

摘 要

诺思洛普·弗莱是西方二十世纪人文学科最重要的思想家之一。他是加拿大多伦多大学的文学教授，加拿大联合教会的牧师，文学批评家与《圣经》批评家。弗莱的宗教关怀贯穿他一生的创作。弗莱现象是以《圣经》为其源头之一的西方文化的一个现象。理解弗莱的宗教关怀也就是在一定程度上去理解《圣经》文化的精神性。

首先，在第一章，笔者试图阐明尽管弗莱的声誉主要来自他的文学理论专著——《批评的解剖》，他的首要关怀却是宗教。在第二章，笔者追溯了弗莱的福音派卫理教家庭对他的宗教思想的形成所产生的影响。弗莱的宗教气氛浓郁的家庭是渗透着宗教关怀的西方文化的一个缩影，宗教成为弗莱的首要关怀是西方《圣经》文化的必然。第三章阐述弗莱对宗教诗人威廉·布莱克的发现。布莱克研究是弗莱《圣经》研究的开始，它影响了弗莱一生的学术研究方向。在第三章第一部分，笔者试图说明《圣经》与西方文化的关系。第二部分解释了什么是自然宗教以及布莱克和弗莱共同的担忧——与《圣经》思维相背离的自然宗教所带来的灾难性后果是人与上帝的分离。第三部分介绍了弗莱在《可怕的对称》中所描述的布莱克把人们从虚假的宗教中拯救出来的办法——诗人的创造性的想象。第四章解读弗莱的《圣经》研究专著《伟大的代码》。弗莱发现《圣经》的语言是诗性的语言。诗性的语言实质上是弗莱在《可怕的对称》中所阐述的布莱克的“想象”这一概念的重申与拓展。弗莱分别从《圣经》的神话的、隐喻的和类型学的三个思维模式入手，探讨《圣经》的诗性语言，指出诗性语言指向《圣经》自身，是上帝的语言，是精神与自由的语言。在论文的第五章，笔者将弗莱的《圣经》研究放在西方《圣经》研究的大背景下，指出弗莱《圣经》研究的特殊地位和意义。从二十世纪八十年代起西方的《圣经》研究出现了文学研究和宗教研究的融合。而弗莱的《圣经》研究从一开始就是这样一种融合。弗莱的《圣经》研究是在肯定《圣经》语言是诗性的语言的基础上对宗教的关注。弗莱通过他的《圣经》研究告诫我们：要获得真正的宗教，需要经由正确的途径，即对《圣经》语言的正确理解。

关键词：诺思洛普·弗莱； 威廉·布莱克； 《圣经》； 宗教； 诗性语言

Abstract

Northrop Frye was one of the most important thinkers in arts and humanities of the western world in the twentieth century. He was a literature professor of Toronto University, an ordained minister of the United Church in Canada, and a critic on both literature and the Bible. His religious concern underlay his life long writings. He is a phenomenon of western culture which has the Bible as one of its origins. To understand Frye's religious concern is in some senses to understand the spirituality of biblical culture.

First, in chapter I, the author tries to prove that though Frye derived his fame mainly from *Anatomy on Criticism*, a book on literary principles, Frye was primarily concerned about religion. Then, in chapter II, the author traces Frye's Evangelical Methodist family's influence on Frye's thinking. Northrop Frye's religious family background is a miniature of the western culture which is permeated with religious concern. Chapter III is about Frye's discovery of the religious poet William Blake. Frye's religious thinking began with his Blake study, which decided his later years' academic directions. In section I the author tries to demonstrate the Bible's relation with western culture. Section II introduces what Deism is and explains Frye's introduction of Blake's worry that Deism, which conflicts with Biblical thinking, would bring a disastrous consequence to people, which is man's separation from God. Section III is about the solution to the problem that both Blake and Frye faced, which Frye depicted in *Fearful Symmetry*. Frye tells us that Blake's remedy against man's separation from God was 'creative imagination of the poet'. Chapter IV analyzes Frye's description of Bible's language in his Bible study book, *The Great Code*. The language of the Bible is poetic language, which is in fact the accentuation of Blake's 'imagination'. Frye tells us that there are three modes of thought that dominates the Bible, which are mythical, metaphorical and typological thinking and thus he forcefully proves that the language of the Bible is poetic. All of them are ways of arranging words, referring only to the Bible itself. Words of the Bible constitute a

world of themselves, a world of spirit and freedom, and the Bible's language is the language of spirit and freedom. Then in the last chapter, the author points out Frye's position in western Bible studies. Frye's Bible study is a convergence of literary studies and religion studies, a tendency that began to emerge in Western Bible studies at the end of the twentieth century. Frye's Bible study tells us that to obtain a true religion we need to understand correctly the language of the Bible.

Key Words: Northrop Frye, William Blake, the Bible, Religion, Poetic Language

前 言

西方的二十世纪下半叶是文学理论繁荣的时代，加拿大人文学者诺思洛普·弗莱（Northrop Frye）作为一位原型批评理论家在西方得到了广泛的重视，北美一些大学甚至把他的文学批评专著《批评的解剖》指定为必读书目，并把它当作最重要的批评理论之一列入各式各样的文学批评书籍（傅俊，2001：367）。从各国学者对弗莱及其著述的引用和评述来看，他的地位仅居于马克思、莎士比亚、列宁、柏拉图、弗洛伊德和罗兰·巴尔特之后（Denham, 1987: ix），他又是二十世纪出生的人文学者中被引用次数最多的一位（Denham, 2004: 1）。弗莱的世界声誉主要来自《批评的解剖》。而弗莱思想的重要方面——他的宗教思想并未得到应有的关注。近年来，这一点已有所改观。除了以《圣经》为中心的几部重要的作品《伟大的代码》和《神力的语言》外，弗莱生前最后一部阐述宗教思想的著述《双重视觉》，他一生中的有关宗教的演讲、笔记等已被收入多伦多大学2000年出版的《弗莱全集》第4卷本《弗莱圣经著述：除〈伟大的代码〉和〈神力的语言〉之外》和2003年出版的《弗莱有关〈圣经〉的笔记和演讲及其它宗教论述》。弗莱的主要研究者罗伯特·D·丹纳姆（Robert D. Denham）关于弗莱的宗教思想的研究专著，《精神世界的宗教启示者和建筑师》于2004年由弗吉尼亚大学出版社出版发行。可见，弗莱在宗教方面的探索尽管长期以来处于被忽视的状态，但近年来已得到国外弗莱研究者一定程度的重视。

对弗莱思想产生重大影响的因素有二，其一是他的福音派卫理教家庭。诺思洛普·弗莱出生于北美一个有着浓厚宗教氛围的家庭。弗莱父亲方面的第一个有据可查的先辈是1639年从英国南部移民来到美国新英格兰的一个清教徒。弗莱的外祖父是北美一名敬业的乡村牧师。弗莱的母亲凯瑟琳（Catherine Mary Maud）终生保持着对宗教生活的热情。无论生活如何拮据，凯瑟琳都坚持拥有《圣经》、文学名著、百科全书和钢琴。在对弗莱的宗教与文学艺术的熏陶方面母亲起了至关重要的作用。在这样的家庭中，《圣经》的阅读是一个必不可少的部分。正如弗莱在《力的词语》中指出的，《圣经》以生动的故事形式给童年时代的弗莱留下深刻印象（Frye, 2000: 167）。

第二个使弗莱终生获益的影响来自于十八到十九世纪的英国诗人威廉·布莱

克(William Blake)。弗莱从大学时代开始接触布莱克，并被其深深吸引。这种影响贯穿了弗莱的一生。布莱克是属于十八和十九世纪的诗人，生活在西方文化的一个转型期，是一个文艺复兴之前曾在西方占主导地位的基督教影响开始出现衰退的时代。西方文化有两大重要源泉，其一是以《圣经》为代表的希伯来文化。希伯来文化给人类的重大标志就是《圣经》，纯粹文字的遗产。布莱克通过自己的创作传达给世人这样的信息：《圣经》是创造性想象的产物，真正的宗教信仰途经诗人的想象力，人运用想象才能去创造，才不会与上帝分离。弗莱的第一部作品《可怕的对称》是对布莱克这一信息的解码。在布莱克的时代，即启蒙的时代，正经历着从《圣经》的思维向普遍接受理性思维的转变，人的理性(reason)受到欢呼。而布莱克却以诗人的敏锐看到了以理性思维取代诗性思维的灾难性后果。这种把理性当作最高信仰的宗教被称为自然宗教(deism or natural religion)。十七世纪的哲学家约翰·洛克(John Locke)的思想对自然宗教的发展起了推波助澜的作用。洛克以抽象概念将主体和客体区分开来。根据洛克的观点，上帝的观念是通过经验，即感觉和反思取得的(汤姆森, 2002: 81)。对布莱克而言，把握世界是通过诗人的想象，而非哲学的沉思和回忆。是诗人的想象使人具有创造性，积极性，主动性。这样的人不是被动地面对一个外在于自己的上帝，处于被奴役的、不自由的状态。这样的人参与着上帝的创造。他大胆地断言，真正的宗教只有一个，没有什么自然宗教。十八世纪人们对理性的信仰让布莱克觉察到了未来人们的精神危机，一个丧失真正宗教的危机及其带来的可怕的灾难。这个危机在弗莱的所处时代即二十世纪爆发了。二十世纪的人们出现了对人的理性的幻灭感，对从文艺复兴以来人对自身的绝对肯定的怀疑。二十世纪的文学艺术表现出的人是不完整的，异化的，痛苦的。二十世纪的西方文化似乎走向了穷途末路，哲学的理性思维在解决人的精神问题上表现了它的局限性。

布莱克是极具预言性的。弗莱在他的时代所深感不安的也正是布莱克当年的预见。弗莱首次接触布莱克时，正是二次大战之前，西方游荡着法西斯主义的阴魂，相当数量的西方知识分子站在亲法西斯的立场。弗莱为当时笼罩西方的极权思想而深感不安，这成为他研究布莱克一个深刻动因。布莱克时代的人不能理解布莱克，把他视作疯子。而在大学时代，弗莱就极其深刻地领悟了布莱克，并开

始了他漫长的布莱克研究生涯。弗莱对布莱克的研究历时十五年，最终他写出了《可怕的对称》一书。布莱克的发现就是弗莱的发现，布莱克研究给了弗莱巨大的动力。

布莱克研究将弗莱其后的学术研究引向两个方向。其一导向文学研究，其二导向《圣经》研究。弗莱的第二本书是《批评的解剖》，使他蜚声世界。这本书的相当一部分内容是弗莱从《可怕的对称》原稿中的删减。弗莱由布莱克研究所引发的对西方文学的思考形成了《批评的解剖》的内容。《批评的解剖》虽然是对西方文学的研究，但对文学的研究不是弗莱的最终目的，只是通达目的的手段。

弗莱的第一本《圣经》研究作品是《伟大的代码》。弗莱企图解答这样一个问题：《圣经》为何如此强烈地吸引了象布莱克、弥尔顿这样的诗人？布莱克已经以诗人的方式创造性地阐释了《圣经》，弗莱作为一个文学批评家，同样创造性地但却以不同于布莱克的方式对《圣经》进行了解剖。在《伟大的代码》中，弗莱要突出强调的是：《圣经》的语言是诗性的语言。弗莱对布莱克所强调的“想象 (imagination)”进行的解释是：想象是人关于词语 (words) 的努力 (Denham, 1991: 222)。这里“诗性的语言”实质上是弗莱对《可怕的对称》中所阐述的布莱克的“想象”的重申与拓展。弗莱“诗性的语言”这一概念取自于维柯的《新科学》。维柯认为在人类语言发展的最初阶段，原始人还没有发展出抽象概念。原始人类都是诗人，他们使用的是诗性的语言 (维柯, 1989: 30)。弗莱认为《圣经》的旧约属于人类语言发展的第一阶段，是使用的诗性的语言，而《新约》也沿用了《旧约》的语言模式。随着人类语言的发展，诗性的语言渐渐淡出人类的生活，语言进入了辨证的阶段，即思想与物质相分离的阶段。在这一阶段，上帝代表“永恒不变的存在，高高在上。”表达这个永恒不变的是抽象名词 (弗莱, 1997: 35)。语言的第三阶段始于文艺复兴。弗莱强调在英国文学史中，这一语言阶段始于洛克。在这一阶段“演绎过程越来越从属于归纳和收集事实的主要过程”，主体与客体相分离，观察者与被观察者相分离 (弗莱, 1997: 30)。语言用来对客观自然规律进行描述。在这一阶段，真实的标准就是语言结构是否与所描述对象相一致。宗教问题在这一阶段显得似乎没有意义，上帝只能归入错觉。(弗莱, 1997: 35) 因此，对弗莱而言，人的信仰问题也就是语言的问题。

