (1979).

[325] *France.* Anatole France’s *Le jardin d’Épicure* (1894), trans. by A. Allinson in 1908 as *The Garden of Epicurus,* is similar to what Frye would call an anatomy, an erudite excursion over a wide range of knowledge.

[325] *Merejkowski's book*. Dmitry Merezhkovsky, *Tanya Zapada: Alantida-Europa* [*Atlantis/Europe: The Secret of the West*] (1930); English translations, 1933 and 1971.

[330] *Kundalini*. In the treatises on Yoga, kundalini is the cosmic energy that exists in everyone, represented as a radiant serpent.

[338] *Sepher Yetzirah*. *The Book of Formations*. This brief, anonymous work of mystical cosmology aims to account for the mystery of creation, which is seen as issuing from "thirty-two wondrous paths of wisdom, comprising three categories: number, letters and words." Frye quotes from the fourth section of the work. See *Origins: Creation Texts from the Ancient Mediterranean*. Trans. Charles Doria and Harris Lenowitz. 1976. A critical edition of the text by Ithamar Greenwald was published in *Israel Oriental Studies* 1 (1971): 132-77.

[348] *Heller*. "Neither Rilke nor Nietzsche praises the praiseworthy. They praise. They do not believe the believable. They believe. And it is their praising and believing itself that becomes praiseworthy and believable in the act of worship. Theirs is a *religio intransitiva*." Erich Heller, *The Disinherited Mind: Essays in Modern German Literature and Thought*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974, p. 171.

[349] *Ayesha*. Ayesha is the ageless woman, She-who-must-be-obeyed, in Rider Haggard's *She* (1887). Haggard's *Ayesha, or the Return of She* was published in 1905.

[373] *Boehme says*. See Boehme's "Theosophische Punkten," 1, *Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 4. Ed. Will-Erich Peuckert. Stuttgart, 1955-60. See also "The Sixth Treatise on the Supersensual Life," *The Way to Christ*. Trans. Peter Erb. New York: Paulist Press, 1978, pp. 179-80. Frye's text was Boehme's *Six Theosophic Points*. Trans. John Rolleston Earle. 1958.

[373] *wu wei*. The principle whereby one achieves one's goal without aggressive action.

[373] *Abbé Sieyes*. Emmanuel Joseph Sieyes (1748-1836), a French priest and revolutionary. In his celebrated pamphlet "What is the Third Estate?" Sieyes begins his answer by saying, "Everything. What has it been hitherto in the political order? Nothing. What does it desire? To be something."

[394] *Huizinga's play thesis*. See Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*. London, 1949.

[397] The papers referred to in this para.: *the Wagner*. "The World as Music and Idea in Wagner's Parsifal," originally presented as an address to the Toronto Wagner Society, October 27, 1982; published in *Carleton Germanic Papers* 12 (1984): 37-49, and rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 340-55. *the Morris*. "The Meeting of Past and Future in William Morris." *Studies in Romanticism* 21 (Fall 1982): 303-18; rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 322-39. *the Vico*. This apparently refers to "The Responsibilities of the Critic," originally presented as a lecture at Johns Hopkins University, February 20, 1976; published in *MLN* 91 (October 1976): 797-813; rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 124-40. *Vico-Bruno-Joyce*. "Cycle and Apocalypse in *Finnegans Wake*," originally presented as a lecture at the University of California, Berkeley, February 1985; rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 356-74. *the Castiglione*. "Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*," originally presented as a lecture at Aula Atti Accademici, Venice, May 23, 1979, and at the University of Urbino, May 29, 1979; published in *Quaderni d'italianistica*, 1, no. 1 (1980): 1-14; rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 307-21. *the More's Utopia paper*. "Natural and Revealed Communities," the Thomas More Lecture in the Humanities, presented at Holy Cross College, April 22, 1987, and published in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 289-306. *the Wiegand lecture*. "Literature as a Critique of Pure Reason," originally presented as the second of the 1982 Wiegand Lectures; published in *Descant* 14 (Spring 1983): 7-21; rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 168-82. *the Royal Society symbols paper*. "The Symbol as a Medium of Exchange," presented at the meeting of the Royal Society of Canada, Kingston, Ontario, on October 26, 1984, and published in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 28-43. *the Smith paper*. Framework and Assumption, originally presented as a lecture at Smith College, Northhampton, Mass., October 24, 1985; published in the *Northrop Frye Newsletter* 1, no. 1 (1988): 2-10; rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 79-92. *Ontario 1784-1984*. "Culture and Society in Ontario, 1784-1984," originally presented as a lecture at McMaster University, September 7, 1984; rpt. in *On Education*, pp. 168-82. *short lyric introduction*.

"Approaching the Lyric," originally presented as an address at the Conference on Lyric Poetry and the

New New Criticism, Victoria College, Toronto, October 14, 1982; published in *Lyric Poetry: Beyond New Criticism*. Ed. Chaviva Hosek and Patricia Parker. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1985, pp. 5-17; rpt. in *The Eternal Act of Creation*, pp. 130-36.

