

DISSERTAÇÃO DE MESTRADO — INGLÊS

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Modern Version of the Myth. Advisor: Ana Lúcia Almeida Gazolla  
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This study aims at analysing the elements by means of which Eugene O'Neill, in his trilogy Mourning Becomes Electra, departs from the classical versions of the Electra myth and presents a modern, original elaboration of that Stoff. Freud's theory of instincts and of the Oedipus complex, as well as specific ideological aspects of American culture, are also discussed, since they influence characterization and function as the base for the action. It is demonstrated how the play is structured on the principle of polarity, which underlies setting, imagery, and characters' portrayal. The role of psychological fate in the trilogy is examined, as it limits the individual freedom of the characters and leads to their alienation and self-destruction. Finally, taking as support Hegel's and Max Scheler's views on the tragic, the question of genre definition is focused on. It is concluded that O'Neill's characters are not tragic heroes, but rather embody traits of contemporary self-doubt, rebellion, and fragmentation. The dark view of life projected in the play is discussed, since the outcome reveals that on an individual or historical level, there is no solution for human conflict.