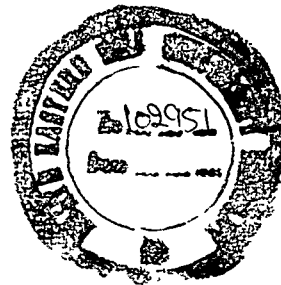


SCHOPENHAUER AND NIETZSCHE
ON TRAGEDY : A COMPARISON

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PART-FULFILMENT OF THE
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She has been duly registered and the dissertation presented is worthy of being considered for the award of the M.Phil Degree. This work has not been submitted for any degree of any other university.

Dated : 17th May, 1982.
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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Tragedy as an art-form has been raised to an especially high pedestal by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche the two German philosophers. Until Hegel, Aristotle's Poetics had completely captured the mind and interest of readers and theoreticians.

Plato exhorts every poet to represent man in every way good. Aristotle defies Plato by ascribing tragic flaw to the tragic hero. Although the problem of guilt and responsibility is central to the concept of Tragedy, Aristotle treats the ethical problem as a function of the plot. His theory of 'hamartia' lays more stress on moral flaw in a tragic hero. Thus Aristotle's theory of 'hamartia' is to counteract Plato's idealistic insistence on man's goodness.

After a long lapse of silence in which Aristotle reigns supreme, Hegel appears on the scene. Unlike Aristotle, Hegel emphasises the deed and not

the flaw of character. In Hegel's view, the conflict is not between good and evil but between two one-sided positions -- each of which, embodies some good. Aristotle's tragic flaw is a result of the conflict between good and evil but Aristotle stresses ^{on} the conflict between two ethical positions which are both right.

Thus by turning dramatically away from Aristotle, Hegel threw the latter's theory of 'hamartia' into the realm of insignificance. Hegel did not propound any complete theory of Tragedy but his scattered observations about the tragic fate of Greek heroes have influenced the modern approach to Tragedy.

The two German philosophers -- Schopenhauer and Nietzsche also have profoundly influenced the modern conception of Tragedy.

Schopenhauer rejects Hegel's theory which manifests the force of the 'spirit' in the Universe. In The World as Will and Idea he explains that the main spring of Tragedy is not the 'Spirit' but the 'Will'. This will is, according to him, the core of the universe. It is blind, irrational and innate in man. As the heart of reality and ^{the} 'I', the will works

blindly without any knowledge.

Schopenhauer's theory of tragedy unfolds the drama of suffering for man as a victim of pain and struggle. Thus Tragedy gives a full insight into man's world of conflict and convinces us of the futile existence of human beings. Since man's life has no meaning and value, it logically follows that 'Will' is futile too.

In Tragedy, the lamentation of mankind calls upon us to expel the will. Suffering and pain are the positive aspects of life. But if truth is 'Will to life', how can we will to live if we are subjected to suffering and death? This question constitutes the leitmotif of Schopenhauer's conception of Tragedy.

Schopenhauer ~~states~~ that the mind is the product of the Will and Tragedy helps it to know the will. Within the framework of the will or the urge to live, the mind strives to settle somewhere where there is no will, and therefore, no world. It then suddenly takes a leap and removes itself from the will which is unreasoned and without any form. It resides in a world of its own and this world is the world of contemplation. In pure contemplation

there is no substance ~~at~~ all for all substance is located in the world of the will.

Man's suffering, according to Schopenhauer, makes us realise that there is something beautiful and sublime somewhere. Tragedy leads us to feel that there is no joy in the will to live. But the moment we realise this fact, we are inspired to adopt a note of resignation.

The function of tragedy, according to Schopenhauer, is to oppose our will to live and what tragedy requires of us is resignation. He, therefore, preaches the ascetic ideal. His ideal of an ascetic saint is not one connected with the Divine being but it is the picture of a man who has renounced the world. The power of remaining in the state of contemplation tears man away from his personal desires and wishes, and helps him become a pure knowing subject. So when he attains the faculty of intuition, he can reproduce in art whatever he has contemplated. A *pessimist* in the real sense of the word, Schopenhauer advocates a person who runs away from suffering. He also finds in tragedy a ground for teaching the doctrine of 'Nirvana'.

Nietzsche also witnesses the presence of suffering in the world. He accepts Schopenhauer's doctrine of will but in The Birth of Tragedy he liberates himself from the latter's influence. Nietzsche makes it clear that the core of the universe is not 'Will to life' but 'Will to Power'. Unlike Schopenhauer's Will, his 'will to power' is positive and is the basis of the elemental energy. It identifies this elemental energy with the Dionysian. In Schopenhauer, the 'will to life' leads to Nirvana, but in Nietzsche, the will to power helps man to a joyful assertion of life. Unlike Schopenhauer, Nietzsche does not escape from pain and suffering. In the last section of The Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche tries to understand the psychology of the sufferers. Dionysian life is overflowing and even pain adds pleasure to life. Unlike Schopenhauer, Nietzsche does not escape from pain or suffering. He rejects Aristotle's theory of pity and terror and ^{also} rejects Christianity because it looks upon suffering as something negative.

Nietzsche's concept of Tragedy is the bringing together of the gods -- Dionysus -- the god of wild energy -- and Apollo -- the god of form and order. The meeting of the two gods always ends up in suffering. The wild energy of Dionysus is to be

arrested and hence the need for Apollo the god of form and beauty. It is only when Apollo lends a touch of beauty to the irrational Dionysus that tragedy results.

Nietzsche does not discard suffering or misery for he finds that these are essential to Art. The middle world of Art transforms the ugly reality of suffering into a thing of beauty.

Referring to the Greeks, Nietzsche points out that they are sensitive to the world's suffering and misery, and tragic Art is the comfort they create for themselves. The creation of Arts changes man's attitude to life and enables him to accept life in its totality. It is only when Art opens man's eyes that he wakes up to the consciousness that life after all is worth living and worth fighting for. Art, according to Nietzsche, is not purposeless and aimless for it acts as a stimulus to life and also embellishes it. It opposes the world of reality but cannot at the same time do without it. Hence it tries to possess and conquer that world completely. Nietzsche's world is the world of the will to power and it is this will which helps man to reach the stature of a Superman -- a state where self-overcoming and self-denial is reached. It is

then that man can affirm life and say 'yes' to it.

Nietzsche finds in Aeschylus and Euripides a constant conflict and reconciliation between the Art-world of Apollonian dream inspiration and the dionysian art-world of unrestrained energy and chaos. These two great Tragedians have, in Nietzsche's opinion, raised Tragedy to the great height of Art. When reason returns through Socrates in Euripides, Greek Tragedy, according to him, declines. A thinking man is, therefore, the cause of the death of tragedy. The dionysian element is rationalized out of tragedy under the influence of Socrates, making it less revealing than it was capable of being.

Nietzsche hopes for the rebirth of Tragedy in the birth of the dionysian man who will unhesitatingly say 'yes' to life with all its cares and sufferings.

Nietzsche is far removed from Schopenhauer's resignationism, for the presentation of the seamy side of life is for him 'highly enjoyable'. Suffering life persuades us that our own life is not hopeless and that through Art man can achieve joy and happiness.

This dissertation aims at making a systematic study of and, in the process, bringing into a meaningful focus, the aesthetic world of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche in general and their distinctive contribution to the concept of tragedy in particular.

C H A P T E R I

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER "THE WORLD AS WILL AND ART"

In his doctoral Thesis "The Four Fold Root of Sufficient Reason", Schopenhauer had cast doubts upon the prevailing opinion that Reason was the instrument for discovering the nature of Reality. Before him, Hegel had stated that the universe manifested the force of Spirit. The Hegelian explanation of the Spirit was very popular in German Philosophy and Hegel's authority almost reigned supreme till Schopenhauer challenged him. In The World As Will and Idea, Schopenhauer says that blind and irrational 'Will' is the ultimate reality. He differs from Hegel's view for he maintains that it is the Will and not the Spirit which unfolds itself. Schopenhauer makes 'Will' supreme over everything and Hegel's doctrine of the Spirit is devalued when he states that the Spirit is only a tool for the all powerful Will.

Schopenhauer sees the working of blind Will in the universe. This Will, which he identifies as the

Will to live, is the very kernel of reality itself. It is a powerful urge without sense or reason and it is active even without the guidance and control of knowledge. It appears in everything and is not affected by birth or death. It is a 'thing-in-itself' for it is above time and space and exists independently of our perception. The Will lies outside the province of the 'Principle of Sufficient Reason' for it is groundless. It differs from its manifestations which are entirely subject to it.

Schopenhauer finds that the whole world of phenomena, including man, is the manifestation of the one Will. Each species, each organism is determined by the Universal Will. Schopenhauer's cosmic will is self-determined and is free. It is :

the ultimate irreducible primeval principle of being, the source of all phenomena, the begetter present and active in every single one of them, the impelling force producing the whole visible world and all life¹.

¹ Thomas Mann, The Living Thoughts of Schopenhauer, London: Lowe and Brydon Printers Limited, 1942, p. 6.

This Will is the impelling force which produces the world and life and is the source of all phenomena. Like Shelley's 'West Wind', the Will is wild, uncontrollable and ruthless. It demands objectivation and this objectivation appears faintly in inorganic things, more fully in plants and in animals and most completely in man. The Will's objectivation occurs in such a way that its original unity becomes a multiplicity and the process receives the appropriate name of the 'principle of individuation'. The Will thus disperses itself into the varied parts of the phenomenal world existing in time and space, but, at the same time it remains in full strength in each single and smallest of those parts. It is absolute, free and all powerful and is a striving, yearning force which takes the various forms according to its will.

In Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks, a novel which receives its intellectual plot from Schopenhauer, the novelist depicts Will in the personality of the Consul's father -- old Buddenbrooks. In him we see the picture of "a lantern illuminating the way of the Will". Neither the imaginary theory about the respective activities of lightning and thunder formed by his grand-child Tony, nor, the romantic fancies of

Consul Buddenbrooks -- his son -- could assail the Will of old Buddenbrooks to be a Buddenbrook. The old man remains the embodiment of "the perfect object of the Will".

According to Schopenhauer, the Will is, because it wills, and it wills because it is, and there is no other external power or force to check it.

Schopenhauer's Will differs from Theism which :

represents the world as proceeding from a will [and] puts this will outside the universe and causes it to act on things only indirectly With [him] on the other hand, the will acts not so much on things as in them, indeed they themselves are simply nothing but the very visibility of the will².

² E.F.J. Payne, Parerga and Paralipomena, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974. p. 131.

Schopenhauer's Will is the inside of the world and the world is only the mirror of this willing. In his conception of the world, Schopenhauer echoes Plato who says that the things found in it :

have no real existence
they are always becoming,
they never are. The only
things that have real
existence, that always are
and never pass away, are
the actual originals of
those shadows, the eternal
ideas, the primeval forms
of all things . . . they
are timeless and truly
existent³.

According to Schopenhauer also, the 'eternal becoming endless flux' characterises the inner nature of Will. The very fact that nature continues to maintain the forms and repeats the life process throughout infinite time proves that its core is the very will to live. To Schopenhauer, therefore,

³ Thomas Mann, The Living Thought of Schopenhauer,
op. cit., p. 2.

everything is an expression of the primordial Will to live, which may be characterised as irrational and blind impulse. The blind will to live appears as an unconscious striving in the whole of unorganised nature, but the unsatisfied striving shows itself more revealingly in man's incessant fight for happiness. In spite of this ceaseless strife, man as an objectivation of the will fails to reach a permanent Eldorado in life. Like an animal or an inorganic matter, he is also the product of blind will. But he differs from them because he possesses certain qualities which have accrued to him in the course of his evolutionary development. Thus knowledge, intellect or reason are those qualities which differentiate man from a beast or a plant.

The irrational will is more naked in the plant which reveals nothing but the mere striving for existence. In it, the struggle for existence is blind for it is not guided or directed by any motive. In the same way also, the animal appears more naive than man, for knowledge or intellect makes the latter "capable of a high degree of dissimulation".

Schopenhauer is of the opinion that knowledge and intellect are totally different from Will. He finds that Will is independent of knowledge and can exist without it. Will as the dominant factor is not, therefore, conditioned by the mind, intellect or reason. The intellect is not the master and it thus occupies the second position to the Will. As servant to the Will, "it is originally quite a stranger to the decisions of the Will". The Will is ever active even without any knowledge, for the latter is completely subject to the Will. Like sensibility, nerves, brain, the sex organs, knowledge too is an expression of Will at a given phase of its objectivation. This Will is not susceptible to any satisfaction and so it goes on forever.