弗莱在此书中强调的是第一种语言模式的存在意义。当我们进入第二、第三

语言阶段时，文学，尤其是诗歌保留了第一语言模式。（弗莱，1997：42）弗莱在《批评的解剖》中完成了他对文学语言模式的剖析，在《伟大的代码》中进行的是对《圣经》语言模式的剖析。这两本书都是《可怕的对称》的继续。正如弗莱在《伟大的代码》的前言中所声明，在某种意义上，他的批评著述均是以《圣经》为中心的（Frye,1983: xiv）。它们都在关注这样一个核心问题：诗性语言的存在及其意义。

弗莱从三个角度分析了《圣经》的诗性语言模式：神话、隐喻和类型学。

弗莱对神话的界定是“词的序列”，“叙事”，“故事”（弗莱，1997：53）。神话作为故事是不指向故事之外的。故事无须为它以外的世界负责。如果《圣经》是神话的，《圣经》是一个故事，那么它也不指向自身之外。《圣经》是由多个故事组成的。整个圣经又可被看作一个巨大的故事。弗莱富有创见的发现除了认定《圣经》是故事外，他还发现了隐藏在圣经故事中的U形叙事结构。整部《圣经》讲述了一个大的U形结构的故事：人由于罪从伊甸园被驱逐，在尘世经受磨难，但最终人是要获得拯救的，回到原来较高的状态。

《圣经》的第二种思维模式是隐喻。隐喻被弗莱认为是诗性语言的基础。隐喻表达了主体与客体共有的能（弗莱，1997：23）。隐喻是“A是B”这样的类型，是不符合逻辑的（弗莱，1997：81）。隐喻不仅充斥在《圣经》当中，而且是“《圣经》语言的一种思维控制模式”（弗莱，1997：82）。弗莱给出了这样一个例子，是耶稣的一句格言：神的国就在你们心里（《路加福音》17：21）（弗莱，1997：82）。这个心不是指心脏。也就是说圣经使用的不是描述性的语言。基督教的信仰是超理智的，是只能用隐喻来表达的（弗莱，1997：82）。而“隐喻的”即是“精神的”。耶稣也是一个隐喻。耶稣是“人与上帝”。弗莱还指出了《圣经》的神话思维模式和隐喻思维模式的关系。当《圣经》中的故事不是按照序列，而是被冻结，被静态地看时，《圣经》就是一个巨大的隐喻。《圣经》的语言是隐喻的即指《圣经》是精神性的，是指向自身的。

诗性的语言即神话的和隐喻的语言，想象的语言。从这一点来讲，《圣经》与文学，尤其是诗歌，是同属于一个语言结构的。但《圣经》不等于文学，《圣经》还有自身独特的思维模式，即类型学。类型学是《新约》与《旧约》之间的渊源研究（弗莱，1997：112）。在《圣经》之外没有证实耶稣生平的证据。《新

约》中的福音故事确凿可靠是由于《旧约》的预言得到了印证。《旧约》中的预言是正确的，因为《新约》的福音故事印证了它们。所以弗莱认为《新约》与《旧约》的关系象两面镜子，互相映照（弗莱，1997：111）。类型学也说明《圣经》是指向自身的。

对弗莱来说神话的思维模式和隐喻的思维模式是指它们各自组合词语的方式。而类型学也是一种组合词语的方式，也就是说，它同前二者一样，都属于修辞方法，所以对待类型学也应该以对待修辞方法的态度来对待它（Frye,1983:80）。基督教《圣经》是从基督教的角度来进行编辑的。从类型学的角度解读《旧约》的故事，《旧约》中的故事就成了《新约》精神真理的寓言故事，而非历史事实的记载。《新约》是《旧约》的原型，《旧约》是《新约》的先前模式。

总之，主宰圣经的这三种的思维模式说明《圣经》只构成它自身的一个世界，一个由词语组成的世界。这个世界是精神的世界，自由的世界。这是《圣经》的真实。

弗莱解读了布莱克，开辟了布莱克研究的新时代。布莱克还引导弗莱进入对《圣经》的解读。这种解读的背后是弗莱对宗教的关注。弗莱对宗教的理解，对《圣经》的解读建立在他独特的语言观上。第二阶段的语言，即辩证的语言的上帝是外在于人的永恒不变的存在，第三阶段的语言强调与客观世界的吻合，描述性语言的上帝成为不可能。只有通过诗性的语言，人才能拥有真正的宗教，上帝才不会是暴君，独裁者，人才不会受奴役，才会拥有自由。这是弗莱的伟大发现。人的自由存在于诗性语言当中，人的信仰依托于诗性语言。《圣经》往往被误读，布莱克曾经被误读，罗伯特 D·丹纳姆的研究证明弗莱也在被误读。正确的解读通往正确的信仰，错误的解读通往错误的信仰。

弗莱的《圣经》研究在西方的《圣经》批评中是有其特殊地位和特殊意义的。《圣经》批评在十八世纪以前是以神学的研究为主，神学家把宗教信仰放在首位。正统神学否认《圣经》的文学性。正统神学的误区在于它把《圣经》的语言当作描述性的语言。这个误区就是教会和哥白尼、伽利略发生冲突的原因所在。

十八世纪以来受启蒙主义对理性的信仰的影响，历史批评逐渐取得了重要位置。历史批评关注过去的历史，关注在过去究竟发生了什么。在某种程度上，历史批评的方法是一种科学的方法。历史批评既忽略《圣经》的文学性，《圣经》

的叙事特点，福音书的故事性，又不关注人的宗教体验。它只是把《圣经》中的故事当作一堆可供研究的资料。

《圣经》的历史批评一直延续到二十世纪下半叶。到二十世纪《圣经》批评又出现了这样的趋势，即把《圣经》当作文学作品来看。与历史批评相比较，《圣经》的文学批评把故事当作故事来看待，把诗歌当作诗歌来看待，释放了故事和诗歌所具备的功能，文学批评还扩大了《圣经》对没有基督教信仰的人们的影响。

但《圣经》毕竟并不完全等同于文学作品，因此文学批评也不能主宰《圣经》的研究。《〈圣经〉阐释指南》的编辑约翰·巴腾指出近年来从不同角度对《圣经》的研究又出现了融合的趋势，即文学批评与宗教关注的融合 (Barton, 1998: 22)。这种融合既关注《圣经》的文学性，又承认它是基督教的圣书。

弗莱的《圣经》研究角度正是与这样一种趋势的巧合。对弗莱来说《圣经》本质上是文学性的，它的是诗性的语言。诗性的语言即是精神的语言，真正的信仰必须经由诗性的语言。《圣经》就是这样一本大于文学的书，一本文字的遗产。弗莱通过他毕生的努力告诉我们《圣经》是用诗性的语言写成。错误地理解《圣经》的语言模式导致错误的宗教，导致宗教裁判所，极权统治，独裁，和种族清洗。正确地理解了《圣经》的语言模式，我们才会知道，上帝希望于人的，是“自由”（弗莱，1997：295）。所以，《圣经》的语言，如弗莱所说，也是“爱的语言”（弗莱，1997：294）。弗莱1991年写成的《双重视野》的副标题是“宗教的语言和意义”。在按这个世界的时空观理解的的人生的终点，弗莱再一次强调：理解《圣经》的意义必须理解《圣经》的语言。

乞今，国内的弗莱研究已取得了相当的成果。上个世纪八十年代开始，诺思洛普·弗莱的原型批评理论在中国文学批评界得到陆续的介绍并作为二十世纪西方文学批评理论之一被编入英语语言文学专业的文学理论教材。九十年代起，文化批评兴起，于是出现了从文化批评的角度对弗莱的认识。国内现有的弗莱研究著述有王宁编著的《弗莱研究：中国与西方》和《弗莱研究：现状与展望》，江玉琴的博士论文《论诺思洛普·弗莱的文化批评之路：中国的视角》。王宁和江玉琴是从文化批评的角度分析弗莱。梁工和刘意青则各自在他们的《圣经》研究著述中花了相当篇幅介绍弗莱的《圣经》研究。对他们而言，弗莱是当代西方

重要的《圣经》研究学者之一。梁工的《西方圣经批评引论》认为弗莱的《圣经》研究是对《批评的解剖》中的神话原型批评理论的巩固和发展，是语言中心主义的（梁工，2006: 424）。刘意青在《〈圣经〉的文学阐释》中则认为弗莱批评理论的建设得益于他的《圣经》研究（刘意青，2004: 113）。弗莱在中国的研究者们已经对弗莱进行了全面而又系统的探讨，他们的学术成果还有待于笔者的进一步学习。笔者的论文只是一个小小的尝试，即强调了弗莱在《圣经》研究中潜藏的宗教关怀。对精神、宗教的深入探索，是西方文化的优秀传统，也是中国文化需要借鉴之处。弗莱的学术生涯是西方文化关注精神性的这一传统的反映。笔者试图通过对弗莱的研究，引发我们对西方文化精神性这一特征的思考，使我们从中获益。

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Chapter I

Northrop Frye's Primary Concern

At the end of the last century, Falun Gong cult was very rampant in China and even extended its influence over some neighboring countries. Many of the believers tried every means possible to go to the heaven described by Li Hongzhi, the founder of the evil cult Falun Gong. Some of them committed suicide and some others did severe harm to their family members to reach their goal. They adopted these radical measures in order to execute the orders of Li Hongzhi. Li controlled their behavior and paralyzed their judging ability. Li's followers thought that by obeying Li they would be saved, but in fact they lost their independence and freedom. The trick Li played was the enslaving of man's spirit. What Li needed was tyranny and the state he hoped for his followers was slavery.

Among these believers there were businessmen, government officials, and even scholars. Though well-educated, they accepted the false religion blindly. Superstition is not necessarily connected with illiteracy. The first lesson we need to learn is that where there is no true religion, there is false religion. The second is that we need to probe into religion to make the true religion reveal itself to people. Religion is the topic deserving our discussion. The Russian religious thinker Berdyaev said that religion is man's higher existence (Berdyaev, 2000, 12: 7), higher than our ordinary existence, which is limited by laws of nature. Religion is the spiritual need of people of all ages and of all cultures.

Chinese culture, which is heavily soaked in Confucianism, is in a large extent concerned about secular life, and in essence it is a secular culture. Marxism, which could find its origin in the Bible, brought its concern for man's spirituality and freedom into Chinese culture in the first half of the last century. But since reform and opening to the outside world, the strong secular power in Chinese culture has quickly adapted to the materialism in western culture. Chinese now begin to enjoy the material richness brought by new economic system which is the result of learning

from the west. While material adequacy is necessary for us to meet our basic needs, the deviation from spirituality, and inequality and exploitation that happen during the economic development, are not what we expected. In the new century we need learn one more time from western culture on man's spirituality. We can not be content with secular achievements, which Berdyaev thought were fragile (Berdyaev, 2002.6: 96).

From the birth of Christianity to the Renaissance, western culture had been a religious one. After the Renaissance especially since the Enlightenment it began its process of secularization. Though the religious seeds were deeply concealed, the religious kernel has never been destroyed. When conditions are allowable, the seeds come into bud. Theologians, artists, and critics in different ages express their thinking on religion. Among them, the thinker who reminded our duty of exploring religion in the twentieth century was Northrop Frye.

Northrop Frye was a literature professor of Toronto University, an ordained minister of the United Church in Canada, and a critic on both literature and the Bible. It's said that if the Nobel Prize in Literature were ever to come to a Canadian it would be awarded to Frye, and a study of 950 journals revealed that among the most frequently cited authors in the arts and humanities Frye ranked only behind Marx, Aristotle, Shakespeare, Lenin, Plato, Freud, and Barthes (Denham, 1987: ix). Frye's fame was linked with *Anatomy of Criticism* when theories of literary criticism prospered greatly in western countries in the 20th century. Universities in North America assigned *Anatomy of Criticism* to students as a required book, and regarded it as one of the important tools in literary criticism (Fu, 2001: 367). Frye derived his worldwide reputation mainly from *Anatomy of Criticism*, the second book that he had written. However, Robert D. Denham, one of Frye's main researchers points out that the structural poetics of *Anatomy of Criticism* did place Frye at the center of criticism in the 1960s, but to Frye structure is a means towards the ultimate goal, not the goal itself (Denham, 2004: 3). Frye himself also affirmed it. He proclaimed that he did not intend to establish a literary theory, though the acclamation that *Anatomy of Criticism* received was not out of his expectation (Denham, 1991: 240).

As Robert D. Denham mentioned, if we did not overlook Frye's writings besides *Anatomy of Criticism*, we would find how much of Frye's attention was paid to religion (Denham, 2004: 2), though Frye himself announced that religion was not his interest (Frye, 1992: xiv). He so announced because he didn't want to cause any misunderstandings. The two world wars had already shattered people's beliefs relentlessly. The twentieth century was no longer an age during which people would follow any doctrine without questioning. People had turned to so many 'Gods', nature, God, man, reason and science, and then when the twentieth century came, human beings were severely disillusioned. They seemed to have nothing to turn to. The dangling characters in Beckett's *Godot* are good examples. Any serious thinker who thinks he has found a solution has to be very cautious. The assertion that 'there is God' will obviously lead to an opposite conclusion that 'there is no God'.

