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Myth and Dramatic Imagination in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Structural, Archetypal, and Cultural Analysis

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الملخص

في هذه الدراسة، قدم المؤلف دراسة أكاديمية للدور الذي يلعبه الأسطورة في الدراما الإنجليزية في سياق مسرحية ويليام شكسبير "حلم ليلة منتصف الصيف" من خلال شرح الأشكال المختلفة للأسطورة ووظائفها كهيكل ومحور ووحدة ثقافية في الدراما الإنجليزية الحديثة المبكرة. استنادًا جزئيًا إلى نظريات مثل نظريات نورثروب فراي بين المضمون والشكل، ومن حيث عصر النهضة، وبالتالي، وجهة نظر ما بعد عصر النهضة التي تعتبر الأسطورة أمرًا حيويًا للمسرحية منذ السنوات الأولى في المسرح الإليزابيثي، تدعي الدراسة أن الأسطورة في المسرحية ليست مجرد زخرفة، بل هي نظام درامي حي يشكل تطور الشخصيات وحركة الحبكة بالإضافة إلى المعنى الفلسفي الجوهري. إن البناء الأسطوري لشكسبير من خلال الأساطير الكلاسيكية والفولكلور الإنجليزي ومفاهيم عصر النهضة عن الخيال يتوسط بين الدوافع الأرسطية من العقل إلى الرغبة ومن النظام إلى الفوضى، وكذلك الدوافع الأفلاطونية من الوهم إلى الواقع. ومن الناحية المنهجية، تتضمن الدراسة قراءة دقيقة نوعية، ولكنها تسترشد بالتفسير النظري، وتتتبع

الموضوعات الأسطورية وأنماط السرد والتناقضات الرمزية في سياقها الثقافي والفكري. أظهرت النتائج أن الأسطورة تعمل في آن واحد كشكل مسرحي، وشكل من أشكال العلاج، ومرآة للمجتمع. تساهم الدراسة أيضًا في نقد شكسبير من خلال تقديم نموذج متكامل لقراءة الأسطورة في سياق الدراما، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على ابتكار شكسبير الأسطوري الشعري في خلق انعكاس معقد للتجربة الإنسانية من المواد الأسطورية المتلقاة.

Abstract

In this study, the author has provided an academic examination of the role that myth has in the English drama in the context of William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream by explaining the various forms of the myth and functions of the myth as a structure, focus, and cultural unit of early modern English drama. Based in part on theorists such as Northrop Frye between content and form, and in terms of the Renaissance and, by extension, post-Renaissance view of the mythic as vital to play since the early years in Elizabethan stage, the paper contends that myth in the play is not simply ornamental, but a living dramatic system that both shapes character development and plot movement as well as substantive philosophical meaning. Shakespeare's mythic construction through classical mythology, English folklore, and Renaissance notions of imagination mediates Aristotelian impulses from reason to desire and from order to disorder, as well as Platonic impulses from illusion to reality. Methodologically, the study engages qualitative close reading, but guided by theoretical interpretation, tracking mythic motifs, narrative patterns, and symbolic oppositions against their cultural and intellectual backdrops. The results showed that myth serves at once as a theatrical form, a form of therapeutics, and a society mirror. The study also contributes to Shakespearean criticism by introducing an integrated model of reading myth within the context of drama, placing particular emphasis on Shakespeare's mythopoetic innovation in creating a complex reflection on human experience from received mythic materials.

1. Introduction

As a medium for culture, myth has used cultural symbols to answer important questions about being, desire, will, and the nature of change. However, myth in the humanities is more than another dusty bin of ancient tales, functioning as a guiding system of the meaning that sub-strata plot, character, and theme (Frye, 1957). Myth serves both as narrative substance and as a conceptual framework in drama, media, anthropology, and theology (Jung, 1964) through which it localizes and sometimes works out social and psychological tensions (Jung, 1964).