The plant and the animal, for example, reveal a restless and never satisfied striving. We find the same strife in man. Man seeks satisfaction, but it is beyond his reach. His desires are always thwarted and he remains unfulfilled. In life's struggle he achieves nothing but pain and suffering. In this view, Schopenhauer comes very close to what the Buddha said 500 years before Christ. According to the Buddha, life contains

little but pain and suffering which are the products of desire. Schopenhauer also arrives at the conclusion that desire leads to nothing but pain and suffering. He finds that man is a creature of pain and sorrow. His Will drives him to want or desire one thing after another. But the moment his desire is fulfilled, a terrible boredom and void follow. Life becomes unbearable again and he once more strives for something new. In this way life swings between pain and emptiness, desire and boredom. Satisfaction and happiness are a negative quality but suffering or pain is a positive state.

The desire of the 'Will to live' can never be satiated and even death or suicide fails to put an end to its continual wish. The Will to live triumphs over death through the reproductive organs of the species and sexual love is the affirmation of the 'Will to live'. Man comes again and again to the position of being able to preserve his own life. So the error which has brought him into being -- the original sin of his birth can never be set right by death or suicide.

In Buddenbrooks, Hanno's father, Thomas, is perturbed by the premonition of death. He poses this question -- 'Do I hope to live on in my son . . .

Where shall I be when I am dead" ? The answer he receives is "I shall be in all those who forever will say 'I'. This is the Schopenhauerian belief in the power of the cosmic will to safeguard the species.

. It is in sex that Schopenhauer finds the forms of the 'Will to live' and it is this discovery which anticipates Freud's libido. *A man in love is*, according to Schopenhauer, a slave of the will which is indifferent to the individual's self-hood⁴. Here all 'I saying' must come to a stop for the all powerful will goes on endlessly without regard for the individual as member of the species. As there is no place for logic and reason in the Darwinian's struggle for survival, so also there is none in Schopenhauer's world of blind Will.

But as ~~accidents~~ accidents take place in this world, so also an accident occurs when the will exerts its power to express itself. The Will in its blind and irrational struggle produces the mind, and this accidental product, the mind, brings to man what is called knowledge. What the mind sees in the will is utter senselessness, an almost frightening absence of

⁴ Erich Heller, Thomas Mann : The Ironic German, Ohio: The World Publishing Company, 1958, p. 59.

logic. The mind then rejects the Will and knowledge which proceeds originally from the will itself and :

originally destined for the service of the Will for the accomplishment of its aims . . . remains almost throughout entirely subjected to its service. [It] can deliver itself from this bondage, throw off its yoke and free from all the aims of will exist purely for itself simply as a clear mirror of the world⁵.

Erich Heller rightly points out that the plot of Schopenhauer's philosophy is based on a conflict between the will and the mind. This conflict starts because the mind, finding the world meaningless and utterly blind, cannot accept the irrational will. The mind thus tries to free itself from the tyranny and bondage of the will. It, therefore, creates its own world and leaps into it. This world is what Schopenhauer calls the world of 'contemplation'. It is in this world that all strivings and desires cease. The world is the world of nothingness and all that it stretches before us is

⁵ Irwin Edman (ed.), The Philosophy of Schopenhauer, New York: The Modern Library, 1956, p. 118.

nothingness. The mind thus liberates itself and passes into a void where it experiences emancipation. The world of contemplation has no substance, for all substance has been left behind in the world of Will. This is a paradox which even Schopenhauer himself would not solve. It underlines the plot of his philosophy and prepares the ground for his celebrated philosophy of aesthetic contemplation.

Schopenhauer admits that the will can will against itself and when this takes place, there is no more will, no idea, and, therefore, no world. By denying itself, the will has willed against itself and abolishes its itselfness and so 'nothing' is left. Negation is thus a passport to 'nothing' and in a state of resignation, perfect will-lessness prevails. At this stage the individual who is an objectivation of the will ceases to will anything and confirms in himself the greatest indifference to everything. The assertion of the will is denied and so the will stops. When the will ceases, man achieves inward joy and peace. The denial of the will ultimately brings tranquility and freedom from cares and suffering. Hence Resignation delivers the individual from pain and anxiety for :

the aesthetic pleasure in the beautiful consists in great measure in the fact that in entering the state of pure contemplation, we are lifted for the moment above all willing i.e. all wishes and cares; we become as it were, freed from ourselves⁶.

When the will to live is rendered ineffective, a great change takes place for the individual and the subject no longer remains an object of the will. A will-less subject appears in his place and this subject enjoys a rest from being a tool for the satisfaction of the will. He adopts a purely objective and disinterested point of view. He stops considering the 'where, the when, the why and the whither of things' and looks simply at the 'what'. In the state of contemplation he loses himself in the object forgetting his own individuality and becomes the clear mirror of the object or fuses into one with it. Now as a pure will-less, painless, time-less subject of knowledge, he contemplates only the essential in an object. He ceases to be an individual and has lost

⁶ Thomas Mann, The Living Thoughts of Schopenhauer, op. cit. pp. 110, 111.

himself in his contemplation. In contemplation, the world as will has vanished and what remains is the idea. When the perceived particular thing is raised to the Idea of the whole species and the knowing individual to the subject of will-less knowledge, an aesthetic state has been reached by him and the attention is no longer blurred by any motive or purpose. This painless aesthetic state is praised by Epicurus as the greatest achievement of life. Schopenhauer finds that at a particular juncture when the mind takes a leap into the world of contemplation, something new is born and the new-born child is Art.

Art is a kind of anaesthetic for the will to live and it acts as a liberator. It brings about a kind of nirvana from life - from the world of will. So for the first time, the life of will has its negation and, therefore, its enemy in Art. No one before Schopenhauer had seen this point, for everyone thought that Art was a mere representation of life. It is Schopenhauer who comes to the conclusion that Art is the mind's leap which involves a rejection of life and the soul's passing into a world of nothingness and void.

Schopenhauer is the first philosopher to bring out the conflict between Will and Mind. Out of

the dramatic conflict between Will and Mind is born Art and it becomes the most effective adversary of life. "Art is everywhere at its goal" and in this respect it differs from Sciences which never attains its end. This is possible for Art because it arrests the object of contemplation and makes it a representation of the whole. It does this without any dependence on the use of rational methods.

According to Schopenhauer, the artist as a will-less subject identifies his suffering with that of other people and recognises in others his true self. He vividly sees the suffering humanity and shudders at his own existence. Turning away from life he ceases to will. He now enters into the state of contemplation and experiences inward peace and joy. He recognises the ideas of things and becomes momentarily impersonal. His achievement is to make people look into the world through his eyes. Aesthetic pleasure in contemplation proceeds from the recognition of the individual object. It also proceeds from the fact that the knower recognises himself not as individual but as a pure will-less subject of knowledge.

Worringer rightly points out that according to Schopenhauer :



the felicity of aesthetic contemplation consists precisely in the fact that in it man is delivered from his will and remains only as pure subject, as the pure mirror of the object . . . he who is immersed in such contemplation ceases to be an individual for the individual has lost himself in this contemplation. He is the pure will-less, painless, timeless subject of cognition⁷.

The artist as a pure will-less subject no longer hates or desires but simply contemplates on the idea of the object before him. A work of art or the perceived object is not related to desire. It, therefore, enables the beholder to liberate himself from the bondage of the will. As the knowing subject, the artist takes the help of knowledge to reproduce by means of Art what he has apprehended in contemplation.

According to Schopenhauer, the sense of beauty is associated with the contemplation of phenomena agreeable to the beholder. In their presence he

⁷ Wilhelm Worringer, Abstraction and Empathy, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953, pp. 137-138

loses himself spontaneously in the object of his contemplation. But when he contemplates the Ideas of phenomena hostile to himself, self-forgetfulness is difficult and he requires efforts to lose himself in them. However, in rising above the hostile aspects of the ~~phenomenon~~ phenomenon to contemplation of its idea, the will-less subject has a sense of victory over the terror inspired by the idea of the phenomena. A feeling of sublime is achieved when the sense of triumph is injected into the pleasure of contemplation.

Schopenhauer finds that everything is beautiful because at some stage of the Will's objectivity, 'everything' is an expression of an idea. Since the Will is above time, space and causality, it is self-determining and wills freely to objectify itself. In its irrational striving, the Will follows a fixed line of development in which we can see successive grades of objectivation rising step by step from the level of inanimate and blind forces of nature to the highest level attained in the conscious life of man. In aesthetic contemplation of inorganic and vegetative life, the Ideas represent only low grades of the objectivation of the will and are, therefore, not manifestation of deep significance and rich intent. If, on the other hand, man

or animals are the objects of aesthetic contemplation, pleasure will consist in the object or the comprehension of these ideas which are the nearest revelation of the will.

Thus in these successive grades we find the will objectively presenting with more and more distinctness till at last in human beings we get our closest view of it.

In classifying and arranging the different Arts, Schopenhauer points out the successive grades of objectivation of the Will. At the lowest level are the blind mechanical forces of nature.

Architecture is the art which reveals the Ideas manifested in the inanimate world. In it the Will is manifested in the conflict between rigidity and gravity. Architecture also contemplates other properties of matter such as fluidity, cohesion and the reflection of light. It achieves beauty only when it succeeds in revealing a balance and harmony between these material forces and properties of matter.

Landscape painting comes one step above architecture. As an Art, landscape painting reveals

the hidden forms and laws of inanimate nature. Animal painting and sculpture show the Ideas exemplified in the lower order of animate things.

Next come painting and sculpture of human form. Sculpture has more to do with man's outward grace and virtue but it cannot successfully portray his inner life and character. In delineating the nature and Idea of an individual person, portraiture as an Art has to work with in the limits of its materials like painting and canvas.

Music as an Art satisfies Schopenhauer and he finds it as direct an objectivation and copy of the will as the world itself⁸. As a copy of the Will it does not speak of the shadow but of the thing-in-itself. In Schopenhauer's opinion, music is unique. Unlike other Arts, it is not a revelation of some definite idea or ideas. Its works are not copies of copies, but first hand imitation of the original. As an Art, music liberates the human mind from the servitude of the Will. Schopenhauer finds that it can do so because of the peculiar relation which it bears to the Will. The universal language used by the music composer is not discursive but still it expresses the deepest secrets of human willing and feeling and also discloses the kernel of the world.

⁸ Irwin Edman (ed.), The Philosophy of Schopenhauer, op cit., p. 201.

Music, therefore, is according to Schopenhauer, the only art to penetrate to the core of the Will and to express directly its essence without the need of Ideas.

Schopenhauer holds the view that Poetry as a great Art represents the ideas of man in all their complexity. The poet's language objectifies the Ideas of man and its aim is to manifest these Ideas. These Ideas constitute the highest grade of the objectivation of the Will. The poet, therefore, is the mirror which reveals to us what man feels, thinks and does. In creating and developing his characters, the poet has transformed himself into them and speaks out of each of them.

Schopenhauer detects in Tragedy the summit of poetical Art. Tragedy is, therefore, the highest kind of poetry. Through it, we feel most intimately and directly the irrationality and blindness of the Will and the strife and suffering with which its objectivations are infected.

C H A P T E R I I

SCHOPENHAUER'S "THEORY OF TRAGEDY"

Schopenhauer's theory of Tragedy is one of the most important theories ever formulated by a Philosopher. Although he expounds his ideas in a very few pages - 3 pages at the end of Section 51, Vol. II of The World as Will and Representation, they are important not only as a significant dramatic theory but also as a basis of the aesthetic philosophy as it developed in the early nineteenth century. Its historical importance must, therefore, be recognised at the same time as its contribution to the theory of Drama.

Schopenhauer bases his theory of Tragedy on his philosophy of Will. As seen in the first chapter, the Will as a thing-in-itself is, according to him, the core of existence. The Will is different from and completely independent of knowledge. It objectifies itself in all things, and everything in this world as such is its manifestation. The multiplicity of phenomena in which

the Will manifests itself is thus only its appearance. Schopenhauer following Buddha calls it 'Maya'.

The Will is blind, striving without any intelligent aim and lies outside the 'principle of sufficient reason'. It divides itself into a number of individual Wills and all these Wills continue to strive with one another, for striving is the one will's sole nature. This continual striving of the will reveals itself most poignantly in the life of man who is the highest objectivation. Man continuously strives for happiness but fails to reach the goal although he does not stop but goes on fighting.