Northrop Frye carried out his religious exploration after Nietzsche announced that 'God is dead', and when T. S. Eliot said that Europe was a 'wasteland'. Then there was Derrida who further shook the base of western values with his theory of deconstruction. Frye's effort was of course very difficult. But Frye was very determined, and his industrious work on religion took him more than fifty years. His early fascination with religion started with the study on the religious poet Blake when he was still a college student in his twenties. Frye in his last book, *The Double Vision*, which was finished several months before his death when he was seventy-eight years old, emphasized again his concern over religion.

When Northrop Frye, a literary critic and a literature professor, at the same time an ordained minister of the United Church in Canada, preached religion, the way he preached was of course very special. He preached religion in the way of a literary critic and a literature professor. He was a very devoted professor who taught the Bible and literature, a very laborious critic on the Bible and some great poets, and a passionate minister who had served for more than fifty years. He played all these roles very well. He was the man who could with his creativity and with his genius overcome the split between these different areas or different aspects. He differed from most religion scholars in that he was a literary critic. He differed from most literary

critics because he was also an eloquent preacher of his religious doctrines. What we should pay attention to is that whether he was teaching, writing, or preaching, his primary concern was religion. Religion was not only important to him, but also 'central' to his careers (Denham, 2004: 3).

Chapter II

Family Influence

Frye proclaimed that everything he had learned either came from Blake or from his Evangelical Methodist background (Ayre, 1989: 4). So it is necessary to make known some relevant information about Frye's family and about his education. I'm not here adopting a biographical approach to Frye's works in Frye's understanding of it. Frye said that taking a biographical approach was accepting 'the assumption that the poet's life is the essential key to the deeper understanding of the poetry' (Frye, 1973: 17). My purpose to study Frye's biography is to understand the cultural background which Frye was in, and to find the 'real context' (Frye, 1973: 17) of Frye's works. Exploring his biography, we may find that it's a reflection of a larger cultural context.

Frye's biographer, John Ayre, spent ten pages describing Frye's family branches to show that his background had deep religious root. The forefathers of both Frye's father and mother were puritan immigrants moving to the new continent from Britain. The Evangelical Movement^① in the history of Christianity was launched during the Reformation. Reformation leaders, the forefathers of Evangelicalism, reject other sources of authority besides the Bible, such as Roman Catholic teachings and traditions. 'Evangelical Methodist' shows the emphasis on the authority of sacred book – the Bible. It also shows another thing: the acceptance of the descriptive accuracy of the Bible. The former was what Frye benefited and the latter was what Frye questioned.

Frye's maternal grandfather Rev. Howard was a loyal minister who spent his most of his life traveling and preaching among small towns of North America. A month before his death in Oct. 1923, *The Detroit Free Press* on the top front ran his picture with another minister on the top front page with the headline 'HAS PREACHED GOSPEL FOR SIXTY-THREE YEARS.' Yet he was not so

^① from <http://www.victorianweb.org/religion/evangel1.html>

determined in his belief as he seemed to be. When he was dying, he surprised his daughter Mary with the painful confession, 'I don't understand God.' (Ayre, 1989: 18)

Frye's mother Catherine Mary Maud was a woman paying her attention only to two things, church life and her children's education. Frye's childhood was accompanied by Bible reading and dinnertime prayers. One feature of the Methodists is that they laid emphasis on Bible reading. Bible reading itself left the young Frye the impression of stories, not of doctrines. 'Such a conditioning may have helped to propel me in the direction of a literary criticism that has kept revolving around the Bible, not as a source of doctrine but as a source of story and vision.' (Frye, 2000: 167) Frye's childhood experience with the Bible was precious to Frye and some of his later principles of criticism came from it.

Such experience with the Bible was recorded by many other major western writers too (Norton, 2000: 387-397). In China, children also take part in classics reading activities. In the private schools of old China, children were required to read and even to recite passages from *Four Books* and *Five Classics*, the classics that pass on traditional Chinese teachings. Biographies about famous people in China show how they were influenced by these traditional doctrines, especially Confucianism. The influence they acquired in childhood would go in two directions, to follow the teachings of Confucius without any doubts or to interpret tradition in a revolutionary way. Most Chinese in Old China belonged to the first category. Even today there are still some scholars advocating reviving Confucianism. Only a small group of people belong to the latter, such as Lu Xun and Ba Jin, two prominent modern writers born in old China, who later in adulthood experienced strong conflicts between traditional Chinese culture and western culture when they had the chance to go abroad. To adopt a revolutionary attitude towards traditional culture is to prevent people from superstition and idolatry. Both of them were fighters who wrote forceful works penetrating into the dark side of tradition. It is their childhood experience with Confucian teachings that made it possible for them to know how destructive it was to abide by obsolete doctrines without questioning when they grew up and had the chance to meet the more democratic western culture.

Similarly, there have been a lot of people in western countries who accepted what was taught to them by the Church, or the some other authorities. They did not question whether the God they believed in was a true God, and whether their religion was a superstition. In fact, in western history, there have appeared different Gods. These different Gods have led people into different roads. Sometimes people were excited, thinking that they were finally redeemed, but sometimes people were frustrated, finding that they were once again cheated. But there are always some people, like the prophets in the Bible, who can perceive the problem of their age. They warn people of their false religion that may lead them to the betrayal of the true God. With his sensitivity, Northrop Frye was such a person who perceived and made known the danger threatening his age.

Frye was born in a family believing in God and taking the reading of the Bible as an important part of family life. He was never far away from tradition. The topic of God never left his life, and both his teaching and writing centered on the Bible. But he didn't accept the orthodox doctrine of religion in the way of his pious grandfather and mother. That "there is a God" is the opposite of that "there is no God" (Frye, 1983: 16). If the Church, the ministers tell you that there is a God in heaven, there is the possibility of questioning the authenticity of the statement. It is the descriptive language that is used to describe a God who might exist in a certain place, a God that is *there* and a God who is outside you and who thus might intimidate you and control you. This is the belief that might arouse suspect in the believer's mind. So it is not surprising when Frye's grandfather said before his death: 'I don't understand God (Ayre, 1989: 18).' As for his mother, Frye thought that she was not so sure of God's existence either (Ayre, 1989: 45).

The thinking of religion never went away from Frye. His understanding of religion was not acquired from doctrines preached by ministers, but from stories in the Bible. Orthodox teachings of Christianity of course could not satisfy him. He could not be content with going to the Sunday service like his mother, and preaching to people as a traditional minister like his grandfather. In fact, though an ordained

minister, he didn't take any parish. He had his own way of believing in God and preaching the Gospels. That is what characterized Frye. In finding his own way approaching God, the religious poet William Blake was the first person who had given him inspiration.

Chapter III

Discovering Blake

Robert D. Denham said that the religious base in Frye's thought began with William Blake and William Blake was the source of all his critical ideas (Denham, 2004: 4). Not only were Frye's own ideas greatly shaped by Blake, but also many modern readers who have read only a few of Blake's lyrics have been significantly shaped via Frye (Lee, 2004: 26). If we want to probe into Frye's religious ideas, it would be impossible to ignore Blake.

William Blake was a British religious poet between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century. Among his works, *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* are well known to Chinese readers. Blake lived a poor life as a poet and an engraver. Reading his biography by G. E. Bentley, Jr carefully, we find that though he was never rich, William Blake lived the life that adequately protected his genius. Frye thought this way too (Denham, 1991: 118). There were stories of American writers' unsuccessful investment which brought them miseries, such as Mark Twain's and F. Scott Fitzgerald's. There was also the story of Sherwood Anderson's awakening from business life into writing career. But material awkwardness seldom interrupted William Blake's career of expressing god-like sentiments (Bentley, 2001: 73). He was always in Paradise, as his wife said (Bentley, 2001: xxiv). When he was once introduced to a pretty girl of a rich family in a party in his shabby clothes and old age, he looked at her kindly and said, 'May God make this world to you, my child, as beautiful as it has been to me.' (Bentley, 2001: xxvi) It seems that Blake did see something that he wished to share with people. However, people in his age could not understand him and they thought he was insane. Even Wordsworth, another great poet of his time called him 'mad' (Frye, 1990: 12). He had long been considered to be a mystic, which gave critics the excuse of not taking his writings seriously and of course not taking any pains to ponder on them.

But when Frye 'met' Blake, his response was completely different. He was soon

grabbed by Blake after their first contact as an undergraduate in Toronto University in the thirties of the last century (Denham, 1991: 163). Obviously Frye went into the world Blake wished people to see. If Blake was often in Paradise, it's likely that Frye saw the light of Blake's Paradise. Frye said that Blake was not a mystic and he had as strong a desire to communicate as any other poets (Frye, 1990: 4). Frye was so fascinated with Blake that anywhere he went, he carried Blake with him. He even persuaded his girlfriend Helen to read Blake in order that they could have more in common (Ayre, 1989: 103). When Helen discussed with him the political doctrines popular at that time, he suggested that modern man should read Blake or 'go to hell' (Ayre, 1989: 114).

After the reading and rereading of Blake's poems, not only his *Songs*, but also his difficult *Prophecies*, Frye found that Blake's works were the rewriting of the Bible, and the expression of his revolutionary understanding of the Bible. Blake as a poet led Frye into a revolutionary reading of the Bible, not the traditional Methodist reading, which took the Bible's language as descriptive. It was the reading by a poet. Frye said in *Fearful Symmetry* that we should read the Bible from Blake's eyes (Frye, 1969: 11). Frye's concentration on the Bible had never been broken, but it was from Blake that he obtained a new perspective. This perspective is a poet's perspective. Frye proclaimed that he was doing what had not been done about the Bible (Denham, 1991: 221).

The history of Bible interpretation began with Bible's appearance. There have been interpretations done by theologians, such as Augustine and Aquinas. Their primary concern was to preach Christian doctrines. There have been historical approaches to the Bible. Historians regard the Old Testament as a record of the history of the Hebrews and the New Testament as a biography of Jesus. And since the latter half of the last century, it has also been regarded as literary text, and different literary criticism theories began to be applied to the Bible's interpretation, such as feminism criticism, deconstruction criticism, and so on. The Bible had never been seriously treated from a poet's perspective before Frye.

The Bible was called 'the great code of art' by Blake (Frye, 1969: 45), and

Blake was trying to crack the code. Then, Frye tried to crack Blake's code. (Denham, 1991: 164) Blake's writing was a process of cracking the code of the Bible, and as a literary critic, Frye began his Bible study by cracking a poet's works. It was the job of interpreting Blake that led to Frye's interpretation of the Bible. Frye did his Blake study not to become a Blake scholar and similarly, he interpreted the Bible not to become a Biblical scholar, just as he studied western literature not to establish a literary theory (Denham, 1991: 240). Frye wanted to know what Blake wanted to arrive at (Denham, 1991: 164). We also want to know what Frye wanted to reach.

Frye had written more than twenty essays about Blake and had taken part in many Blake study activities, but the most important work on Blake was *Fearful Symmetry*. The publication of *Fearful Symmetry* 'was taken as marking a new age in Blake studies (Bentley, 1994: 181).' 'Within six months it had sold 1100 copies, an astonishing number for academic books which often have a print run of no more than 500 copies (Bentley, 1994: 180).' Enthusiastic responses came from critics after its publication. 'The book is of extraordinary importance, not only for the light it throws on Blake, but also philosophically and religiously... (Ayre, 1989: 205)' *Fearful Symmetry* 'is a great imaginative act, a piece of prophetic criticism which can, in the hands of imaginative readers, break open the bondage of the cocoon and free the winged future of a transformed society' (Denham, 1987: 314). Frye's concern for religion is perceived by sensitive readers of *Fearful Symmetry*. He was even considered to be 'the religious teacher (Ayre, 1989: 206)' modern people had been waiting for. 'Religion', 'God', and 'Jesus' appear frequently in this book. In *Fearful Symmetry*, he was preaching to the readers of modern time behind 'a Blakean mask' (Denham, 2004: 2).

I The Bible and Western Culture

Both Blake's writings and Frye's books center on the Bible. The Bible represents one of the origins of western culture, Biblical thinking. To explore both Blake's and Frye's thoughts, we have to probe into the sources of western culture.

The Russian religious thinker Berdyaev in *The Meaning of History* said that western consciousness has two origins, Greek origin and Judaism origin, and the combination of both formed the Christian world. Christian world united these two great worlds and at the same time began a new life. (Berdyaev, 2002: 21) Christian world has a book as its centre, the Bible, which has influenced almost every western country's cultural development since its birth (Liang, 2000: 2) . And this influence has come into almost every aspect of western culture, so when we mention western culture, we naturally call it Christian culture(Zhang, 2004: 38). Therefore we can at least infer that Western culture for a long time in history has been a religious culture, a culture that has centered on a religion, which has been linked with a sacred book, a book on the relationship between man and God.

