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"Shakespearean Values: Othello in Time and Place" - Abstract

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What's wrong with (in) Othello? Although the traditional answer has been to see him as a victim of "the green-eyed monster," Othello's jealousy is a symptom of the "values" permeating Shakespeare's world at the turn of the seventeenth century. These values—the relative worth of wit and witchcraft, the influence of place on the person, the acceptance or censure of violence against women, and the contest between Europe and the racial 'other'—create the characters and tragic action of Shakespeare's play. Understanding how they do so is the first step in deciding what value this story has for audiences today. Does Othello challenge or reinforce the values of Shakespeare's society? of ours?