JUNG'S ARCHETYPES IN NORTHROP FRÉE'S
ARCHETYPAL CRITICISM

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ARCHETYPAL CRITICISM

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

At the present time Northron Frye is one of the most prominent and most controversial figures in the field of literary criticism. He is generally pointed to as the leader in contemporary myth criticism—or archetypal criticism, as the area is sometimes called, a diverse grouping of all those studies of literature in terms of ancient or primitive myths that are reused in it plus those studies which bring in depth psychology and examine literature as recreations of basic human "archetypal" mental configurations. Although Frye is also the author of Fearful Symmetry (1947), an influential study of William Blake as an original mythopoeic poet, Frye's current eminent status as a literary critic is largely the result of his volume Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (1957), a work which David Daiches calls "brilliant and highly influential,"\(^1\) adding that it "already shows signs of becoming something of a bible to the new generation of critics concerned with myth and symbol."\(^2\) In his article "The Current Revolt against the New Criticism," published only two

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\(^2\)Ibid.
years after Anatomy of Criticism, Hyatt H. Waggoner gives Frye a similar position of leadership among myth critics and even predicts more acclaim and support for the Canadian.

... I confess I find myself more interested than convinced. But a great many people are already convinced, and others, I predict, will be, when they have had time to master this difficult, forbidding, and impressive book.

As his personal reservation indicates, Waggoner is hardly a Frye "disciple"; but he shows that even those who do not support Frye also do not deny his prominence. Critics who are much more openly averse to Frye than Hyatt Waggoner acknowledge Anatomy of Criticism, as is evident in an article by W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., in Essays in Criticism.

... this book stands at the summit of mythopoeic criticism to date [1962]. It is a book which may well have advanced or precipitated the climax of mythopoeism in English criticism by several decades, and thus it may have done us a considerable service.

Although one can almost believe from the context that the "service" this critic suggests from Frye's work is that of hastening the decline of mythopoeic criticism by hastening its climax as a movement, Wimsatt does not deny the volume's importance. Even René Wellek, who in an article in Sewanee Review goes on to castigate Frye for inconsistency, acknowledges Anatomy of Criticism by indicating that it is "a work

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3Hyatt H. Waggoner, "The Current Revolt against the New Criticism," Criticism, 1 (Summer, 1959), 218.
1Ibid.
of literary theory which has been praised as the greatest book of criticism since Matthew Arnold. Wellek notices the ranking, even if he does not subscribe to it. As the generally—though not universally—accepted leader of myth critics, Northrop Frye and his theories demand attention.

The amount of attention that Frye merits is increased by the ascendant position of myth criticism in contemporary American critical work. David Daiches in *English Literature* (1964) speaks of the attention to myth and symbol as having "reached enormous proportions in contemporary America." Again, Hyatt Waggoner notes a similar situation and appears to expect the emphasis on psychological—hence mythological—element in literature to continue to grow.

It seems to me ironic that just as some psychologists are beginning to suspect that "mere chemistry" and not Freudian complexes lies at the root of our personality and our thinking, the rest of us who are not psychologists are beginning to think in terms determinatively colored by Freudian and Jungian concepts.

This is the same direction predicted for American literary criticism by Norman N. Holland, professor of Shakespeare at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As leader in his field, Northrop Frye is important; but as leader in a field

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7 Daiches, p. 126.

8 Waggoner, p. 217.

which is having a great and possibly growing impact on all of literary criticism, he is even more important.

The reasonableness of studying Northrop Frye in terms of his employment of the psychological thought of Carl G. Jung begins to appear when one understands that the field of myth criticism, especially in its archetypal form, is almost invariably connected with the work of Jung, often as an unstated assumption. In *Literary Criticism: A Short History* (1957), the authors mention Freud and Jung, who "in general are regarded as having furnished positive and specific directives"\(^7\) for the psychological and mythical approach to literature. Similarly, René Wellek in his *Concepts of Criticism* (1963) treats of myth as being, among other things, "the central term for a type of criticism which has its antecedents in Nietzsche, Frazer, the Cambridge Greek scholars, and in Carl Jung."\(^8\) Actually, although Freud and Jung are often mentioned together as the bases of psychology incorporated into literary criticism,\(^9\) it is to Jung that those critics are considered to be related who rely on a kind of comparative-mythology approach to literature or who consider literature as a manifestation of the internal

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\(^9\) Waggoner, p. 222.
psychic symbols and quests of the human mind, as Walter Sutton explains in Modern American Criticism.

But myth and archetype critics are for the most part followers of Jung and share his mystical and religious inclinations, while critics attracted to Freud more often think of themselves as scientifically or historically oriented.\textsuperscript{13}

With Jung generally supposed to be the basic authority for myth and archetypal critics, the connection between Jung and Frye is significant. Wimsatt and Brooks surely are not merely stating personal opinion when they assert in their \textit{Literary Criticism: A Short History}, "Recent 'myth' criticism, as previous allusions in this chapter indicate, owes more to Carl Jung than to any other man."\textsuperscript{14} If contemporary myth criticism owes more to Jung than to anyone else, then there seems to be justification for studying to ascertain how much Northrop Frye as generally acknowledged leader in the field has drawn from Jung.

Actually, the relationship between Frye and Jung need not be merely inferred. It has been asserted clearly and repeatedly by critics and reviewers. David Daiches makes the connection while referring to Frye's study of Blake in \textit{Fearful Symmetry,} Frye's first book.\textsuperscript{15} In \textit{Literary Criticism: A Short History,} written before \textit{Anatomy of Criticism} appeared,


\textsuperscript{14}Wimsatt and Brooks, p. 176

\textsuperscript{15}Daiches, p. 84.
Wimsatt and Brooks footnote Frye's use of the word "archetype" in this way:

"Archetype," borrowed from Jung, means a primordial image, a part of the collective unconscious, the psychic residue of numberless experiences of the same kind, and thus part of the inherited response-pattern of the race.16

Even the wording of the definition assumes a direct indebtedness of Frye to Jung for the concept, which is explained almost in Jung's own words. No less direct an association is indicated by René Wellek when he asserts about Anatomy of Criticism in his Concepts of Criticism (1963), "In practice Frye devises an enormously intricate scheme of modes, symbols, myths, and genres for which, however, the Jungian archetype is the basic assumption."17 In a slight slackening of the intellectual bond, one reviewer of Anatomy mentions other sources for Frye's archetypes.

When Frye speaks of myths he insists on the need of "archetypal criticism," which seems to be a composite of the psychological approach of Jung, the anthropological approach of Frazer, and the literary approach of T. S. Eliot.18

Obviously not everyone agrees that to be Fryean is to be basically and predominantly Jungian.

What needs to be determined, then, is the extent of Frye's use of Jung's psychology in arriving at his own controversial theories about archetypal literary criticism.

The study must necessarily emphasize those borrowings or adaptations that Frye acknowledges. While it can call attention to those parts of Frye's theories that seem to reflect Jungian influence, it cannot do more than suggest such links. An effective handling of the topic must then begin with the rudiments of Jung's hypotheses about archetypal psychology. The next step is to examine the major works of Northrop Frye, from his first book, *Fearful Symmetry* (1947), through his famous *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), to the most recent of his volumes, *A Natural Perspective* (1965), in an attempt to ascertain the role of Jung's psychology in the developing critical theories of Frye.

Though Carl Jung was not the first to speak of archetypes and certainly is not presently considered an exclusive source for the concept, either in terms of images or myths, his work on the psychology of the unconscious, and the archetypes that he has hypothesized therein, is still dominant. From the publication of *The Psychology of the Unconscious* in 1912 until his death in 1962, Jung championed the importance of the inner man, of the unconscious part of the mind. As Jung himself declared,

> What we need is the development of the inner spiritual man, the unique individual whose treasure is hidden on the one side in the symbols of our mythological tradition and on the other side in man's unconscious psyche.¹⁹

Not only was he a most consistent exponent of this introspective approach to living, but according to Hans Schaer's *Religion and the Cure of Souls in Jung's Psychology* Jung was also "... perhaps the first to set out to build a theory of the soul that takes account not only of 'professional psychology' but also of religion, mythology, alchemy, art, and literature." Such colleagues and students as Joseph L. Henderson, Aniela Jaffé, Jolande Jacobi, and Cároly Kérenyi continue Jung's methods and ideas admittedly; but also for most other workers in the field of archetypal myths and symbols Jung is generally assumed to be the forerunner, even if often specifically unacknowledged. Even when unacknowledged, Jung's concepts of the unconscious mind and its archetypes are for the most part distinctive enough to be recognizable when others borrow them, as Frye is alleged to have done.

Although many writings by Jung begin with brief summaries of his hypotheses concerning the nature of the human unconscious, none of these are sufficiently clear or concise, taken singly, to provide the reader with a full and immediate understanding of the concepts. Representative in general is this statement of thesis drawn from Jung's *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*.

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In addition to our immediate consciousness, which is of a thoroughly personal nature and which we believe to be the only empirical psyche (even if we tack on the personal unconscious as an appendix), there exists a second psychic system of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature which is identical in all individuals. The collective unconscious does not develop individually but is inherited. It consists of pre-existent forms, the archetypes, which can only become conscious secondarily and which give definite form to certain psychic contents.\(^1\)

The statement quoted does make clear that the collective unconscious is separate from one's conscious mind, is hereditary for all human beings, and is the repository for archetypes which have an ordering function for that segment of the mind. Though the summary might be adequate for one who already knows the psychologist's ideas, it leaves the less informed person struggling with such terms as "psychic," "personal unconscious," and "pre-existent forms," not to mention "collective unconscious" and "archetypes" themselves. It soon becomes clear that to deal adequately with the parts of Jung's psychological concepts, a person must have some idea of the whole.

The basis of Jung's thinking, of course, is his understanding of the way the human psyche operates. Even at this fundamental level, however, he stresses,

> Our psyche is a part of nature, and its enigma is as limitless. Thus we cannot define either the psyche or nature. We can merely state what we believe

Jung disclaimed both the absoluteness of his knowledge and the development of his ideas into a "system." He waited for others to verify what he had suggested and to supplement his findings before attempting to propound a structure of the mind. Nevertheless, his ideas form a fairly clear functional diagram of the human mentality.

For Jung the human mind is an entity, the psyche, to be dealt with as a unit having two general factors: the conscious and the unconscious. Furthermore, the psyche is real and its activity is real, its events being just as important to the human being as the events of the external world. Hans Schaer expresses the point accurately.

... what he does maintain is that the psychic is reality, i.e., is real (actual) because it acts. The reality of it is no whit inferior to that of the physical in significance, intensity, and extent.

This psychic reality Jung extends equally to the conscious and unconscious functionings of the mind, even to the idea that psychic activity can occur without external or sensory stimulus but that physical activity cannot be experienced without simultaneous psychic processes.

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24 Ibid., p. 23.

The other principal postulate that Jung makes about the psyche as a whole is that it operates on the basis of opposites and functions as a self-regulating entity. The unconscious constantly attempts to compensate for the actions and development of the conscious mind by developing the opposite elements to an equal degree, thus working toward equilibrium.

A direct outgrowth of its compensatory nature, the actual functioning of the psyche is described by Jung in terms of libido, or psychic energy, which he suggests by analogy with the physicists' hypothesis of physical energy.

Jung's conception of the psyche is dynamic; he thinks of it as an activity or an energy, otherwise termed a psychic libido. Such energy arises from the polarity of opposites, of which Jung gives several examples: extravert-introvert, love and hate, good and evil, anima-animus, persona-shadow, and more fundamentally, conscious-unconscious. There can be, he says, no energy without a pre-existing polarity. Psychic energy exists because of a tension between opposites...

This quotation from an article by Ralph Demos in Review of Metaphysics expresses clearly the relation of psychic energy to psychic opposites, but it also shows some common distortions. The psyche is not purely psychic energy or libido, but is merely measured or described in terms of that. The polarities listed are also misleading, for Jung avoids and usually transcends the question of good and evil as meaningless except in the conscious mind; and love and hate are elements,


not always prominent ones, in the more functional oppositions named in Demos' other examples. Libido is the result of psychic tensions and is not to be confused with will, which Jung describes as purposive libido and which is solely a manifestation of the conscious mind. The function of libido is rather clearly stated by Hans Schaer, a pupil of Jung.

In normal circumstances libido is bound up with our interests and attention, hence with the sphere of consciousness. It can, however, fall into the unconscious and so energize the unconscious functions that little of it is left over for consciousness.

When the unconscious is thus activated, it can take over temporarily the governing of behavior and produce strange, uncharacteristic behavior that in its extreme forms is called possession.

With an understanding of Jung's general hypotheses about psyche and libido, the inquirer still needs information about Jung's visualization of the form and arrangement of the conscious and unconscious portions of the psyche before he is prepared to study the unconscious and its archetypes. For Jung the conscious is not identical with the psyche. The consciousness is only part of the psyche and includes only those functions which man directly recognizes and to a large extent controls. Normally consciousness centers around the personal ego, which Jung defines carefully in his Aion.

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28Schaer, p. 29.
29Ibid.
30Jung, Man and Symbols, p. 23.
We understand the ego as the complex factor to which all conscious contents are related. It forms, as it were, the center of the field of consciousness; and, in so far as this comprises the empirical personality, the ego is the subject of all personal acts of consciousness.31

Man's conscious mind is ego-oriented and, especially in the Western world, distrusts and attempts to avoid all contact with the actions of the unconscious, which seems dark and unknown.32 The conscious mind, however, is still relatively unstable and can be easily overwhelmed through external appeals to irrational emotions or through the emergence of powerful drives from the unconscious. And even as the conscious mind attempts to isolate itself and develop its rational control of itself and its environment, Jung suggests that the compensating nature of the psyche is causing the unconscious mind to develop equally strong counter-trait.

