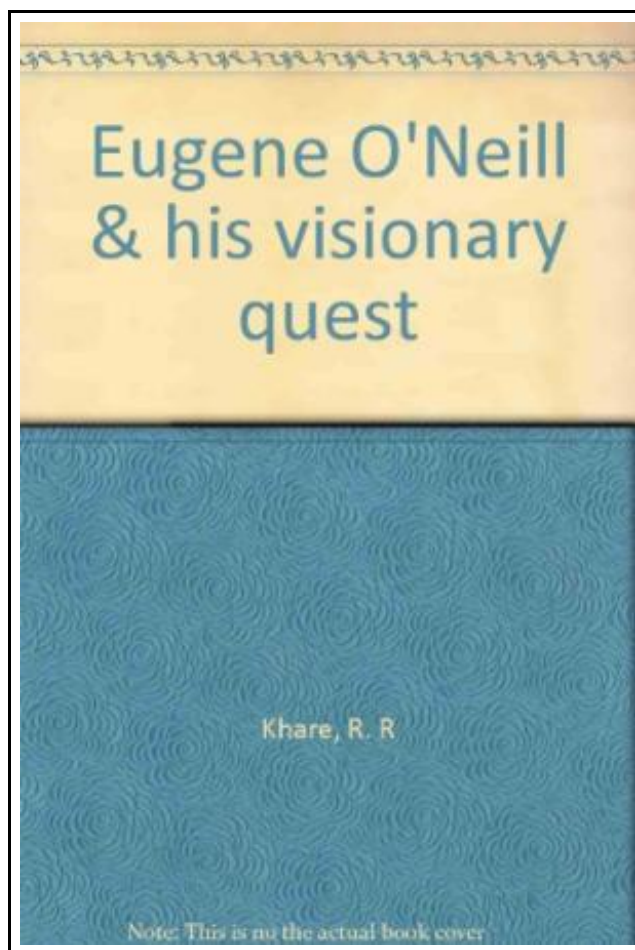


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EUGENE O'NEILL AND HIS VISIONARY QUEST

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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 a grossly materialistic world is then taken up and finally the plays which round off his career (no less spatial and tranquil than Shakespeare's last plays) are taken up and the conclusion aptly sums up the whole career of O'Neill as one of visionary aspiration and release. The final appearance of identities with Shakespeare was another fruitful line of an exploration of these in greater detail and this very significant and potentially promising inquiry is embodied in an appendix.

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