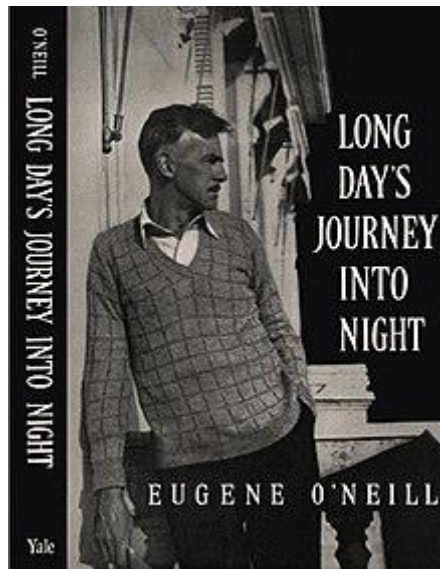


**Alienation and Addiction to Dysfunction in the Family in
Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night***

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Courtesy: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_Day%27s_Journey_into_Night

Abstract

Long Day's Journey into night is an auto biographical play, a play of a great power and craftsmanship. It is a recalling of a day in the O'Neill's household. The names are partially changed the surname becomes Tyrone, Ella Quinlan O'Neill, the Playwright's mother becomes Mary Cavan Tyrone the playwright gives himself the name Edmund, which was the name of a brother who died in childhood (Her called Eugene), is father and his elder brother Keep their own first name James.

Introduction

In his drama *Long Day's Journey into Night* he has presented the reality of life. The paper deals with the theme of alienation and addiction due to which the family gets shattered and longing for the undying love. It will also discuss about the isolation of man due to which he always feels separated from the family and extremeness of addiction which almost leads to mental trauma. Thus the paper will highlight O'Neill's exploration of human isolation and extremeness of addiction leads to dysfunction in the family.

The play opens in Tyrone's fogbound summer house which keeps them apart from the outer world and presents the reality of life. The play begins in the morning just after the breakfast. It presents the story of four Tyrone's, the money-loving father, James Tyrone, his wife Mary, their elder son, Jamie and the younger son, Edmund.

Alienation

Alienation is one of the prominent themes which are projected through all the major characters in the play. The characters have been presented without any bias as each and every character has its own importance in the play presenting their own problem in their life. The theme of alienation is highly projected through the character of James Tyrone. James Tyrone was once a Broadway actor. He was much interested in his job and money than his family. By choosing the profession as an actor, he has spent most of his time in cheap hotels and bars due to which he was not able to provide comfortable life to his wife and children. His job as an actor has made him completely separated from his family and hated by his wife and children. On the other hand he never hates any of his family members but lives isolated. He fails to be an artist and a husband as well as a father due to which he starts drinking and makes most of his days in bars. As being a lonely man and hated by family he feels alienated and separated due to his own fate.

Addiction

Mary Tyrone was the wife of James and mother of Jamie and Edmund. She suffers from loneliness and extreme addiction of morphine. Mary had a dream of becoming a nun or a concert pianist but when she fell in love with James Tyrone her dreams got shattered. She was happy when she married James, but when the years passed she has to travel with her husband on road tours and to stay in dirty hotels. James being an actor he was much interested in earning money and mostly stayed in theatre due to which he left his wife alone most of the days. His wife remarks:

And Mr. Tyrone is never worried about anything, except money and property and he'll end his days in poverty. I mean, deeply worried. Because he cannot really understand anything else (p.87).

During the birth of Edmund she was prescribed to take morphine in order to reveal from pain but it had made him a permanent drug-addict. Due to this consumption of drugs she feels separated from her family and never finds time to spend with them. Love of a mother is must in every family but it lacks in the family of Tyrone and this addiction almost makes her to reach a state of mental illness. So Mary lives a life of loneliness and insecurity and consumes more and more drugs.

Jamie

Jamie was the elder son of James and Mary. He suffers from extreme loneliness and separation. He leads a meaningless life without any goal. He dropped out of several colleges and depended on his parents for money. He has the capability of becoming a fine actor but he spends his money on alcohol and women. He is considered to be a useless person in the family and a nagging son to his parents. His father views that he is not more than an aimless

creature who spends money lavishly on useless things like alcohol and women. Commenting on his attitude, his father says:

Your mind was so poisoned by your own failure in life, you wanted to believe every man was a knave with his soul for sale, and every woman who wasn't a whore was a fool (p.30).

Jamie's attitude towards Edmund reveals the main cause for his isolation. He hates Edmund because he thinks that he is the root-cause of their mother's drug addiction and made their mother separated from them. Deprived of mother's love and father's affection, he turns into a half-dead person. Love is the essential truth, a bare necessity for every human being. But when Jamie fails to achieve the love of his parents, he becomes frustrated and gets isolated.

Edmund Tyrone

Edmund Tyrone, the younger son of Tyrone's is the self portrait of Eugene O'Neill. The character of Edmund reflects the life of O'Neill himself. Edmund leads a life of aimlessness and detachment because he considers himself a "thankless child" (p.77) to his parents. His father thinks that he is the reason for his mother's worsening health condition. From his mother's view he is an unwanted child. His mother says to him: "You were born afraid. Because I was so afraid to bring you into this world" (p.96).

Moreover he suffers from tuberculosis where his father wants to send him to a state-owned sanatorium so that he gets cured. He never finds peace at his home and remains as a stranger. He is partially alcoholic but not like his father or brother. So his father's greediness, his mother's love-hate attitude, his brother's envious nature makes him to feel isolated from his family.

Conclusion

On the whole, *Long Day's Journey into Night* signifies the reality of life O'Neill has presented the loneliness of man and addiction through every character. Moreover the title, *Long Day's Journey into Night* is not a forward journey but a journey in the backward direction reminding every character of their root-cause for their own isolation and loneliness. Thus Eugene O'Neill has provided an opportunity to see how the reality of life is revealed where an extreme alienation and addiction leads to an aimless life in his drama *Long Day's Journey into Night*.

Works cited

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