The Bible is composed of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament^① is the sacred scriptures of Judaism and, with the New Testament, of Christianity. It is said that the authors of the Bible included kings, shepherds, prophets and other leaders. Written almost entirely in the Hebrew language between 1200 and 100 BC, the Old Testament (also called the Hebrew Bible) is an account of God's dealings with the Hebrews as his chosen people.

After approximately 400 years of scriptural silence, Jesus arrived on the scene in about 4 BC. Throughout his teaching, Jesus often quoted the Old Testament, declaring that he did not come to destroy the Jewish Scriptures, but to fulfill them. In the Book of Luke, Jesus proclaimed to his disciples, 'all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.' (Luke 24:44)

^① from <http://www.answers.com/the Old Testament>

The New Testament[Ⓞ] is the collection of religious texts that are central to Christianity. The texts of the New Testament were written in Greek. Their content is loosely a narration of the first century of Christianity. It all starts with Jesus, son of God, and continues into the period of transition from Judaism into the molding of a new religion. The central themes of the New Testament is underlining Jesus as Messiah; that redemption from sin only could be obtained through the belief in Jesus; transmission of the message to all peoples, not only Jews.

It has been argued that the Old Testament is not Christianity, since Christianity involves a new relationship between man and God, and also because the Old Testament is clearly written only for Jews. The Old Testament is however, understood as the foundations on which the New Testament rests. Jesus proclaims this. Frye also tries to prove the innate link between them.

The whole Middle Ages of the Western world after the Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome were once a period completely under the influence of Christianity. Christianity is not a low level religion that reflects nature. It's a religion that centers on man's freedom and spirit (Berdyayev, 2002: 85-101). The Middle Ages disciplined man and directed man towards God and spiritual life. Then the innate deficiency in the Middle Ages led to the reaction of Christianity. The reaction began from the Renaissance, an intellectual movement that spread the whole Europe since the 14th century. That change was a process of the secularization of western culture. According to Berdyayev, the secularization process of western culture began as early as the Renaissance (Berdyayev, 2002: 102-118). The Renaissance had the seed of secularization. But before the 19th century, the secularization had not reached its summit. The 17th and the 18th century was a transitional period (Berdyayev, 2002: 120) during which the change had not happened drastically. It was the end of the 19th century that witnessed the failure of the Renaissance and the severe consequences of man's being away from God. So it's understandable when Frye said that western literature was under the influence of the Bible at least until the 18th century (Frye, 1983: xi). Though the change had not been so obvious in the 18th century, Blake with

[Ⓞ] from <http://www.answers.com/the New Testament>

his acute perceiving ability had already sensed it. In contrast to the religion based on the Bible, Blake found the anti-biblical religion, which is called natural religion or deism. In *Fearful Symmetry*, Frye decoded Blake and introduced Blake's strong response to natural religion or deism.

II Deism and Man's Separation from God

Blake was born in the eighteenth century, the age of reason. This was an age man had gradually 'turned away from the Biblical world view' (Greene, 2004: 257). In fact, the change in man's thinking in the western world began as early as the Renaissance. The 16th century's Renaissance in England, the revival of classics was in fact the revival of Greek culture. First, man's interest was in art and literature. Then man's curiosity gradually changed from literature to science (Russell, 2003: 33). In the seventeenth century, science had obtained great achievements (Russell, 2003: 43). England was under the influence of empiricism in the eighteenth century (Russell, 2003: 243) and Locke was father of empiricism (Russell, 2003: 193). Empiricists think that experience is the only source of knowledge and man's mind is born like a sheet of paper (Thomson, 2002: 19) and the material world exists outside our senses (Thomson, 2002: 34). 'The far greatest part of words that make all languages are general terms' (Locke, 1959: II, 14). As an empiricist philosopher, Locke advocated perceiving the world in a rational and abstract language. The history of the development of western culture is also the history of the fight between Biblical thinking and philosophical thinking. What Blake saw in the eighteenth century was the triumph of philosophical thinking with abstract language over Biblical thinking with concrete language. Biblical thinking has the possibility of being regarded as an obsolete, primitive mode of thought. What is scientific and philosophic is regarded modern and has been largely accepted not only in the western world but also in China.

Hebrew culture and Greek culture have different concepts of universe. Hebrew universe is God-centered universe while Greek universe is man-centered universe. The revival of Greek culture in the Renaissance brought great trust in man's own power. This might be why so many great 'giants' (Liu, 1993: 41) of talent appeared in this age. The faith in man reached the peak in the 16th century. Man since this age shifted their eyes from God to man. This was the era during which man was happy

with their separation from God. When the seventeenth century came, some philosophers began to theorize this separation, such as Francis Bacon and John Locke. Locke's ideas introduced in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* were influenced by dualism in Greek culture. Locke thought that experience is the only source of knowledge, and the material world exists outside man's sense. He emphasized general terms. To him words were signs of ideas.

Since they could consist of nothing but either of outward sensible perceptions, or of the inward operations of their minds about them...

(Locke, 1959: II, 6)

Our observation employed either, about external objects, or about the internal operations of our own minds perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understanding with all the materials of thinking. These two are the fountains of knowledge, from whence all the ideas we have, or can naturally have, do spring.

(Locke, 1959: II, 122)

This is the Greek tradition of "forming knowledge from ideas" (Berdyayev, 2000: 129). During the post-Renaissance period Greek culture went on exerting its influence. But the post Renaissance culture mixed with Christian culture could not completely come back to Greek philosophical thinking. The Christian elements would emerge now and then. In contrast to the religion based on the Bible, the one that put man's reason on the highest position and that was acclaimed by people in the Enlightenment is called natural religion or Deism. It was inevitable that people who had already adopted biblical thinking would sense the distinctions that distinguished Deism from Bible based religion.

Deism^① is the belief in God based on reason rather than revelation. As a form of natural religion, Deism was popular in England and some other countries in Europe in the 17th century and eighteenth centuries as a rejection of orthodox Christianity. Deists asserted that reason could find evidence of God in nature and that God had created the

^① from <http://www.answers.com/deism>

world and then left it to operate under the natural laws he had devised. By the late 18th century Deism had seen the dominant religious attitude among Europe's educated classes and numerous important thinkers who held deist beliefs.

Deism requires that the human mind apply logic and reason to come to a recognition and understanding of God, because God is innately logical and reasonable. Deism can be traced back to the Stoics of ancient Greece. Early deism grew from the increased interest in natural science exhibited in the works of Copernicus, Galileo, Sir Francis Bacon, and others. Early deist thinkers sought to apply the same principles of the rational study of nature to the study of religion.

For example, Isaac Newton's discovery of universal gravitation explained the behavior both of objects here on earth and objects in the heavens, and promoted a world-view in which the natural universe is controlled by laws of nature. This in turn suggested a theology in which God created the universe, set it in motion controlled by natural law, and retired from the scene. So to the biblical poet Blake, along with Locke, Newton was also a devil, who pushed God away.

Locke himself was not a deist, but the publication of his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* marked a major turning point in the history of deism. Locke's famous attack on innate ideas in the first book of the *Essay* effectively destroyed that foundation of innatist deism and replaced it with a theory of knowledge based on experience. Innatist deism was replaced by empiricist deism. Under the influence of Locke and Newton, deists turned to natural theology and to arguments based on experience and Nature: the cosmological argument and the argument from design. The end of the 17th century and the 18th century saw the Flowering of Deism in Britain. As a poet born in the 18th century, it is understandable that Blake's response to Locke and Newton could be so strong.

Though Deists still claimed that they believed in God, and wrote books on their belief in God, their way of talking about God went to the opposite of their initial purpose. The result was man's separation from God.

As mentioned above, Locke's theory propelled Deism into flowering in the 18th century. Blake had good reason to hate Locke. The danger was that Locke's ideas

would mislead man into the false religion and the deviation from God. 'Locke was responsible for Deism, whether he was a Deist himself or not; for his cloven fiction is the source of its separation of the divine and the human.' (Frye, 1969: 53)

This was Blake's worry. Frye understood Blake's worry. Blake worried not only about Deism's result in his own age but also about its influence over the future age.

We shall never understand why Blake so hated Deism unless we understand not only what it was to him, but what he saw that it would soon become. That is, we must accept in Blake a certain amount of prophecy in the literal sense of anticipating the probable future, and must see in his conception of Deism a mental attitude which is still with us, the monstrous hydra, which is the perverted vision of human society as an atomic aggregate of egos instead of as a larger human body.

(Frye, 1969: 54)

According to what Frye said, when man is separated from the divine, human beings in the society are isolated egos, which is one of the important themes of modern literature. That was what Blake predicted in the eighteenth century, and what actually happened in the twentieth century.

III Blake's Imagination

In *Fearful Symmetry*, Frye introduced Blake's fierce attack on Deism or natural religion and Locke was a target because Locke's theory contributed a lot to Deism. Locke represented the abstract way of talking about God relying on general terms. According to Berdyaev, God can not be talked about with abstract ideas. The abstract God outside man is an idol. (Berdyaev, 2002, 1: 5) Any God outside man is superstition and will lead to slavery and tyranny. What Blake believed in is God in man (Frye, 1991: 271). That is also why Deism caused such rejection from that Blake and why Frye mentioned frequently twentieth century's tyranny in *Fearful Symmetry*. The twentieth century tyranny had already been rooted in Blake's age.

Locke's way of talking about knowledge of God was in fact a different way of thinking from the Bible's. Blake said that only man with full imagination of the poet is the real man (Frye, 1990: 112). He looked upon 'poetry and art as a language for the utterance of conceptions...for their visionary truth (Yeats, xvii)'. The creative imagination of William Blake is 'Christ in him (Yeats, xxvi)' and 'the body of God (Yeats, xxviii)'. Only with the imagination of the poet can man approach God. The analytical abstract thinking of a philosopher like Locke's general terms can not guide man into the road to God. The consequence of Locke's thinking is the separation of subject and object, and God and man. When man is separated from God, man becomes a slave of an idea, or of the law of nature. Newton wanted to go to God through the law of nature. He wanted to put God in a different kingdom from God's. In that way he couldn't encounter the true God. Locke, Bacon, and Newton, the mistake they made was that they rely on man's reason to talk about God. God's kingdom is the kingdom of spirit. God can only be talked about in the language of the kingdom of spirit. (Berdyaev, 2000: 18) From this point, we can understand why Blake emphasized the importance of the poet's imagination and why Frye talked a lot about the language of the Bible. When we want to talk about God, we should use the language of God's kingdom, or the language of spirit, not that of nature.

Blake made great efforts in bringing people back to what he thought was the correct way. He warned people of the disaster that Locke's way of thinking might cause and tried to make people come back to the way of thinking of the Bible

Dreadful disasters finally took place in the century of Frye, but Blake in the eighteenth century, which was strongly under influence of the philosophy of Bacon and Locke, perceived the danger of the budding false religion – natural religion or Deism. He detected the tendency toward natural religion and the deviation from Biblical thinking.

To Blake, Locke represented the abstract philosophical or analytical thinking which now is a dominant way of western thinking. But how far can western philosophy go? Can western philosophy satisfy western mind? Today's western culture is connected with developed science and technology and the material richness that benefited from the development of science and technology. Western philosophy has developed systematically with the new achievements of science and technology. This aspect has long been an attraction to Chinese. What we Chinese tend to neglect is the spiritual aspect closely connected with the Bible, which has been deeply rooted in western culture.

Blake attacked Locke, Newton and Bacon not because they did not believe in God. All of them wrote about religion, expressing their belief in God. Blake thought that their way of approaching God was wrong and they were leading man into a wrong road. In this road man cannot reach God and can not go into the spiritual world.

Blake hated Locke so much because Locke's way of thinking 'is designed to withdraw the subject from the object' (Frye, 1969: 17). This way of thinking belongs to abstract philosophers. To them, there is a world outside man, 'some kind of nonmental reality behind our perception of them (Frye, 1969: 17).' But to Blake, the world outside our perception is unreal (Frye, 1969: 26). Locke's way is the way towards the unreal world.

Then through what way can man reach the real world? Blake's answer is creative imagination. With the poet's creative imagination, the relation between God

and man, nature and man is different from that in natural religion's point of view. In creative imagination they are united, while in natural religion they are separated. Blake talked a lot about creative imagination of the poet. To Blake the poet's imagination is the way for man to go into the spiritual world.

In Blake's belief, creative imagination is the way to the real world. According to Blake, there are three worlds: the world of vision, the world of sight and the world of memory: the world we create, the world we live in and the world we turn away to. The real world is not the world we see with eyes. It is the world we perceive with full imagination. That world is also called the world of vision.