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Myth has a unique status in the context of Shakespearean drama. It is this deep mythic tradition which Shakespeare inherits from Roman and Greek sources, from the medieval allegory pitting man against man, body against spirit, soul against soul, and from native folk belief that renders phenomena such as this felt reality of the close boundaries between humans and the inhabited lands of other than human animals so frank and prophetic. He does not imitate myth but rather reconstitutes it in a form more malleable to the needs of early modern England. A particularly striking example of this is a A Midsummer Night's Dream, combining classical age myths with English fairy lore, creating fantastic and impossible places on the borderland between dream and reality (Barber 1959).

Perhaps you may also soon find it formulaic rom-com, but like any good myth there is more to its symbolic and psychological aspects than meets the eye. Elements such as the opposition of Athens and the woods, the appearance of supernatural beings with the job of working the protagonists, and themes of magic and metamorphosis make a mythical substructure seem likely (Frye 1957). This archetypally mythic narrative structure (Jung 1964) embodies interdicts against a Passionate drive, and it demands reconciliation between social Order and instinctual Desire, between Authority and Liberty.

Despite the vast amount of critical attention paid to A Midsummer Night's Dream, scholars have rarely connected its mythic aspects be they classical, folkloric or festive within a comprehensive theoretical model. This gap is filled by the present study, which presents a thorough examination of myth as an elemental, archetypal and cultural theme in the drama. This myth is so embedded, yet contingent, that the study applies techniques drawn from myth criticism, archetypal process, structuralist theory, boiled down by using the Renaissance humanist concept of combined shape to reveal how myth reveals that myth operates like plural semiotic process across dramatic and social spheres channeling personality and narrative into cultural form.

In general, the present study investigates Shakespeare's use mythological narratives to establish on stage a sense of unity, symbolism, and even significance. This paper builds on the critique of Shakespeare by demonstrating the interpretive function of myth, as well as by placing A Midsummer Night's Dream within the tradition of theatre based on classical myth.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Myth and Literary Criticism

The study of myth in literature has been dominated by the myth critics, Northrop Frye and Joseph Campbell. Frye understands myth as the origin of genre in Anatomy of Criticism, with plot forms built on recurrent forms. According to him, comedy travels through a cycle of disorder to order in a seasonal rhythm, a framework with wider ranging ramifications for Shakespearean comic drama (Coupe, 2009). For Campbell, in contrast, myth is a sort of eternal psychological archetype of transformation, and the archetypal tropes of initiation, ordeal, and rebirth inform not only the mythological but modern literary criticism (Campbell, 2008).

This has led to subsequent works that view myth, not as a remnant of history, but as a semiotic system alive and well. These perspectives draw attention to the metaphorical and psychological functions of myth, and the mythic narratives serve as sketches of human fears and longings. So myth is no longer just a story as some forms of modern literary criticism traditionally viewed myth, but a living sign system (Coupe, 2009).

2.2. Archetypal and Psychological Approaches

Examines myths as literary images and symbols rooted in the archetypal structures of the collective unconscious; highly Jungian in nature. In literature and close readings, Jung's archetypes are thematic, with common types such as the trickster and the ruler, as well as the change agent, being seen as manifestations of common human experience. Frye's insight about the methods of literature and the classification of shapes subsequently led later critics to relate archetypes to genre, the direction of narrative movement, and cultural myth making (Guerin et al., 2011).

The preeminent objection to the interpretation of A Midsummer Night's Dream has been the impact of archetypal readings in the criticism of Shakespeare. Oberon, Titania, and Puck are frequently considered archetypal forces of nature, lust, and disorder (Garber, 2008). Most reference Puck as a pure archetype of trickster overturning reason and stability, pointing to an overarching interest in psychological transformation and mythical ambivalence over the events of the narrative (Coupe 2009). These readings shed light on the characters but seldom treat the play as an integrated mythic system.

2.3. Structuralist Perspectives

Oppositions that organize mythic meaning are the most common structuring elements of structuralist approaches, the best known of which are associated with Lévi-Strauss (1963) argues that oppositions between nature and culture, order and chaos, reason and passion give structure to

human thought in myths. Structuralist readings of A Midsummer Night's Dream emphasize the opposition between the rational world of Athens and the irrational forest. These geographical divisions correlate to more fundamental ideas underpinning the play, like mind/body, law/desire, and social/animal freedoms. But if structuralist readings emphasize the symbolic oppositions of the play, they are also almost blind to the cultural and historical context undergirding other characters that would shape Shakespeare use of myth (Sanders 2016).