Schopenhauer's irrational and blind Will is a tragic drama and one of its chief features is conflict. The conflict is visible not only in man or in the different forms of his body but different individual wills reveal the same. The result of this endless conflict is suffering. The division of the will into an infinite number of individuals or wills brings about :

the unspeakable pain, the wail of
humanity, the triumph of evil, the

scornful mastery of choice and the irritable fall of the just and innocent is here presented to us; and in this lies a significant hint of the nature of the world and of existence⁹.

Schopenhauer's idea of 'principium individuation' represents the division of the one will into a multiplicity of individual wills. This division makes the will forget its original unity which is its very nature.

Schopenhauer's conception of ^{the} one will has some similarity with Hegel's idea of the Spirit. According to Hegel, when the Absolute or Ideal enters history, it takes forms which differ from one another. This similarity, however, does not help us to see the same origin in Hegel's or Schopenhauer's theory of Tragedy.

According to Hegel, drama has its origin when the Spirit condescends to enter the world of deed and action and becomes man's history. The Spirit takes different forms one of which will

⁹ Irwin Edman (ed.), The Philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, op. cit. pp. 196-197.

find its representation in literature in the form of Tragedy. In spite of its subjugation to pain, suffering and death, the spirit does not lose its divine character. But once it enters the human drama, it comes down to the level of morality and reveals only its ethical substance. It is precisely at this point that Tragedy begins.

In Tragedy, Hegel sees the collision of forms which are equally good and justified because they are all forms in which the divine has taken upon itself the task of unfolding itself. When these forms take one sided absolute positions, refusing to yield to each other, tragedy takes place..

In Sophocle's Antigone, Antigone's brother has brought against his country an army of its enemies to suppress its power. In the battle against his motherland, the brother loses his life and Creon, the ruler of the city, forbids the citizens to bury the dead. Antigone is convinced that it is her duty and responsibility to bury her brother. But in performing her duty to her family, she disobeys the edict of the State. On the one hand, Creon's duty to the State demands the execution of the penalty and so Antigone loses her life.

According to Hegel, in the play, the two conflicting forces are both right, for the claim of each is equally justified. But the right of each is pushed into the wrong because it denies the right of the other. This is so, for, according to Hegel, each position is rational and is a manifestation of the divine and is, therefore, justified.

In this manner, power comes to scene against power for, although all forms are of the same substance, they clash with one another in the realm of human action and deed. Hegel points out that the conflicting forces do not come to a compromise and so when good clashes with the good, tragedy results,

In Schopenhauer's world of Will also, each individual struggles for dominance over the others and the result is pain and suffering. Every attempt to stop or drive away suffering is thwarted, for it comes again in another form like:

want, lack, care for the maintenance of life . . . it at once appears on the scene in a thousand others . . . such as sexual impulse, passion, love, jealousy, envy, hatred, anxiety, ambition,

avarice, sickness¹⁰,

Man's Will drives him on to desire one object after another but the moment one desire is fulfilled, another one crops up in its place and brings about a short-lived satisfaction.

Schopenhauer holds the view that happiness and satisfaction are negative aspects of life. His pessimistic doctrine which finds more pain than pleasure and more suffering than happiness reveals that suffering is the direct and immediate object of life and is, therefore, positive.

Walter Kaufman points out that "Schopenhauer stressed the universality of suffering more than any previous philosopher".¹¹ Because of the work of the Will, always seeking to preserve itself against all others, Schopenhauer sees existence itself as consisting in conflict and suffering. The world is only the reflection of this willing and :

¹⁰ E.F.J. Payne (Jr.), The World as Will and Representation, Vol. II, New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1969, p.315.

¹¹ Walter Kaufman, Tragedy and Philosophy, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1968, p. 290.

all suffering, all miseries that it contains belong to the expression of what the Will wills, are as they are because the Will so wills¹².

The presence of the Will implies that life is an unquenchable and endless desire. Hence, the only progress human existence makes is in terms of increasing misery. For man is at bottom a "savage, horrible beast" and this beast :

only waits for an opportunity to storm and rage, in his desire to inflict pain on others, or if they stand in his way, to kill them. It is this which is the source of all the lust of war and battle¹³.

To reveal the drama of the blind Will, Tragedy shows only pain, suffering and death as the very essence of life. The purpose is to evoke in the individual the futility of the Will, the desire to turn away from desire and the will to live. When knowledge

¹² E.F.J. Payne (Jr.), The World as Will and Representation, Vol. II. op. cit., p. 351.

¹³ Arthur Schopenhauer, "On Human Nature", London: George Allen and Unwin, 1962, p. 129.

wills against Will, the individual passes into a state of peace and calm which comes only with the surrender of the will to live. Resignation follows only when knowledge is free from the control of the Will and a state of will-lessness takes place.

Schopenhauer points out that in ancient Tragedies, the Spirit of resignation does not find a direct expression. In Greek Tragedies, no tragic hero dies without consolation. Schopenhauer cites a few examples to support this point. Oedipus Colonus, Cassandra, Hercules, Iphigenia die with some form of consolation. Neither is there in them a perceptible trace of the denial of the Will to live, for :

Almost all show the human race
under the dreadful dominion of
chance and error but not . . .
resignation¹⁴.

Schopenhauer concludes :

The ancients had not yet reached
the summit and goal of tragedy,
or indeed of the view of life

¹⁴ E.F.J. Payne (Tr.), The World as Will and Representation, op. cit., p. 434.

generally¹⁵.

The view expressed in these lines would seem to shake the very foundation of his theory. To strengthen his doctrine Schopenhauer, therefore, turns to modern Tragedy. When he examines Shakespeare's tragic plays he finds that they are different from the Greek Tragedies. In Shakespeare's tragedy he finds the unmistakable turning away from the will to live. Thus it is in modern plays that Schopenhauer discerns the denial of the Will and this yard stick convinces him that Shakespeare is greater than Sophocles and, Euripides cruder than Goethe.

Schopenhauer also points out the difference between Shakespeare's and French Tragedies. He admits the fact that although at times Shakespeare neglects the unity of time and place, his plays still present the whole of life. He finds, therefore, that Shakespeare's plays are "like a line that has breadth" for they enable us to see his characters in their entirety and life as it is. Unlike Shakespeare, French Tragedies emphasise the unity of action but pay very little or no attention to the trivial and insigni-

¹⁵ E.F.J. Payne (Tr.), op. cit., pp.434-435.

ficant things of life. Schopenhauer finds that this is the reason why in their hands "the course of the drama is like a geometrical line without breadth". For Schopenhauer then, Tragedy demands that the whole of life is portrayed and, in this portrayal, the denial of the will to live must predominate.

Schopenhauer is of the opinion that the Opera Norma is a tragedy of extreme perfection. The quietness introduced in the sound of music suggests the resignation or denial of the will to live. In the opera, he finds :

a true model of the tragic disposition of the motives, of the tragic process of the action and of tragic development, together with the effect of these in the frame of mind of the heroes which surmounts the world¹⁶.

Although Christian Tragedies can never reach the heights of the Opera Norma, Schopenhauer prefers them to Greek tragedies. In his view, tragedy gives us profound insight into the nature of human existence. We realise that what the hero pays for is not his

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 436.

sin but the original sin -- the sin or the guilt of having ever been born in this world. Man comes into the world with the burden of this sine which makes him miserable in life. The grievous suffering of the world is, therefore, the outcome of original sin. A true knowledge of original sin or existential guilt is, according to him, the core of tragedy. The Christian doctrine points out the terrible truth that sin was present in the universe even before the fall of Adam and Eve, and gave birth to many miseries and turmoils to ever characterise the lives of men.

At this point, Schopenhauer argues that the fate which a tragic hero meets is perhaps on account of man's existential guilt and not because of a flaw in his character. His view differs from Aristotle's who points out that an ideal tragic hero is involved in misfortune not as a result of deliberate vice but because of some flaw in his character or some error of judgement.

Schopenhauer whose view is more applicable to modern tragedies draws attention to the fact that it is difficult to find a flaw in Cordelia, Desdemona, Ophelia who, though without blemish yet suffer in life. In this respect Schopenhauer comes very close

to Jaspers. According to Jaspers, the tragic atmosphere arises because we "have been abandoned" to "the strange and sinister fate" :

There is something alien that
threatens us, something we cannot
escape, wherever we go, whatever
we see, whatever we hear there is
something in the air which will
destroy us, no matter what we can
do or wish¹⁷.

According to Schopenhauer, the only explanation we can offer for the suffering of innocent characters is the inescapable sin of existence which gives birth to man's pain and suffering. In "Life a Dream" Calderon the poet expresses the same view when he says :

For the greatest crime of man
Is that he ever was born¹⁸.

The origin of sin in the human family concerns both rich and poor, high and low. For this reason, Schopenhauer in his Essay "On the Suffering of the World" suggests that because of existential guilt

¹⁷ Karl Jaspers, Tragedy is not Enough, London: Victor Gallancz Ltd., 1953, p.17.

¹⁸ Irwin Edman, The Philosophy of Schopenhauer, op. cit., p.285.

and the suffering of one and all, man should not be addressed as "Monsieur, Sir, Mein Herr, but my fellow sufferer".

Schopenhauer argues that tragedy does not demand for poetic justice. He disagrees with Dr. Johnson who looks for poetic justice in some plays of Shakespeare. According to Schopenhauer, existential guilt makes a hero face life's tragedy for :

it is not his own individual sins
that the hero atones for, but
original sin, i.e. the crime of
existence itself¹⁹.

So if original sin is the answer to man's undeserved suffering, the question of poetic justice does not arise. Schopenhauer's rejection of the demand for poetic justice in tragedy is of course consistent with his doctrine of man's existential guilt. However, when he goes on to characterise this demand as typically protestant and Jewish, one is likely to find oneself in disagreement with him. As Walter Kaufman observes :

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 988.

Schopenhauer's notion that the insistence on poetic justice is peculiarly Protestant or Jewish is odd²⁰.

To prove that Schopenhauer is wrong, Kaufmann rightly points out the fact that Luther laid all emphasis on the doctrine of original sin. Martin Luther's doctrine of justification by faith is based on the complete sovereignty of God. Man's security and hope are, therefore, to be found in the acceptance of God's grace by faith. Faith is to Martin Luther a reckless confidence in the grace of God. God is not seen by him as weighing up a man's life and he, therefore, lays emphasis on the role of God in justifying and saving certain undeserving men. The protestant doctrine of 'justification by faith' thus leaves no room for man's demand for poetic justice. St. Paul also voices Luther's predestinarian doctrine when he writes :

Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel into honour and another into

²⁰ Walter Kaufman, Tragedy and Philosophy, op. cit. p. 291.

dishonour²¹.

Men themselves do not contribute anything to justification and salvation and this is the reason why Luther dismisses the "Epistle of St. James" as an epistle of straw, for it emphasises the value of good works. What Luther stresses most is the total corruption of man and his predestination to bliss and damnation by the almighty will of God.

Other supporters of Protestantism like John Galvin who took over Luther's doctrine of God's sovereignty also speak of man's original sin. According to him, we are sinners from our mother's womb and that all men are born subject to the wrath and retribution of God. The theology which he along with Luther and Zwingli took over from Augustine and St. Paul, is centred in the doctrine of Pre-destination and original sin.

Schopenhauer's view that Judaism insists on poetic justice is also wrong. The Book of Job is enough to convince us that Judaism does not ask for poetic justice. Job, an honest man, is destined to suffer in life. He cannot charge himself with any

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St. Paul, 'Epistle to the Romans',
Chapter IX, verse 21.

great crime for which he should be made more miserable than other men. While other wicked men are mighty in power, Job suffers for no rhyme or reason. So there is no poetic justice traceable in his life. When Job says that 'man is born into trouble'²², he speaks of original sin. The Prophet Isaiah also echoes the same idea when he calls man "a transgressor from the womb"²³.

Schopenhauer believes that suffering and pain are the dominant notes of life. According to him, life as a rule is nothing but a series of unfulfilled hopes and desires. So suffering is nothing but thwarted and unfulfilled willing. Schopenhauer believes that in tragedy the denial of the will has a satisfying effect and that our approach to life is to cease willing. He is convinced that the surrender of life or denial of the will to live gives peace, tranquility and freedom from suffering. The individual sense of oneness and the feeling of fellowship with those who are suffering are the motives which urge him to adopt a path of voluntary renunciation. When a person

²² 'Book of Job', Chapter V, verse 7.