The world of memory is an unreal world of reflection and abstract ideas; vision is a world of creators and creatures. In the world of memory we see nothing; in the world of sight we see what we have to see; in the world of vision we see what we want to see. These are not three different worlds, as in the religions which speak of a heaven and hell in addition to ordinary life; they are the egocentric, the ordinary and the visionary ways of looking at the same world.

(Frye, 1969: 26)

These three worlds are not three worlds that exist in three different places. There are three worlds because there are different ways of looking at the same world. Locke's world is the unreal world of memory because it's a world of abstract ideas. Philosophers' abstract ideas cannot take part in creation. The reality is created with imagination and the world created with imagination 'is more real than the world we passively accept' (Frye, 1969: 27). This understanding of real world is completely different from what we usually accept. And if any person can not perceive the world with imagination, then he suffers from 'mental disease' (Frye, 1969: 27).

The imagination of the poet is also called by Blake as the poetic genius or the spirit of prophecy. Blake said: 'The Religions of all Nations are derived from each Nation's different reception of the Poetic Genius, which is every where call'd the spirit of prophecy.' (Frye, 1969: 28)

What Blake talks about here is man's spirit. If man can use the imagination, the

poetic genius, man has the spirit of prophet. Then the religion he holds is the true religion. Hence Blake announced that 'All religions are one'. "All religions are one" means that the material world provides a universal language of images and that each man's imagination speaks that language with his own accent. Religions are grammars of this language.' (Frye, 1969: 28)

Frye defined imagination as 'the primary constructive efforts that man makes with words (Denham, 1991: 222).' The universal language is the imagination. Each man has the potential of speaking the language of imagination which leads to the one true religion. 'All religions are one.' This is a great discovery of Blake.

God to Blake is also identified with imagination. God and man are different things to some people, but to Blake, they are united.

Blake, by postulating a world of imagination higher than that of sense, indicates a way of closing the gap which is completed by identifying God with human imagination:

Man is all imagination. God is Man & exists in us & we in him.

The Eternal Body of Man is The Imagination, that is, God himself... It manifests itself in his works of Art (In Eternity All is Vision).

(Frye, 1969: 31)

This is the connection between man, God and imagination. God is imagination. Imagination is active and creative. Blake's understanding of God is not the image of a tyrant who demands submission or an idea that needs our philosophic meditation. God exists in man and man is in God. God is human. God is not isolated from human experience. The creative imagination is the experience through which man approaches God.

Imagination is active. Man who uses imagination is no longer passive. An active man is united with God. He is free. A man who can not use the imagination is passive and has no freedom. Freedom of man is the topic we have to deal with when talking about God and about religion. Berdyaev said that God appeals to man's freedom (Berdyaev, 2000: 17), and Frye said that God wants man to have freedom

(Frye, 1983: 232). The opposite of freedom is tyranny, which is a word which frequently appears in both *Fearful Symmetry* and *The Great Code*.

Frye explains the origin of tyranny: 'A man may specialize in self-restraint or in restraint of others. The former produces the vices which spring from fear; the latter those which spring from cruelty. But the thwarting of imagination is the basis of both: all the cruel are frightened, and all the fearful are cruel.' (Frye, 1969: 57)

Tyranny's root is in Locke's way of thinking. That is why Blake thought that 'the cold, logical, analytical faculty was the most murderous of all (Yeats, xvi)'. Man who believed in Deism and who was capable of tyranny was called natural man by Blake, and he is the contrast of the real man who perceived the world with creative imagination. A natural man withdrew into himself and was locked up there with his own key in a dark spiritual solitude. He had no freedom. A natural man was an isolated ego. His only freedom was to hinder and to restrain others' freedom (Frye, 1990: 57). Tyranny was not forced on man from outside. It originated in man's mode of thought, the thought that led to false religion.

There is only one false religion as there is only one true one; and it has two infallible marks. First, it postulates some kind of God who is unknown and mysterious because he is not inside but somewhere else: where, only God knows. Second, it preaches submission, acceptance and unquestioning obedience. This is seen in its clearest form in the worship of a defied Caesar, but subtler tyrants have preferred various kinds of loyal disguise.

(Frye, 1969: 60)

In Deism, the false religion, man faces a mysterious God whom man cannot understand. This God is above man, and he is not the real God. This God of Deism is the reflection of the orders of secular society. In secular society, there is 'submission, acceptance and obedience'. The natural man applied the rules of physical world and human society to the kingdom of spirit, the kingdom of God. To the Deists, the physical world outside man is the only real one and he remained in this world where only the cold laws of nature take effect. If laws of nature were accepted by man, what

man did would be to 'spend all their time either wronging others or brooding on wrongs done to them' (Frye, 1969: 67).

The result of natural man's Deism would be catastrophic. 'The end of all natural religion, however well-meaning and good-natured, is a corrupt and decadent society rolling downhill to stampeding mass hysteria and maniacal warfare (Frye, 1969: 67).'

Frye discovered Blake's discovery from Blake's writings. Blake pointed out that the true religion was based on creative imagination and the false religion Deism was based on abstract philosophical thinking, which was the origin of tyranny. Frye did not talk much about freedom in *Fearful Symmetry*. He would do more about it in his Bible book – *The Great Code*.

Chapter IV

Poetic Language of the Bible

To Blake, the way to overcome the split between man and God is the imagination, and in Frye's definition, the imagination is the efforts poets make with words. In *The Great Code*, Frye further draws our attention to the universal language poets speak.

As mentioned before, when Frye wrote his Blake book, he was haunted by tyranny of his age (Denham, 1991: 247). He experienced the two world wars and lost his elder brother and his wife's younger brother respectively. Freedom and tyranny were two themes often appearing in his mind. Tyranny is the opposite of freedom. If tyranny exists, there is no freedom. But where can we find freedom and how can we obtain freedom? Blake wrote poems because he wanted to communicate something important to people. Frye wrote books and essays for more than fifty years because he too had something very important to communicate. Blake excited him because Blake gave him the answer he needed and led him to the correct road. This is not the road of a philosopher, like Nietzsche, who pained himself in his puzzling searching and went mad finally. This is a road similar to Heidegger's, who expressed his philosophy by interpreting Van Gogh's paintings and Hoelderlin's poems, not by using abstract general terms. Their similarity might be this: only art can express the truth. Frye was still different from Heidegger in that Frye got his inspiration from Blake not only because Blake was an artist, but more importantly because in his poems Blake was rewriting the Bible. Blake's borrowing from the Bible was about 90% (Ayre, 1989: 93). It is Blake who led Frye into the rewriting of the Bible. Frye pointed out more than one time that some major Western writers had flirted with Fascism in the twentieth century. As is known to all, Heidegger was one of them. So Frye could not be satisfied with interpreting literary works and then establishing a certain literary theory. He went to one of the origins of western culture, the Bible. He did not stay in the field of ascetics and talked about beauty, which is the topic that Blake didn't care

either. Frye talked about the language of the Bible and the language of literature. Frye could talk about the Bible *and* literature not because the Bible is equal to literature but because they use the same language, the literary or poetic language.

Frye taught the Bible in Toronto University for more than thirty years and then he was suggested to write a book on the Bible. The seemingly easy job for him didn't go that smoothly. This book was finished eight years after the deadline.

Blake led Frye into the door of interpreting the Bible. Blake had his own way. It was a poet's creative way. Through reading his poems, readers get a new and creative understanding of the Bible. Readers of Blake's poems are no longer passive receptors of religious doctrines. We go into a world of spirit with imagination, the genius of the poet. If we do use their full imagination, then we are no longer tyrants or victims of tyranny. We experience eternity and freedom. We become what Blake calls 'real men'.

Frye as a literary critic tried to be even more conscious than Blake though he said that Blake was a conscious poet. He tried to point out why the Bible is so powerful that it attracts great poets like Blake and Milton, and why its influence has remained until the eighteenth century and even today. The answer is that the Bible speaks the language that directs man to freedom, which is what God wants man to have.

Then what is the language the Bible speaks? The Bible is a collection of books. They are words spoken by God and recorded by prophets. In *Fearful Symmetry* Frye said that only by creative imagination could man bring out God in him (Frye, 1969: 30-31). With creative imagination, poets see the world of vision. The philosopher's language made up with abstract concepts and general terms can't make man see this world. Only words of the Bible, God's words, words that belong to the first phase of human language can lead us into the world of God, the world of freedom and love.

In *The Great Code* Frye tells us that this language is poetic language. The poetic language belongs to the first phase of human language. Poets' contribution is keeping using the language when it is ignored in other fields. The Bible is a great code of art because it speaks the poetic language. Its power penetrates into our age and even into the culture outside western world.

Then what is poetic language to Frye? Poetic language is imaginative language the poet uses and it is also the language of the Bible, the mythical and the metaphorical language. The 18th century Italian scholar Vico's great discovery was that primitive men were poets who spoke with poetic language. Poetic language belonged to the first phase of the development of human language. Vico spent most of his literary career making such a discovery. (Vico, 1989: 30) Frye benefited a lot from Vico's discovery and Frye's own great discovery might be that the Bible was written in poetic language. The Old Testament was written in Hebrews and Hebrews is said to be a concrete language. According to Vico's division of human language, the Old Testament belonged to the first phase, during which man used poetic language. The New Testament was written in Greek, and though it could not avoid Greek influence, it was written on the base of the Old Testament. In Frye's judgment the New Testament is also mythical and metaphorical. Besides, the Bible's language is typological, which is unique to the Bible. Being typological strengthens the imaginativeness of the Bible. So in the Bible there are three modes of thinking, mythical, metaphorical and typological, which is completely different from the abstract rational philosophical thinking and the descriptive language which corresponds to an outside world.

I Mythical Thinking

The first mode of thinking of the Bible that Frye analyzed is mythical thinking.

Then what is myth? '...myth to me means, first of all, mythos, plot, narrative, or in general the sequential ordering of words. (1983, Frye: 31)' The Bible is a myth, that is, a story. 'The Bible tells a story' and 'The Bible is a myth' are essentially the same statement (Frye, 1983: 32).

That the Bible is a myth is something that bridges the Bible and literature. Literature descends from mythology (Frye, 1983: 34). No one condemns literature for its untruthfulness of its stories. Literature has no responsibilities of being loyal to an outside world. The Bible also tells a story. It does not refer to an outside world. It is not describing any 'reality' outside us, though Berdyaev says that the Bible is the greatest reality (Berdyaev, 2002: 50-67).

Since childhood the Bible had impressed Frye with stories, not doctrines. The Bible tells stories. It is not the record of some historical facts. The Bible myths 'are closer to being poetic than to being history' and its truth "is inside its structure, not outside' (1983, Frye: 46). Being mythical is one of the characteristics of being poetic.

Myth is words in sequence. It's a structure of words, a narrative structure. (Frye, 1983: 31) Then what is the narrative structure of the Bible and what kind of story the Bible tells?

This gives us a narrative structure that is roughly U-shaped, the apostasy being followed by a descent into disaster and bondage, which in turn is followed by repentance, then by a rise through deliverance to a point more or less on the level from which the descent began. This U-shaped pattern, approximate as it is, recurs in literature as the standard shape of comedy, where a series of misfortunes and misunderstandings brings the action to a threateningly low point, after which some fortunate twist in the plot sends the conclusion up to a happy ending. The entire Bible, viewed as a "divine comedy," is contained within a U-shaped story of this sort, one in which man, as explained, loses the tree and water of life at the beginning of Genesis and gets them back at the end of Revelation.

(Frye, 1983: 169)

The Bible has a big narrative structure and the Bible tells a 'U-shaped' story which is also formed by a series of U-shaped stories. Frye with his creativity drew this comedic story pattern from the Bible.

The example Frye explains in detail is Job's story. Job in the Old Testament was a man faithful to God. But Satan said to God that Job was a righteous man only because he was rich and had a happy family. God then began to test Job. God made Job lose his beautiful children and big houses and then even deprived him of health. Job lived a very painful life. Though he was tortured a lot, finally Job still proved to be a pious man. God was satisfied and Job was returned with health and beautiful children again. Of course it's a story. The children who were dead can not come back to life. We can't read it in the rational way. The misfortune happened to innocent Job not because he deserved it. We can not explain Job's fate with causality. If Job's fate was caused by his evil doings, then the God is a rational God. But Job did not do anything evil. The significance of Job's pain is that man's pain on the earth is the road to the world of spirit. Job's story is a good example of the U-shaped story pattern in the Bible. The whole Bible is a big U-shaped story. In Creation, we are told that Adam was once in Paradise and then he was driven and he suffered a lot in the bottom. He experienced the pain similar to Job's. Jesus' death on the crucifix is the extreme of man's pain in this world. Finally in the end of Revelation, the last part of the Bible, the saved man was once again sitting beside God in heaven. Mythical thinking is imaginative, poetic, and spiritual. We can not treat the Bible as factual history.