I use the term enantiodromia to describe the emergence of the unconscious opposite, with particular relation to its chronological sequence. This characteristic phenomenon occurs almost universally wherever an extreme, one-sided tendency dominates the conscious life; for this involves the gradual development of an equally strong, unconscious counterposition, which first becomes manifest in an inhibition of conscious activities, and subsequently leads to an interruption of conscious direction.33

In other words, if ignored too long, the unconscious will overwhelm the conscious mind to restore equilibrium at least


32Jung, Man and Symbols, p. 31.

temporarily and thus reduce the extreme psychic tension. However, Jung also believes that when such tensions become strong, dreams are produced to subtly communicate the nature of the developing problem and its compensation to the conscious mind. In *Man and His Symbols* the psychologist expresses the concept this way:

In this respect, dream symbols are the essential message carriers from the instinctive to the rational parts of the human mind, and their interpretation enriches the poverty of consciousness so that it learns to understand again the forgotten language of the instincts.

Naturally enough, Jung's study of dreams then led him into a study of their source and their process of manifestation in the unconscious portions of the psyche.

As a result of his researches into the nature of the unconscious, Jung postulates two basic ideas. First, the unconscious operates independently of the conscious mind but can and does influence conscious behavior. Second, the unconscious has two layers or parts: the personal unconscious, which corresponds to what Freud called the subconscious; and a deeper level, the impersonal unconscious, or collective unconscious, as it is more frequently named. Of course, the use of spatial metaphors like above, below, deeper, and within is misleading, for Jung nowhere even hints at trying to find physical locations for these different

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activities in the brain. His area of interest is the psychical, not the physical. Nevertheless, if used properly, spatial terms help keep the different functions clear. The following example from Hans Schaer's book on Jung uses such words in relating the personal unconscious to the conscious ego.

A part of the personality, however, is not coordinated with this ego and not conscious; hence the soul extends into the unconscious. Consciousness is, figuratively speaking, only the tip of a cone whose base goes deep down into the unconscious realm; and this personal unconscious which lies comparatively close to the ego passes over into psychic territory that is no longer accessible to the individual.36

This part of the unconscious contains all the personal memories that the conscious mind has not retained, as well as all the stimuli known as subliminal, which the conscious mind never even noticed. Here, too, are those memories that are ignored because they are unpleasant; that is, they are repressed from consciousness. Jung suggests that these unconscious images, impressions, and memories continue to influence conscious behavior without being acknowledged.37 In the unconscious mind thinking occurs conceptually, using images richer, more imaginative, and more dramatic than the conscious mind can even apprehend, let alone express.38 Jung even believes that the conscious mind is a relatively recent development of and from the unconscious. Ralph Demos

36Schaer, p. 31.
37Jung, Man and Symbols, p. 50.
38Demos, pp. 81-82.
summarizes the point: "In the order of evolution, the unconscious precedes the conscious; the conscious mind has developed from the prior unconscious mind, just as mind in general has evolved from life." And the chronological sequence can be explored further to define the collective unconscious as existing before the personal unconscious. The distinction between the two portions of the unconscious is one that Jung makes carefully and frequently, as in this section from his *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*.

While the personal unconscious is made up essentially of contents which have at one time been conscious but which have disappeared from consciousness through having been forgotten or repressed, the contents of the collective unconscious have never been in consciousness, and therefore have never been individually acquired, but owe their existence exclusively to heredity.

This concept of the collective unconscious was the primary cause of Jung's departure from Freud, who denied its existence. Jungians are quick to point out, however, that Freud eventually arrived at the same conclusion shortly before his death. For Jung the personal unconscious is certainly important, being the source of many mental problems; but his real interest is in the collective unconscious, the "Janus-faced" source of man's deepest and strongest drives and concepts, which embodies his prehistoric heritage and his best defenses against future psychic danger.

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39Ibid., p. 75.
41Storr, p. 398.
One other area of Jung's work needs to be considered before his ideas about the operations of the unconscious—personal and collective—can be studied and understood. This area is perhaps his best-known: the classification of people into types, first by attitude and then by dominant mental function. **Extravert** and **introvert**, the names that Jung coined to identify the two basic attitudes of people toward living, are today in general use, with attendant degrees of distortion. Anthony Storr in *American Scholar* clearly summarizes the original meanings.

Jung saw that men approached the study of the mind, and indeed life in general, from different basic preconceptions, of which they were not always aware. The extravert valued the outer world, the relation to external objects, whereas the introvert gave his chief esteem to the world he discovered within himself.43

The extravert devotes the greater part of his libido automatically to the conscious control and manipulation of the external world as he perceives it. The libido flows outward toward the object, as Jung describes it. The introvert, on the other hand, is more concerned initially with the effect of external perceptions on himself and his inner state; thus Jung speaks of the latter's libido as tending to flow inwards first. Neither state is better than the other, both being perfectly normal. Along with the extravert-introvert attitudinal poles, Jung also provides classifications based

43Storr, p. 399.
on what he calls functional types: thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition.

These four functional types correspond to the obvious means by which consciousness obtains its orientation to experience. Sensation (i.e., sense perception) tells you that something exists; thinking tells you what it is; feeling tells you whether it is agreeable or not; and intuition tells you whence it comes and where it is going.44

Often these four functions appear in diagrams at the four points of a compass, with thinking directly opposite to intuition and feeling directly opposite to sensation. Thinking and feeling are rational, that is, consciously directed; sensation and intuition Jung considers as being alike irrational (outside or beyond reason) because they are dependent upon external physical stimuli and not mental directives.45

Of the four terms, feeling is most easily misunderstood; Jung calls it a judgment of value that is directed toward finding order in experience and is a rational process, not just an emotional reaction.46 Of course, a person's functional type may be a blend of two, e.g., thinking-feeling.

However, the relation of these classes to the unconscious comes through Jung's idea of compensatory action. The conscious mind picks one of the four functions and differentiates it, that is, separates it from the other three and develops

45Ibid.
46Ibid.
it at the expense of the others, an action that is necessary for its direct application in living. This most-used function Jung calls superior. "The superior function is always the expression of the conscious personality; its aim, its will, and its achievement . . . ."47 Of the remaining three, one is picked and developed as an alternative or back-up method and is called inferior; the third may receive some attention, but the fourth is almost always totally neglected. To the extent that one function is concentrated on, its opposite and the other lesser traits are forced into the unconscious, where they become correspondingly active. It is such oppositions that provide tension to create libido and activate both portions of the psyche.

The third major portion of the psyche, the collective unconscious, proceeds from Jung's most controversial major hypothesis and--along with the archetypes which he suggests exist therein--has been the subject of most of Jung's writings. The psychologist himself defines the collective unconscious as

... a deeper layer, which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but is inborn. This deeper layer I call the collective unconscious. I have chosen the term "collective" because this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal; in contrast to the personal psyche, it has contents and modes of behaviour that are more or

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47Jung, Psychological Types, p. 426.
less the same everywhere and in all individuals. 48

Others—like Jung’s colleague Jolande Jacobi in his book on
Jung's controversial terms—wax more eloquent in their descrip-
tions.

The collective unconscious as suprapersonal matrix,
as the unlimited sum of fundamental psychic conditions
accumulated over millions of years, is a realm of im-
measurable breadth and depth. From the very beginning
of its development it is the inner equivalent of Creation,
an inner cosmos as infinite as the cosmos outside us. 49

In other words, the psychic structure of the collective
unconscious is the result of man’s experiences even before
the emergence of consciousness, reflecting what one reviewer
calls "a vertical similarity in time, between present and
past . . . , a similarity in terms of images and other con-
tents, not derived from personal experience." 50 This level
of the mind is basically primitive, that is, pre-logical, using
as guides what Jung calls "instinctive trends, represented
by corresponding thought forms—that is, by the archetypes." 51
Still active in the collective unconscious are the fantastic
associations that civilized man has pushed back into the un-
conscious but which most primitive people use freely, 52 as in
what French ethnologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl called participation

18Jung, Archetypes, p. 3.

49Jolande Jacobi, Complex/Archetype/Symbol in the
Psychology of C. G. Jung, translated by Ralph Manheim

50Demos, p. 83.
mystique, the belief that part of a man's soul is incarnate in some external animal or object. The bases for association of ideas at this level are not explainable by external standards, particularly by that of causation. Jung asserts that the communications from the collective unconscious occur "not as a rational thought but as a symbolic image," produced unconsciously and spontaneously in dreams. From the storehouses of the unconscious can come completely new ideas, insights, inspirations. In fact, when Jung suggests that the use of such materials effectively interpreted in terms of the arts or sciences is "one of the hallmarks of what is commonly called genius," the relevance of his thought to literary criticism becomes a little clearer. Needless to say, the communications arising from the collective unconscious appear in terms of universals, not personal conditions. Jolande Jacobi attempts to clarify the point in his Complex/Archetype/Symbol.

For example, the individual is no longer confronted with his own mother, but with the archetype of the "maternal"; no longer with the unique personal problem created by his mother as a concrete reality, but with the universally human, impersonal problem of every man's dealings with the primordial maternal ground in himself.

While the concept itself seems plausible and relatively simple, a study of the language of these manifestations, the

53 Ibid., p. 24. 54 Ibid., p. 23.
55 Ibid., p. 21. 56 Ibid., p. 38.
symbols of the archetypes, is by no means simple; yet it is this most complex area of Jung's thoughts that concerns literary theorists now.

The problem of merely defining these "archetypes" seems to be a self-renewing one, so that Jung and his supporters spend much time clarifying and restating the concept; and not always are Jung's own explanations the clearest. In preparing to present the idea, Jolande Jacobi gives useful advice.

... when we encounter the word archetype in any of Jung's writings, we shall do well to consider whether the reference is to the "archetype as such," still latent and nonperceptible, or to an already actualized archetype, expressed in conscious psychic material, an archetype that has become an "image." 58

The archetype is the basic formative power and is always present in the human mind, waiting to be activated by a sufficiently grave psychic disturbance, at which time it manifests itself as a symbol. Jacobi calls the archetype "the magnetic field and energy center underlying the transformation of the psychic processes into images," 59 and prepares for some of Jung's own statements by stressing that "... the archetypes are not inherited representations, but inherited possibilities of representation." 60 The Jungian statement to which she leads comes from The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious.

58Ibid., p. 35. 59Ibid., p. 48. 60Ibid., p. 52.
The archetype in itself is empty and purely formal, nothing but a *facultas praeformandi*, a possibility of representation which is given *a priori*. The representations themselves are not inherited, only the forms, and in that respect they correspond in every way to the instincts, which are also determined in form only.61

The comparison to instincts is one of Jung's favorites, and he frequently refers to the archetypal manifestations as images of instincts. Another frequent explanation likens the archetype of the collective unconscious to the formative principle acting when a crystal appears within its solution; although no pattern is visible at first, the structure of the crystal becomes the one known to be characteristic of that substance. Jung's archetypes are inherited as part of the structure of the human psyche and are the same in all human beings.

Insofar as the operation of the archetypes is concerned, Jung gives a fairly clear, concise presentation.

There are as many archetypes as there are typical situations in life. Endless repetition has engraved these experiences into our psychic constitutions, not in the form of images filled with content, but at first only as forms without content, representing merely the possibility of a certain type of perception or action. When a situation occurs which corresponds to a given archetype, that archetype becomes activated and a compulsiveness appears, which, like an instinctual drive, gains its way against all reason and will, or else produces a conflict of pathological dimensions, that is to say, a neurosis.62

The archetypes, basic inherited patterns of response that

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man has found best suited to specific recurring crises of life, many of which are more animal than exclusively human, lie dormant until a time of uneasiness or disturbance, when the libido normally employed in conscious responses is allowed to fall back into the unconscious and there can activate the corresponding archetype. As Jung observes, because the archetypes are autonomous and function at their own level and in their own terms to produce solutions to a problem, they can largely interfere at will with the activity of the conscious and can modify or thwart conscious action with unconscious impulses. Nor can the conscious mind really ignore such manifestations when they appear, for the archetypes have a strange fascination about them that Jung calls numinosity and that many people associate consciously with religious ecstasy. In fact, he asserts that archetypes are "at the same time, both images and emotions. One can speak of an archetype only when these two aspects are simultaneous."

However, as Jolande Jacobi points out, the conscious mind itself can never really apprehend the archetypes as such. The manifestation comes in terms of an archetypal "image" or "symbol," or sometimes in a behavioral symptom.

Only when the archetypes come into contact with the conscious mind, that is, when the light of consciousness falls on them and their contours begin to emerge from the darkness and to fill with individual content, can

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64 Ibid.
65 Ibid., p. 96.
66 Ibid.
67 Jacobi, Complex, p. 75.
the conscious mind differentiate them. Only then can consciousness apprehend, understand, elaborate, and assimilate them.\(^{68}\)

The archetype as the conscious mind receives it is clothed in terms of the person's individual experience and thus is actually interpretable only by him. However, it is the archetype which selects and orders the experiences involved and used, and the pattern behind them is that of the archetype. Again Jacobi provides a helpful explanatory example.

... an archetype—for example, the archetype expressing the "creation of a relationship" between two "realms"—may borrow its mode of manifestation from the most diverse spheres of reality and ideation and still retain its identity of meaning. In this case, bridge, rainbow, gate, mountain pass, compromise, connecting link can stand for the same meaning or at least fundamentally similar meanings, and yet, taken separately, each embodies a different aspect of it.\(^{69}\)

Thus the manifestations of the archetypes are purely personal and reflect only individual experiences as far as external descriptions are concerned. Yet Jung and his colleagues find it necessary to protest repeatedly that it is the underlying forms that are inherited, and not the representations. Jung is quite outspoken on the point.

The term "archetype" is often misunderstood as meaning certain mythological images or motifs. But these are nothing more than conscious representations; it would be absurd to assume that such variable representations could be inherited.\(^{70}\)

Because these same representations of the archetypes, in what are often called archetypal images and symbols, are currently

\(^{68}\)Ibid., p. 66.

\(^{69}\)Ibid., pp. 54-55.

centers of literary interest and much confusing controversy, Jung's thoughts on them also need clarification.