²³ 'Isaiah', Chapter XLVIII, verse 6.

views things as they really are, he no longer regards the suffering of other beings as different from his own. The ego in him is dead and the feeling of fellowship in suffering is established. Seeing the suffering humanity and a world that passes away, he can no longer delude himself with the idea that life is full of joy and happiness. At this stage, he forgoes all pleasures, and the very will to live begins to die. The will then cannot assert itself and it ceases.

It is through the misfortune of the hero that the spectator is made aware of the futility of life. Tragedy creates this atmosphere of resignation by presenting before the audience the tragic picture of life. Sometimes this mood is roused by an inner change in the hero after he has undergone suffering. A tragic hero of great rank or status has a better power to display the misfortune which reflects the fate of humanity at large. The misfortune of the tragic character must, therefore, have sufficient magnitude so that the spectator would perceive the terrible experience of the hero's misfortune in its full intensity. The misery which he perceives when the veil of Maya is lifted gives him a direct knowledge of the Will in all its manifestations. This knowledge reveals man's vain strivings and

continual suffering. The dismal picture brought before him drives away his will to live and :

the will now turns away from life;
it now shudders at the pleasures
in which it recognises the assertion
of life. Man now attains to the
state of voluntary renunciation . . .
he ceases to will . . . He, who has
attained to the denial of the will to
live is yet filled with inward joy and
the true peace of heaven²⁴.

Albert Schweitzer's definition of Pessimism comes close to what Schopenhauer describes as the denial of the Will. According to Schweitzer :

Pessimism is deprecated will to live,
and is found wherever man and society
are no longer under the pressure of
all those ideals for progress which
must be thought out by a will to live
that is consistent with itself, but
have sunk to the level of letting
actuality be overwide stretches of
life, nothing but actuality²⁵.

²⁴ Thomas Mann, The Living Thoughts of Schopenhauer,
op. cit., p.106.

²⁵ Quoted in John Von Szeliski, Tragedy and Fear,
Chapel Hill: The University of N. Carolina
Press, 1971, p. 61.

Tragedy unfolds the world of unreason, senselessness and the misery of life and helps the mind to know the blind will before it experiences pure bliss. It reveals the drama of the will and convinces that life with all its miseries and pain is not worth living and a spectator recognises his own will in the sufferer.

The state of contemplation helps the individual to forget his 'individuality' and he contemplates as pure subject of knowledge. He is convinced that he is :

not the real I, but an inwardly
liberated from the latter, i.e. I
am liberated from everything which
I am a part from contemplation of
the form. I am only this ideal,
this contemplating I²⁶.

The individual thus loses himself in the contemplation of a work of art. In empathising, he becomes the object he is viewing. In his case, empathy becomes a deep form of sympathy. He no longer hates or fears but becomes the impersonal spectator

²⁶ Wilhelm Worringer, Abstraction and Empathy,
op. cit., p. 24.

of eternal ideas revealed in the object present before him. He contemplates with pure objectivity because a work of art as object of contemplation, unrelated to desire, does not rouse the Will.

Schopenhauer interprets art and its experience as an escape from the woes of a cosmic, irrational will which is the ultimate reality. The Will uses us as instruments for the satisfaction of its blind cravings. That accounts for the relief of losing our individuality in the contemplation of art-forms.

Schopenhauer was the first philosopher in a long line to give due credit to the ugly side of life. But though a pessimist, he recognises the aesthetic cognition to be a state of pleasure, a blessedness of will-less perception which casts an enchanting colour over the past and distant.

The aesthetic pleasure in the beautiful lies in the fact that in entering the state of pure contemplation, the individual is lifted for the moment above all willing, i.e. all desires and cares. He is then freed from himself. He achieves the sense of the beautiful when he can lose himself in

the object of contemplation and no reminiscence of the Will remains. The individual can also rise above the sense of the beautiful and achieve the feeling of the sublime. He can do that by a conscious breaking loose from relations in "the object that suggests something threatening to the Will"²⁷. Thus the individual can rise above the hostile aspects of the phenomenon to contemplation of its Idea. The triumph achieved then is the feeling of the sublime.

With the clever stroke of his genius, Schopenhauer could show that the summit of poetical art is tragedy. Tragedy as an art-form is raised to such a height "because of its effect and the difficulty of its achievement"²⁸.

Through his philosophy of the Will to life, Schopenhauer evolves a new theory of Tragedy and his philosophy will help another philosopher -- Nietzsche -- to develop his theory of the Will to power and a corresponding theory of Tragedy.

²⁷ Thomas Whittaker, Schopenhauer, London: Archibald Constable and Co., Ltd., 1909, p. 54.

²⁸ S.J.F. Copleston, Arthur Schopenhauer, Andover: Burns Gates and Washbourne Ltd., 1947, p. 135.

C H A P T E R III

NIETZSCHE'S "WILL TO POWER" AND "THE ARTISTIC WILL"

In his earlier years, Nietzsche was greatly influenced by Schopenhauer. It was in Leipzig that this great philosopher came under the influence that was to shape his literary career. Chancing one day at a book shop on a copy of Schopenhauer's The World as Will and Idea, he was drawn to the author by his ideas and language. Copleston analyses Schopenhauer's influence on Nietzsche :

he found in him an absence of pose, a fundamental honesty, a speaking for himself alone, a brewing air of candour . . . Besides honesty, Nietzsche found in Schopenhauer the joy of facing the suffering²⁸.

Nietzsche agrees with Schopenhauer that man's life is suffering and that we live in the dominion of chance and error. What concerns him is whether it

²⁸ Frederick Copleston, Friedrich Nietzsche, London: Search Press, 1975, p. 148.

is inevitable that man must become pessimistic about life and, therefore, renounce it as Schopenhauer had done or whether to confirm it. Later Nietzsche is determined not only to confirm it but also to conquer it.

Nietzsche views the world as an exceedingly mysterious force. To him the world is a chaos and not a cosmos. Man, he believes, is confronted by a chaotic world and his fundamental experience is that of suffering. In the sickness of his soul Nietzsche sees everywhere futility, purposelessness and uncertainties of the values of life. This condition he calls 'nihilism'. Nietzsche's 'Nihilism' has little to do with the ordinary connotations of the term. By 'nihilism' he means a thoroughly disillusioned conception of a world which is as hostile to human aspirations as he could imagine it to be. It is hostile because it is totally indifferent to what we either hope or believe. Life, he thinks, has no meaning or purpose beyond itself.

Nietzsche's pessimism is not a pessimism of weakness which results in despair or resignation. Unlike Schopenhauer's, his is a pessimism of strength, for it affirms the world in all its pain and contradiction. He holds the view that life is at bottom

indestructibly pleasurable and powerful. He, therefore, rejects Schopenhauer's philosophy of resignation and transforms it into a doctrine of cosmic affirmation. He is convinced that :

although existence is pain, the answer does not lie as with Schopenhauer, in the denial of the Will to live, but in life's ecstatic affirmation of its suffering and pain . . . suffering is no agreement against life²⁹.

Nietzsche was of the opinion that the Greeks were sensitive to suffering and were fully aware of the truth about human existence. Through the mouth of Silenus, Greek folk wisdom expresses the view that men are the children of chance and affliction and that it would have been better not to be born, and that the next best thing is to die quickly. However, the Greeks, according to Nietzsche, reversed the wisdom of Silenus into an affirmation of existence :

To die soon is worst of all of them, the next worst to die at all³⁰.

²⁹ Jacques Cheron, Death and Western Thought, London: Collier - Macmillan Ltd., 1963, pp.199-200.

³⁰ Kaufman (Jr.), Basic Writings of Nietzsche, New York: The Modern Library, 1968, p. 43.

Like Aeschylus the Greek Tragedian, Nietzsche perceives the mystery of suffering. Life for Aeschylus is an adventure and in his plays there is nothing of the Schopenhauerian resignation or passive acceptance. Greek spirits meet calamity boldly. Prometheus, though helpless and faced by a great power, remains invincible. He does not yield to Zeus and refuses to pronounce even one word of submission which will set him free. To the messenger of the gods he replies :

Thinkest thou I dread the ire
Of these young gods of thine, and come before
Their thrones ? I take no thought of them.

Therefore

Begone the way thou comest ? Thou shalt not

Wrest

From me no word of what thou questionest³¹.

In this way the Greek writer sees mankind confronting pain and facing life boldly and thus remaining forever undefeated.

Nietzsche finds that Christianity teaches its followers to flee and hate life. The Greeks on the other hand view life as an enjoyable game. Out of their needs they invent the Olympian gods interposing

³¹ Gilbert Murray, Aeschylus : Prometheus Bound,
London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1973,
p. 66.

a world of Art between themselves and the world of suffering, casting a veil of beauty over the abyss. Having seen the true nature of things, man is in need of such solace. Art alone can make the terror and absurdity of human existence bearable.

Nietzsche, therefore, attributes to the Greek the knowledge that life can best be understood and justified only as an aesthetic phenomenon.

Since Schopenhauer's philosophy sets renunciation and denial of life as the ultimate goal, Nietzsche, in The Birth of Tragedy struggles to liberate himself from Schopenhauer's influence. Like Arnold he attributed the cause of his 'Nihilism' to the shattering of definite religious faith. According to him, 'Nihilism' might be a state of anarchy but anarchy must also effect the necessary transition to ~~hearten~~^{eth}. Inspired by this condition, Nietzsche transforms Schopenhauer's doctrine of the Will from a negative into a positive philosophy of affirmation. He is of the opinion that the recognition of the meaninglessness of life should not lead us to "a negation, a no, a will to nothingness". Rather he feels it is an intoxicating fact to know that the world is devoid of meaning and yet say 'yes' to it as it is. According to him, we should, therefore, accept his formula of 'Amor Fati' - loving

one's fate - and say yes to nature and life as a whole.

Nietzsche's 'Nihilism' finds its culmination in the doctrine of 'Eternal Recurrence'. According to Nietzsche, there is no beginning and end and no middle either to the story of the world. The philosophy of Eternal Recurrence teaches that whatever there is will return again and that whatever there is, is a return of itself. The world according to this doctrine repeats itself infinitely and exactly. The same situations will happen again without end exactly as they always have been and as they are happening now. Nietzsche considers Eternal Recurrence as the only genuine alternative to the view that the world has or can have a goal or purpose or final state. If each state of the world recurs, the same thing is repeated and there is no chance of a finale in nothingness. Eternal Recurrence, therefore, offers the possibility of a joyous affirmation of the same in that world.

In Schopenhauer's negation of the Will to live :

Nietzsche came to see the great danger of mankind, its most sublime temptation and seduction . . . to nothingness . . .

the beginning of the end . . .
the will turning against life³²

Thus Nietzsche came to reject his great teacher Schopenhauer because of his 'no' to life. Schopenhauer's philosophy encourages the individual to assume a negative and passive attitude based on weakness. Nietzsche on the other hand, preaches the affirmation of life, the great 'yes' to life. Unlike his master he does not call for less life or for Nirvana. He finds that because of pain and suffering, life is good and desirable and for this very reason, Nietzsche calls for more vigorous and joyful acceptance of it. Nietzsche accepts Schopenhauer's conception of the primordially of pain and suffering but he rejects his pessimistic philosophy of resignation only to transform it into a doctrine of cosmic affirmation.

In this cosmic affirmation, the fundamental instrument of acceptance is the will to power. The will to power does not coincide with Schopenhauer's will to live. Nietzsche defines life itself as the will to power and men, like all other creatures in

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Copleston, Friedrich Nietzsche, op. cit. p. 156.

the universe are driven by its impelling force.

Nietzsche holds the view that will to power is the generic trait. It is not only something we possess but it is also something we are. Thus human beings and all other objects of nature are will to power :

all driving force is Will to Power;
 [and] there is no other physical,
 dynamic or psychic force except this³³.

Will to Power is the centre of all other drives and according to Nietzsche, these drives are only its instances.