2.4. Myth, Folklore, and Renaissance Humanism

A third key area of scholarship has looked at how Shakespeare combines classical myth with English folk tradition. Barber (1959), Briggs (1976) popular belief and ritual seasonality, and festive inversion in the fairy kingdom of the play, in particular. Drawing on new historicism (Greenblatt 1980; 2004), we will consider how Shakespeare's own mythologies map onto some of the energetic dynamics of Renaissance culture in which classical landscapes are re-framed as articulations of early modern anxieties regarding authority, subjectivity and imagination.

This process is aided by Renaissance humanism. According to Sanders (2016), Renaissance authors adopted mythical characters and stories as malleable cultural materials, not as timeless exemplary patterns, and often reframed Greek and Roman tales to address the intellectual and ethical concerns of the present day. This humanist reconstitution of classical myths embodied in figures such as Theseus and Hippolyta in A Midsummer Night's Dream, recognizable ideals of reason and sovereignty, are still vulnerable to the subversive powers of imagination and desire.

2.5. Research Gap and Critical Positioning

Though significant scholarship exists on each of these concepts, two critical gaps remain. Secondly, most studies of myth in A Midsummer Night's Dream either apply one theoretical model or don't use any of these models and don't cohere into an analytic framework. Third, the binding mythic function has been relatively neglected, especially with regard to its dynamic projection onto individual psychological change within culture (Sanders 2016).

This study fills these gaps by providing a synthetic application of myth criticism, archetypal theory, and structuralist analysis, combined with the distant context of Renaissance humanism. In this way, it seeks to show how myth in A Midsummer Night's Dream works both as a form of structural drama, as a language of symbols, and as cultural discourse, and to complement this trivalent status with the play's continuing critical and theatrical significance (Coupe, 2009).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

It belongs to the category of a qualitative, descriptive-analytical study and utilizes close textual analysis. This is particularly relevant to literature based studies, where texts are used as vicarious architectures of symbols and value systems. This analysis is far more about interpretive depth and theoretical coherence than quantitative data points.

3.2. Data Sources

This research will focus on a canonical literary text, in this case, A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare. These sources exist in this context to support aspects of the interpretive analysis rather than deliver preordained conclusions. Critical Materials Myth criticism archetypal theory structuralism renaissance humanism Shakespearean drama.

3.3. Analytical Procedure

The analysis goes through the following steps:

Identification: The various mythic references, motifs, and figures both implicit and explicit that are found throughout the text and that serve as one of the components in establishing the work.

Classification: These are classified based on a mythological origin (classical mythology, English folklore or hybrids) and theatrical role.

Theoretical Interpretations: Each of the themes identified above are interpreted through a hybrid of myth criticism, archetypal theory and structuralist methods and analysis.

Contextualization: As Turner places the interpretive results in context with the culture at large, and into the matrix of the Renaissance humanist intellectual context..

3.4.Accuracy and Limitations

The study synthesizes textual evidence with theoretical insight and historical detail, achieving analytical rigor through this triangulation. To perclude this, we follow in our methodological work within section some conceptual consistency that is the avoidance of methodology fragmentation. The narrower boundaries of observing a singular work and one that looks to textual evidence, not one based in performance history allow for deeper engagement with myth as a textually-inherent dramatic system.

4. Analysis

This is a close reading of A Midsummer Night's Dream that reveals the central functioning of myth as a structuring dramatic psychological principle, giving order to plot and character-magic from one end of meaning. Through mythic characters places and transformations it is this

elemental clash that Shakespeare dramatizes in the course of, or within his text via close reading. Mythic elements become active, generative forces of dramatic imagination and symbolic logic rather than passively referential.

4.1. Mythic Authority and Classical Order: Theseus and Hippolyta

It begins in a world in thrall to the antiseptic logic of classical myth and the patriarchal gravity of Athenian law. Theseus, Duke of Athens is a literal embodiment of a quasi-mythic archetype of the rational ruler whose power is firmly grounded in law and reason. The kingdom; the timelines; the rule you can almost hear her air hissing out as he claims it all.