As with most of his terms, Jung has a specific meaning for the word symbol; and he differentiates it carefully from sign or image. While an image or word may be part of what Jung considers a symbol, it only becomes symbolic if it "implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning," with a "wider 'unconscious' aspect that is never precisely defined or fully explained."\(^71\) It qualifies as a symbol if it represents a psychic fact or condition that is only partly known or perhaps completely unknown to the conscious mind.\(^72\) As Jung points out in his book *Man and His Symbols*, "The sign is always less than the concept it represents, while a symbol always stands for something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. Symbols, moreover, are natural and spontaneous."\(^73\) The last clause is particularly significant. For Jung a true symbol is never invented or thought out; it "occurs" to the person as perhaps a sudden insight or inspiration, but it is never the result of conscious planning. Hence when an archetypal manifestation occurs, it qualifies as a true symbol because it is spontaneous and because it means much more than what the conscious


mind can attach to its apparent form. A distinction can also be made between collective symbols and individual symbols, as Jacobi does in Complex/Archetype/Symbol.

The encounter with the consciousness of a collectivity and its problems gives rise to collective symbols (e.g., mythologems); contact with an individual consciousness and its problems gives rise to individual symbols (as, for example, the image of a witch with the features of one's own mother). Whether a communication from the unconscious is rendered as a collective or an individual symbol then depends on how the recipient consciousness interprets and applies it. One of Jung's controversial suggestions is that not only are most collective symbols religious symbols, but the unconscious appears actually to be the source of human religious experience, an insight which provides more common areas for comparative religion and literary study. If a person perceiving an individual symbol can trace its form back to the primordial pattern of a collective symbol, Jacobi sees an opportunity to allow "... the individual psyche to preserve its unique form of expression and at the same time to merge it with the universally human, collective symbol." This process is the same one that Jung says leads to the formation of natural symbols, which "represent an enormous number of variations on the essential archetypal images," and which he contrasts with what he calls cultural

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74 Jacobi, Complex, p. 120. 75 Jung, Man and Symbols, p. 55.
76 Jacobi, Complex, p. 104. 77 Jung, Man and Symbols, p. 93.
symbols, those collective symbols that have been consciously reworked and transformed and have been accepted by civilized societies as strong representations of "eternal truths." Whatever the class of symbol being considered, Jung cautions that natural symbols and psychological manifestations projected into the external world do not make sense by that environment's standards; they seem chaotic, paradoxical, confusing. Such occurrences must be dealt with on their own terms if they are to communicate at all. Even more importantly, no symbol can be reasonably understood except in terms of the person who produced it; anyone who wishes to interpret an archetypal symbol must know both the personal and cultural backgrounds of the individual who experienced the symbol. That such a mandate limits the application of Jungian symbols to literary interpretation seems probable.

At least one other area of Jung's work with symbols of the human unconscious deserves attention. Through his work with patients Jung has arrived at a process which he calls individuation, which basically consists of restoring open communication between the conscious and unconscious and in the process moving the individual's personality center somewhat closer to the realm of the unconscious so that better equilibrium within the psyche becomes possible. In working

78 Ibid. 79 Bertine, p. 370. 80 Jung, Man and Symbols, p. 92.
in this same direction with many patients, Jung has noticed that at various stages of treatment the nature of communication from the unconscious changes, with certain archetypal symbols tending to appear in the dreams and phantasies of each individual as he reaches a certain psychic introspection. The names that Jung has given to these various psychic phenomena are well-known, but they are also significant because he has carefully and consistently found correlations between these psychic events and literature. The elements and stages include persona, shadow, anima or animus, figure of universal wisdom, and mandala. Of these, only the persona is a function of the conscious mind; the remainder function from the unconscious mind in direct accordance with Jung's theory of the compensatory nature of the unconscious. Of the individuation process itself Jung says, "In general, it is the process of forming and specializing the individual nature; in particular, it is the development of the psychological individual as a differentiated being from the collective general psychology."\[81\] The process particularly involves enabling the patient to find, recognize, and admit those parts of his conscious and unconscious psyche which hitherto were unknown or had been repressed. Thus the effective sphere of consciousness is expanded to include familiarity with large parts of what had been unconscious, including most of the

\[81\] Jung, Psychological Types, p. 561.
personal unconscious. The symbols that arise in the process Jung calls symbols of transformation. About them he makes two general statements.

Like the personalities, these archetypes are true and genuine symbols that cannot be exhaustively interpreted, either as signs or as allegories.82

...what we can above all establish as the one thing consistent with their nature is their manifold meaning, their almost limitless wealth of reference, which makes any unilateral formulation impossible.83

That the symbols of transformation are of no single interpretation and can have limitless association with experience is frustrating to those who desire empirical definiteness, but makes the concepts themselves all the more challenging. The persona is often called the social mask. It represents all the qualities that the ego develops to improve its relationships with the external world. According to Jung, "...the persona is a compromise between the individual and society based on what one appears to be."84 The persona embodies one of the functional types at a high level of differentiation and indeed can rigidify to the point that the ego refuses to recognize any traits except those of the persona. The counterbalance to the persona is the shadow, the "other man" that is composed of the traits and memories which the conscious mind neglects, forgets, or represses. As Jolande

82Jung, Archetypes, p. 38. 83Ibid.
Jacobi points out in *The Psychology of Jung*, the shadow traits are usually projected unconsciously onto someone else, the individual’s opposite. Thus frequently what the person dislikes in another human being are his own unacknowledged characteristics. While the shadow is mostly within the personal unconscious, the anima, which is the next archetype appearing, lies more within the collective unconscious. The anima embodies first the contrasexual qualities of the individual and is therefore anima for the man and animus for the woman. The anima is usually a single female for the man, who is not basically monogamous; but for the woman the animus is often plural. For simplicity in the following definition Jung speaks only of the man’s form.

It is this female element in every male that I have called the "anima." This "feminine" aspect is essentially a certain inferior kind of relatedness to the surroundings, and particularly to women, which is kept carefully concealed from others as well as from oneself.

The anima is evanescent, unpredictable; her actions often resemble strange, ambiguous, paradoxical games or rituals. She operates by the functional type most ignored by the persona and appears as an inseparable blend of good and bad qualities. She is numinous; and if, as often happens, she is unconsciously projected onto a real woman, the individual is drawn to that woman by an unreasoned fascination.

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85Jacobi, *Psychology*, p. 103.


87Jung, *Archetypes*, p. 28.
mostly based on qualities that are projected onto her. This figure Jung is able to find often in literary works as a goddess, or as a personified soul, or as a man's idealized woman, thus partaking of both personal and impersonal characteristics. Before the process of individuation can continue, the patient must face and admit the existence of the qualities of the anima within him and learn to recognize their influence upon him.

The last three symbols of transformation are as close as the individual can get to perceiving pure archetypal figures, for these symbols come from the collective unconscious alone and need not in any way reflect personal experience. Recognition of these figures relates the person to all of humanity in his new role of a consciously unique being who has finally recognized all the other factors, pleasing and displeasing, which operate within his psyche. Jung calls the symbol succeeding the anima or animus the archetype of meaning.

Only when all props and crutches are broken, and no cover from the rear offers even the slightest hope of security, does it become possible for us to experience the archetype that up till then had lain hidden behind the meaningful nonsense played out by the anima. This is the archetype of meaning, just as the anima is the archetype of life itself.

At this level again there is a sexual separation, with the woman's seeing usually a mother archetype who represents in

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88 Ibid., p. 69.  
89 Ibid., p. 32.
a sense the creative function and her direct association with the role of matter in the universe. The man usually sees some form of a "wise old man" or counsellor archetype whose aura conveys his association with the impregnating function of the spirit that complements the woman's most basic role (cf., the frequent motif of virgin birth in world religions). As with the other symbols of transformation, these archetypes of relation to the universal order may take almost any shape and are usually ambiguous in emotional values. In speaking of the mother archetype, Jung says:

All of these symbols can have a positive, favourable meaning or a negative, evil meaning. An ambivalent aspect is seen in the goddesses of fate (Noira, Graea, Norns). Evil symbols are the witch, the dragon (or any devouring and entwining animal, such as a large fish or a serpent), the grave, the sarcophagus, deep water, death, nightmares and bogies (Gampusa, Lilith, etc.).³⁰

Again the variable nature of the symbols which appear indicate the necessity of knowing the person whose they are; the symbols lose their real significance if taken out of context. Similarly the wise old man archetype may be one person or several. Whatever form, good or evil, he appears in, he conveys to the person at this stage his role of "... the superior master and teacher, the archetype of the spirit, who symbolizes the pre-existent meaning hidden in the chaos of life."³¹ Recognition of this archetype and

³⁰Ibid., pp. 81-82. ³¹Ibid., p. 35.
its meaning ends the individual's isolation of uniqueness and prepares him, in a sense, for the last symbol of transformation, the *mandala*, which appears somehow as the person's psyche responds to the increasing order within itself. The name *mandala* is Sanskrit for "circle" and is the name in India for circles drawn during religious rites. In describing generally some of the many examples included in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Jung says,

> There are innumerable variants of the motif... but they are all based on the squaring of a circle. Their basic motif is the premonition of a center of personality, a kind of central point within the psyche, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which is itself a source of energy.93

Most frequently a mandala has a circle within which is either a square or two perpendicular lines like a cross, dividing the circle into equal quadrants. When patients produce and draw out these symbols, the mere sight of them seems to have a calming effect, just as the same symbols do when Hindu and Buddhist believers use them as objects for contemplation to liberate the soul from worldly conflicts. However, when Jung describes the mandala and the other symbols of transformation as occurring in a predictable sequence during the process of individuation, he does not mean that manifestations occur only if a person is being treated by a psychologist. On the contrary, these archetypal

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symbols represent areas of centralized psychic activity in every person, so that mental stress may cause any of them to appear to anyone at any time and without any required sequence.

Just as Jung hypothesizes that the symbols in an individual's dreams come from his unconscious mind and can be universal if produced by the collective unconscious, so the psychologist suggests that myths recurring all over the world also reflect the collective elements of the human psyche. Actually, the correspondence between dream and fantasy images produced by patients and parallel figures in world mythologies was Jung's first basis for suggesting a collective element in the human mind. In discussing the treatment of patients in *Contributions to Analytical Psychology*, Jung chronicles the individual production of myths.

We can see almost daily in our patients the way mythical phantasies arise. They are not thought out, but present themselves as pictures, or as a series of representations that force their way out of the unconscious, and when recounted, often have the character of connected episodes which possess the value of mythical presentation. That is how myths arise, and that is why the phantasies from the unconscious have so much in common with primitive myths.94

For Jung the major point to be stressed about true myths is that they are never invented; like symbols, they occur

spontaneously and are direct reflections of psychic activity. The most primitive level is that of participation mystique, already mentioned, in which a person identifies himself completely or partially with some external object, animal, or occurrence. Normally the next step in psychological development involves projection, defined by Jung as "an unconscious, automatic process whereby a content that is unconscious to the subject transfers itself to an object, so that it seems to belong to that object." The simplest operation of projection creates mana objects by associating the numinosity of psychic symbols with external objects, so that those objects seem endowed with marvelous power and fascination. Projection can be a fertile source of myths because the person involved can find all the activity of his psychic elements in visual form, complete with their inexplicable fascination and aura of importance. In Jung's words.

All the mythologized processes of nature, such as summer and winter, the phases of the moon, the rainy seasons, and so forth, are in no sense allegories of these objective occurrences; rather they are symbolic expressions of the inner, unconscious drama of the psyche which becomes accessible to man's consciousness by way of projection—that is, mirrored in the events of nature.

Although there can be stories invented to explain natural phenomena, for Jung such stories are not myths; myths

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95Jung, Archetypes, p. 60. 96Ibid., p. 6.
come spontaneously, and they are believed, not explained. Myths can be as paradoxical, as puzzling, as ambiguous as the archetypal symbols by which they are stimulated. Further development of the consciousness frequently leads to personification, a concept which Eleanor Bertine summarizes well in an article on Jung: "... the inner image may no longer be projected to an actual material object but will be hyponotized, that is, regarded as having a metaphysical existence of its own independent of the psyche." 97 These independent forms then are often personified as gods, demons, gremlins, and other supernatural forms. 98 Because Jung holds that the collective unconscious is the primal source for all major myths, he naturally explains and presents recurrent parallels among world mythologies as proof of the theory. For example, he sees the god-hero figure as an archetype and often connects it to Christ.

The general idea of Christ the Redeemer belongs to the world-wide and pre-Christ theme of the hero and rescuer who, although he has been devoured by a monster, appears again in a miraculous way, having overcome whatever monster it was that swallowed him. 99 Thus in most forms the hero and his cycle can be pointed to as archetypal, 100 with his universality and timelessness as proof, but also with his connection to psychic processes as a prior condition. Jung even suggests that the question

97 Bertine, p. 367. 98 Ibid. 99 Jung, Man and Symbols, pp. 72-73. 100 Ibid., p. 73.
of life after death is archetypal, arising in every man, a question to be dealt with or repressed as best each man can. In Jung's hypotheses the association between the human collective unconscious and mythology is direct and inescapable; and man must have mythology of some sort in order to exist.

Naturally enough, in dealing with man's sources of myth Jung also concerns himself with the written and visual expressions of those myths: literature and art, especially as they relate to the creator and to society in general. Often Jung lumps together writers, painters, musicians, and other creative minds under the term artist and deals with them collectively. The psychologist's interest in and treatment of literature and art are extensive, for in them he finds the recurrence of human archetypes and the most nearly direct expressions of the collective unconscious. However, Jung is generally cautious in applying psychology to the arts, as he shows, for instance, in the prefatory remarks to a lengthy analysis of the poet Schiller's writings to show that this writer also recognized the differentiation of men by what Jung called functional types.