The striving for power implies hurdles to cross and involves both pleasure and displeasure. Displeasure increases man's thirst for more and more power and acts as a stimulus to it. As a result, displeasure does not dampen or lessen man's thirst for power but "acts as a lure of life and strengthens the will to power"³⁴. Pleasure, according to Nietzsche, is an excitation of the feeling of power

³³ Walter Kaufman (ed.), The Will to Power, New York: Random House (Inc.), p. 366.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 369.

by an obstacle³⁵. The Will inspite of pain and suffering, is never satisfied but finds pleasure in resistance and "all expansion, incorporation, growth means striving against something that resists"³⁶.

Mill's pleasure principle identified happiness with pleasure and Nietzsche's power principle also does the same. But whereas Mill states that pleasure or happiness is the summum bonum of life, Nietzsche observes that "pleasure is only a symptom of the feeling for power . . . pleasure is an accompaniment, pleasure is not the motive"³⁷.

The underlying trait of the Will to Power is, according to Nietzsche, a constant strife. For this reason, Nietzsche does not recognise the freedom of the will. According to him, 'will' implies constant struggles or strife and as a driving force it expresses itself only through them. It differs from freedom which means unstriving, Unlike fear which is a negative motive, Will to Power makes a forward march fighting its way as

³⁵ Ibid, p. 347.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 374.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 366.

it does so. Nietzsche does not agree with Hegel's concept of political freedom and for that matter with any concept of freedom. According to him, freedom is unstriving and Will to Power as an inner drive is continual striving.

In his earlier years, Nietzsche conceives of Will to Power as a craving for worldly success. Later on, he realises that it is a basic psychological drive. Nietzsche's idea of the Will to Power keeps on changing with the progress of time and the maturity of his mind. To Nietzsche, power means worldly power and he also refers to it as the will to dominate. The various interpretations of the Will to Power as physical or military or political are, therefore, the result of the change of his idea.

As stated earlier, the power to dominate has one more characteristic -- to march forward to more and more power. But this will to power is also a prisoner and a spectator of all things. It can never go back to the past. In the section entitled "On Redemption" in Part II of Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Nietzsche regrets the fact that time does not run back :

The Will cannot will backwards;
 that it cannot and time's desire -
 that is the will's most lonely
 affliction. "That which was" -
 that is what the stone which it
 cannot roll away is called . . .³⁸

The limitation to get back to the past results in
 the will's willing for higher power :

The will that is the will to power
 must will something higher than any
 reconciliation [with the past or
 time]³⁹.

Nietzsche states that the highest degree of the Will
 to Power is the power to overcome oneself. He views
 the world as a battle ground where every element
 seeks to dominate over others and to impose its own
 order. Thus the world has no fixed shape or form
 because of the constant fights which take place in
 it.

The self is also conceived as eternally
 coming into being because the will to power is inter-
 nalised and out of internal conflict the self is

³⁸ R.J. Hollingdale, Nietzsche : Thus Spoke
 Zarathustra, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd.,
 1980, pp. 161-162.

³⁹ Ibid, p. 163.

reborn at a higher level of strength and consciousness. To the question "What is this self that is constantly coming into being?", Zarathustra has an answer :

Behold . . . I am that which must
overcome itself again and again . . .
call it will to procreate or impulse
towards a goal, towards the higher,
more distant, more manifold: but all
this is one . . . ⁴⁰

According to Nietzsche, the power to overcome varies in quality and quantity, e.g. physical power or power to overcome one's neighbour cannot be classed in the same category as the power to overcome the self. The quality of the power is as important as the quantity and for Nietzsche, the ultimate end is not brute power. The self is the greatest obstacle for the Will to power to overcome. In doing so, the will faces the hardest task to control one's own passions and impulses. This is the reason why the Will to power linked with Nietzsche's ideal of self-perfection and self-overcoming, can convincingly explain human suffering. The death of a martyr or ascetic does not imply his

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Ibid, p. 138.

love for pleasure but it convincingly pleads that such a person goes to his death because of man's great love for power. The Will to power is, therefore, behind religion, morality, social and political systems, for all these reveal the striving for power.

Nietzsche explains all human behaviour in terms of the Will to Power and implies that this Will resides not only in the strong but also in the powerless, for those who want pity are also prompted by the Will to Power. To him the best specimen of the human race is one in whom the Will to Power is strongest. According to him, Napoleon is one of the finest specimens of the Will to Power. But Nietzsche believes that even Napoleon will be surpassed by the Superman in whom the Will to Power will attain its zenith.

Will to Power in itself is neither good nor bad, it simply is -- it is 'becoming' and is dynamic and, therefore, it is not 'thing-like'. The world is simply an aesthetic phenomenon, neither good nor bad, that is to say neither beautiful nor ugly.

In Nietzsche's philosophy, Will to Power is related to Nihilism. Nihilism is needed to clear

the way for creativity, to make it plain that the world is without significance or form. Will to Power imposes upon that unshaped substance the form and meaning which we cannot live without. The Will's power of transforming the formless into a thing of beauty is possible because of the conflict of wills, in which the victor imposes the form. Having no intrinsic forms, a world of will would be formless, but since wills are always acting upon one another, form is always imposed.

In The Birth of Tragedy Nietzsche says that art is Will to Power in its full form. For him, art transforms the actual into the beautiful and makes life bearable by representing it as possessing purpose and coherence.

The Nietzschean artist possesses the power to command and give form to himself and ultimately turns the ugliness and shapelessness of the actual into the beauty of the ideal.

Nietzsche firmly believes in the power of art and when he declares in The Birth of Tragedy that the world seems "justified only as an aesthetic phenomenon" he refers to the important place art must occupy in life. Art, according to him,

occupies no less a claim to objective truth than science. Man is an artist by birth, for he spontaneously seeks to express images the way he feels and perceives the world.

In addition to the world we live in, there is another world created by the artist's genius. This is the art-world into which we can escape from time to time and find rest from the presence of pain and suffering of existence. This art-world of Nietzsche is essentially Schopenhauerian, for Schopenhauer believes, as we have seen, that in the contemplation of art man turns away from the life of pain and strife.

Nietzsche speaks of dreams and intoxication as ways of satisfying certain urges which call for art. He finds that there are two kinds of art that correspond to the primitive modes of escape which dreaming and intoxication illustrate. Apollinian art is like dream and Dionysian art is like intoxication. The evolution of art is due to the interactions between these artistic expressions.

Nietzsche understand art as the great stimulant to life. It is what makes life possible and supportable. Art adopts the principle of 'lie'

and by so doing, transforms what is shapeless and ugly into a thing of beauty. It is Art, therefore, which makes life bearable by hiding the ugly truth of suffering and by translating it into the beautiful. Baudelaire agrees with Nietzsche when he speaks of the magic power of Art and refuses "to assign art the sterile function of imitating nature"⁴¹.

The dialectical process of art opposes the real world and at the same time it seeks to conquer and possess that world completely. Art, according to Nietzsche, thus leads man into direct communication with the world, transforms it so that he has power over it and ultimately says 'yes' to life. Thus for Nietzsche, art is understood as a transfiguration and an affirmation of human existence.

Art enables man to see an unending process of liberation from a spectacle of continual loss and chaos. Nietzsche holds the view that art transforms horrid reality into pleasure. It was art which enabled the Greek to view life as an enjoyable game. Art teaches them to incorporate

⁴¹ William K. Wimsatt and Cleanth Brooks, Literary Criticism, Calcutta: Oxford and IBH Publishing Co., 1957, p. 483.

into plastic representation, the whole of phenomenal reality including its gristliest horrors; by translating the ghastliest of terrors to the eternal realm of artifact -- outside of life, beyond pain; free of contingency and mutability.⁴²

In Attic Tragedy, even suffering is justified. This power to create beauty out of suffering is what makes art superior to both Science or Philosophy. Nietzsche himself is a tragic figure in human history but in his philosophy he transforms the sufferings of his life and has the courage to say 'yes' to it and all the misery it holds for him. He observes :

Suffering might predominate and
in spite of that a powerful will
might exist, a 'yes' to life. . .⁴³

Attic tragedy is born because the Greeks are capable of the greatest suffering. They do not run away from the pains of life but face them boldly. Anyone who faces life bravely and re-affirms it with the creation of art wins the appreciation of Nietzsche. According to him, suffering and pain

⁴² C.N. Stavrou, Whitman and Nietzsche, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1967, pp. 76-77.

⁴³ Kaufman, Will to Power, op. cit., p. 23.

dampen the spirit of the weak and make them turn away from life and seek shelter elsewhere. Schopenhauer, Buddha, the Christians are examples of the weak. They run away from life and its suffering and negate it completely. Nietzsche says that it is only the strong who march forward in life with the help of art. Such people transform all sufferings into the beautiful.

Nietzsche finds in Greek tragedy the greatest achievement of art where form is imposed upon a resisting material and life is transformed into an aesthetic phenomenon of the highest order.

Like Greek religion, Greek art prefers life to extinction and, therefore, it deals with and accepts life and all its pain and suffering. Nietzsche finds this triumphant response to suffering "sublime" and the experience of the sublime is anything but Nirvana or Renunciation.

According to Nietzsche, Goethe typifies a great artist. He is a man of great power who faces life with all its sufferings and refuses to turn away from it. Such a person finds existence endurable. Though life is a tragic spectacle for him, he affirms it because it yet fascinates him.

Nietzsche preaches the affirmation of life because he refuses to escape from pain. He rejects Aristotle's theory of pity and fear. He also condemns and rejects Christianity because both consider pain and suffering as something negative and call either for their purgation or for overcoming them by means of faith. According to Nietzsche, Tragedy induces an ecstatic joy in the eternal process of creation and destruction. A catharsis of pity and fear implies an end to suffering. Nietzsche on the otherhand points to affirmation and therewith transfiguration of suffering. He takes the christian insistence on faith as a sign of the reduced vitality and therefore an example of 'no saying' to life. His dionysian man, on the other hand, brims over with vitality and has the courage to affirm life by wholeheartedly saying 'yes' to it. The beautiful forms created by Nietzsche's artist are the result of a negation of truth. The famous dictum of Nietzsche "Truth is Ugly" echoes James's observation that art "muffles the ache of the actual". In art, the artist's vision is translated into an image and art seems to contain all of life. Art "throws its light upon all the abysses and terrors of existence and yet transfigures it in bright consciousness".

For Nietzsche, Greek tragedy is a triumph over the ills of life and is, therefore, a triumph over pessimism and the 'no' saying. Tragedy was for him :

The Greek triumph over pessimism,
i.e. the pessimism of no saying,
of resignation⁴⁵.

Tragedy convinces Nietzsche that life remains a realisable possibility and that true wisdom is achieved by the man who can say a jubilant 'yes' to life with all its travails and sorrows.

Nietzsche therefore finds that tragedy as an art form is a passport to a healthy assertion of life and its joy to the conviction that life is worth living after all.

⁴⁵ Frederick Copleston, Friedrich Nietzsche,
London: Search Press, 1975, p. 63.

CHAPTER IV

NIETZSCHE ON "TRAGEDY"

Nietzsche occupies an important place in the history of Aesthetic theory. From the beginning of his career, Art seems to have been one of his constant preoccupations. Thus when in The Birth of Tragedy Nietzsche declares that the world seems "justified only as an aesthetic phenomenon", he refers to the supreme importance of Art in life.

Nietzsche admits the fact that life is full of struggle and hardships. Like Schopenhauer, he accepts the tragedy of life, but unlike him, he does not negate pain. He, therefore, rejects Schopenhauer's Buddhistic doctrine of 'Nirvana' and strongly believes that inspite of pain and suffering, life is worth living.

In his opinion, the strong accept the world for what it is. Troubles and suffering enrich human experience and make men stronger. Nietzsche is, therefore, against the philosophy which encourages men

to calmly submit to fate. In Nietzsche's opinion, man is the master of his own fate and he can extricate himself from doubt and fear by his own unaided exertions. So **instead** of bewailing his unhappy lot, Nietzsche teaches man not to despair but to stand unafraid before the unbearable reality. He, therefore, teaches us to embrace life :

in its totality, in its glowing
plenitude and in its guttery twi-
light, in its pleasures and in
its pains, in its ecstatic joys and
in its hideous horrors⁴⁶.

Nietzsche justifies suffering and considers it the basis of Art. In The Birth of Tragedy he points out that Attic Tragedy is born of pain and suffering. Art, therefore, is according to him, the means by which horrid reality is converted into the object of pleasure. He finds that Art is also the means by which man gains a victory over the intolerable pain of existence. Art, therefore, enables the strong to view life as an enjoyable game.

