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ABSTRACT

Symbol, Myth, and Ritual in Selected Plays of Derek Walcott

A Myth Critical Approach

Patrick Angus Butcher Anthony

This dissertation examines the relationship between myth, ritual, and symbols in the four plays from Derek Walcott's first published collection, Dream on Monkey Mountain and Other Plays, and in the unpublished musical, Marie Laveau, using the myth critical method. The study reviews the history of the myth criticism debate and the main issues involved, including the notion of myth, its relationship to ritual, and the application of anthropological insights to literary criticism. Out of two specific case studies in myth criticism by Thomas Porter, Myth and Modern American Drama and Robert J. Brophy, Robinson Jeffers : Myth, Ritual, and Symbol in his Narrative Poems, methodological principles are drawn for use in the analysis of the selected plays. Victor Turner's notion of social drama and liminality are also utilized, illustrating the myth critical principle of anthropological insights enhancing literary criticism.

Keywords : Patrick Angus Butcher Anthony; Derek Walcott, poet and playwright; myth critical method.