... it may well happen that I shall be accused of giving a construction to Schiller's ideas which his actual words do not warrant. For, although I shall take considerable pains, at every essential point,

to quote the actual words of the author, yet it may not be altogether possible to introduce his ideas in the connection I intend to establish here without giving them certain interpretations or constructions.102 Being conscious of the danger of misinterpretation, Jung certainly tries to maintain objectivity, even though he admits in the same context that unfortunately it is almost impossible for men to look and not see the shapes already somewhat defined in their psyches.103 Jung does show laudable impartiality, for instance, by treating artistic creations from all lands, cultures, and times with approximately equal respect and care. His caution shows in a different line when he is hesitant to give much credence to attempts by others to infer facts about an artist's personality from his works, such efforts being mostly surmise or guesswork anyway in Jung's opinion.104 For him the work of art is to be studied as a psychic product involving the creative act, a phenomenon which is fundamentally inexplicable.105 One other of Jung's self-restrictions appears in the words of Ralph Demos.

Thus, while it is true that Jung has on many occasions interpreted epic and other poetry, and other works of art, in terms of the archetypal images of the unconscious, he has rejected the view that such an interpretation might provide a clue to the literary esthetic merit of the artistic product.106

102 Jung, Psychological Types, p. 88. 103 Ibid.


105 Ibid., p. 177. 106 Demos, p. 82.
Jung consistently studied literature as a manifestation of the creative power of the human mind. He may, as he does in *Psychological Types*, point to similar works by Goethe, Nietzsche, and the Swiss poet Carl Spitteler and cite the greater beauty of the more refined and pruned works of Goethe and Nietzsche in contrast to the truth of Spitteler's work in being more directly reflective of the processes of the collective unconscious; but Jung does not say that on this account the one sample is better literature than the other, and he appears to provide little encouragement for those who would do so.

Most of the limits of Jungian thought as a basis for literary criticism appear in his attitudes toward the artist himself. The artist is a basically independent spirit who looks within himself for a sense of order in experience, or for actual experiences themselves, or sometimes for both. In *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* Jung devotes a full chapter to psychology and literature and there discusses first those writers who devote themselves to experiences of the conscious mind, rendering them so that they force the reader to see them clearly and respond fully. As he often does, Jung speaks of the poet but includes all writers. "The poet's work is an interpretation and illumination of the contents of consciousness, of the ineluctable experiences

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of human life with its eternally recurrent joy and sorrow.\(^{108}\)

All facets of this type of writing are psychologically intelligible to the consciousness. However, in this chapter and most others, Jung is more concerned with what he calls visionary writing, that which turns inward and deals with material that is frightening and often repellent to the average consciousness.\(^{109}\) At this level of creativity the personal life of the writer is immaterial to his meaning and power,\(^{110}\) and these are the works which Jung really considers to be significant artistic achievements.

The unborn work in the soul of the artist is a force of nature that effects its purpose either with tyrannical might or with that subtle cunning which nature brings to the achievement of her end, quite regardless of the personal weal or woe of the man who is the vehicle of the creative force.\(^{111}\)

The true work of art arises in the creator from within him and overpowers him to the extent that what he produces is expressive of much more than his conscious efforts could achieve. Jung says as much when speaking of Carl Spitteler, who could represent any truly creative artist.

We may assume in a poet of modest limits that the summit of his work does not overtop the height of his personal joys, sorrows, and aspirations. But with Spitteler his work quite transcends personal destiny.\(^{112}\)

\(^{108}\)Jung, Modern Man in Search, p. 179.

\(^{109}\)Ibid., p. 182.

\(^{110}\)Ibid., p. 189.

\(^{111}\)Jung, Contributions, p. 234.

\(^{112}\)Jung, Psychological Types, p. 236.
Just as Spitteler says more than could be derived from his own experiences, so do all great artists, to the extent that Jung deprecates the presence of purely personal elements in great art and calls such details limitations and vice in art.\footnote{Carl G. Jung, \textit{Psychological Reflections}, edited by Jolande Jacobi, translated by Eugene Jolas (New York, 1953), p. 177.} The really creative person turns inward and taps the vast resources of humanity latent in the archetypes of the collective unconscious which Jung calls "the primal experience, the dark nature of which requires mythological figures and thus draws avidly to itself everything that is akin, to be used for self-expression,"\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 177-178.} because all the accumulated wealth of human culture can hardly begin to express the richness of association and manifold meanings that the artist is experiencing. Such is the source of the true artist's ideas and insights, and Jung himself can become glowingly rhetorical in visualizing the result.

The man who speaks with primordial images speaks with a thousand tongues; he entrances and overpowers, while at the same time he raises the idea he is trying to express above the occasional and the transitory into the sphere of the ever-existing. He transmutes personal destiny into the destiny of mankind, thus evoking all those beneficent forces that have enabled mankind to find a rescue from every hazard and to out-live the longest night. That is the secret of effective art.\footnote{Jung, \textit{Contributions}, p. 248.}
can be and are evoked by the true artist, who looks within himself to find the archetypes and then draws upon every area of knowledge and experience to express those primal forms with communicative power. In this way he speaks to all men with equal pertinence and escapes the datedness that threatens to bury lesser works. Despite its study of the processes used, psychology has little to say about the excellence of any art. As Jung points out, "Literary products of highly dubious merit are often of the greatest interest to the psychologist." The psychologist may be expected to explain how a work of art is formed and what factors make an individual creative, but he does not attempt to provide standards of literary or aesthetic merit.

Jung's psychological hypotheses are closely related to the arts; and as this summary of his thinking has indicated, he most often turns to literature for clear examples of the archetypes of the human mind. It often happens that those who become familiar with Jung's archetypes use them to help define the function of elements or figures within literature. Thus if even the names of Jung's archetypes are used, the person employing them is labeled as Jungian. How accurate such an epithet is when applied to Northrop Frye is to be determined from an estimate of the extent of Frye's acknowledged and unacknowledged use of Jung's ideas. Of course,

116 Jung, Modern Man in Search, p. 177.

117 Ibid., p. 175.
not all parallels prove indebtedness; in such instances, this study can only suggest those that seem more likely to have been borrowed from Jung than to have been developed independently by Frye, even though—as in the case of Blake—the men have often worked with the same sources.
CHAPTER TWO

FEARFUL SYMMETRY

When Northrop Frye's book *Fearful Symmetry*, a study of the symbolic unity of William Blake's poetry, appeared in 1947, it had double significance. The book was Frye's first major contribution to literary criticism, and it was also the beginning of his individual approach to the archetypal study of literature, the theories of which are now so provocative for modern critics. The simultaneity was no accident, as became obvious ten years later when Frye's major work to date, *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), was published. His most read and most discussed work, *Anatomy of Criticism* is largely an extensive elaboration of the archetypal concepts of literature merely suggested in *Fearful Symmetry* but developed in the later book as the basis for a unified critical and intellectual approach to all of literature. Frye himself pointed to his study of Blake as the initiating force behind his ideas and rarely cited the work of C. G. Jung, the psychologist whose extensive work on human archetypes was inevitably associated with Frye's concepts. Accordingly, a study of *Fearful Symmetry* is necessary to ascertain from the beginning how much the thought of Frye, in its extended expression, can be connected with Jung.
That Frye's book on Blake was considered important is evident from the number of reviews that it received; and the majority of reviewers were favorable. The writer was praised for his energetic enthusiasm, for his "admiringly lucid and illuminating analysis of his author's ideas," and for his explication of Blake's complex symbolism as the key to the poet's meanings. Other reviewers, like René Wellek, disliked the sacrifice of poetic evaluation for idea analysis and suggested that both Blake and Frye had misconceived the relation of ideas to art, or, like Lloyd Frankenburg of Saturday Review of Literature, found Frye's prose style unfortunately difficult. A small number of reviewers did comment on the concept of archetypes in literature and generally indicated support. For example, John Garret in Canadian Forum praised the author for having discovered that "Blake, a limited but intense reader, had grasped the imaginative significance of recurrent symbols in all of the world's great prophetic literature." However,


on the concept of archetypal symbols for all poetry, Garret became more reserved, saying, "Such a doctrine is, of course, in tune with much modern religious and psychological investigation, though it is too early to assess its validity."6 In her review, Helen C. White noted Frye's interest in "the exploration of the universal and timeless drama of the inner life of man"7 as well as his "poise" and "objectivity" in discussing myth as "a continuing human activity and an ever-pertinent instrument of man's self-realization and self-expression."8 With general terminology, reserved opinions, and unspecific comparisons even those who noted Northrop Frye's ideas about literary archetypes grouped them with work in comparative religion and psychology, Jung's field of influence, and passed on. Whether Frye's ideas in Fearful Symmetry actually were more or less derived from Jungian sources was not considered.

That Frye's innovations in archetypal criticism went generally unnoticed and undiscussed is not surprising, for in the book itself these insights develop in most cases directly from the study of Blake and as such are either mentioned incidentally or are consciously subordinated. The only attempt that Frye makes to alert readers to the possible importance of his discoveries is in the last few pages of the book where, as he admits, the concepts are stated.

6 Ibid. 7 White, p. 125. 8 Ibid.
rather "baldly" (p. 425)\(^9\) and even then can be considered merely part of an expected conclusion about "Blake's relevance to our time." Nor is the introduction to archetypes in the text enough to make the reader curious about the term or the idea behind it, for Frye uses "archetype" and "archetypal" through the book in a variety of ways without relating them to a central concept or definition. Each use must be interpreted by its context, with close attention to the critical development of which it is a part. At the same time, however, the reader has opportunity to judge how clearly that usage is an outgrowth of the material.

Even without such a reference to the exact, detailed origins of each usage, Frye's adaptations of the archetype concept can be surveyed for broad meanings and interrelationships. Such an over-view shows that archetype meaning a basic human mental pattern as evidenced in primitive rituals and mythologies and archetype meaning a recurrent artistic conception of existence are used as the consideration of Blake requires, without a conscious distinction between the two meanings and with frequent partial overlappings. Nor are the various parts of each meaning found together; rather, they are scattered throughout the book as their pertinence to Blake's writings appears. For example, the basis for an

anthropological definition of archetypal myth occurs halfway through the book, where Frye suggests that vegetation and sun cycles are, on the most basic level of the imagination, seen to indicate a "fall" of man and "in the return of human and natural life an image or prototype of the ultimate resurrection" (p. 207). However, the next step in the definition is already mentioned earlier in the book, when the writer states, "... in myths, as in languages, there are endlessly suggestive analogies hinting that an underlying single pattern in the variety of moeurs des nations can be seen if one knows how to look for it" (p. 173). At the same time, that step is also part of the evolving definition of archetypes of literary productions, so that intermingling of the two meanings is unavoidable, probably for the author as well as for the reader. Primitive psychology is cited again toward the end of the book in the idea that universal consciousness of the archetype of a malevolent female will, seemingly the cause of misfortune, is activated on occasion and is centered upon a real woman who is then burned as a witch (p. 397). Another portion of the same approach comes early in the work: "All myths and rituals hint darkly and allegorically at the same visions that we find in the Bible, which is why they have such a strong resemblance to Christian myths and rituals ..." (p. 110). And the culmination of the anthropological or psychological concept of archetypes comes in the book's last pages.
Neither the study of ritual nor of mythopoeic dreams takes us . . . to suggest anything more than a subconscious unity among men. But if we can find such impressive archetypal forms emerging from sleeping or savage minds, it is surely possible that they would emerge more clearly from the concentrated visions of genius (p. 147).

Of course, in this book the "concentrated visions" are those of Blake; and to study that emergence Frye seems to achieve a conceptual anaraphemer, scattering pieces of definition throughout the book in such a way that the reader who wishes to see the wholeness must perform the quest of Isis, finding the parts and reuniting them.

Frye's most frequent use of the term "archetype" refers to a universal vision of life as it has recurring in the greatest poetic works of mankind all over the world; in these works William Blake was possibly the first to see the unity through the use of his imaginative genius. Yet even within this concept of archetype there are other uses of the word to consider along with the main one. Two rather lengthy quotations from different sections of Fearful Symmetry summarize the use of archetype in relation to the great vision.

A larger human brain will be developed by Man when the whole of human life is seen and understood as a single mental form. This single mental form is a drama of creation, struggle, redemption and restoration in the fallen life of a divine man. This drama is the archetype of all prophecy and art, the universal form which art reveals in pieces, and it is also the Word of God, the end of the journey of our intellectual powers (p. 340).
The divine man can be Christ, he can be Buddha, he can be Everyman, or he can be that huge being whom Blake calls Albion, whose bodily parts form the world. This vision Blake considers to be the "archetypal Word of God" (p. 108), and any work of art which presents it qualifies as the "Word of God" (p. 108) and can be called Jesus, who is the dominant recreation of the divine vision. As Frye summarizes the reader's position,

All Blake's own art, therefore, is at the same time an attempt to achieve absolute clarity of vision and a beginner's guide to the understanding of an archetypal vision of which it forms part. We cannot understand Blake without understanding how to read the Bible, Milton, Ovid and the Prose Edda at least as he read them, on the assumption that an archetypal vision, which all great art without exception shows forth to us, really does exist (p. 418).

Because the Bible is, in Blake's opinion, the world's greatest work of art, it is for the reader the best and clearest expression of this archetypal vision of the universe, going from creation to apocalypse and including "heroic saga, prophetic vision, legend, symbolism, the Gospel of Jesus, poetry and oratory on the way" (p. 108). Yet when Frye (or Blake, the distinction rarely being clear in the book) speaks of the Bible as the "archetype of Western culture" and therefore "the basis for most of our major art" (p. 109), he is using archetype in a slightly different sense so that it means an imitable pattern and not solely the basic universal vision of poets. This additional meaning seems close to what is used in Frye's discussion of the importance
of the Hebrew prophets, who recreated their national history and "brought out of it the eternally present archetypes of the fall and redemption of man" (p. 341); and yet the archetype of the human fall and redemption is also part of and conveys some of the associations of the great visionary archetype.

