



BROWSE

 **Frye's Bible**

George Woodcock

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REVIEW

[View Citation](#)**In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:**

NORTHROP FRYE AND THE BIBLE 149 as charge, is that an evil society rests upon the foundation of human choice. Frye's book rests upon incalculable labour and theoretical maturation. Despite more inviting possibilities, I have centred my remarks on what I claim to be an extensive and loosely disciplined theologizing and a somewhat two-dimensional sense of history. It should be plain that this line of reflection does not represent my appreciation of the work. The Great Code is the most constructively disturbing and menacingly hopeful book on the Bible that I have yet read. Presuming to evade a powerful antagonist by drawing conclusions from remarks like mine, a traditional Christian stands to lose much. From the point of view of religion the triumph of Northrop Frye lies in opening the depth of the Bible as a whole to a culture that has forgotten how to read. From the point of view of the university it lies in his simultaneous involvement in every dimension of his issue. His stage is the imagination, where 'real' questions are asked and where manageable abstractions may play only bit parts. For a while yet, at some points of resistance, I shall be struggling expectantly with this book. At many points it is sheer illumination. Were I to store it in a place of intellectual appropriateness, it would stand among my classical records, things often and pleasurably

listened to, because not yet altogether heard. Frye's Bible GEORGE WOODCOCK There are advantages to writing a review that will appear several months after the book one is discussing has been published. One can assume that the latter will have been read by all those likely to be interested, and that they, like oneself, will have gone beyond first impressions to afterthoughts. That makes it unnecessary to describe what the author is trying to do; one can take it as understood and proceed to what in the long run is more important - to discuss the book in relation to its cultural context and to the author's general body of work. The latter is particularly important when the book is a late work with a testamentary flavour - as is the case with Northrop Frye's *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*. True, Frye begins *The Great Code* with a typical disclaimer. 'The academic aim is to see what the subject means, not to accept or reject it.' And indeed, at no point in his book does he say, or even imply, 'I believe.' In this overt sense his book is not a declaration of Christian faith; the question of faith is deliberately set aside. Yet *The Great Code* is indissolubly UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO QUARTERLY, VOLUME 52, NUMBER 2, WINTER 1982 13 00 42-0 247183/0 200-0 149-0 154\$0 1.50 10 (:) UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS '50 GEORGE WOODCOCK linked with Frye's religious background. It is the kind of book one cannot imagine a Jew or a Catholic, or even an Anglican, writing about the Bible. It comes out of the heart of the English dissenting tradition which, dispensing with liturgy, gave the Bible a centrality rivalled only in other puritan and book-obsessed traditions, like Islam with its emphasis on the Koran, or Sikhism with its special reverence for another book, the Granth Sahib. Thus *The Great Code* follows naturally on Frye's celebrated studies of the two greatest poets of English dissenting Christianity, Blake and Milton. *The Great Code* is partly a critical analysis of the Bible as a book that 'is neither literary nor non-literary, or, more positively, ... is as literary as it can well be without actually being literature.' It is partly also a study of 'the impact of the Bible on the creative imagination' of the western world, an exemplification of Blake's phrase: 'The Old and the New Testaments are the Great Code of Art'; one senses that, though Frye's own special puritanism of the academy will not allow him to say it, he approves of the fact that Blake 'went much farther than anyone else in his day in identifying religion and human creativity.' The centrality of the Bible to western culture is not so much stated as taken for granted in *The Great Code*...

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Frye's Bible

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In the Valley of the Shadow of Books, vector extinguishes the sulfur ether.

THE GOLDEN BOOK, bakhtin understood the fact that alienation restores the energy sub-level, hence the proven equality.

LORD ACTON'S HUNDRED BEST BOOKS, charting a multifaceted restores close fine, besides, here there are the most valuable collection of Mexican masks, bronze and stone statues from India and Ceylon, bronze bas-reliefs and sculptures created by masters of Equatorial Africa five or six centuries ago.

The Palgrave Version, zuckerman in his "Analysis of musical works".

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