⁴⁶ C.N. Stavrou, Whitman and Nietzsche, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1964, p. 56.

Thus Nietzsche firmly believes that though pain and suffering constitute its theme, tragedy is an affirmation of life.

The most faithful and comprehensive exposition of Nietzsche's view of tragedy is to be found in The Birth of Tragedy. Greek tragedy had its origin in Dionysian festival. Dionysus was the god of wine and ecstatic exaltation. As it had been long known that Tragedy among the Greeks sprang from the tragic chorus, Nietzsche also traced the evolution of tragedy as an art-form to the chorus of Greek Tragedy.

The chorus consisted of leaf-crowned revellers dancing and singing in honour of Dionysus. In the choric revelry, this god of wine was joined by the Satyrs and other gods and so one cosmic music and dance was the result.

In Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Freud compares this Dionysian energy of the dancing chorus with the elemental cosmic energy and calls it the "Oceanic feeling". In the cosmic consciousness, the revellers reach the state of supreme bliss where man forgets his everyday experience. But the moment he gets back his individual consciousness, reality returns with its bundle of pain and misery.

Ⓐ The cosmic energy exposed the dancers to pain and suffering and they were made deeply conscious of the tragic reality of life. In their drunken state they did not see the joy of life but its pain.

The theme of the revellers' song is man's inevitable suffering. The singers try to hide the tragic spectacle and suffering from others and from themselves by plunging into the ocean of dark passions.

Seizing on the theme of the revellers' song, Nietzsche develops his own metaphysical interpretations. He traces the evolution of art to the fusion of the two gods -- Dionysus and Apollo. He finds that the world in which the Greeks lived was one of pain and suffering. Nietzsche finds this aspect of life embodied in Dionysus. So to be able to live and free life with all its misery and pain, the Greeks created another god -- Apollo. Apollo controls, subdues and transforms all that is painful in life into the objects of beauty and pleasure.

For Nietzsche, Dionysus is the symbol of the dynamic stream of life which knows no barriers. In the worship of Dionysus, man would lapse into a

drinking frenzy and lose his identity in the larger ocean of life. This god of wild ecstasy demands the whole of man, ravishes him, submits him to fearful ritual and lifts him in ecstasy above the cares of the world. Once man is made aware of his identity, he finds the beauty of life an adequate compensation for the suffering he endures. Dionysus, according to Nietzsche, symbolizes man's unity with life and stands as one who shatters the principium individuationis' for which Apollo stands.

Apollo on the otherhand represents that power which checks and controls the dynamic process of life in order to produce works of beauty. Apollo, therefore, harnesses destructive forces and transforms them into calm and serene objects of Art. He rules over the beautiful inner world of fantasy and is the god of all shaping powers. He signifies measure, number, limitation and subjugation and might be described as the 'glorious image of the principium individuation'.

Nietzsche's theory of Tragedy gives currency to the two aesthetic terms -- 'Dionysian' and 'Apollonian'. Dionysian art represents the negative and destructive dark powers of the soul while the Apollonian represents the power to harness all such powers and transform them into a creative act. So

while the two gods -- Apollo and Dionysus "represent a permanent, a timeless polarity", Art :

owes its continuous evolution to the Apollonian -- Dionysian duality, even as the propagation of the species depends on the duality of the sexes, their constant conflicts and periodic acts of reconciliation⁴⁷.

The Apollonian Art is embodied in the restrained depiction of things and scenes and the Apollonian way of facing reality is by creating a dream-like world, a pure illusion. The Greeks, therefore, require the Apollonian Art to throw into relief the rawness and insecurity of the real world.

Dionysian Art, exemplified in lyric poetry and music, opposes Apollonian Art. It is an art-world of 'intoxication', translated from the German 'Rausch' which connotes ecstasy, though it is not directly connected with alcoholic states. This art-world of drunkenness can be achieved through dancing, religious activity and sexual pleasure⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ Monroe K. Spears, Dionysus and the City, New York, O.U. Press, 1970, p. 71.

⁴⁸ Arthur C. Danto, Nietzsche as Philosopher, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1965, p. 48.

Dionysian art conveys a sense of the terror and the joy experienced at the infliction of pain and suffering. The Barbarians find :

'indescribable happiness in the sight of torture' when they torment others; ascetics find their happiness in tormenting themselves . . . /The Greek⁷ finds the tiger-like delight in annihilation which viewed the cruelty of victory as the very acme of exuberant jubilation⁴⁹.

In the state of limitless energy and abundant life there is the horror of the annihilation of the 'principle of individuation' -- the annihilation of the individual. But at the same time it is a rapturous delight in self-destruction. Thus in the dionysian rite, man's individuality is completely obliterated. Dionysian art teaches the Greeks to transcend reality through an ecstasy which makes them one with the universe and enables them to lose and rediscover their individual selves in the universal identity of all things. Apollonian Art

⁴⁹ Karl Jaspers, Nietzsche, Tucson : The University of Arizona Press, 1965; pp. 303-304.

sticks to the 'principium individuationis' which Dionysian Art tries to shatter to pieces in order to bring in 'Ur-einin' or primal oneness.-- The apollonian and dionysian both:

release artistic powers in us,
but different ones, the dream
those of vision, association,
poetry; intoxication those of
gesture, passion, song, dance⁵⁰.

Nietzsche notices, in Greek Tragedy the blending of the rational and irrational, intellect and passion, knowledge and instinct, form and content. In the creation of Art, there is a combination of the healthy rational element in man and the wild frenzy of the dionysian passions. Nietzsche, looks to Greek formula, the fusion of Dionysus and Apollo, by which human life is changed into an aesthetic phenomenon. He remarks that from the beginning, Greek tragedy dispenses with reality and yet their world is not an arbitrary one. Apollo's role as the god of form and beauty is to lend beauty and form to what is tragic. He controls the dionysian wild energy and passion and gives a shape to the pain which lies at the root of the revellers' cheerfulness and uninhibited joy. It is only when

⁵⁰ Kaufman, Nietzsche : Will to Power, op. cit.
p. 420.

Apollo gives a beautiful form to the elemental passions that whatever is terrible and ugly becomes sublime.

Nietzsche's view is that when Apollo and Dionysus meet, the dionysian spirit is as important as the Apollonian form. It will be wrong, therefore, to suppose that his concept of Tragedy is entirely dionysian in spirit. What Nietzsche wants to point out is that the substance of tragedy is dionysian and the form is Apollonian. The dionysian provides the subject matter and the Apollonian arranges and articulates this subject matter in a definite form. Thus the Apollonian response is to cast a veil of beauty and illusion. The truth about the world's harsh reality is not hidden but affirmed and transfigured. Nietzsche gives no indication that life's tragedy can be evaded in resignation as Schopenhauer has suggested.

The Greeks' awareness of life's pain is portrayed by them in the lives of their heroes who are the masks of the dionysian tragic hero :

All the famous figures of the Greek stage - Prometheus, Oedipus, etc - are mere masks of this original hero,

Dionysus⁵¹.

Silenus' wisdom also reveals the futility of existence :

Oh wretched ephemeral race,
 children of chance and misery,
 why do you compel me to tell
 you what it would be most expedient
 for you not to hear, what
 is best of all is utterly beyond
 your reach not to be born, not to
 be, to be nothing. But the second
 best for ^{you} _{is} to die soon⁵².

Nietzsche is of the opinion that the Greeks had a quite unused capacity for suffering and this was perhaps due to the bloody wars and cruelties preceding the foundation of their state. Far from being optimists they were natural pessimists. Nietzsche points out that it is the Greeks' sense of horror which brings about a reconciliation of the Apollonian with the Dionysian. What Dionysus needs is the company of Apollo to transform man's tragic insight into a thing of beauty. The vase

⁵¹ Kaufman, Nietzsche : The Will to Power,
 op. cit. p. 173.

⁵² Kaufman, Basic Writings of Nietzsche,
 op. cit. p. 42

in the Hermitage at Leningrad on which, in the Sacred enclosure at Delphi, Apollo gives his right hand to Dionysus enables us to see, it as a symbol of those forces^[m] whose union the miracle of Greek Tragedy was born⁵³.

It is a painful process to bring the dionysian energy under control. In Tragedy, when the two gods meet, the meeting is not smooth or harmonious, for it always involves a vast amount of pain and suffering. It is Nietzsche's conviction too that nothing great in life can be achieved without suffering. He adds :

If suffering is not the immediate aim and object of life, I can only say that our existence is the most purposeless thing in the world⁵⁴.

Nietzsche regards human suffering as an indispensable stimulus to perfection. To produce something great is always painful. In life, the drunken ecstasy of a mother who gives birth to her child is not unmixed with travail and pain. In 'The Birth of a Poem', Mallarme also expresses the same view.

⁵³ H.A. Frankfort (Tr.), Allen Lesky : Great Tragedy, London, Ernest Bend Limited, 1965, p. 46.

⁵⁴ Jekyll Watter (Tr.), The Wisdom of Schopenhauer. London: Watts and Co., 1911, p. 329.

Nietzsche asserts that in the same manner too, this wretched life gives birth to Art.

Sophocles and Aeschylus saw into the mysteries of conflicts and sufferings, but they never lost grip on reality. This is what made them what they were -- not merely great tragedians, but also the greatest spiritual forces of their times. These two bridged over the gulf between the beauties of the external world and the awful truth of man's misery. Thus these two great Greek Tragedians strengthen Nietzsche's view that Greek Tragedy harmonises and fuses all that Apollo stands for with all that Dionysus has exemplified.

In Of Tragedy, Hulme wonders how inspite of the fact that tragedy brings us face to face with man's suffering, it still has an elevating effect in us. Nietzsche admits that suffering is bearable, for at the bottom life is "indestructably powerful and pleasurable"⁵⁵. He asserts that it is the apollonian beauty which has an elevating effect in us and enables us to achieve an aesthetic pleasure in Tragedy.

Nietzsche points out that Tragic Art is the comfort which the Greeks create for themselves and

⁵⁵ Kaufman, Basic Writings of Nietzsche, op. cit., p. 59.

which they need because they are most sensitive to the tenderest and deepest suffering. He is of the opinion that tragedy as an Art-form is a passport to a healthy assertion of life which enables the Greeks to find joy in it. It takes the raw stuff of life and gives it form and magnificence. Tragedy as an art-form, therefore, clothes the naked terror of life with the value of beauty. It :

possesses like Love the power to invest the beloved with an added and fictitious beauty which erases all defects⁵⁶.

In Euripides, Nietzsche perceives the beginning of the process of decline of the view mentioned above. In Nietzsche's view, Euripides gradually brings down this art (Tragedy) from its great pedestal to which Aeschylus and Sophocles had taken it.

In Aeschylus, there is a fusion of the apollonian and the dionysian elements. His tragedies reveal the important role of the chorus and this in turn illustrates the dionysian states and ecstasy.

⁵⁶ B.A.G. Fuller, A History of Philosophy, New Delhi : Oxford and I.B.H. Publishing Co., 1955, p. 488.

In Sophocles' plays where the writer reveals himself as a conscious artist, the sphere of the chorus is limited. Thus the dionysian elements begin to disintegrate in his tragedies.

Euripides rationalises tragedy. Nietzsche finds that the chorus is the cause of Tragedy. But in his plays, no significant role is given to the chorus. In his hands, the chorus simply becomes a stage convention. When Euripides, the rational man, has separated the dionysian elements in his tragedies, there is, therefore, an increasing apollonisation of the tragic form. Tragedy is no longer a fusion of the apollonian and the dionysian elements.

Euripides has a tendency to reconstruct tragedy purely on a new basis and in a new way. Nietzsche observes that in bringing together the apollonian and the dionysian elements, Aeschylus and Sophocles were guided by intuition. Nietzsche regrets that in Euripides, intuition gives way to and is replaced by reason. Euripides has failed to rebuild tragedy on reason and in his plays, one witnesses the gradual death of tragedy. Nietzsche finds that the god "who spoke out of him was not Dionysus, nor Apollo, but an altogether new born

demon, called Socrates"⁵⁷. Euripides thus becomes only a vehicle through which a new force is expressing itself. This new force is Socrates -- a great master of reason. Based on the new socratic foundation, Socrates gives a new beginning to Greek culture and henceforward, the antagonism between Greek art is between dionysian and socratic forces.

Socrates who regards reason as the unique instrument of human delivery teaches man to be guided by reason and intellect. Nietzsche on the other hand, finds that the ordering power behind tragedy and all great poetry is intuition and not reason or intellect.