II Metaphorical Thinking

The second mode of thinking of the Bible is metaphorical. 'We clearly have to consider that metaphor is, not an incidental ornament of Biblical language, but one of its controlling modes of thought (Frye, 1983: 54).'

What is metaphor? Metaphor is 'an energy common to subject and object which can be expressed verbally only through some form of metaphor' (Frye, 1983: 15). It's the language with power, the power which overcomes the split of subject and object. Metaphor is not logical and does not turn to man's reason. It is of 'A-is-B type' (Frye, 1983: 54). For example, Christ is God and man; in the trinity God, son and spirit are one.

The language of the first phase had no separation of subject and object and 'subject and object are linked by a common power or energy (Frye, 1983: 6).' 'Words in such a context are words of power or dynamic forces (Frye, 1983: 6).' This language is founded on metaphor. The poetic language is essentially metaphorical.

That *metaphorical is spiritual* is emphasized by Frye and is supported by the Bible. Frye says that 'the nearest to the purely metaphorical conception is perhaps the word "spirit" (Frye, 1983: 19).' 'The word "spiritually" means a good many things in the New Testament, but one thing that it must always centrally mean is "metaphorically." (Revelation 11: 8; Holy Bible, 444) ' (Frye, 1983: 56)

So the poetic language based on metaphor is the language of spirit. And the Bible is written in the language of metaphor. The Bible is spiritual. That's why it has so great attraction to poets. Poets keep using the language of metaphor because what poets are concerned about is spirit. '...the primary function of literature, more particularly of poetry, to keep re-creating the first or metaphorical phase of language during the domination of the later phases, to keep presenting it to us a mode of language that we must never be allowed to underestimate, much less lose sight of (Frye, 1983: 23).' God's kingdom is spirit's kingdom; Caesar's kingdom is a secular one. God's kingdom in the Bible is not a kingdom communicated to us with

philosophical or descriptive language. We use descriptive language to describe a world 'there', a world outside us. With the poetic language the world is in us and God is in us. Frye said that Blake believed neither in man nor in God. He believed in 'God and man', the 'Divine Humanity'. (Frye, 1991: 270) This is also the topic Russian religious thinker Berdyaev talked about in his *Slavery and Freedom* (Berdyaev, 1944: 44). A free man is a man of spirit and a man who has God in him.

Frye pointed out that the Old Testament is contemporary with the metaphorical phase of language and the New Testament continues with the same language pattern. (Frye, 1983: 53) 'Biblical Hebrew is an almost obsessively concrete language, and while there are a few abstract terms like 'nature' in the New Testament, they hardly affect what is still a metaphorical structure.' (Frye, 1983: 27) The Bible is not literary 'in intention' (Frye, 1983: 53), and it is not equal to literature, but it is using literary language, metaphorical, poetic, imaginative language. 'It (the Bible) is not metaphorical like poetry, though it is full of metaphor, and is as poetic as it can well be without actually being a work of literature. (Frye, 1983: 29)'

The Bible is basically metaphorical and the doctrines 'can be stated only in the form of metaphor (Frye, 1983: 55)'. The metaphorical thinking in this-is-that form is irrational. Hence, Christianity is 'a faith beyond reason (Frye, 1983: 55)'. That 'Christ, God and man are one' can only be expressed metaphorically. If we try to understand it in a rational way relying on reason, we will fail. Christ is God and man. Christ is a metaphor. If understood in a rational way, God is existence outside man. But that is not true God. Berdyaev says that God is pure spirituality and does not belong to rationality. We can not talk about God within rationality. God does not belong to the objective world. God is active and creative. God is the breakthrough of the natural world. We can only talk about Him in symbolic language. Symbolic language shows the deficiency of this world and the longing for a perfect world. (Berdyaev, 2000: 17-18) Like Frye, Berdyaev also emphasized the necessity of a correct language to approach God. Frye found the correct language. Through metaphor we understand God. This also corresponds to Blake's imagination. With imagination, we bring out God in us. The metaphorical language is the imaginative

language Blake uses in his poems when he tries to bring out God in himself.

Another thing the metaphorical mode of thinking of the Bible tells us that the events the Bible describes are 'language events (Frye, 1983: 60)', and that 'the Bible means just what it says, but it can mean it only without primary reference to a correspondence of what it says to something outside what it says (Frye, 1983: 61)'. For example, when Jesus says "I'm the door," the statement doesn't mean that there is an outside door. Frye then inferred that even God's existence comes from the existence of the Bible. There is no God outside the words or spiritual language of the Bible. 'In the beginning there was the word (Frye, 1983: 61).' If we regard the language of the Bible as the tool to describe some external world, we become 'natural men (Frye, 1983: 61)', not Blake's 'real men'. Then our religion is natural religion.

Frye stressed that the primary meaning of the Bible is metaphorical (Frye, 1983: 61), just like the meaning of poetry is metaphorical. The Bible and literature are of the same verbal structure. The attitude we treat literature also applies to the Bible. 'It is only when we are reading as we do when we read poetry that we can take the word "literal" seriously, accepting every word given us without question (Frye, 1983: 61).' We do not try to find a world outside literature and similarly if the meaning of the Bible is metaphorical like literature, we needn't find any outside world of the Bible, either.

Frye pointed out the interrelationship between mythological mode of thinking and metaphorical thinking. The Bible is both metaphorical and mythological. The Bible is a myth if we read it 'sequentially' (Frye, 1983: 63). In the Bible there are 'stories of creation, of legendary history, lists of laws and rituals with narratives explaining their origin' (Frye, 1983: 63). When reading the Bible, if we change our perspective and 'freeze' the Bible into a simultaneous unit, it becomes a single, gigantic and complex metaphor (Frye, 1983: 63-64).

What is commonly accepted is treating the Bible on the descriptive assumption. Descriptive attitude means that there is a God there. When in the same descriptive way science proves that no God is there, people can not control the desire to question the credibility of their faith. The same doubt once tortured Frye's grandfather and his

mother. The true God, the true spirit does not exist in the world outside poetic language. 'In the beginning, there is the Word, and the Word was with God. He was in the beginning with God.' (John 1:1; Holy Bible, 161)

Frye was as revolutionary as Blake when he pointed out it to us that the correct approach is a linguistic one. Only when we accept that the language of the Bible is metaphorical, can we go into the world of spirit, the world beyond the split of the subject and object. The Garden that man wants to come back to and the future Promised Land in the Bible are all spiritual. If we could understand the Bible mythically and metaphorically, we would not proclaim war for a sacred land in the physical meaning, which is now actually happening in the Middle East.

III Typological Thinking

Typological thinking belongs to the Bible only. Typology does not apply to any other book outside the Bible. 'The typological organization of the Bible does present the difficulty, to a secular literary critic, of being unique: no other book in the world, to my knowledge, has a structure even remotely like that of the Christian Bible.' (Frye, 1983: 80) It is one of the three biblical ways of thinking Frye introduced in *The Great Code*. Mythical thinking and metaphorical thinking can be used in secular criticism, but the typological one can not.

Typology^① is a special kind of symbolism. A symbol is something which represents something else. We can define a type as a 'prophetic symbol' because all types are representations of something yet future. More specifically, a 'type' in scripture is a person or thing in the Old Testament which foreshadows a person or thing in the New.

When we say that someone is a 'type' of Christ, we are saying that a person in the Old Testament behaves in a way that corresponds to Jesus' character or actions in the New Testament. When we say that something is 'typical' of Christ, we are saying that an object or event in the Old Testament can be viewed as representative of some quality of Jesus.

The word 'type' is derived from a Greek term *τυπος*, which occurs more than ten times in the New Testament. A person, event or thing is so fashioned or appointed as to resemble another; the one is made to answer to the other in some essential feature; in some particulars the one matches the other. The two are called type and antitype; and the link which binds them together is the correspondence, the similarity, of the one with the other. A type always looks to the future; an element of prediction must necessarily be in it. A Scriptural type and predictive prophecy are in substance the same, differing only in form. This fact distinguishes between a symbol

^① from <http://www.answers.com/typology>

and a type. A symbol may represent a thing of the present or of the past as well as of the future, e.g. the symbols in the Lord's Supper.

Typology is the hinge of the Bible. It connects the Old Testament with the New Testament. Frye in 'Typology I' noted the classic principle that the New Testament was concealed in the Old Testament, while the Old was revealed in the New Testament. For example, in the New Testament, there are stories of Jesus, but there is no evidence outside the Bible to prove that these Gospel stories are true. They are true because "it confirms the prophecies of the Old Testament". Then how do we that the Old Testament prophecies are true? 'Because they are confirmed by the Gospel story.' Frye said that the two testaments are like 'a double mirror, each reflecting the other but neither the world outside.' (Frye, 1983: 78)

That the Bible should be read typologically is revealed in the New Testament. 'The typological way of reading the Bible is indicated too often and explicitly in the New Testament itself for us to be in any doubt that this is the "right" way of reading of it' (Frye, 1983: 80).

Frye gave his own definition of 'type', 'typology' and 'antitype'.

Everything that happens in the Old Testament is a "type" or adumbration of something that happens in the New Testament, and the whole subject is therefore called typology, though it is typology in a special sense...What happens in the New Testament constitutes an "antitype," a realized form, of something foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

(Frye, 1983: 79)

There are three modes of thought that controls the Bible. A mode of thought is a way of arranging words. Both mythical thinking and metaphorical thinking have their own ways of arranging words. Typological thinking has its own way of arranging words, too. This is what is important to Frye. So typology is also regarded by Frye as a form of rhetoric (Frye, 1983: 80).

Among Bible scholars there has been the opinion that the Old Testament and

the New Testament are not continuous. Some of them have found evidence outside the Bible to affirm the discontinuity. As an 'architect of spirit', Frye would not need any evidence outside the book. Typological reading is enough to combine the Old Testament and the New Testament into a unity. The effective way is to find out the type in the Old Testament and antitype in the New Testament.

For example, the typological attitude towards the laws in the Old Testament is that they are allegories of the spiritual truth of the Gospel. The Christian Bible is compiled from Christian perspective. The New Testament is spiritual, which is expressed in it. Then from the perspective of Christian perspective, the Old Testament is also spiritual.

A warning that the law, even if transcended, was not to be regarded or annihilated by the gospel appears in Matthew 5:18, where it was perhaps inserted to guard against the Gnostic tendency to think of Christianity as totally discontinuous with Judaism, even to think of the Old Testament God as an evil being. The Old Testament ceremonial and dietary laws were, however, considered no longer binding on Christians, and that meant that they had to be thought of as allegories of the spiritual truth of the gospel.

(Frye, 1983: 84)

Another aspect of typology Frye mentioned is that the Old Testament as a whole is the type and the New Testament as a whole is the antitype.

The Old Testament is concerned with the society of Israel; the New Testament with the individual Jesus. The society Israel, then, is the type of which the individual Jesus is the antitype.

(Frye, 1983: 87)

Then Frye saw seven phases in the Bible. From mythological reading, these are a series of stories. But from typological reading, 'each phase being a type of the one following it and antitype of the one preceding it (Frye, 1983: 106).' These seven phases are Creation, Revolution or Exodus (Israel in Egypt), Law, Wisdom, Prophecy,

Gospel, and Apocalypse. Five of these phases are in the Old Testament and two are in the New Testament.

The first phase is Creation. What is characteristic of the Creation of the Bible is the maleness of God.

In the myth of creation in the Bible, God is father, and of course male. The maleness of God will not put man into the endless mechanical cycle of repetition within nature, which, according to Frye, gives man no freedom (Frye, 1983: 108). The myth of the Bible has a beginning and an end. And this 'beginning' is no birth at all. According to Frye, it is like waking from sleepiness. Its movement is vertical. '...there is a sense of self-transcendence, of a consciousness getting "up" from an unreal into a real, or at least more real world. (Frye, 1983: 108)' In fact, this real world is what Frye calls the world of spirit, where man is no longer hindered by his biological limits, and is in freedom.

The Creation is the type of 'which the antitype is the new heaven and earth promised in Revelation 21:1.' (Frye, 1983: 114)

The second phase is Revolution. In talking about this phrase, Frye introduced the story of Exodus. Hebrews led by Moses fled from the tyranny of Egypt. God takes sides with 'the oppressed Hebrews against the Egyptian establishment'. (Frye, 1983: 114) Frye thought the contract between God and man, which shows God's side with man, introduces 'a revolutionary quality' into the Biblical tradition, and its characteristics go into the whole western tradition through Christianity, through Islam, and survive with little change in Marxism. (Frye, 1983: 114)

To Frye, the great contribution Israelites made to history is their monotheism. Thus in Christianity there is the conception of 'false God', and this rejection of 'false God' can not be found in the tolerant Buddhism (Frye, 1983: 115). The feeling that the world will not be saved until there is a right belief persists in Christianity, Islam, and in Marxism, all of which are under the influence of the Bible (Frye, 1983: 115).

By the way, in traditional Chinese culture, people believe in their ancestors.