There are still other uses of the term "archetype" in Fearful Symmetry, especially in those sections where Northrop Frye summarizes and comments on Blake's development of an "archetypal" poetic system of symbolism. Blake's theory of art included as a central tenet "his conception of the recreation of the archetype, the process which unites a sequence of visions, first into a tradition, then into a Scripture" (p. 415). This archetype is the same one previously mentioned, the vision of a universal pattern of existence from creation to apocalypse; and it can be re-created by one genius or by the collective efforts of many visionaries, as with the prophets of the Bible. However, a poet can also develop his own synthesis of myths into a personal retelling of the epic of existence, as Spenser did in combining the Biblical myths with native Arthurian legends (p. 143). Such a synthesis could become the basis or framework for the artist's own system of archetypal symbolism, with archetypal in this context indicating the possession of wide relevance to human experience as well as connection with a vision of universal order. William Blake
evolved his own symbol system to express the well-known vision, and then late in life he attempted to tell others how the process could be used to create a national symbolic structure for Britain. He incorporated the explanation into the critical notes accompanying the fresco exhibition that he held to show everyone how much England needed public art.

...it was to give a rough outline of the British archetypal myth, showing how the legends of Albion, Arthur, Druids, ancient Bards, the island of Atlantis and other fragments fit together into a pattern by means of which the British nation can develop a set of historical conventions for the artist to use, as religious conventions were employed in medieval painting (p. 409).

The idea of a national mythological history to replace the outworn Classical and Christian sagas with a new version of the great poetic order which would use British figures for its symbols and thus increase general consciousness of the basic unity of art is the dream that Blake worked toward constantly. Such a mythology would be the archetype for lesser works, in the sense of a basic pattern. Its symbols would be archetypal by participation in the great poetic vision, by participation in the great national myth, by the embodiment of basic human experiences, and by proliferation of subsequent artistic figures modeled after them. Because each true artist penetrates back to the universal vision which Blake so carefully discerned and then expressed in his own language, Frye suggests, "... here the frame-
work or archetypal symbolism provided by Blake may be of some value in trying to unify in our minds the symbolism of another poet" (p. 427). Thus the concept of archetypal as a broad artistic and critical unit develops.

In narrower applications Frye uses the term "archetypal" more freely, usually in the sense of "basic pattern." He writes, for instance, of the way that Greek dramatists could express mythological characters as human beings because the audiences "were already prepared to attach archetypal significance" (p. 419) to the religious and historical beliefs being presented. The idea of "universality" is strongly implied, but any or perhaps all the other meanings of archetypal would be satisfactory. In relation to a common basis for art symbolism, Frye mentions the reaction one could have upon meeting "an archetypal symbol employed by Blake, Keats and Spenser in a few more poets" (p. 427); the context at that point indicates that "archetypal" means the presence in a poem of a recognizable repeated element whose associations can be enriched or explained by reference to the use of a similar symbol by other poets whose treatment of the universal vision is somewhat clearer. And there is a use of "archetypal" in the sense of "communicating a similar meaning" in Frye's explanation of what Blake felt about imitation by one artist of the work of another.

... the real relation to a predecessor is the common relation of both to the archetypal vision. The recreation, for instance, of Leonardo's Mona Lisa by
Pater is an attempt to bring out the archetypal significance of that picture as a vision of what Blake calls a female will (p. 356).

The exact definition of "archetypal" here depends on whether "a female will" is part of the universal vision that sometimes results in the persecution of witches or is instead a primal essence of womanly personality. Although the context slightly favors the former, either interpretation would fit. Arranging the wording of a sentence or passage so that it can simultaneously express two or more meanings is in some situations both profound and significant, allowing a reader to sense the richness of possibilities. But in *Fearful Symmetry* the practice backfires when Frye begins to summarize his points.

Of course, those who are incapable of distinguishing between a recognition of archetypes and a Procrustean methodology which forces everything into a prefabricated scheme would be well advised to leave the whole question alone (p. 422).

Although Frye does not mention it, the form of this cautionary notice resembles the warning that Jung gives to those who would try to evaluate literature on the basis of its archetypal significance. In Frye's version, however, the warning advice can only be effective if the reader knows which meaning of archetype he is to supply to the word here, and the context gives no clues. That the distinctions in meaning are not particularly significant to Frye at this point in his career seems indicated by his neglecting to acknowledge the differences.
Besides his use of the term "archetype," Frye exhibits extensive knowledge of mythology as both psychological and anthropological phenomenon. As with his definitions of archetype, he brings in bits of information about primitive and artistic mythology when it helps to explain or parallels some area of Blake's thought. The only psychologist whom Frye specifically names is Freud, invoked when the critic calls Blake's Beulah "a Freudian land of dreams in which all images are erotic" (p. 233) and again when he suggests that one segment of Blake's mythology can be understood if the reader substitutes for Blake's characters "those of a newer myth of much the same shape," i.e. the Freudian libido, id, and superego (p. 301).

The relation of literature to the social sciences Frye formulates rather clearly.

Anthropology tells us that the primitive imaginative gropings which take the forms of ceremonies and of myths developed to explain them show striking similarities all over the world. Psychology tells us that these ritual patterns have their counterpart in dreams elaborated by the subconscious (p. 424). The statement can be called neither Freudian nor Jungian, although the term "subconscious" is of Freud. Similarly, when Frye explains that primitive rituals are formed to "recreate and humanize a phenomenon of nature in a work of art" and also to exercise some control over natural processes (p. 296), he does so as general information. In the same way Frye uses references to many mythologies and to
recurrent forms generalized from them, often to reinforce his description of a similar use of symbols in Blake. For instance, he mentions that in mythologies a flood is often "the symbol of the end of a cycle, the passage from life through death into chaos . . . before the cycle turns again and the dragon-slaying hero reappears on the scene" (p. 283). In myths, he comments, generally the monster represents the powers of darkness, of the unknown, with all the horrors attributed that the imagination can devise (p. 138). He compares Blake's concept of the world as parts of the body of a God-man to the Veir of the Icelandic Eddes, to Adam Kadmon of the Hebrew Apocrypha, to imagery in the Vedas, to the Egyptian myth of Osiris, and to the Greek stories of Dionysus in which occurs the sparastos, or ritual tearing apart of his body (p. 287). By such means Northrop Frye demonstrates his extensive knowledge of primitive psychology and mythology without aligning himself with any particular school of thought in those fields. His subordinating all other sources to the writings of Blake can almost convince the reader that what validates the findings in all these fields is that Frye has found them in Blake.

Most of Northrop Frye's own reflections, especially those on the current state of criticism and on the relevance of Blake's concept of an underlying universal vision in all of art to the literary critic, come in the last eight pages of the book, interspersed among summary statements of
Blake's ideas. Even here there is occasional difficulty in identifying and separating Frye's paraphrasings of Blake from his own ideas. The main point about criticism now is that there is no unity in the field and that "... the problem of achieving order without regimentation is before us" (p. 423). Such a unity of perspective was almost achieved in the Renaissance on the basis of the Classics (p. 420) and existed for the Western world during the Middle Ages when art, religion, and science most nearly blended into a unified view of life's patterns. Part of the problem Frye connects with current critical attitudes, which encourage "response" to great art without also insisting on intelligent thought such as Dante and Spenser expected their readers to use (p. 422). The situation is especially noticeable in the field of mythopoeic or metaphysical art, where the Romantic influence still assures the critic that "... the mythopoeic faculty in art is subconscious, and that if one wishes to produce effective symbolism one must, as Johnson said of Ossian, abandon one's mind to it" (p. 421). According to Frye, the notion that reality in mythopoeic art can only be perceived by flashes of intuition is outdated (p. 421) and critics owe it to themselves to rediscover or to formulate their basic "language" and principles into some kind of cohesive structure.

As could be expected, Blake provides many of the hints and directives that cause Frye to champion the idea of
unity in art. He summarizes the concept as it evolves from Blake.

If we follow his own method, and interpret this idea of one original language and religion for all humanity in imaginative instead of historical terms, we have the doctrine that all symbolism in all art and all religion is mutually intelligible among all men, and that there is such a thing as an iconography of the imagination (p. 420).

Such an "iconography of the imagination" would aid the critic in perceiving the relationship of a single work or group of works to universally human patterns of imaginative thought. But Frye does not rely solely on Blake's ideas, even though Blake was a genius. Rather, he relates the concept to current work in psychology and the other social sciences.

In our day psychology and anthropology have evoked great changes in our study of literature strongly suggestive of a development in this direction, and many of the symbols studied in the subconscious, the primitive and the hieratic minds are expanding into patterns of great comprehensiveness, the relevance of which to literary criticism is not open to question (p. 421).

As psychology and anthropology continue moving toward hypothesizing a single basic imaginative pattern of the human mind, so Frye suggests that literary critics should strive for the same kind of unity based on a study of the archetypal pattern demonstrated in great works of art, which he suggests as the surest source of the pattern (p. 424).

As a more concrete example of the need for such a conception, Frye chooses the Greek word ἀπαντά, very inadequately translated as "necessity" in English, a term of great meaning and depth for the Greek tragedians and a word for which
associations can only be reconstructed from its use in the dramas themselves. Further, Greek tragedy as such has its meaning according to "its relation to the context of all tragedy, the great drama of death and redemption of which it forms a crucial episode" (p. 428). That kind of evaluation demands a broad view of literature extending beyond tragedy alone, a view that can place tragedy in perspective as part of a larger whole. For this approach to literature Frye uses the term anagogv. If—and he does make his statement conditional—such unifying principles can be found, archetypal criticism of art may become the integrated basis for all other types to start from. The concept appears to be one that Northrop Frye supports by reference to unspecified psychological work but derives directly and primarily from his own study of literature.
CHAPTER THREE

ANATOMY OF CRITICISM

That examination of Fearful Symmetry, Frye's first book, shows no verifiable evidence of Jungian influence does not, of course, mean that Frye's thinking does not incorporate any of Jung's psychology at a later time. The next major work of Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, shows significant changes in his literary theories. In its basic approaches to literature, Anatomy is an outgrowth of the Blake study; but Frye selects and defines specifically his own definition of archetype in a way considerably beyond the uncertainty of Fearful Symmetry. As this chapter also demonstrates, in Anatomy of Criticism several ideas of Jung's appear as Frye develops his structural approach to archetypal criticism; however, with only one major exception, Frye uses Jung as related to, not integrated into, his own critical theories.

The same preconceptions about archetypes and archetypal criticism that had existed in 1947 were active in 1957, the year in which Northrop Frye published Anatomy of Criticism, his most significant and controversial book. Because the term "archetype" was central to Anatomy of Criticism, it was immediately associated with Jung's meaning of the term.
an inherited, latent form of unconscious mental reaction or survival pattern, residing in the human collective unconscious, which could be activated at times of unusual psychic stress and which could then be perceived by the conscious mind only as a projection onto external matter or processes or as images and actions appearing in dreams. Such an association thus made archetypal criticism a process of recognizing the basic psychic patterns or archetypal images as writers had expressed them in literature; the critic even could employ Jungian terms like *shadow*, *anima*, *wise old man*, and *mandala*. Besides the assumption of a Jungian approach, those who had read Frye's earlier work, *Fearful Symmetry*, and who associated the two books brought the author's previous confused use of the term "archetype" to the new work; for them the word could be expected to mean at a minimum either a great poetic vision of the universal order from creation to apocalypse like those of Blake and of the Bible, or a prototype of something which could be the pattern for later copies. Those readers who brought such preconceptions to *Anatomy of Criticism* found that Frye not only had evolved an intricate and fairly complete framework for literary criticism, but had also based that framework primarily on his own definition of *archetype*, one which incorporated some of the varied applications in his earlier book but which also, and mostly, was original. Although study shows some variants of the principal definition,
including one which can be called Jungian, Northrop Frye's main definition and use of archetype and consequently his version of "archetypal criticism" in Anatomy of Criticism can hardly be traced to the ideas of Jung. As in Fearful Symmetry, the meaning of archetype is inseparable from the system of criticism built around it; and its facets must be discussed relative to that system.

Among the indications of the central importance of the term "archetype" in Anatomy of Criticism is the fact that over half the book is an explanation of the concept and its application to literature. Another is that reviewers comment on the pervasiveness of the word. Kenneth Burke in Poetry's review calls Frye's archetype "the generative principle of his four essays. And apparently his belief in it is what provides the ground for his other perceptions, which come thick and fast, and are often quite unusual in themselves..."  

Frank Kermode is so conscious of the importance of the word that in his treatment of the book in Review of English Studies he carefully and completely separates Frye's use of archetype from that of Jung and that of Maud Bodkin, whose book Archetypal Patterns in Poetry is based on the work of Jung. Most indicative, however, of the prominence of

1Kenneth Burke, "The Encyclopaedic, Two Kinds of," Poetry, XCI (February, 1956), 324.

archetype in Anatomy of Criticism is the care with which Frye defines the word and the extent of the applications he finds for it.

Because the book itself is not fully integrated, being four essays with a thematic unity based on attempts to find an overall pattern in literature and a schematic for discerning that pattern without the author's trying to present a "system" as such, the division into four essays allows variations on even the basic concepts. Accordingly, the term "archetype" has a general definition in the second essay, "Ethical Criticism: Theory of Symbols," plus elaborations of that meaning in the third essay, "Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths." For the initial meaning, Frye's use of symbol must be understood, because in the second essay "symbol as archetype" is foremost. The author explicitly defines

... the word "symbol," which in this essay means any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention. A word, a phrase, or an image used with some kind of special reference (which is what a symbol is usually taken to mean) are all symbols when they are distinguishable elements in critical analysis (p. 71).

The symbol is a unit on any level of critical attention, and the term can mean a letter if one is studying alliteration or a whole work such as a poem or book if one is viewing at

that level of literature. While the terminology may seem somewhat confusing, the confusion itself points up the need for better critical vocabulary which Frye notes as he adopts such make-shift words. He speaks of the levels of symbols as phases: the literal or descriptive phase relies on symbols as motifs or signs; the formal phase is concerned with the symbol as a unit of form or as an imaged pattern for his work that the writer attempts to complete; the mythical phase uses symbol in its archetypal sense, the basic patterns that writers use through convention or by choice of genre, patterns that recur throughout literature; and the anagogic phase requires the basic unit or symbol to be a vast apocalyptic vision, with each expression of it as a monad, a miniature or individual presentation of that order. The place of the term in this scheme somewhat clarifies *archetype* as Frye uses it.

