



Psyche and Symbol in the Theater of Federico García Lorca: Perlimplin, Yerma, Blood Wedding

By Rupert C. Allen

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Symbol and psyche are twin concepts in contemporary symbolological studies, where the symbol is considered to be a "statement" by the psyche. The psyche is a manifold of conscious and unconscious contents, and the symbol is their mediator. Because Lorca's dramatic characters are psychic entities made up of both conscious and unconscious elements, they unfold, grow, and meet their fate in a dense realm of shifting symbols.

In Psyche and Symbol in the Theater of Federico García Lorca, Rupert Allen analyzes symbolically three dramatic works of Lorca. He has found *Perlimplín* to be a good deal more complex in both psyche and symbol than it has been admitted to be. *Yerma* involves psychological complications that have not been considered in the light of modern critical analysis, and the symbolic reaches of *Blood Wedding* have until this book remained largely unexplored.

Lorca was no stranger to the "agony of creation," and this struggle sometimes appears symbolically in the form of his dramatic characters. Both *Yerma* and *Blood Wedding* reflect specific problems underlying the creative act, for they are "translations" into the realm of sexuality of the creative turmoil experienced by Lorca the poet. *Perlimplín* portrays the paradoxical suicide as a self-murder born out of the futile attempt to create not a poem, but a self.

Previous criticism of these three plays has been dominated by critical assumptions that are transcended by Lorca's own twentieth-century mentality. Allen's analysis provides a new view of Lorca as a dramatist and presents new material to students of symbology.

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About the Author

Rupert C. Allen (1927–2008) was Professor of Spanish at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

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