[397] *the various religion papers*. These were “The Mythical Approach to Creation,” originally presented at the meeting of the Learned Societies, Montreal, June 4, 1985; published in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 238-54. “The Expanding World of Metaphor,” originally presented at the meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Chicago, December 8, 1984; published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 53 (December 1985): 585-98; rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 108-123. “The Dialectic of Belief and Vision,” originally presented as an address at the School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto, December 3, 1985; published in *Sbenandoah* 39, no. 3 (1989): 47-64; rpt. in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 93-107. “The Journey as Metaphor,” originally presented as a lecture at the Applewood Centre, Toronto, October 8, 1985; published in *Myth and Metaphor*, pp. 212-26. “Repetitions of Jacob’s Dream,” originally presented as a talk at the National Gallery, Ottawa, October 13, 1983; published in *The Eternal Act of Creation*, pp. 37-49. *Ruth paper*. “The Bride from the Strange Land,” originally presented as a talk at the Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto, May 25, 1985; published in *The Eternal Act of Creation*, pp. 50-61.

[410] *identification of Substance with Subject-Spirit*. See para. 13 of Hegel’s Preface to his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Trans. A.V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977, p. 10.

[419] *Ara vos prec*. “Now I pray you,” Dante, *Purgatorio*, XXVI, 145. The words of Arnaut Daniel, who requests that Dante remember his pain. Eliot’s 1920 *Poems* were first called *Ara Vos Prec*.

[421] *Michael instructing Adam*. The line is from *Paradise Lost*, XII, 303.

[428] *Montaigne’s “consubstantial” remark*. “I have no more made my book than my book has made me; a book consubstantial with its author, concerned only with me, a vital part of my life; not having an outside and alien concern like all other books.” Montaigne, “Of Giving the Lie,” *Essays*, Book II. Trans. Charles Cotton.

[434] *a volume of 12 essays*. For the essays referred to in this paragraph, see note 397. Frye did write a paper on James, “Henry James and the Comedy of the Occult,” presented at Carleton University on October 19, 1989, and published in *The Eternal Act of Creation*, pp. 109-29

[442] *Rochdale*. A student residence that provided those in the late 1960s with an alternative to the University of Toronto system of instruction. It became a center of counter-culture activities and was eventually closed—in May 1975—for mortgage arrears.

[443] “*She died young*.” Ferdinand’s remark to Bosolo, who had strangled Ferdinand’s sister in John Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*, IV, ii.

[468] *Elizabethan age*. Frye is referring to his marriage to Elizabeth Eedy.

[468] *Donne’s image . . . Montaigne’s*. Frye is quoting from Donne’s *Devotions on Emergent Occasions*, Meditation XVII: “Now, this bell tolling softly for another says to me: Thou must die.”; for Montaigne, see note 428. In *Paradiso*, 33, 85-87, Dante describes how the Eternal Light “contains within its depths / all things bound in a single book by love / of which creation is the scattered leaves” (Musa translation).

[591] *Shelleyan fading-coal fallacy*. “A man cannot say, ‘I will compose poetry.’ The greatest poet even cannot say it: for the mind in creation is, as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness.” Percy Bysshe Shelley, “A Defence of Poetry.” *Shelley’s Critical Prose*. Ed. Bruce R. McElderry, Jr. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1967. 30.

[599] *the Russian mir*. “Mir” means peace, plus a variety of other things. See para. 538.

[609] *Chaos book . . . von Neumann*. “The sciences do not try to explain, they hardly even try to interpret, they mainly make models. By a model is meant a mathematical construct which, with the addition of certain verbal interpretations, describes observed phenomena.” John von Neumann, qtd. by James Gleick in *Chaos: Making a New Science*. New York: Penguin, 1987, p. 273.

[660] *my brother* Eratus Howard Frye, born March 29, 1899, was killed by artillery fire near Amiens, August 18, 1918.

[675] *Simcoe*. Frye and his second wife, Elizabeth, owned a condominium in Simcoe, Ontario.

[698] *lecture on More's Utopia*. See note 397. The lecture was at Holy Cross, not Boston, College.

[723] *Paley*. William Paley (1743-1805), who found proof of the existence of God in the design of nature.

730] *black words on white space*. See Mallarmé's "Préface" to *Un coup de dés*.

Norrie Stories

As announced in the last issue of the *Newsletter*, Jane Widdicombe plans to assemble a collection of personal anecdotes and stories by and about Frye. Readers who would like to contribute to the collection should send their accounts to Jane Widdicombe, P. O. Box 545, Nobleton, Ontario L0G 1N0.

The *Northrop Frye Newsletter* publishes material by and about Frye and his criticism, as well as supplements to his bibliography. The editor welcomes material related to this aim. The *Newsletter* is ordinarily published twice annually and is distributed without charge to those who request it. Publication is supported by the English Department of Roanoke College. Address all correspondence to the editor, Robert Denham, English Department, Roanoke College, Salem, VA 24153. Copyright © 1993 by Robert D. Denham ISSN: 1058-062X