The symbol in this phase [mythical phase] is the communicable unit, to which I give the name archetype: that is, a typical or recurring image. I mean by an archetype a symbol which connects one poem with another and thereby helps to unify and integrate our literary experience (p. 99).

In this meaning the archetype can be a recurring theme, like the sea's cruelty or heroic valor; a recurring form, like the ballad or the elegy; a recurring story, like the heroic quest; or even a recurring use of certain images in a given context, like the gray, cold sea, leafless trees, and bare rocks in an expression of grief or death. Frye's
archetype is generally characterized by two words: association and convention. As he points out,

Archetypes are associative clusters, and differ from signs in being complex variables. Within the complex is often a large number of specific learned associations which are communicable because a large number of people in a given culture happen to be familiar with them (p. 102).

An archetype has many associations, a different set for each person who contacts it. Such associations can vary from culture to culture, as for instance in the differing attitudes toward the dragon, which is usually inimical in Europe but is regarded as friendly in China. Some such associations are learned generally in a culture and become conventional; that is, an author by convention knows that certain images or figures are expected to appear as he works with a given subject if he wishes to communicate broadly. Frye suggests that this hypothetical question could have governed Milton as he wrote "Lycidas": "How does poetry require that such a subject be treated?" (p. 97).

Whether consciously or unconsciously, the writer is subject to convention; and his response is a recreation of patterns already used, i.e. archetypes. Accordingly, "recurrent unit" or "recurrent pattern" can be a useful, though oversimplified, synonym of Frye's archetype. At the same time, however, writers can attempt purposely to complicate, confuse, or reverse the normal associations of archetypes; such techniques can interfere with communication, Frye's idea
of the basic purpose of literature (p. 103), but can also allow the author to express ideas which society might condemn as irregular or immoral if presented more baldly (p. 156). Thus in his attempts to "show empirically how conventional archetypes get embodied in conventional genres" (p. 293), as well as other tasks that he sets for himself, Frye indicates "that archetypes are most easily studied in highly conventionalized literature: that is, for the most part, naive, primitive, and popular literature" (p. 104). Frye's principal definition of archetype includes their communicability, association, convention, and recurrence; his more specialized uses of the term mostly vary the relative importances of these characteristics.

The first slightly narrowed application of archetype occurs in the second essay and through the rest of the book. An archetype is often a recurrent pattern—a sequence of adventures or experiences, an over-all form. In his "Polemical Introduction" Northrop Frye refers to "primitive formulas," perhaps a suitable rephrasing for this use of archetype.

We next realize that the relation of later literature to these primitive formulas is by no means purely one of complication, as we find the primitive formulas reappearing in the greatest classics—in fact there seems to be a general tendency on the part of great classics to revert to them (p. 17).

The reappearance of such formulas is one of Frye's postulates; and when he uses the Bible along with Classical mythology as
a grammar of literary archetypes" (p. 135), he refers as often to stories or to large sections of the Bible as he does to paralleled images or figures. Because his approaches to literature are broad, the use of archetype with reference to patterns is frequent. Frye's noting of "the archetypal tragedy of the green and golden world, the loss of innocence of Adam and Eve" (p. 220), includes the whole episode, not just the moment of fateful decision. Within this usage one can almost include the mythoi of the third essay, the basic arrangement of elements in tragic, comic, romantic, and ironic ("realistic") narratives. The same general attitude seems implied when Frye comments on the great encyclopaedic structures like the Bible: "Such works are definitive myths, or complete organizations of archetypes" (p. 121). The archetypes would tend to be all the lesser stories and literary patterns contained within the great structure. The emphasis is still on literary recurrence, but in its broader aspect.

The second and more frequent specialized sense of archetype is in its use to name a recurrent image or prototype with connotations of individuality or restriction rather than of broader sequences and cycles. It is in this context that Frye most often speaks of archetypes as images linking together poems or other works within a convention, that being his overall basis for finding unity in literature (p. 100). Using a semblance of Frye's own terminology, one could call this second variation "image as archetype" and the
first variation "pattern as archetype." The reader's conscious or unconscious recognition of the repeated use of images or figures of speech in similar situations is one of his most basic reactions to literature.

... we shall find that expanding images into conventional archetypes of literature is a process that takes place unconsciously in all our reading. A symbol like the sea or the heath cannot remain within Conrad or Hardy: it is bound to expand over many works into an archetypal symbol of literature as a whole (p.100).

In this use of the term, archetype emphasizes convention and the reader's part in establishing it, with examples mostly based on concrete, isolatable figures, shapes, or incidents. In such wise, Frye notes that the archetype of epiphany or enlightenment on a mountain-top has survived the Ptolemaic cosmology on which it was based and can be seen, for instance, in Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken* and in Virginia Woolf's central concept of *To the Lighthouse* (p. 206). Similarly Frye exemplifies the tendency of tragedy to break up the family and oppose its members to society and cites "the tragic archetype of Antigone" (p. 218). Another employment of archetype in the sense of an individual element comes when Frye identifies

the Omphale archetype, the man bullied or dominated by women, which has been prominent in satire all through its history, and embraces a vast area of contemporary humor, both popular and sophisticated (p. 229).

Such an archetype is only a single relationship; even though it may provide the theme or a minor theme in a literary work, the connotation is that of an isolated event or figure. One
more example along the same line is called the "flood archetype," in which a great disaster overwhelms all of society but leaves a small group to begin life again (p. 203). The implication is that of a single event, not of a broad pattern, almost as if in naming the event one isolates it as a separate entity. A different form of the individualized archetype appears in "an ambivalent female archetype" (p. 322), sometimes good or sometimes evil, unpredictable and almost undefinable, whose presence often marks the end of a cycle of activity or of nature. As his examples prove, within his broader definition of the archetype as a communicable, recurring symbol often appearing in conformance to conventional association patterns, Northrop Frye varies the exact application of the term to cover both recurrent patterns and recurrent images, although in its broadest sense the basic definition does include both.

Development of the principal definition of the archetype in a slightly different direction results in what Frye calls the archetypal level of literature and the archetypal symbol, the symbol being operative mostly on that like-named level. In these and other generalizations the author uses synecdoche and includes all works of literature when he speaks of poetry or art. The archetypal level treats poetry as "an artifact of human civilization" (p. 145), where poetry is above all "still useful and functional" (p. 115). Such a
level is compared to the anagogic phase or level, where poetry is a part of culture and is not subject to the restrictions of society, no longer needing to be purposely didactic, instructional, or otherwise "practical." Such a use of the term "archetypal" emphasizes its qualities of communicability and broad conventional association. Critical work in this phase can still tend to let moral or ethical purposes be the over-riding criteria; and authors working at this level tend to interpret nature in terms of humanity, finding civilized human significance in natural processes and objects. Frye defines "archetypal symbol" within this context.

An archetypal symbol is usually a natural object with a human meaning, and it forms part of the critical view of art as a civilized product, a vision of the goals of human work (p. 113).

The artist interprets nature for other members of his society, while civilization proceeds about its purpose of forcing nature into human forms, e.g. farms, gardens, and cities. For the poet who serves his civilization, nature is to be explained in human terms and exploited for the good and glorification of humanity. "Archetype as artifact" can almost describe this level, although not without some distortion.

As a corollary to the archetypal symbol, Frye introduces slightly later in the book the archetypal metaphor. Again the word "archetype" refers to the individualized recurrence
in literature but to one which is less dependent on social convention and more the result of authorial ingenuity or inspiration. Frye pointedly distinguishes between the archetypal symbol and the archetypal metaphor.

Archetypally, where the symbol is an associative cluster, the metaphor unites two individual images, each of which is a specific representative of a class or genus. Archetypal metaphor thus involves the use of what has been called the concrete universal, the individual identified with its class, Wordsworth's "tree of many one" (p. 124).

As in a Chinese ideogram and in the most primitive association-al forms, two entities are held to be each other, the standard operation of a metaphor; but, being a concrete universal, each of those entities represents and actually embodies within itself all others of its own kind. With archetypes as its two elements, the metaphor itself becomes archetypal; that is, it makes a statement of interchangeable identity that holds for every variation of either of the component terms, as Frye's example demonstrates.

The identity of the human body and the vegetable world gives us the archetype of Arcadian imagery, of Marvell's green world, of Shakespeare's forest comedies, of the world of Robin Hood and other green men who lurk in the forests of romance, the last the counterparts in romance of the metaphorical myth of the tree-god (p. 124).

The basic identification of the human body and the world of vegetation, with all the cyclical parallels and analogies implied, can be observed in literature from the most primitive to the most sophisticated works, all examples of what Frye calls an archetypal metaphor. Naturally, the communicative
value of the metaphor varies according to the degree that readers can perceive and respond to the basic identification.

One admitted and complete exception in the use of his basic definition of archetype Northrop Frye makes in naming the archetypal masque late in the book. The masque form of drama, in which music and spectacle become very important, includes most movies and some of the highly sophisticated psychological dramas now produced, especially in Europe. The archetypal masque tends to detach itself from normal time and space, with its setting becoming sinister, even demonic or nightmarish, and always with purposive evocation of loneliness (p. 290).

Naturally, with such a setting, characterization has to break down into elements and fragments of personalities. This is why I call the form the archetypal masque, the word archetype being in this context used in Jung's sense of an aspect of the personality capable of dramatic projection (p. 291).

Although the accuracy of his use of Jung's ideas is a matter for later comment, Northrop Frye does relinquish in the one instance of the archetypal masque his own definition of the archetype in favor of a Jungian definition which some might have expected him to be using all through the work.

As might be surmised, however, Northrop Frye relies upon his own general meaning for archetype as a recurrent element or structure in literature when he formulates the role of the archetypal critic in literature. Toward delineating this role the whole book is planned, and the resultant principles are these: the archetypal critic
ascertains the boundaries of literature and its structural pattern from a study of literature itself, without reliance upon what Frye calls "determinisms"; and the archetypal critic works to break down barriers within the field of literary criticism, attempting to show how for instance the historical critic, the textual critic, and the psychological critic all contribute to a unity which none of them alone can achieve. The problem of determinisms is an ever-present one for the archetypal critic, especially because other fields have already developed their structural approaches. It is much easier, then, for the critic to rely on external patterns of perhaps history or economics to find order in literature, much as for centuries grammarians relied on Latin grammatical rules to explain and organize the English language. With such misdirection in mind, Frye speaks boldly about

. . . what in history is called determinism, where a scholar with a special interest in geography or economics expresses that interest by the rhetorical device of putting his favorite study into a causal relationship with whatever interests him less. It would be easy to compile a long list of such determinisms, all of them, whether Marxist, Thomist, liberal-humanist, neo-Classical, Freudian, Jungian, or existentialist, substituting a critical attitude for criticism, all proposing, not to find a conceptual framework for criticism within literature, but to attach criticism to one of a miscellany of frameworks outside it (p. 6).

Frye sees the archetypal critic as the one who can best find the inherent order of literature without reverting to other fields to explain why or to contribute more than small
epiphanies or areas of enlightenment. Nor does the archetypal critic rely on what an individual writer judges about his own significance or his own place in a tradition or in literature. The statement on this point sounds slightly pompous, but it is clear.

In archetypal criticism, the poet's conscious knowledge is considered only so far as the poet may allude to or imitate other poets ("sources") or make a deliberate use of a convention. Beyond that, the poet's control over his poem stops with the poem. Only the archetypal critic can be concerned with its relationship to the rest of literature (p. 100).

While the writer who consciously uses convention or archetypal elements in his work may indeed be able to relate them to other literature, his unconscious achievements and the total accomplishment require an uninvolved perspective which the archetypal critic can provide. However, in achieving this perspective, the archetypal critic does not customarily usurp the role of the anagogic critic, who attempts to see literature as a whole by moving outside it into, as it were, another dimension (rather than merely into another field, as at least one critic of Frye has implied was inevitable and therefore contradictory)\(^1\); rather, he studies literature from the inside in terms of its recurrent structural elements—communicable symbols, as Frye often calls them.

\(^1\) Vivian Mercier, "A Synoptic View of Criticism," Commonweal, IXVI (September 20, 1957), 618.
As is implied by the term "social fact," the archetypal critic does not seek causes except perhaps incidentally. By synecdoche Frye includes all kinds of literature within the words "poem" and "poetry." According to Frye, the critic or scholar who continues to work without being conscious of the archetypal nature and shape of literature restricts himself to efforts without end and ultimately without direction (p. 342).

Because archetypal criticism is concerned with discerning the recurrent elements of literature, it naturally works most easily in what Frye calls "the mode of romance, when the interchange of ballads, folk tales, and popular stories was at its easiest" (p. 116). At the level of romance, in which myths are presented in a slightly "displaced" form, that is, with heroes and actions depicted as somewhat nearer to normal experience but still recognizably miraculous and "supernatural," patterns are clearest; and from there the shape of basic character and action elements, for example, can be identified in other, more realistic modes, where the accumulation of factual detail and the adjustment to accord with experience are more extensive. For such purposes Frye adapts the Aristotelian words mythos and dianoia plus the words ritual and dream, which are normally associated with
anthropology and psychology respectively.

... the narrative aspect of literature is a recurrent act of symbolic communication: in other words a ritual. Narrative is studied by the archetypal critic as ritual or imitation of human action as a whole, and not merely as a mimesis praxeos or imitation of an action. Similarly, in archetypal criticism the significant content is the conflict of desire and reality which has for its basis the work of the dream (pp. 104-105).

The meaning of "symbolic" here is Frye's, the basic unit for any level of study. "Significant" is better understood as "meaningful," being related to the concept of dianoia, or total meaning, part of which is conventional association and part personal response, part expressible and part not. "Dream" here is related to the work of the imagination in visualizing and transforming experience and includes conscious and unconscious efforts. Frye mentions the work of Frazer and of Jung in connection with archetypal study of ritual and dream at this point, but mostly as sources of interesting ideas and even then with constant warnings about determinism (pp. 108-109).

