



Eugene O'Neill and His Visionary Quest

By R.R. Khare

Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1992. N.A. Book Condition: New. X+260pp The book is a consistent exploration of the visionary quest for happiness which constitutes O'Neill's most remarkable preoccupation as a tragic dramatist. It begins with a discussion of the nature of tragic vision and its raw material-the human condition. The two manifestations of the tragic vision are then discussed in relation to their positive and negative applications. This is illustrated with reference to the earliest plays with 'desire'- its prompting, upsurge, commitment, accentuation and final consummation-as the motif, underlining a final antithesis. This is followed by more complex embodiments of the visionary quest and two of ten most baffling plays of O'Neill-'The Great God Brown' and 'Lazarus Laughed'-are used to illustrate this complexity which reveals the Christ-like and the Satanic elements of human nature as they emerge in the Quest. Two further limits of human existence which are disclosed by 'Strange Interlude' and 'Mourning Becomes Electra' plausibly shown as stages of this quest. The negative vision is seen to be dominant yet held in balance by the positive vision in the two religious (or anti-religious) plays discussed as its vantage-point. The question of identity (and its loss and repossession) in...

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