Now, good, clear Hippolyta, our hour for matrimony
It arrives without delay, four jolly days chime in
"Another moon" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 5)

That same introduction places us in the mythic, built on Greek ideals of order and harmony. At the same time, however, Shakespeare shows the false power his figures hold over their own lives. The inflexibility of patriarchal law is highlighted in Theseus's reaction to Hermia's refusal to marry Demetrius:

"To you, your father should be as a god;
One that composed your beauties; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 6)

In this way, a tyrannical bond is formed between importers mythic authority and those who begin to be viewed as mere commodities. Creation is rendered in the language of music: "composed your beauties," which invokes mythic tales of gods shaping mortals, but Shakespeare reframes this power through criticism. Myth then serves not to idolize power but to dramatically illustrate its violence when severed from emotional and imaginal playfulness.

The fully realized presence of Hippolyta only adds to this complication of the mythic order. The former queen of the Amazons: A female counter-myth of independence from men, and of female warrior value? The closing lines create an air of subdued silence, reminiscent of her mystical and all-conquering silence at the beginning of the play, suggesting an ambivalence between mythic conquest and political assimilation and reinforcing the political matter of power brokered through mythic narratives, central to the play.

4.2. The Enchanted Forest as a Mythic and Liminal Space

Unlike the city of Athens, the enchanted forest functions as a mythic realm, where supernatural law trumps human law. The woods,

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mythically, become a liminal space, a threshold between civilization and instinct, where change can occur. Oberon and Titania are the rulers of this space, and their quarrel disturbs not only the fairy kingdom but also the natural world:

"The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts.
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 20)

This remains a distinctly mythic conception; all cosmic order is dependent upon the balance of the superhuman. Disruption of Nature reads like one of those ancient tales where gods should have simply kept their distance to avoid ecologically disastrous messes. The myth connects the individual lust with a universal result, highlighting the symbolic connectedness of this universe of the play.

The function the woods performs to obliterate social roles is nonetheless another confirmation that its mythic function. The moment the lovers enter that space, hierarchies are thrown to the wind and legal and social power dissolve. Lysander's sudden withdrawal of feelings is one example of this destabilization:

"It was the reason of Man which dominated his will.
And that a maid is as good as the worthier " (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 30)

For Lysander himself to have just invoked "reason," then, right before this portion of the speech as if passion's role in defining what were even allowable aspirations in a city far more than realistic ones was minimal that is no small irony. Myth then detonates the illusion of rational mastery, and lore maintains that appetite proceeds by channels other than sober choice.

4.3. Puck and the Myth of the Trickster

Among its cast of mythic larger than life characters Puck figures centrally in this mythic imagination of the play. In effect, they become a kind of trickster: congested with insistent innuendos, flowing movement and disruptive derailments. He portrays himself as nature's mischievous destabilizing force:

"I am that merry wanderer of the night" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 25)

The trickster, a figure found to some degree in all mythological traditions, is the huckster of disruptive change. The havoc the mischievously misapplied love potion wreaks in the two couples is no dramatic accident but mythic necessity. Through disorder, truth reveals itself.

Puck's delight in chaos underscores the myth's comic function:

"Lord, what fools these mortals be!" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 28)

With the exception of humans, this line provides the basis for the mythic irony that takes humanity itself as its object. To the trickster, myths of rational autonomy are revealed as illusions prone to fragility. Therefore, this is a way to critique human hubris while remaining at comic distance.

In this respect, the play's most overtly mythic metamorphosis is the magical doling out of the head to Bottom. That change is reminiscent of Ovid's Metamorphoses, but Shakespeare puts a comic spin on the mythic tradition. Such is the absurdity of transformation that Bottom himself seems not to realize something has changed:

"I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 35)

So, without realizing it, Bottom has literally become the thing he denies. His metamorphosis externalizes the mythical conception that identity is fluid and can be bent and broken in the detectors of one's imagination.

Tiana's bewitched infatuation with Bottom parodies the myths of divine human passion as found in the classics:

"Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 18)

Thus, the hyperbolic exaggeration parodies mythologizing while simultaneously reaffirming the rational potency of love. Shakespeare employs myth not to assert that the scene can rise to tragedy, but to demonstrate that desire is always theatrical, always irrational.