The two elements, ritual and dream (or archetypally, mythos and dianoia), unite in the myth, which Frye finds as "giving meaning to ritual and narrative to dream (p. 107). Throughout the discussion of archetypal criticism Frye uses the elements "recurrence" and "desire," which approximate the most pertinent parts of ritual and dream, naming therefore the archetypal aspects of mythos and dianoia.
Myth, which unites the two parts, also becomes in a narrower sense the term mythos in the third essay of Anatomy of Criticism, "Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths," in which Frye examines and groups a widely representative assortment of writings according to the basic myth, or pattern of desire and recurrence, in each. The result is four mythoi: mythos of tragedy, mythos of comedy, mythos of irony, and mythos of romance. Ultimately Frye suggests that the four mythoi, arranged schematically with comedy opposite tragedy and irony (in the sense of absolute subordination of myth to experience) opposite romance, form of themselves a central unifying myth or structural form for narrative literature, a cyclical quest-myth the component phases of which merge into adjoining forms in a sequence which Frye carefully charts.

Aton or conflict is the basis or archetypal theme of romance, the radical of romance being a sequence of marvelous adventures. Pathos or catastrophe, whether in triumph or in defeat, is the archetypal theme of tragedy. Speragmos, or the sense that heroism and effective action are absent, disorganized or foredoomed to defeat, and that confusion and anarchy reign over the world, is the archetypal theme of irony and satire. Anagnorisis, or recognition of a newborn society rising in triumph around a still somewhat mysterious hero and his bride, is the archetypal theme of comedy (p. 192).

The development of the concept of a central pattern for all narrative literature is by no means the only result of extensive archetypal criticism, but it is perhaps the most spectacular. Its gradual appearance in Anatomy of Criticism demonstrates the basic approach of the archetypal critic,
who works within literature to find the order inherent there. While Frye can and does mention that this central quest-
romance pattern has analogies in the discoveries of Frazer
and Jung (p. 152), he does not use the external fields to
guide his thought. Above all, the archetypal critic must
be autonomous in literature.

As the more frequent mentioning of his name has prob-
ably shown, Jung is considerably more prominent in Anatomy
of Criticism than in Frye's earlier book, Fearful Symmetry.
In his notes at the end of Anatomy, the author remarks on
the high degree of development of archetypal criticism in
English writings and mentions Evelyn Bondin, a well-known
adaptor of Jung's theories, as one of the leaders. More
specifically, Jung's book Psychology and Alchemy is cited
as a good source for alchemical symbolism, this being in
relation to Frye's discussion of archetypal symbols in
apocalyptic literature. Similarly Frye suggests a compar-
ison of his idea of a unifying central quest myth in nar-
native literature with Jung's Symbols of Transformation,
the reference probably being to the dream adventures detailed
there as manifestations of a psychic quest. The last men-
tion of Jung in the notes comes relative to the critic's
mention of studies of the myths of the birth of a hero,
one version of which is Essays toward a Science of Mythology
by C. G. Jung and Cézoly Kerényi. Other brief references to
Jung come in the text itself, where for instance Frye suggests
that the archetypal critic might be interested in Frazer's work on primitive ritual in *The Golden Bough* and in Jung's work on primitive dreams (p. 168). He notes that James Joyce in *Ulysses* from *Finnegans Wake* used some of the dream investigations of Freud and Jung (p. 277) and that antagonists of the heroic quest often are figures of parental origin, the benevolent counterparts of which appear in the psychological quests of Freud and Jung (p. 163). One specific recognition of Jung comes as Frye upholds the archetypal critic's interest in mainly the impersonal or non-personal elements of literature.

This emphasis on impersonal content has been developed by Jung and his school, where the communicability of archetypes is accounted for by a theory of a collective unconscious—an unnecessary hypothesis in literary criticism, so far as I can judge (pp. 111-112).

Although Frye does not elaborate further, the reason for Jung's collective unconscious theory's being "unnecessary" for literary criticism is that Frye is working with literary archetypes, empirically derived recurrent elements in literature, the source or sources of which are not his concern; but Jung is studying psychological archetypes from literature and elsewhere, the source of which is perhaps his greatest concern. Frye is avoiding Jung's system, a "determinism"; but delineating the bases of separation makes his attitude more meaningful.

The same general attitude of tributary non-involvement seems to characterize Frye's main use of Jung's ideas: the
study of the quest-romance. Each study of the romance, whether as an archetypal motif, a drama, a fictional narrative, or a fictional mode, points up its basic element to be a heroic quest or adventure in a supernatural, even superhuman world. This same type of quest is part of Jung's studies; there he calls it the psychic quest and accounts for its presence in art and literature by suggesting that the mind unconsciously projects its activities onto the things around it. Indeed, for both Frye and Jung, the more fanciful and the less "realistic" a writer allows himself to be, the more clearly his productions will show archetypes, though they are literary for the critic and psychic for the psychologist. The romance as a narrative mode is the least realistic level except for pure myth, as Frye sees it.

The romancer does not attempt to create "real people" so much as stylized figures which expand into psychological archetypes. It is in romance that we find Jung's libido, anima, and shadow reflected in the hero, heroine, and villain respectively (p. 304).

Although the basic hypothesis here is not directly contrary to Jung's meanings for his terms, neither is it truly in accord with Jung's ideas. While the libido indeed often appears as the hero in the quest-myth, the projection of the anima is basically inconsistent and ambivalent, a fascinating blend of good and evil that is not normally connected with the heroine of a romance. In a similar way, the shadow as a Jungian psychic element is not all bad; it may be dark,
mysterious, and even frightening, but not necessarily evil in the way that Frye's identifying it with a villain of romance seems to imply. In discussing the romance mode or narrative, Frye also calls Spenser's Guessa a "terrible mother" (p. 196) and Shakespeare's Prospero a "wise old man" (p. 195), both usages representing the same kind of adaptation of Jungian terminology without any mention of the psychological inaccuracies involved. Even when openly crediting the psychologist, Northrop Frye apparently uses only parts of Jung's hypotheses about human psychological archetypes and does not distress either himself or the reader by detailing the distortions or inaccuracies of the resultant impression of Jung and his work.

Although the use of Jung is an innovation, much of Anatomy of Criticism is a direct outgrowth of Fearful Symmetry. Looked at in this way, Anatomy represents the second stage of many of Frye's theories that were in the earlier book. The hypothesis of the archetype in literature and of the literary critic as an archetypal critic are the most obvious carry-overs, but also present is a repeat of Frye's quiet admission that a relationship may indeed exist between literature and psychology. From the multiplicity of meanings for the word archetype in the Blake study, including the archetype as a giant poetic vision of universal order and again as a reproduceable pattern or image, Frye educes the concept of the archetype as a communicable symbol or
element, a definition which includes both the idea of pattern and image and of any other fundamental critical element studied. Blake's idea of a basic apocalyptic unity among artists becomes the prime tenet of anagogic criticism, while his suggestion of a mythological unity among all peoples is metamorphosed and expanded by Frye into the field of archetypal criticism, wherein the critic studies only literature to determine its elemental structural unity. Stylistically, too, the books relate; for as in Fearful Symmetry Frye shreds definitions and comparisons, distributing the pieces as they are relevant to the discussion of Blake's work, so in Anatomy of Criticism Frye uses only those portions of other thought systems and disciplines which relate directly to his point and ignores what he cannot use immediately, of which attitude his treatment of Jung is a good example. Especially noticeable is a similarity of goals for literary criticism; the literary critic is to be conscious of his participation in an order greater than that within the individual work or writer. But most of all, the critic is to operate autonomously, turning only to literature rather than to related fields to evolve his standards for judging. The outlines of this position appear at the end of Fearful Symmetry, but they become the unifying theme of the four essays of Anatomy of Criticism, from its "Polemical Introduction" through to the end of its "Tentative Conclusion."
Since 1957, the year that *Anatomy of Criticism* appeared, Northrop Frye has published four books and various articles. Of his shorter pieces, only one, "The Road of Excess" in Bernice Slote's collection of critical writings *Myth and Symbol*, comments on the field of archetypal criticism itself, and even then the article is more a study of the development of the theories than of their components. The four books, which might be expected to develop further the ideas in Frye's major work, generally concentrate on rewording or rephrasing those ideas, with special attention to the study and subtle variations of genres and literary language. Of the four volumes, *Fables of Identity* (1963) provides some clarification of Frye's archetypal theories by its inclusion of an article on literary archetypes published before *Anatomy*. Also, *Fables of Identity* is the only one of the four works to mention Jung or his work on archetypes even as a point of interest, let alone as a contributor to Frye's ideas. Thus in the eight years covered by his chief publications since *Anatomy of Criticism* ("The Road of Excess," *Myth and Symbol*, 1963; *The Well-Tempered Critic*, 1963; *Fables of Identity*, 1963; *The Educated*
Frye has devoted himself to clarifying the terms of his archetypal theories, to exploring the areas of genre study and literary language as pertinent to literary criticism, and to demonstrating the application of his basic theories to literature, without much attention to outside sources like Jung and mostly without any reference even to the word "archetype" itself.

In some ways the article "The Road of Excess" as published in Myth and Symbol typifies and paces Northrop Frye's book publications since Anatomy of Criticism. The ideas within it are not new; if not directly stated, they are at least implicit in the earlier work. Some of the concepts are reworded, and some are clarified in the process. For the most part, however, the material is repeated from earlier work, especially in this article, which lacks even the application of Frye's familiar techniques to new material. As a preface to Frye's article, the editorial introduction is misleading, for Miss Slote emphasizes Frye's connection with archetypal criticism.

To Mr. Frye, through his work on Blake in Fearful Symmetry and his compendium of critical theory in Anatomy of Criticism, is generally attributed the beginning of interest in archetypal studies in literature.¹

¹Bernice Slote, editor, Myth and Symbol (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1963), p. vi.
The article itself, however, purports in Frye's words to "examine what has been so far a mere assumption, the actual connecting links between my study of Blake and my study of the theory of criticism." Noticeably, he does not speak of "archetypal" criticism, and the article does not even contain the word. The treatment of links is quite general, frequently a repetition of derivations that Frye had clearly labeled in *Anatomy of Criticism*: for instance, in the article Frye notes that the *dialectia* of a literary work is at least partially implied in its total structure and cannot be paraphrased, and he cites Blake for support; the point is the same one that he made in *Anatomy of Criticism*, also with Blake as his reference. The main difference is that in *Anatomy* Frye included a specific quotation but used only a general statement in the article. The chief value of this article appears in the reworded terminology, which is subdued in nature and tone. What he called "archetype" in the earlier work he here calls "a projection of the theme," which the critic is conscious of having met before; the story is "one of an infinite number of possible ways of

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getting to the theme." Thus one major critical response should be that of establishing the story's convention and its genre. The approach seems considerably less evangelical than before. Frye also clarifies the relationship between narrative and theme, including the term anagnorisis.

Narrative in literature may also be seen as theme, and theme is narrative, but narrative seen as a simultaneous unity. At a certain point in the narrative, the point which Aristotle calls anagnorisis or recognition, the sense of linear continuity or participation in the action changes perspective, and what we now see is a total design or unifying structure in the narrative.

Even without examples, this definition is clear and can be applied without the hesitation that Frye's earlier use of the synonym "discovery" for anagnorisis produced. One other area Frye clarifies: the relationship of allegory to commentary. Allegory is one context of literature, "where the total meaning of the literary work is seen in relation to other forms of significance, such as moral ideas or historical events." In some writings, "technical allegories" like The Pilgrim's Progress, this external meaning provides continuity. Frye feels that because commentary most frequently relates a work to historical events or moral ideals, such efforts allegorize the literature. While this opinion appears in Anatomy of Criticism, the thought process behind it is revealed in this article. Like the

6Ibid.  
7Ibid., pp. 7-8  
8Ibid., p. 13.  
9Ibid.  
10Ibid.
four books that also succeed Anatomy, "The Road of Excess" contributes little that is new in Frye's thought and does not treat archetypal criticism as such; but the article does prove valuable in clarifying some of the approaches and concepts introduced in the earlier work.

Although not even as helpful in explicating existing theories as the article just mentioned, Frye's book The Well-Tempered Critic, which also appeared in 1963, is interesting as a development in a direction rather perfunctorily treated in Anatomy: the relationship of rhetoric and the spoken language to literature and its critics and teachers. As the title indicates by its allusion to the tempering of a keyboard so that all the notes will relate harmoniously even though some sacrifice in tonal accuracy is necessary, the book is concerned with sound, with the connections between the spoken language and the written language. This book does not employ the word "archetype" at all; even the concept of archetypal criticism does not appear until near the end of the volume, and then in a muted repetition of the "recurrent structural elements" definition.

The more we know about literature, the more clearly its interconnecting structural principles appear: the conventions that link characters in O'Casey with characters of the same type and function in Aristophanes; the genres common to Shakespeare and Sophocles, to Proust and Lady Murasaki; the myths that connect contemporary poets with ancient classics.11

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The archetypal approach is developed no further, and even this appearance is a subordinate part of Frye's standard plea for a disinterested study of literature by critics in addition to the standard "experience" or "reaction" approach. Instead, Frye uses the book to suggest three basic rhythms in English: prose (continuous), poetry (discontinuous), and verbal association (conversational, intermittent). These same three rhythms appear in writing in sentence, verse, and broken agglomerative forms, respectively. In addition, Frye hypothesizes three levels of expression in literature, with "hieratic" and "demotic" specializations in each. However, in none of these developments does he mention psychology or Jung, even when he reiterates an idea carried from Blake through Anatomy that poets do not really shape their poems consciously, but seem almost "observers of a largely involuntary process." The only reference to a psychologist in the book is one comparison of euphuism to the Freudian theory that humor is the result of displaying openly some subconscious processes that are usually suppressed, and the comparison is not extended further. The Well-Tempered Critic can be considered a development of the study of rhetoric begun in the fourth chapter of Anatomy of Criticism, but it really does nothing to advance Frye's case for the archetype as a basis of literary criticism.