This religion is what Blake calls 'natural religion'. This belief in one's ancestors put man under the control of biology, the force of nature. This man is timid facing their ancestors. This is another form of slavery. Man puts himself in the bondage of blood link, the mechanic aspect of society. Marxism brought in revolutionary quality into Chinese culture. Chairman Mao spoke out something significant about the destructive elements in Chinese culture. Mao said that Chinese people in old China were under the oppression of three large mountains. One of them was the force of the race. For thousands of years, Chinese had been under the influence of this natural religion. The mild religion Buddhism has existed for thousands of years in China without fundamentally influencing Chinese culture. What's more, it has been adapted some by Chinese culture. With its biblical origin, Marxism has shattered the foundation of Chinese culture. The concept of history with a beginning and an end, the conception of having a right belief comes into Chinese culture and has become part of Chinese culture. Today there are still people who are nostalgic that we seem to have lost some good things in traditional culture, but any superficial understanding of tradition and foreign culture will not do much good to the true understanding of our culture.

Frye found that there is a feature of the Bible showing its revolutionary aspect. That is 'its strong emphasis on metaphors of the ear as compared with those of the eye', and 'much is said about the word of God'. (Frye, 1983: 116) God of the Bible is a God of words. Frye said that history is a period of listening in the dark for guidance through the ear (Frye, 1983: 117). Biblical culture was different from Greek culture which centered on two visual stimuli: the nude in sculpture and drama in literature. It was different from a polytheistic religion, which had statues or pictures to distinguish one god from another. Frye pointed out that the hatred of idolatry lied behind this feature. Frye tried to show that the root of this hatred was a revolutionary impatience with a passive attitude toward nature and the gods assuming to be dominating nature. (Frye, 1983: 118)

The third phase is Law. Frye gave an example of America in expounding on this phase. America is a country founded on revolution, and 'a country founded on a

revolution requires a deductive way of thinking which is often encoded in constitutional law' (Frye, 1983: 118). Similarly, there is 'the Old Testament sense of Israel as a people created by its law' (Frye, 1983: 118). Frye tells us man's difficult situation connected with law. 'The conception of Law in the Bible is immensely complex (Frye, 1983: 119)'. Frye says that the two aspects of law are in fact the combination of Classical and Biblical tendencies (Frye, 1983: 119). The conception of 'natural law' belongs to Western thought but is not of Biblical thinking (Frye, 1983: 119-120). In the New Testament, Jesus emphasizes that he will fulfill the law of God, not to cancel the law. From the Christian Bible, the law does not refer to the natural law in the physical world which need man's surrender. If the law is necessary, the law refers to man's spirit. The Russian writer Leo Tolstoy talks a lot in his *Resurrection* about Moses' laws we should abide by. What he talks about in his work is in fact man's spirit, the upward movement of man's spirit, not the passive obedience of a timid soul. So Frye says that 'the problem of human freedom cannot be worked out wholly within the categories of man as we know him and nature as we see it' (Frye, 1983: 121).

The fourth phase is Wisdom. Frye explains the relation between law and wisdom in the Bible. Law is 'general', and wisdom is 'specific'. It is the individualizing of law. (Frye, 1983: 121) Frye points out that the center of the conception of wisdom is the Book of Ecclesiastes, whose author or editor is called Koheleth. He is a collector of proverbs and the key word of these proverbs is 'vanity'. So Frye says that Koheleth's paradox is that 'all things are full of emptiness' (Frye, 1983: 123). Frye's understanding of this word is expressed in the Buddhist thought that the world as everything is within nothingness (Frye, 1983: 123). In the Bible the Creation began with air and light, which are the two symbols of 'spirit' (Frye, 1983: 124). Air constitutes the invisible world, but we could not see anything else if we could see air. Finally Frye points out the significance of wisdom. We use past experience 'as a balancing pole for walking the tightrope of life, finally grows, through incessant discipline and practice, into the final freedom of movement' (Frye,

1983: 125).

The fifth phase is Prophecy. 'Prophecy in the Bible is a comprehensive view of the human situation, surviving it from creation to final deliverance, and it is a view which marks the extent of what in other contexts we could call the creative imagination....the prophet sees man in a state of alienation caused by his own distractions, at the bottom of a U-shaped curve. (Frye, 1983: 128)' Frye explained to us the relation between Prophecy and the previous phases like this: prophecy is the individualizing of the revolutionary impulse, just as wisdom is the individualizing of the law. (Frye, 1983: 125)

To Frye, Milton and Blake are prophet poets (Frye, 1973, 76). In the Bible, Moses and Jesus are prophets, and Moses wishes that all Lord's people would become prophets. A prophet is a person with 'genuine insight (Frye, 1983: 128)' and with 'the authentic message (Frye, 1983: 126)'. Prophecy is never pleasant, but it is the true message that a true prophet wants to communicate to people. Frye became excited when he began to study Blake because he thought that Blake spoke the 'unpopular message' (Frye, 1983: 126). Blake's prophecy was revolutionary and people in his age didn't have an ear keen enough to apprehend it. Frye in the twentieth century crossing the gap of time caught what Blake really wanted to communicate. Then Frye's own book in his time again became the message he wanted to convey to his contemporaries. Frye was preoccupied with the Bible and he was not satisfied with only being a critic of literary works. Just like Blake, a prophet poet, Frye is a prophet critic. The Bible can attract Frye because it has an authentic message to communicate. Frye studied classics such as Shakespeare's because they are works with the penetrating power and still have something to share with us. The Bible to Frye is a book with the most penetrating power. Frye's own works, starting from *Fearful Symmetry* to *The Double Vision*, are books with similar power. Frye has a true message to tell modern people. Only from this perspective can we really catch the message he wanted to transmit.

The sixth phase is Gospel. 'The gospel is a further intensifying of the prophetic vision.' (Frye, 1983: 129) Northrop Frye's reading of the Bible is the reading from the perspective of Gospels. Gospels are also mythical narratives to Frye (Frye, 1983: 114). Gospels are spiritual and prophetic. From the perspective of Gospels, the understanding of the Old Testament is spiritual, not descriptive. Christian Bible is a revolutionary one, a prophetic and spiritual one. Frye's revolutionary reading of the Bible followed this tradition.

For example, Jesus' understanding of Sin is not equal to crime. It does not refer to the act that breaks laws. It's rather 'a matter of trying to block the activity of God, and it always results in some curtailing of human freedom, whether of oneself or of one's neighbor' (Frye, 1983: 130). 'Sin' is something that hinders man's realization of freedom, which is the highest aim of man.

Gospel's conception of law of is also a new one, a spiritual one. Rules of Law are not rigid written doctrines people have to obey in ordinary life. The Gospel is 'a different kind of individualizing of the law, founded on the category of prophecy' and 'Christianity thinks of the Old Testament as primarily a book of prophecy rather than law...' (Frye, 1983: 131).

In contrast to Gospel's conception of law is the 'totalitarian conception of law, in which the breaker of an obligation to God is to be wiped out with his family (Joshua 7: 24)' (Frye, 1983: 131). The totalitarian conception of law is in fact the understanding of the Old Testament from the descriptive perspective. Terrorism and tyranny are latent in this understanding of the Old Testament (Frye, 1983: 131).

Frye provides an example of Plato's *Republic* to illustrate two different results caused by the two perspectives. 'As an allegory of the wise man's mind, the *Republic* is a powerful vision; as an ideal social order, it would be a fantastic tyranny. (Frye, 1983: 131)' If there were a society set up completely according to the rules described in the *Republic*, Socrates would not have a better fate, because he would have no freedom. The descriptive perspective pulls man towards tyranny.

Jesus' death is also prophetic and 'if we think of his significance as prophetic rather than legal, his real significance is that of being one figure in history whom no

organized human society could possibly put up with. The society that rejected him represented all societies: those responsible for his death were not the Romans or the Jews or whoever happened to be around at the time, but the whole of mankind down to ourselves and doubtless far beyond (Frye, 1983: 133). Society will always line up with Pilate to oppress the prophet (Frye, 1983: 133). Tyranny exists in all societies and all human ages. What mainly distinguishes Christianity from most other religions is 'this revolutionary and prophetic element of confrontation with society' (Frye, 1983: 133).

This understanding makes us know better the relation between the individual and the society, and that between freedom and tyranny. Gospel's perspective is the perspective of poetic language, assuming that the Bible is mythical and metaphorical, which made the foundation of the Christian comprehension of the whole Bible.

The seventh phase is Apocalypse. Frye explains the meaning for revelation, apocalypse.

The Greek word for revelation, apocalypses, has the metaphorical sense of uncovering or taking a lid off, and similarly the word for truth, aletheia, begins with a negative particle which suggests that truth was originally thought of as also a kind of unveiling, a removal of the curtains of forgetfulness in the mind. In more modern terms, perhaps what blocks truth and the emerging of revelation is not forgetting but repression.

(Frye, 1983: 136)

Blake thought that when we were born, we took everything into the world. This world cannot create anything. Frye had similar ideas when he talked about education. Education is to remove the repression from the student's mind (1983, Frye: Introduction). From Biblical point of view, the history has an absolute beginning and an absolute end. History itself is something like repression we need to remove. 'Man creates what he calls history as a screen to conceal the workings of the apocalypse from himself. (Frye, 1983: 136)'

To a reader from a different culture, what apocalypse provides is a horrible view. There are images of trumpets, fire, darkness, blood, the killing of humankind, and the destruction of the world. If we accept it in descriptive thinking, what we see are incredible cruelty and terror. It is Frye's reading that pulls us through the mist.

The vision of the apocalypse is the vision of the total meaning of the Scriptures, and may break on anyone at any time...What is symbolized as the destruction of the order of nature is the destruction of the way of seeing that order that keeps man confined to the world of time and history as we know them. This destruction is what the Scripture is intended to achieve.

(Frye, 1983: 136)

What is destroyed is the world we see from the angle of Deism, the natural religion. In this world, there is the split of the subject and the object, and thus there are isolated egos in pain. When the world full of egos disappears, a new world comes. This world is not the land Israel occupies in the Middle East in geographical meaning. It is the world of spirit.

'At the end of the Book of Revelation, with such phrases as "I make all things new" (21:5) and the promise of a new heaven and earth, we reach the antitype of all antitypes, the real beginning of light and sound of which the first word of the Bible is the type.' (Frye, 1983: 138) In the beginning, God created the world. At the end of the Book of Revelation, all things are new. Typological reading unifies the Old Testament and the New Testament. Both the world God created at the beginning and the things that are made new at the end of the Bible refer to the world God wants us to go into, the world of spirit and the world of freedom. Freedom is God's intension. Frye stated it clearly at the end of *The Great Code*. But man tends to slide into slavery. (Frye, 1983: 232) Frye's concern for man's freedom, which is the highest aim of religion, is again emphasized.

Mythical and metaphorical language is literary language that dominates the Bible, which implies that the Bible, like any other literary work, does not have an

outside behind the book. Typological thinking, which belongs to the Bible only, is one more feature of the Bible that shows the fact that the Bible is not a book recording historical facts or religious doctrines. The language of the Bible constitutes the world of itself, and this is the world of spirit and freedom. This world belongs to neither the subject nor the object. It is a world in between. Compared with *Fearful Symmetry*, *The Great Code* makes it clearer that Frye's approach to faith is a linguistic approach. In *Fearful Symmetry*, Frye says that we should read the Bible from Blake's eyes. Blake with his poet's genius tries to communicate to readers his way of reading the Bible, but he is often misunderstood. Frye's great contribution is that he not only knows how Blake reads the Bible, but also articulates clearly the three modes of thought in the Bible which belongs to poetic language. Blake is a conscious poet and Frye is a conscious critic. *The Great Code* can be called the anatomy of the Bible and the Bible is well decoded in Frye's way. If *Fearful Symmetry* broadens the study of Blake, *The Great Code* also broadens people's perspective on the Bible.

Chapter V

Northrop Frye's Position in Western Bible Studies

Northrop Frye is a man in a culture that is under the dominating influence of the Bible. His fascination with the Bible was not unique at all. The Bible has always been a focus of criticism in western countries. The history of biblical criticism is almost as long as the history of the Bible. Roughly, there are four phases in the history of the Bible study, though not strictly according to the historical time sequence.

There had been mainly two approaches involved in Biblical criticism before the twentieth century. The dominant one until the eighteenth century was theology. Christian theology, in Christianity is the systematic study of the nature of God and God's relationship with humanity and with the world. To the theologian like Augustine, the Bible is not literary at all (Liu: 2003: 29). Scholastic theology sought to illuminate matters of religious faith through intellectual understanding. Scholastics theology confined theology to the field of the systematization and investigation of revealed truths. Generally speaking, theology's concern is religious doctrines. And orthodox theologian's acceptance of the Bible is from the descriptive perspective. That is why Copernicus and Galileo aroused the irritation from the Orthodox Church and were condemned for heresy. The universe that Copernicus and Galileo described according to their scientific discovery conflicted with the order of the universe in the Bible, if it is understood from the perspective of descriptive language. With the development of science, theologians' descriptive interpretation of the Bible led to people's doubt of the faith in God. The tragic collapse of people's belief in the divine reached its peak in Frye's age.