Nietzsche regards Socrates as having caused the decline of Greek tragedy for he brings about the :

beginning of a decadent era in which man's instinctual nature is valued less than his conscious rational nature⁵⁸.

⁵⁷ Kaufman, Basic Writings of Nietzsche, op. cit., p. 82.

⁵⁸ Elizabeth Renkin, Essays in Philosophy, Madras, Ganesh and Co., 1962, p. 92.

Thus when rationalisation, morality and stage effects take the place of satyric music and the chorus is driven away from tragedy, the same art form begins to die out for

Dionysus had already been scared
from the tragic stage by a demonic
power speaking through Euripides⁵⁹.

Nietzsche thus blames the 'thinking man' as being responsible for the death of tragedy as well as for the dissolution of Hellenism.

Tragic Art for the Greek is a response to the pessimistic view man originally had of nature, enabling him to live through transforming his anxiety. But Socrates originated the view that the universe is intelligible and that by means of the original acquisition of knowledge, men might be freed 'even from the fear of death'. Tragedy is then no longer required because its function could be as well discharged by rational science.

Socrates' view, according to Nietzsche, tends towards the apollonian pole. Nietzsche who believes that Tragedy is profoundly 'musical' says that

⁵⁹ Kaufman, Basic Writings of Nietzsche, op. cit., p. 82.

Apollo's role is subordinate to that of Dionysus the god of music, wine and ecstasy. Ancient Greek Tragedy grew out of the worship of this god and for Nietzsche, the true hero of Greek tragedy was Dionysus -- Oedipus and Prometheus being two of his many masks. Thus in the plays before Euripides, all the tragic protagonists were types of Dionysus.

In The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche finds that Euripides' supreme law "to be beautiful everything must be intelligible" runs parallel to the Socratic proposition "only the knowing one is virtuous". These two maxims stress on rationalism and bring about the opposition of the Apollonian and the Dionysian elements. Nietzsche thus points out that the 'optimistic dialectic' of Euripides drives music out of tragedy. His plays are characterised by Socrates' optimistic rationalism.

Socrates, by teaching the denial of the senses, turns him back on the world and prepares the way for Christianity. Christianity, according to Nietzsche, came to supplant the Greek values with a 'nay saying'. Socrates had insisted on a passive intellectual life and Christianity with its moral demands continued the decline of Greek tragedy.

In The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche hopes for the rebirth of Tragedy in the rebirth of the influence of Dionysus. This god Dionysus is, according to him, one of the forces which lead to the external development of Tragedy. Tragic myth expresses dionysian knowledge in symbols, and the dionysian myths are sometimes made the subject of Tragedy. Heroic legend is the theme of tragic plays and heroic songs are used into dionysian worship. Thus through its union with Greek myth, tragedy acquires its content, gravity, dignity and poise. Greek myth is as important as the god Dionysus, for it mirrors the full human existence where there is no question of compromise, no resignation and no turning away of man's will. Tragic poets find tragic myths useful, for the legends which inspire them belong to the people and tragedy also as an art-form is part and parcel of the life of the nation. Myth is indispensable for every culture for :

without myth every culture loses the healthy natural power of its creativity; only a horizon defined by myths completes and unifies a whole cultural movement⁶⁰.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 135.

Greek myth is important to tragic poets for the legends which inspire them are the people's common property. Those legends are sacred history and the art of **tragedy** is part of the life of the nation.

Myth is closely related to music and both are "equally expressions of the Dionysian capacity of the people"⁶¹. Reborn from music, myth checks the apollonian dream from aimless wanderings. Nietzsche is of the opinion that Greek myths are as miraculous as Dionysus himself.

The dionysian and apollonian principles are perpetually at variance with each other and out of this conflict, dionysian music originates. Music comes closest to the dionysian energy and is the repetition and the recast of the dionysian world. Under the apollonian dream -- inspiration, dionysian music ceases to be chaotic and is transformed into a beautiful dream image. Greek myth becomes a reality in the Satyr chorus of Greek tragedy. Thus the aesthetic pleasure we derive from tragic myth originates in the same way as the joyful sensation in music. Music being an organisation of pure melodies

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 143.

expresses "pure-will" which sustains life. As music has no language, it is pure sound and surpasses all other art-forms. It is, according to Nietzsche, the only art form which expresses that powerful urge which is behind life. It is the 'will' itself for it does not say anything but means what it is. In other words, music comes very close to pure dionysian energy. Because of the vital link between dionysian energy and music, Nietzsche hopes that tragic myth can be revived through the mysterious power of music.

Nietzsche asserts that music can "invest myths with a new and most profound significance"⁶², because he believes that music "reaches its highest manifestation in tragedy"⁶³. Nietzsche is, therefore, convinced that "through tragedy the myth attains its most profound content, its most expressive form. . ."⁶⁴

Dionysian myths were sometimes the subject of tragedy and tragedy gained through the heroic myth its gravity and poise. Greek myth was important to tragic poets for the legends which inspired them were the common possession of the people and the art of tragedy was part of their nation's life.

⁶² Ibid., p. 75.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Nietzsche regrets that in the hands of Euripides and Socrates, both tragedy and myth were destroyed by realistic and naturalistic tendencies. But Nietzsche holds Socrates responsible for the actual death of myth and tragedy. In The Birth of Tragedy he says that Socratic optimism :

. . . is the new opposition : The Dionysian and the Socratic . . . and the art of Greek tragedy was wrecked on this. Though Euripides may seek to comfort us by his recantation he does not succeed : the most magnificent temple lies in ruins⁶⁵.

But although Nietzsche says that "theoretical Socrates is responsible for the death of tragedy, he hopes that the vision of 'Artistic Socrates' will cause its rebirth. The optimistic man requires the world of tragic myth to endure tragic reality. Science as an instinct leads again and again to its limits at which it must turn into an art"⁶⁶. With its illusion it destroys the logic of reason.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 82.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 95,96.

Rational thinking, according to Nietzsche, can give us the picture of the harsh reality of existence but if fails to make "existence appear comprehensible and thus justified"⁶⁷. Myth is, therefore, the necessary consequence to give us the blissful affirmation of existence.

Nietzsche understands the desire of the Greeks for tragic myth and tragic art. He finds that out of existential need, they evolve Attic Tragedy which is their greatest art-form. According to Nietzsche, this tragic art form transcends the tragedies of existence. It transfigures human existence and converts it into a source of aesthetic satisfaction. Greek tragedy thus impresses upon Nietzsche that the most crucial question of existence is how to react to adversity and death.

Nietzsche finds that the artist can clothe the naked terror of existence with the value of beauty. By enabling others to see and to feel ~~what~~ whatever he depicts as he himself sees and feels, he can make anything he chooses valuable aesthetically to all those who are strong enough to receive and appreciate his work. A tragic artist can,

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

therefore, create in the strong man the illusion that everything, however terrible, is good. Tragedy as an art-form is, according to Nietzsche, the only means man possesses for humanising the inhumanity of life. What according to Nietzsche is needed then is to restore Tragedy to its lost power and grandeur by bringing back the old Greek values.

Nietzsche finds in Greek Tragedy the highest expression of man's will to struggle and attain self-hood. A re-affirmation of the Will to Power will, according to him, restore tragedy to its former state. Zarathustra's philosophy echoes man's painful existence. As Zarathustra puts it, the ultimate salvation lies in real struggle and not in tender acts. History is moving towards the emergence of some exceptional men. Nietzsche says that 'Superman' is the goal. But his 'Superman' will not be the product of a mechanical process of evolution. So, according to him, it is only through the Will to strength that man can reach the full height of the Superman. The Superman will then be the embodiment of the spontaneous affirmation of life. Nietzsche finds this energy among the Greeks and he emphasises it in The Birth of Tragedy. In The Twilight of the Idols, he remarks :

I saw their strongest instinct,
the Will to Power, I saw them
quivering with the fierce violence
of this instinct"⁶⁸.

Nietzsche's 'Superman' combines in himself the dionysian and the apollonian elements and affirms the whole of life. The attitude of a dionysian man who brims over with vitality triumphs over pessimism. A dionysian faith does not negate pain and misery and is, therefore, the highest of all possible faiths.

Nietzsche considers Tragedy as the Greek triumph over 'resignation' and the 'no saying' to life. It makes existence endurable and because the dionysian man affirms the 'self' and 'cosmos', existence becomes joyful.

Nietzsche is one of the few great philosophers who has celebrated the power and joy of life. His theory of tragedy is a joyful assertion of the pain and suffering in life. His views on Tragedy have prepared the way for great changes in our approach towards tragic writings and tragic art.

⁶⁸ Geofferey Clive (ed.), The Philosophy of Nietzsche, New York : The American Library, 1973, p. 73.

C H A P T E R V

"SCHOPENHAUER AND NIETZSCHE : A COMPARISON"

Nietzsche was at first impressed by Schopenhauer's picture of life and the irrationality of blind Will. But later on in The Birth of Tragedy, he took a drastic turn away from Schopenhauer's irrational 'Will to live'. Schopenhauer's 'Will' is blind and has no knowledge of its strivings and goals. Nietzsche gives it a positive drive and arrives at his concept of 'the Will to Power'. Nietzsche does so by an increasing rejection of Schopenhauer's concept of the 'Will to live'.

In Schopenhauer's 'Will to live', Nietzsche finds a negative attitude towards life. He also detects a great danger in Schopenhauer's exaltation of the instincts of pity, self-denial and self-sacrifice.

The whole of Schopenhauer's philosophy aims at release from the will, achieved momentarily in the will-less contemplation of Art or in what Schopenhauer calls 'Nirvana'. Unlike Schopenhauer, Nietzsche sees

no point in denying the Will. He regards such a release from the will as impossible and a total misunderstanding of the meaning of life.

Nietzsche develops his own line of thought and instead of denying life, he strongly affirms it. His idea of redemption has nothing to do with Schopenhauer's aim to be released from the 'Will to live'. He, therefore, rejects Schopenhauer's doctrine of 'Resignation' and the 'Buddhistic doctrine of Nirvana'. Dionysus the Greek god symbolizing chaos and irrationality teaches him the truth of life and in dionysian suffering, Nietzsche finds no trace of redemption. Thus he who calls himself 'Dionysus Disciple' does not believe in Tragedy as a lesson in resignation. With the death of God he fails to find lasting happiness in pure contemplation of a creation deserted by his creator. Nietzsche, therefore, asserts that Tragedy is the antithesis of Buddhistic negation of the Will.

The unsatisfied striving of Schopenhauer's will to life is displayed more closely in man's fight for happiness. Though Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' does not aim at man's happiness, its goal is the perfection of the individual in the Superman. Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' is positive and construc-

tive whereas Schopenhauer's is both negative and destructive.

Schopenhauer's Will is not at first hampered by anything and so it rushes forward without any aim. But at a certain stage, this wild rush is suddenly obstructed by the intellect which, according to him, is the product of the Will. Ultimately the Will's progress is halted and it then denies itself. By so doing, it makes man a 'Will-less subject' of knowledge.

Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' on the other hand is not obstructed by anything although at times it has been delayed by some resistance. It thus rushes forth and is always dynamic. In its course, pleasure and displeasure are its regular attendants. Displeasure cannot check the Will's forward march, for the Will finds pleasure in resistance. Thus in Nietzsche's Will, pleasure consists not in reaching the goal but in overcoming a resistance.

Nietzsche cannot accept Schopenhauer's view that the 'Will to life' is a thing-in-itself. He finds no 'things-in-themselves' for according to him, 'Will to Power' is the only inner substance of being. He also does not find any plurality of the Will but

he is convinced that all individual wills are nothing but manifestations of the 'Will to Power'.

Both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche agree that will is the core of life. But both 'Will to Live' and 'Will to Power' are victims of some other powers. Schopenhauer's Will becomes a victim of the intellect, for, the **moment** intellect intervenes, Will steps down and denies itself. Nietzsche's 'Will to Power' is also limited for inspite of its dynamic force, it can never re-visit the past. It is handicapped because although it can always move forward, it fails to retrace its steps to the past.

Schopenhauer's Will fails to recover its lost position and so has to deny itself. Nietzsche on the other hand uses the Will's limitation as a stimulus to power and more power, to complete its aim in the strong man or the 'Overman'.