12 Ibid., p. 140. 13 Ibid., pp. 119-120. 14 Ibid., p. 66.
The second volume by Frye to appear in 1963, *Fables of Identity: Studies in Poetic Mythology*, is the only one since *Anatomy* to deal specifically with archetypal criticism and the only one to refer specifically to C. G. Jung on any point whatsoever. The work is a collection of essays published variously elsewhere, of which all but two are post-*Anatomy*. The first four essays tend to be theoretical; and the first two, "The Archetypes of Literature" and "Myth, Fiction, and Displacement," pertain directly to Frye's basic postulates about archetypal criticism and about myth criticism, names of approaches which combine in practice but not in Frye's terminology. As might be expected, because "The Archetypes of Literature" was written in 1951 as Frye's first direct suggestion that archetypes exist in literature, large sections of the article are recognizable parts of *Anatomy of Criticism*, especially of the "Polemical Introduction." However, about "Myth, Fiction, and Displacement" Frye comments that it "states my central principle about 'myth criticism': that myth is a structural element in literature because literature as a whole is a displaced mythology." The Statement is a recognizable repetition of the idea presented in *Anatomy of Criticism*, where Frye traces the mythoi of tragedy, comedy, irony, and romance.

through the five levels or nodes of fiction to demonstrate the principle of displacement. The article essentially reviews those parts of Anatomy that present the principles of the study of literature as displaced mythology, but without the elaborate terminology of the earlier work and its consequent "blueprint" effect. Although the ideas are not new, the attitude is; as in the article in Myth and Symbol, Frye loses some of the evangelistic fervor of Anatomy. He speaks of myth criticism as "a supplementary form of criticism which can examine the total design of fiction as something which is neither mechanical nor of secondary importance." In the earlier volume, myth criticism as one part of archetypal criticism is "central" to literary criticism. Even more surprising, at the end of this article Frye appears almost to recant his dogma of a "self-contained literary universe."

For just as critical naturalism studies the counterpoint of literature and life, words and things, so myth criticism pulls us away from "life" toward a self-contained and autonomous literary universe. But myth, as we said at the beginning, means many things besides literary structure, and the world of words is not so self-contained and autonomous after all.

However, there is no real reversal; what Frye has championed is autonomy for the literary critic and for the archetypal study of literature. Literature itself he does not really

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17Ibid., p. 38.
consider self-contained; only its internal organization is. Further, the subtle reference to multiple meanings of "myth" may be an echo of the hint which is part of his conclusions of both Fearful Symmetry and Anatomy of Criticism: that there may indeed be psychological explanations for the presence of archetypes in literature.

The explicit uses of archetype in Fables of Identity are largely derivative and are mostly rephrasings. In "Literature as Context: Milton's Lycidas" appears the only specific definition of the term.

By an archetype I mean a literary symbol, or cluster of symbols, which are used recurrently throughout literature, and thereby become conventional. That the definition is so clearly a repetition from Anatomy is not surprising, for Milton's Lycidas is one of Frye's most-used examples in arguing for the importance of studying literature in terms of its conventions. Another familiar use of the term "archetype" appears in the essay "How True a Twain," Frye's intensive analysis of Shakespeare's sonnets as a product of convention and not as a biographical riddle.

By suppressing realistic characterization, convention develops another kind, an archetypal character who is not individualized, but becomes a focus of our whole literary experience. ¹⁹


This figure becomes the "image as archetype," the form that recurs in a given context with whatever emotional or symbolic values the writer may wish to attach to him but with at least a basic accepted minimum significance by convention. A similar use appears in Frye's essay on The Fairie Queene, in which he calls the presence of an old man and his young daughter an archetype and points out at least three recurrences of the same pairing in one book of Spenser's romance epic.

Even if Fables of Identity does little to expand or develop Frye's theories of archetypal criticism, its essays do much to clarify or at least indicate the extent of Frye's use of Jung and his psychological studies. The first article, "Archetypes of Literature," is the only one to mention Jung by name; but as the first evidence of Frye's thinking about archetypes, the disproportion seems significant. The first citation comes as Frye delineates the basic human heroic quest myth and its universality.

In the solar cycle of the day, the seasonal cycle of the year, and the organic cycle of human life, there is a single pattern of significance, out of which myth constructs a central narrative around a figure who is partly the sun, partly vegetative fertility and partly a god or archetypal human being. The crucial importance of this myth has been forced on literary critics by Jung and Frazer in particular. . . .


This basic myth appears to be ultimately the central myth of all narrative literature that Frye perceives in *Anatomy of Criticism* after arranging the myth of tragedy, irony, comedy, and romance schematically. Although Frye does not mention Jung at that point, the connection that could only be guessed at then by the reader can be confirmed to some extent because of this article. Frye also here comments on the literary importance of Jung's libido symbols.

... the fascination which *The Golden Bough* and Jung's book on libido symbols have for literary critics is not based on dilettantism, but on the fact that these books are primarily studies in literary criticism, and very important ones. Frye probably is referring to Jung's *Wandlungen* and *Symbole der Libido*, which is referred to in the notes at the end of *Anatomy of Criticism*. If he means the symbols of the libido itself, he is concerned with the hero figures of the quest myth; however, as appears more likely because he uses anima, "terrible mother," shadow, and other Jungian symbols as terms of character identification, he probably means all the archetypal symbols involved in what Jung calls the process of individuation. However, the difference in attitudes among users of these symbols Frye carefully explains here, though he does not specify them in *Anatomy of Criticism*.

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In any case the critic who is studying the principles of literary form has a quite different interest from the psychologist's concern with states of mind or the anthropologist's with social institutions.  

Such a remark does prepare the reader somewhat for the different use or approach that Frye has for the Jungian symbols subsequently in Anatomy and rather completes the scheme: in this article Frye mentions the differences but does not specify them, and in Anatomy of Criticism he presupposes the differences without stopping to mention that they do exist. At least one other example clearly shows Frye's use of Jung. In the article "Blake after Two Centuries" Frye lists several art forms as being in the hieroglyphic tradition of painting, the one adopted by Blake; among these examples are "... Eastern 'mandalas' that communicate the sense of powerful spiritual discipline in repose. ..."  

The resemblance to Jung's study of the mandala as indicative of inner unity and strength is unmistakable. As a whole, Northrop Frye's Fables of Identity indicates little about any further development of his theories of archetypal criticism; but the book does help verify the importance of Jung in Frye's initial thinking on the subject.

The next book of Frye's to be published, The Educated Imagination, is very close to being for 1964 what The

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Ibid.

Well-Tempered Critic is for 1953 as far as archetypal criticism is concerned: a polite restating of the basic tenets without the terminology of Anatomy of Criticism and with much simpler, more gradual explanations. That the volume is a published version of what was originally a series of radio talks for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation helps to explain its laborious simplicity and its abundance of unsophisticated examples. The purpose of the volume is apparently to answer the question "What good is literature?"; and Frye bases his answer "To educate the imagination" on his concept of literature as reiterated mythology, an expression of man's most basic ways of seeing himself and his world. All of Frye's standard theories are present, treated in a very simple way.

I've tried to explain how myths stick together to form a mythology, and how the containing framework of the mythology takes the shape of a feeling of lost identity which we had once and may have again.25

The "feeling of lost identity" arises from man's consciousness of the difference between what life is and what he would like life to be—in its extreme form the difference between hell and heaven. The discussion then leads into Frye's idea that the Bible is the best overall containing form for mythology, as Blake said. Frye stresses the primitive use of metaphor and the arising of conventions that

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"impose certain patterns of order and stability on the
writer." He does not, however, introduce any variations
upon archetypal criticism. Neither does he mention Jung or
any of his symbols; but Frye does comment at some length on
a concept that parallels Jung's collective unconscious.
After describing the personal subconscious which every person
enters when he dreams using his private imagination, Frye
continues:

Underneath literature there's another kind of sub-
cconscious, which is social and not private, a need
for forming a community around certain symbols, like
the Queen and the flag, or around certain gods that
represent order and stability, or becoming and change,
or death and rebirth to a new life. This is the
myth-making power of the human mind, which throws up
and dissolves one civilization after another.

The parallels between this social subconscious in literature
and Jung's collective unconscious in psychology are extensive,
even though Frye is careful to avoid the psychologist's term-
inology. Just as Jung suggests that myths are the result
of the projection of psychic processes onto externals and
that projected archetypes have a numinous fascination for
all men, so Frye suggests that the social, myth-making sub-
cconscious beneath literature produces the major symbols for
human society. This concept introduced by Frye in his The
Educated Imagination seems to conflict with his disavowal
of Jung's collective unconscious in Anatomy of Criticism.
However, as long as he avoids trying to explain the source

26 Ibid., p. 93. 27 Ibid., p. 103.
or operating principles of his "social subconscious," Frye is rather effectively avoiding the "determinism" of psychology, especially that of Jung. The volume otherwise is nothing new; and for the reader who has read Frye's other books, this one is mostly repetition in different words.

Frye's last book-length work so far, _A Natural Perspective_, published in 1965, is an intensive study of Shakespeare's comedies and romances in terms of their conventions and genre characteristics, i.e., their archetypal elements. As in his other post-historic books, Frye ignores the word "archetype" and speaks instead of inherited conventional structures and figures. This book, too, begins with a rewording of the archetypal approach, comparing it to standard commentary, which emphasizes the uniqueness and peculiar excellences of each Shakespearean play and which constitutes necessarily the bulk of Shakespeare criticism. "The present book retreats from commentary into a middle distance, considering the comedies as a single group unified by recurring images and structural devices."28 Frye is not substituting his approach for others but is supplementing existing criticism. Especially in this book the author concentrates on convention and Shakespeare's use of popular, primitive stories not to be judged in terms of their credibility.

The real critical question involved here is: Does anything that exhibits the structure of a comedy have to be taken as a comedy, regardless of its content or of our attitude to that content? The answer is clearly yes. A comedy is not a play that ends happily: it is a play in which a certain structure is present and works through to its logical end, whether we or the cast or the author feel happy about it or not.29

The approach is less theoretical, more practical than it appeared in Anatomy of Criticism and is presented without most of the Greek terminology and structural divisions characteristic of the earlier volume. As usual, in speaking of romance Frye mentions primitive myths; and when he gets to the structure of a comedy, he begins with Plautus and Terence. Also evident is his total neglect of Jung's name and terminology. However, Frye does mention Freud three times: once for the idea that the individual dream has a link with the unknown that makes it incommunicable;30 once for the theory that wit is uninhibited speech;31 and once for the erotic pleasure principle that Frye believes underlies all comedy.32 A Natural Perspective is a more detailed application of the principles of comic structure presented in Anatomy of Criticism and fairly well represents all of Northrop Frye's major work since that volume.

Like A Natural Perspective, Frye's books after Anatomy appear to be largely repetitions in simpler language of various

29 ibid., p. 46.  
30 ibid., p. 108.  
31 ibid., p. 105.  
32 ibid., p. 75.
unsupplemented sections of theory from that work. The word "archetype," as well as Jung and his threat of "determinism," disappear. Frye's post-*Anatomy* books have new words and new applications, but few new ideas, especially in the area of archetypal criticism.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

There are two conclusions to be drawn from this examination of Northrop Frye's critical theories in relation to Jungian psychology. First, the best and fullest representative of Frye's thought is his *Anatomy of Criticism*, which unifies and orders the chaotic use of archetypal criticism in *Fearful Symmetry* and which Frye's succeeding books mostly repeat, rephrase, and reapply in a rather subdued fashion. Second, the role which Jung's psychology plays in Frye's published works is considerably less than is commonly supposed. As has been noted, C. G. Jung is not cited in *Fearful Symmetry* and is avoided again in Frye's post-*Anatomy* work. During his period of theory formation, including the article "Archetypes of Literature" (1951) and culminating in *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye evinces some interest in Jung's hypotheses and employs such Jungian terms as *anima*, *persona*, *terrible mother*, and *wise old man*. In *Anatomy* he even adopts temporarily the Jungian definition of *archetype* to help describe the "archetypal masque" in his own schemata; but such uses are incidental, as their disappearance from Frye's later work seems to prove. In the principal definition which he evolves for *archetype*, that of a "communicable, recurrent, conventional
element in literature," Frye does not employ Jung and really cannot be called Jungian even if the word "archetype" does imply the connection.

Perhaps the most intriguing part of the later development of Frye's archetypal criticism is his dropping of references to Jung and of the word "archetype" itself. As has been noted, the change is accompanied by a marked decrease in evangelical or argumentative energy on Frye's part. It is possible that Frye has dropped the archetype name in order to avoid both the automatic association with Jung and the stronger critical resistance that such a linkage raises against his suggestions. As Walter Sutton points out in Modern American Criticism, others have used such tactics, notably Maud Bodkin.¹ Or it is possible that avoiding the distinctive name "archetype" and rephrasing the concept in more general terms is a means of lessening the resistance. Dropping the word can also be Frye's attempt to alleviate some of the confusion caused by using the word with his meaning in one context and Jung's meaning in the next. Finally, it may be that Frye is yielding to the vague sense of uneasiness or discomfort caused by using parts of the writings of a man whom one does not really understand. Frye's misapplication of Jung in Anatomy of Criticism is one evidence of his unfamiliarity with Jung, but an even

clearer one is his attempt to review Jung's *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* and *Psychology and Alchemy* in *Hudson Review*, 1964. Heinous distortions like this one occur one after the other.

The four "archetypes", or semi-autonomous personalities which the psyche has partly created and partly evoked, now settle into the four functions of a psychic life: thought, feeling, intuition, and sensation. (At least I think they do, but ... Jung's argument here may be less symmetrical than my account of it.)

Perhaps Frye's lack of familiarity with the general theories of Jung, plus his ever-present wish to avoid "determinism," is the cause of much of his post-Anatomy avoidance of Jung.

Northrop Frye stands high among the leaders of literary criticism today. Examination of the bond that many critics assume to exist between Frye and Jung indicates that Frye's archetypal approach to literary criticism is for the most part his own contribution to the field and cannot be validly attributed to Jung.

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