

## What is the *Dianoia* of Myth? An Investigation into a Neglected Dimension of Northrop Frye's Mythological Theory

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Inspired by Cassirer's and Eliadeh's mythological insights and employing Fraser's and Freud's views as well as New Critical ideas, Northrop Frye gained deep insights into the cyclical and dialectical structure of myths. In his view, the formation of a myth is considered to be the outcome of two different functions: the tendency of the myth to present narratives in a cyclical system, and its movement toward self-sufficient verbal structures. Frye studies the latter function under myth's theme-centred aspect and believes that *dianoia*, or meaning, is myth's dialectical structure which is formed as a result of the formulation, interpenetration and interconnection of images. Nonetheless, the concept of *dianoia* has, so far, been overlooked in the majority of the studies on Frye's theoretical position. Therefore, employing a descriptive-analytical method, the present article aims to investigate Frye's theories in this regard and, concentrating on his theoretical origins, analyse *dianoia*'s internal function. This study will demonstrate that *dianoia* is associated with the hieroglyphic, hieratic and demotic aspects of speech, and that the transition from the myth to romance, epic and, ultimately, history is made possible due to the function of the paradigmatic axis. In this transition, the untransformed myth finally moves toward naturalism's realistic dimension and the myth, though hidden and dormant, does not disappear at all. Thus, according to Frye, even those works that have been written by adopting a basically historical approach, have the potential to be examined and analysed through a mythological reading.

**Key words:** Mythology, Cyclical and Dialectical Structure of Myths, *Mythos*, *Dianoia*, Paradigmatic Axis.

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