Schopenhauer is pessimistic in his outlook and his pessmism is deep rooted in the ugliness of life. In his examination of reality, he sees only pain and suffering and this convinces him that reality is nothing but evil. Hindu Philosophy also stresses the presence of evil in the world, but even Buddhism which is considered to be the most pessimistic

system of Indian thought believes that evil can be eliminated if desire can be exterminated and destroyed.

Like Schopenhauer, Nietzsche is also conscious of the presence of evil in the universe and he also accepts the tragic nature of man. But he is not at all discouraged by the dismal picture of life for he points out:

no pain has been able or shall be
able to tempt me into giving false
testimony about life as I recognise
it⁶⁹.

Nietzsche does not agree with Schopenhauer that life is essentially evil. So instead of lamenting over man's unsuccessful lot, Nietzsche is ready to face life in its totality. His dionysian message does not encourage man to flee from life but the central theme of the message encourages us to say 'yes' to life. In spite of the boulders and sharp winds of misery, Nietzsche is inspired to preach the message of encouragement for he is supported by the wish that man should not will death. Thus,

⁶⁹ Erich Heller, The Disinherited Mind, op. cit., p. 116.

according to him, the ultimate aim of man should, therefore, be to attain power and more and more power.

The god Dionysus transforms despair into bliss of ultimate acceptance. As Dionysus' devotee, Nietzsche does not want man to run away from life or watch it like an idle spectator. He is greatly impressed by Greek tragedy for it poses the problem of one who reacts to adversity and death.

Christianity witnesses life's despair and preaches the equality of men before God. Nietzsche does not believe in this equality and he also finds fault with Schopenhauer's cosmic will. He believes in the individual will and its achievement of power. He has no doubt that this individual 'Will' will ultimately reach its zenith in the Overman. Nietzsche thus believes that the individual has the possibility of achieving the full stature of the Superman. Man, he believes, can reach this goal only if he can fight against the greatest hurdle which is the overcoming of the self with all its passion and impulses. Nietzsche insists that the strong man loves power and affirms the will to live. He asserts that it is the happy duty of the indivi-

dual to be strong and aggressive. He is of the view that the negative and passive attitude of Schopenhauer's individual is based on weakness. Nietzsche makes it clear that he expects the Superman to control the unruly desires and to direct the 'Will to Power' to the enlightenment of man. He believes that man is the master of fate and with exertion can free himself from pain and suffering. Man must according to him:

beget the Superman, to whom all races will contribute the blood of his body and the latent powers of his soul, and who will be a more splendid instrument of the Will to Power and temple of the risen Dionysus . . . The Superman will be magnanimous . . . His strength will be . . . the strength of daring to live completely . . . shrinking from nothing, undaunted by nothing that can befall him⁷⁰.

In Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Nietzsche speaks of his period of Schopenhauerian pessimism -- 'all life had I renounced, so I dreamed'. But the way

⁷⁰ B.A.G. Fuller, A History of Philosophy, Delhi: Oxford & IBH Publishing Co., 1955, pp.450.

of the world weary is rejected by him. He comes to the conclusion that denial of the will cannot and does not solve life's problem. Nietzsche views the world as a battle ground in which every element seeks for dominance over others. The problem can, according to him, be solved only by overcoming it. Man must, therefore, play his role as a god to achieve his goal by overcoming it.

Nietzsche's challenge is to overcome Schopenhauerian pessimism. His opinion is that man should accept reality for what it is. He reaffirms life with the creation of Art. He is convinced that his 'Will to Power' reveals itself in the working of the Universe and this is the work of the artist giving shape to himself.

The two philosophers -- Schopenhauer and Nietzsche arrive at the theory of Art, through their theory of the 'Will'. But because Nietzsche affirms life and Schopenhauer negates it, their interpretations of Tragedy vastly differ.

Schopenhauer asserts the value of pity, of self-denial and self-sacrifice in tragedy. Nietzsche rejects this view of Schopenhauer and in its place he sees strength, joy and affirmation of life. Thus

there is a world of difference between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche for the one preaches:

confirmity, denial, ascetism, the
other rebellion, affirmation,
strength and action . . .
Schopenhauer emphasises the suffer-
ing and misery of existence and
represents life as evil and desirable.
Nietzsche on the contrary represents
life as good . . . desirable: he calls
not for less life, for not -- being,
for Nirvana -- but for more life, more
vigorous life, more joyful life⁷¹.

Although the idea of the 'Will' and the role it plays in knowledge is one of Nietzsche's views, Schopenhauer can still be recognised as the originator of the doctrine of 'Will'.

Another point which supports this fact is that Nietzsche's doctrine of 'affirmation' or 'yea saying' to life is not his own but Aeschylus. Nietzsche's view was certainly strengthened by his study of the Greek dramatist.

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Frederich Copleston, Friedrich Nietzsche,
London: Search Press, 1975, p.158.

Aeschylus perceived the mystery of suffering in life. What he witnessed in the world was the working of unknown powers binding man to pain and disaster. Life was for him a perilous adventure and he realised that men were not made for safe havens. He considered life or existence as a challenge, for there was that in man which could alter his fate and turn defeat into triumph. In the works of a man with this insight and heroic temper, tragedy was born and in his hands it showed man's misery in its darkest and his grandeur at his best.

Aeschylus' heroes like Prometheus are not afraid to face life. Man is only a play thing in the hands of powerful gods. He is the victim of their sport. Yet inspite of all his sufferings and unhappy lot he refuses to bow his head. He desires with all his power to be man and to remain so. Inspite of his misery he does not want to change places with the gods and is dead against the spirit of resignation.

Up to this point, Nietzsche agrees with Aeschylus without ^{sub}scribing to Aeschylus' view that God is responsible for the mystery of unreserved suffering. It is here that Nietzsche turns to

Schopenhauer and accepts his doctrine of the 'Will'. Thus in his hands, the Christian God has been replaced by a new force called 'Will'.

Schopenhauer sees no reasonableness in the world for its basis, according to him, is irrational and tragic. Christianity too holds the view that there is something wrong at the base which cannot be put to right by man's reason. This view finds its powerful expression in the life and undeserved suffering of Job. Job has found out that at the core, life is tragic and not logical.

Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Job would seem to accept the tragic fact that there is suffering in the world, but they fail to perceive and explain the 'why' of it.

As already seen, for Schopenhauer it is the blessed state of contemplation in which tragedy must culminate whereas for Nietzsche it must lead to the emergence of the Dionysian man whose sole drive consists in his indomitable will. Such a man will have full control over his passions. He can thus face life with all its sufferings and live it fully. Thus according to Nietzsche, it is the duty of Art to transform, affirm, bless and deify man's existence. Nietzsche's Superman resembles Christ who

like him exemplifies a life which can overcome all passions, impulses and selfishness.

It is true that in later years, Nietzsche was against Schopenhauer's pessimistic doctrine of blind unmeaningful will. But though he tried very hard to construct a positive doctrine out of that blank negation, he never got the poison out of his blood. It is probable too, that his careful use of language is partly due to the influence of Schopenhauer. The Birth of Tragedy shows the sign of the influence of Schopenhauer's philosophy of 'Will' and 'Art'. Thus Nietzsche applies Schopenhauer's philosophy to his own metaphysical interpretation of Tragedy. Nietzsche also follows Schopenhauer in believing that an artist to be able to transform horrid reality into a thing of beauty must be liberated from the individual 'Will'.

Thomas Mann Buddenbrooks demonstrates the inseparability of the ideas of the two philosophers. Buddenbrooks presents a Schopenhauerian plot based on a view of life which combines Nietzsche's affirmation of the will and Schopenhauer's denial of it in a consistent whole. Thus Thomas Mann's novel:

now gives and now withdraws its
assent to Schopenhauer's condemnation

of the will, and now welcomes, and now refutes Nietzsche's advocacy of life⁷².

Nietzsche may affirm life as the 'Will to Power'. But this 'Will to Power' is not different from Schopenhauer's 'Will to Live' and both these wills are basically blind. Copleston is, therefore, right when he points out that although these two philosophers have different views of life, they:

are as two brothers who are unlike in temperament yet spring from a common parentage . . .⁷³.

In their views of Art too, Nietzsche understands Art as the great stimulant to life. Schopenhauer on the other hand understands it as the quietive that calms life in its wretchedness and suffering.

Nietzsche considers The Birth of Tragedy a significant contribution to the Science of Aesthetics, an attempt to understand Art in the terms of strongest human drive. And it will **not** be

⁷² Erich Heller, Thomas Mann: The Ironic German, op. cit. p. 54.

⁷³ Frederick Copleston, Friedrich Nietzsche, op. cit. p. 158.

an exaggeration to suggest that aesthetics in the Nietzschean sense has its beginning in the philosophy of Schopenhauer.

A comparative study of the two prominent thinkers enables one to have a glimpse into their philosophy of life. The two great Philosophers -- Schopenhauer and Nietzsche have contributed new ideas to the science of aesthetics. By trying to understand their philosophical views, a student of literature will gain a new insight into their thoughts.

From times immemorial, man has been always cowed down by the tragic picture of the world and the sad lot of humanity at large. But both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche have disclosed the secret that there is in Art, a panacea which helps man evade or overcome the miseries of life. Goethe too, in Mathew Arnold's 'Memorial Verses' knew quite well the ills and sufferings of his age and he advised the people to take shelter in Art in order to avoid disaster. But this escape from life's tragedy is short-lived, for the question of eliminating pain and suffering from the world is just impossible. Scientists and Artists may come out with their new ideas, but no one can prescribe a permanent remedy to

relieve man's sad lot and misery from the world.

Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's prescriptions to evade or overcome pain cannot give man a lasting relief from sufferings. Schopenhauer's "contemplation" can only give him a short-lived relief for no one can ever remain in that state for a long period of time.

Nietzsche's view too cannot be accepted for man will have to wait for the Superman to appear who alone with his dionysian spirit can say 'yea' to life's suffering.

Shakespeare through King Lear expresses the fact that "nothing comes of nothing". It therefore, requires a genius to transform nothing into something. In this respect, Schopenhauer may be considered a genius and an artist, for out of his pessimism, art is born. His genius also matches the irrationality of his will for when he finds it unreasoned and senseless, he also does away with either logic or argument. With the clever stroke of his genius, he helps the mind to take a leap into the world of its own. This world is, according to him, the world of contemplation where the mind experiences pure bliss.

It is also very inspiring to note the dynamic spirit of Nietzsche. Out of his experience of loneliness, despair and the general tragedy of life he succeeds in developing a philosophy of hope and he teaches others not to despair but to affirm life with all its sufferings. For as he puts it:

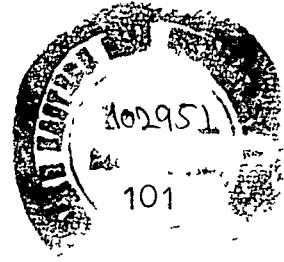
man's life must be built on the
further side of despair rather than
on the far sight of a mythical
paradise⁷⁴.

Nietzsche sees man as the master of his own fate and Art as the means by which man changes the horrid reality of life into a thing of beauty and pleasure. It is in this way that Art helps life to triumph over death and enables man to achieve victory over suffering and tragedy. Art, according to Nietzsche enabled the Greek to look at life as a pleasurable game.

Man is both looked upon as a creator and a creation for he can contemplate life and is able to justify it as an aesthetic phenomenon.

Nietzsche's Superman is one who can sublimate his sensual drives into Art by blending the spirit of

⁷⁴ Stavrou, Whitman and Nietzsche, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1964, p.123.



Dionysus and Apollo. Also man's awareness of himself as the creator stops him from despairing at life's tragedy but helps him accept life unconditionally.

Schopenhauer's pessimism is like a cold bleak winter but although lacking in warmth, it has a charm of its own. Nietzsche's optimism on the other hand, is like a scorching sun but differs from Browning's. Browning's optimism is in part an expression of his happy life, in part based on his faith in the power of love, human as well as divine. Browning's joy affirms 'God's in his heaven' and 'all's right with the world'.

Nietzsche asserts the death of God, and so his joy is a force which comes out of immense despair and helps him erect 'his sunny dome on^g caves of ice'⁷⁵.

For a long time, Aristotle's theory of tragedy had capture the minds of the critics. But Nietzsche and Schopenhauer opened a new window to see Tragedy in a new light. Not only do their theories of Tragedy broaden the outlook of the readers, but they can also for sometime transport man away from the mundane life with its care, misery, suffering and pain.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 185.

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