The approach to Biblical criticism that began to attract attention in the eighteenth is historical criticism, which is similar to a historian's way. It was at the end of the eighteenth century under the scrutiny of Enlightenment reason that the Bible became subject to the systematic critical attention of a complex approach to reading known as the 'historical-critical' (Barton, 1998: 22). Historical critics are

interested in genetic questions about the biblical text. They ask when and by whom books were written; in the case of any biblical books, what were the stages by which they came into being (Barton, 1998: 9). Historical criticism was also concerned with history – not only the historical context of words and meanings, or the historical development of texts, but what happened in the past (Barton, 1998: 11).

Historical criticism was meant to be value-neutral, or disinterested. A historical critic tries to approach the text without prejudice, and to ask not what it meant for him, but simply what it meant. He does not care his individual religious experience. The most important characteristic of historical criticism is the belief in scholarship's ability to arrive at objective truth. (Barton, 1998: 12)

The historical approach had been a dominant one until the latter half of the twentieth century. It is a scientific form of reading (Barton, 1998: 22), which is natural religion in Blake's term. The limitations of historical method of Bible study are obvious. The poetic function of the Bible has been largely ignored by historical critics. They often fail to read biblical narratives as narratives. They tend to treat Gospel stories about Jesus as compilations of miscellaneous data concerning him. (Powell, 1992: 14)

The twentieth century saw a growing fascination with 'the Bible as literature' (Barton, 1998: 21). It implies that if we don't regard the Bible as religion, we can appreciate it as literature. Literary readings of the Bible hover between the imaginative and poetic, and the academic (Barton, 1998: 25). In some degrees, it challenges the Bible as an authoritative 'sacred text' that literary readings take the Bible utterly 'as literature' (Barton, 1998: 29).

The latter half of the twentieth century was the time of literary theories. Literary critics began to venture into the Bible scholars' domain. One of the first to do this was Eric Auerbach. Auerbach demonstrated that 'narrative depictions of reality' can be studied according to the canons of literary criticism regardless of whether those depictions are considered to be historically accurate. The representation of reality in narrative form, Auerbach proposed, is a basic element of literature that transcends distinctions between aesthetics and historical purposes. That means that Bible stories

can be studied in the same way that fictional stories are studied. Questions of historicity can be neglected. (Powell, 1992: 14) After Auerbach, the west began to regard the Bible as a classic of literature. This fascination reached the climax in the eighties of the twentieth century. (Liu, 2003: 26)

Powell, the author of *The Bible and Modern Literary Criticism* lists some benefits that Bible study has obtained from literary criticism. One is that literary criticism offers important insights not available through historical criticism. 'By reading biblical stories as stories and biblical poetry as poetry, literary criticism unleashes the inherent power of these stories and poems of personal and social transformation (Powell, 1992: 18).'

Another benefit is that literary criticism serves communities of faith. Historical criticism is sometimes condemned as harboring an inherent skepticism that works against the faith perspective. Regardless of whether this is the case, the idea that literary criticism is somehow better suited for interpreting scripture from a faith perspective will probably approve better of some literary methods than of others. (Powell, 1992: 18)

The third is that literary criticism places biblical scholarship in dialogue with the academic world at large. Ironically, some scholars claim that the great benefit of literary criticism is not that it connects biblical studies to readers within the community of faith, but to readers outside the community. Secular scholars, including some who claim no fidelity to any particular religious creed, have recently taken an interest in biblical literature and have begun to publish their interpretations of these writings. (Powell, 1992: 19)

Some Bible scholars worry that the tendency to treat the Bible as pure literary works is very dangerous. Literary criticism can not dominate the study of the Bible. (Liu, 2003: 30) Any way, the Bible is not equal to a work of literature. Frye says that the Bible is more than literature (Denham, 1991: 170).

Barton, the author of *The Companion to Biblical Interpretation* suggests that there has appeared a convergence between the Bible and western literature since the last two hundred years of the twentieth century. '...the Bible has continued to interact

with Western literature, even within its theological purposes, and to be a fundamental resource for "literary readings" and critical approaches which biblical criticism itself has often neglected, particularly in the last two hundred years.' (Barton, 1998: 22) The convergence is that Bible scholars are turning to literary criticism, and literary critics are turning to the Bible. Theologians and biblical scholars become more conversant with modern literary theory, and they want to contribute their own insights to the ongoing development of that theory. Literary critics struggle to develop a theory that interprets literature in terms of its poetic function and to develop methodologies appropriate for the study of biblical materials. (Powell, 1992: 19)

Traditionally, professors of religion have not been primarily interested in the Bible's literary qualities. They have shown more interest in the Bible as a compendium of theological insight or as a record of significant history. On the other hand, many colleges and universities have offered classes on 'The Bible as Literature', but such a title usually implies that the Bible is to be examined as literature instead of as scripture. (Powell, 1992: 3) The new convergence of biblical and literary studies destroys this division. The recent Bible studies try to examine the Bible as literature and as scripture at the same time. 'Thus, the trend toward literary criticism of the Bible is in some sense revolutionary.' (Powell, 1992: 3)

Frye's Bible study is in fact such a revolutionary convergence. Frye combines traditional biblical criticism, for example, typological criticism, with modern biblical criticism, and literary criticism with religion studies. The convergence in academics seemed to appear very late, but to Frye the approach to the Bible from the perspective of poetic language had already existed in the tradition of some great poets, such as Milton, Blake, and Coleridge, whom Frye mentions frequently in his books. Coleridge affirmed that 'in the Bible there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together' (Barton, 1998: 30). Coleridge was convinced that the Bible was somehow different from all other literature, 'having proceeded from the Holy spirit', and this very difference would be revealed in literary readings (Barton, 1998: 31). To these poets, what attracted them is not that the Bible is a work of literature, but that the Bible is a book from which man understands God. Frye accepted these

great poets' perspective to the Bible. From the eyes of these poets, he goes directly into the world of freedom. Frye's coincidence with the new tendency in the field of Bible studies shows that Frye's perspective is worth our attention. It also shows that just as what Frye hoped, a lot of people are taking the Bible seriously and are concerned about the thing the Bible points to (Denham, 1991: 248).

Conclusion

To sum up, Northrop Frye's primary concern is religion, and his religion 'was based on an unmediated encounter with the Bible and with works of imagination' (O'Grady, 2004: 175). From his Blake study to Bible study Frye found that faith is by way of the language of imagination. Frye works against two directions: one is historical criticism treating the Bible as a book recording some historical facts, and the other is orthodox theology describing some religious doctrines. Both are on a false language assumption that the language of the Bible is descriptive, not poetic. This idea was expressed as early as when he wrote *The Critical Path*, a project towards *The Great Code*. The belief that 'the road to concern runs through the language of imagination' distinguishes Frye in both literary and religious studies.

It is rather that religion will come to be understood increasingly as having a poetic rather than a rational language, and that it can be more effectively taught and learned through the imagination than through doctrine or history. Imagination is not in itself concern, but for a culture with a highly developed sense of fact and of the limits of experience, the road to concern runs through the language of imagination.

(Frye, 1973: 116)

Northrop Frye's road to religion was first influenced by his Evangelic Methodist family, and then guided by William Blake. He abandoned the Methodist descriptive perspective to religion, but accepted William Blake's language of imagination. In his later years, he studied the language of western literature in *Anatomy of Criticism* and that of the Bible in *The Great Code* and *Words with Power*. Frye confessed that his religious concern had already appeared in *The Critical Path* (Denham, 2004: 1), a book written before *The Great Code*. In fact his religious concern emerged as early as in *Fearful Symmetry*, his Blake book and first publication. His thinking on literature and the Bible was latent in *Fearful Symmetry*, and his religious concern was already very obvious in this book. The discussion on true religion and false religion,

the relation between creative imagination and man and God occupies a lot of the book. Frye's worry about modern time's tyranny and slavery puzzled him and Blake study began to provide him with an answer. The answer is the language of imagination.

Frye's Blake study is illuminating, opens a window for Blake readers. To some readers, it is through Frye that they began to understand Blake. To Frye himself Blake study is of tremendous importance. It led to his achievements in both literary criticism and biblical criticism. There is innate connection between these two fields Frye worked on.

Anatomy of Criticism attracted world wide attention as a book on literary theory, but literary theory is not Frye's final goal. The study of the structure of literature is a means to an end, which is Frye's religious concern. His religious concern was never separated from his understanding of literature. As a literature professor, he found he could not teach literature courses without mentioning the Bible. Then he offered a course on the Bible. After he had taught the Bible course for almost forty years, he wrote a book on the Bible, *The Great Code*. From this book we once again perceived Frye's religious concern. Frye's believed that the crisis of faith that modern man experienced was a crisis in understanding the language of faith (Ayre, 1989: 336). Discovering the language of faith became his great mission in his writing on the Bible. In *The Great Code* Frye introduced his discovery that the language of the Bible is poetic language, which is in fact the accentuation of Blake's 'imagination'. He introduced three modes of thought that belong to the Bible to prove it. The three modes are mythical, metaphorical and typological thinking. All of them are ways of arranging words, referring only to the Bible itself. Words constitute a world of themselves. This world is the world of spirit and freedom. The Bible's language is the language of freedom and spirit. It is God's language. God wants man to have freedom.

After *The Great Code*, Frye published his second book on the Bible: *Words with Power*. This book is 'the dialogue between a divine humanity and a human divinity, human creative power and its spiritual other' (Lee, 2004: 40). In it Frye emphasizes what the Bible and secular literature have in common. Frye was making his efforts in 'making place for religious illusions to become realities through human acts of

creation goes hand in hand, as it has throughout his career, with his making places for revelations of reality from secular contexts – alongside, interpenetrating, and identifying with sacred scriptures' (Lee, 2004: 41). The channel of communication between the Bible and literature are always open. Frye's Bible and literature study bridges the gap between these two fields because secular literature is man's efforts to keep man's imagination alive and to bring God in man. That the Bible and literature are of the same verbal construct and they are of the same language (Frye, 1992: xiv) means that both the Bible and secular literature are efforts of constituting a world of spirit.

Frye wrote his last book *The Double Vision* only several months before his death. The subtitle of this book is 'Language and Meaning in Religion'. It tells us again religion as Frye's primary concern and the linguistic approach to religion as his choice. In this book he points out that there is the natural vision and the spiritual vision. Through the utterly natural vision, there is only the natural man, and a natural man is a product of nature (Frye, 2000: 175). A society made up with natural men is a hierarchy in which there are 'superiors and inferiors' (Frye, 2000: 176) and 'tyranny and exploitation' (Frye, 2000: 187). If he accepts God through natural vision, the single vision of God sees in man the reflection of human panic and rage, his love of cruelty and domination, and such a God calls on him to justify the maintaining of these things in human life (Frye, 2000: 233). He told us that the Bible is important because 'the Bible is the charter of human freedom, and any approach to it that rationalizes the enslaving of man has something wrong with it' (Frye, 2000: 228).

Since his Blake study, Northrop Frye had never stopped guiding our reading of the Bible to God and to 'the world of the free movement of the spirit' (Frye, 2000: 178). Frye was trying in his own way to bring people back to the seemingly obsolete topic, religion, which, under the western background, is understood through the poetic reading of the Bible. Frye once said that those who denied the reality of God are suffering from 'a failure of imaginative energy' (Donaldson, 2003: 40). To bring man back to the imaginative language is to make man go back to their concern for religion.

Northrop Frye was a professor of literature, a critic on both literature and the

Bible, and a minister who delivered sermons on Christian holidays. Both his courses and his writings were his sermons, too. Frye's religious concern ran through all his careers and all his writings. His life was a spiritual pilgrimage. Like the title of Robert D. Denham's book on Frye told us, Frye was a 'religious visionary and architect of the spiritual world' (Denham, 2004). Although Northrop Frye died in Toronto on 23 January 1991 at the age of 78, he will continue to play a role in Bible studies and literature studies for years to come. No matter how fast the world changes and moves ahead, we can not forget Frye because 'to embrace change does not mean that we have to forget our cultural past' (Hart, 1994: 2). Just as Jonathan Harter, the author of *Northrop Frye: The Theoretical Imagination*, said, Northrop Frye is a critic of his time and for all times (Hart, 1994: 305), and a man to whom later generations need to return, because the 'hopes, needs and anxieties of some periods in the future may call upon Frye more than on us' (Hart, 1994: 304). If what Frye predicted is true, in the spiritual history of humankind, after an age of the Old Testament and an age of the New Testament, an age of pure spirituality is coming (O'Grady, 2004: 182). In this age, Northrop Frye's concern will become the concern of all of us.

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