4.5. Dream, Illusion, and Mythic Resolution

Myth is never definitive here; as the play approaches resolution, it serves to reintegrate rather than transform permanently. The lovers awaken from a dream, powerless to understand what has happened to them:

"Are you sure
That we are awake? It seems to me.
That yet we sleep, we dream" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 70)

Dream here acts as a mythic metaphor for the illusion of theatre itself. Setting aside his slippery logic, you feel the gravity of experience. It gives Shakespeare a way out, to come to a resolution of his dramatic tensions that makes no sense.

At the end of the play, Puck addresses the audience with the line:

"If we shadows have offended,
But now think this, and all is set aright;

That you have slept with only" (Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, p. 80)

This wraparound gesture strengthens the met theatrical function of myth. Just like the audience members, they are encouraged to experience the play as a mythical dream; aesthetic experience that implies heightened sensation but not situated in any prosaic reality.

5. Results

Myth functions as a formal component that organizes the development of plot, characterization and thematic resolution in A Midsummer Night's Dream. Myth is then more than anything ornamental, more than a deviant, that is, a signal between intertextual chains, it is an organizing feature of the shift from a state of disharmony to one of harmony. The play here is working through mythic logic, which allows Shakespeare to enforce an impression that it is transformation, not causation, that is the engine of the plot.

These key findings indicated that, through addressing conceptual dichotomies, myth appears to be a bridging term. Such opposing terms are each primary over/against the others, which then un-resolves the binary oppositions structuring the play which further act to obscure 'truth' from 'false'; the reason/desire, law/instinct, reality/illusion oppositions. Myth in this sense works as a metaphorical substitute of a real function and functioning of this toggle of opposites; it temporarily destabilizes and mediates them. In alchemical terms the forest becomes this mythic liminal space that mediates it; suspend the social norm and you are free to transformation psychologically.

The findings, too, demonstrate myth as a psyche-speak. No, archetypes such as Oberon and Titania or Puck are just drives of lust for power or chaos externalized. This stability is disrupted by how the visionary renderings thereof outwardly enmesh the fray of inner emotionality as mythic action so that when the supernatural intervenes rendering that which has been envisioned visible rationalized control collapses. The strategic use of myth the analysis argues thus confirms the claim of this study that when Shakespeare then actively employs myth all he is trying to do is make processes that he is attempting to render invisible in dramatic terms, as transparent as may be all available to the audience of his plays.

The third, and no less interesting, finding has to do with the role of transformation in the mythic structure of the play. Both literally and metaphorically, sexual transition becomes one of the primary strategies through which identity is re-stabilized and transformed. In other words, nothing essential to Bottom coheres to what he now hears, his changes

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being at one remove or another empty with respect to his original self, the same applies to the confused lovers who undergo radical reversals, whereas, in myth, both metamorphoses are conceptually enfolded and Shakespeare uses myth in order to wrestle with the idea of mutability of identity and the perniciousness of the illusion of desire being something transient. These facelifts are on offer as partial, temporary sidelights, continuing cycles of rebirth rather than finality.

Analysis also indicates that, rather than simply a source of historical content, the myth acts as a cultural and philosophical lens focusing on Renaissance humanist ideals. Or more generally, civically-determined and politically-prescribed rational secularism, order, and authority versus mythic actors of imagination, instinct, and artistic creation. Yet this encounter sets up a sort of cultural limbo in which none of these mythic traditions ever really prevails over the rest at the expense of either the rational power or the imaginative liberty. What we get instead is a sort of reconciliation that mirrors that early modern one about the relationship between drive and the gesture.

Finally, that the myth in A Midsummer Night's Dream has a meta-theatrical function that underscores the liminality of reality versus fantasy. It is hard to tell what happens at the end of the play because so much the conjunction of fantasy space and the Puck's final speech only intensifies the confusion of Myth and theatre, between their imaginaries. Greene's a priori if paradoxical belief that Shakespeare used myth both to root some facets of archetypal reality but equally to reflect on the theatrical space as a specific sociological site for dramatic depiction gives this mythic non-physical experience a role in narrative.

