**NORTHROP FRYE**

**Anatomy of Criticism** (1957): archetypal/myth criticism challenging New Criticism

Literature as “autonomous verbal structure” consisting of archetypal “building blocks” repeating across time & space, but NOT necessarily derived from a primal collective unconscious

“The Archetypes of Literature” (1951)

Difference of criticism from other science studies:

1. One does not “learn” literature (as opposed to cosmos), just the critical method
2. Other scientific subjects finite, lit. meanings infinite🡪lit., like psychology, an inexact science of the mind
3. Lit. criticism today means dissipation among many disciplines; “value” judgments unstable acc. to fashions; New Criticism only sees isolated works, cannot pronounce on systemic poetics:

🡪centripetal organizing principle needed

Poems born, not made (revisions show poet was only “medium”; each poet has his/her “private mythology” of unconscious symbols)

Lit. as “a compilation of a relatively restricted and simple group of formulas…in primitive culture”

Search for archetypes “a kind of literary anthropology”: ritual🡪myth🡪folktale🡪literature (great fiction reverts to primal patterns)

“Recurrence” of archetypes in: a. rhythm (temporal; as narrative, words), b. pattern (spatial; general meaning)

Since rhythm comes from nature, lit. rhythm tries to recapture ritual of natural or waking-dreaming cycle (quest myth, lit. cycles):

1. Spring (birth): romance, epic
2. Summer (zenith/marriage): comedy, pastoral
3. Autumn (fall): tragedy, elegy
4. Winter (dissolution, chaos): satire, apocalyptic texts

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| COMEDY | TRAGEDY |
| Hero improves community | Hero in repeated struggle |
| Apotheosis | Tragic grandeur |
| Community | Tyranny or anarchy |
| Marriage | Seduction/ Terrible Mother |
| Animal flock/helpers | Dragon/serpent/monster |
| Garden, Arcadia | Perilous forest, Desert, |
| Gem, stone temple | ruins |
| Rivers | Sea |