6. Discussion

In sum, the present study confirms that as a composition of myth, the myth in A Midsummer Night's Dream is a primary dramatic device rather than a clear secondary aesthetic element. Myth criticism, archetypal theory, and structuralist approaches all provide a model of myth in the drama as a larger dialectic of meaning, which can in turn be found on multiple levels of the drama itself. The analysis also suggests that the mythic narrative frame itself which dictates the linear trajectory of the play, from disorder to order is one that Indies are bound to follow. Shakespeare has cast this cyclical mythic pattern of renewal through disruption, and such disruption is no imperfection in the narrative, but merely a component of renewal. As such, this new finding enhances Frye's theory of comic mythos, but only as it reveals an aspect of Shakespeare explicating the psychological metamorphosis of this structural paradigm. The enchanted forest–a mythic liminal space one

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where social identities dissolve and are remade –as shown in the analysis reinforces the finding that myth mediates rather than reconciles binary oppositions.

Thus, myth is also pried loose from a mediating language of the psych. The final conclusion derived from this type of approach, that unconscious drives play out in dream mythic action, was one of the results visible in Oberon, Titania, and Puck. I think if you see this trilogy is myth needs reason: the supernatural incursion of weddings, love and envy indeed is illustrated; as a result, the delimitations of reason seems to be like that is the object that Shakespeare want to criticize. Although that insight corresponds to the big picture of Jungian archetypal theory, the discussion dives much deeper than simply psychology, placing that kind of phenomena in a sociocultural context. Thus, myth constitutes a collective symbolic order a realm of personal experience that has communal relevance.

The conversation also touches on how important myth is to change. These results indicate at least temporary signs of transformation crisis but this is ritualistic because transformation is only conscious change and not a total transformation. That myth and the transformation of Bottom into an ass is a powerful and one can almost say archetypal symbol of that myth and how Shakespeare is able to pervert the forces of myth so that they function only for comic purpose: their gravity remains, but their power is so saturated with residual strength as to be undone, So this is itself easily read as one of the ways that myth itself functions in A Midsummer Night's Dream by a kind hyperbolic inversion of life so that Shakespeare can examine what it means to be human in all its frail glory and be saved the trouble of writing a tragedy.

The final discussion, eventually, elaborate the meta-theatrical connotation of myth discussed in the analysis. We can also connect this dream framework and Puck final speech to both the myth and theatre type of mythos, because of both are illusionary and both are a representational transformation. Which makes the earlier conclusion that myth is a medium through which Shakespeare contemplates the very nature of dramatic representation concrete. And like the characters, the audience is invited to suspend reality for a new view. Thus, myth itself is at once the subject and the means of the capacity for dramatic imagination.

In brief, what the discussion reveals is the belief in myth is pivotal point in A Midsummer Night Dream, whose dramatic legacy are structure, psychology and culture. Shakespeare is much more sophisticated in his own interaction with inherited narrative and he in a way is deeply responding to myth as a more complex polysomic system around human

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experience than it was in his time. As a result, this study argues that the inclusion of myth operates as a powerful renewed pair of lenses in the field of Shakespearean scholarly work, and, one that also provides an integrated model for the study of myth in a wider sample of dramatic literature.

Conclusion

This study of myth in William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream argues that myth is a central quality in A Midsummer Night's Dream, rather than an incidental tool of dramatic imagination. Using a network of myth criticism, archetypal theory, structuralist criticism, and Renaissance humanism, it demonstrates that myth is an organizing principle that organizes the play's structure, character interactions and meaning. The opposition between Athens and the wood provides an ideal tension between reason and desire, law and instinct, reality and illusion; myth allows for their resolution to be symbolically overcome by transformation and reintegration. Psychologically, myth externalizes the latent aspects of the psyche's desire for unity through these archetypal figures, while culturally it is a humanist fusion of classical mythology and English folk traditions. Their meta-theatrical function is revealed instantaneously by virtue of the dream structure, linking myth with its vanguard role of theatre. In other words, the study demonstrates the continuing relevance of myth criticism, and this fusion of myth and close reading may be extended to other early modern drama. drama.

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