



1943

Pure Will and the Principal Works of Pierre Corneille

Mary Fitzpatrick
Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation

Fitzpatrick, Mary, "Pure Will and the Principal Works of Pierre Corneille" (1943). *Dissertations*. Paper 292.
http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/292

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).
Copyright © 1943 Mary Fitzpatrick

2044
35

PURE WILL AND THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF PIERRE CORNEILLE

by

Mother Mary Fitzpatrick, R.S.C.J.

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in Loyola University

June, 1943

VITA

The Bachelor of Arts degree, magna cum laude, with a major in English was conferred upon Mother Mary Fitzpatrick by Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, June, 1929.

The Master of Arts degree with a major in French was conferred by Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois, February, 1936.

From 1936 to 1938 the writer was engaged in teaching French in the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Chicago, Illinois. In 1938 she studied French in the Maison Mère de la Société du Sacré Coeur, Rome. From 1939 to 1942 she has devoted her time to graduate study in the department of Modern Languages. During the past year she has devoted her time exclusively to research in the same field.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

PAGE

I.	THE CONDITIONS SINE QUA NON OF TRAGEDY.	1
	Classic theory-Outward side of conflict essential- Modern theory-Purely mental conflict sufficient- Action-Complete-Coherent series of events-Signi- ficant-Purposeful-Character-Medium for representa- tion of conflict.	
II.	THE ALL POWERFUL WILL AND DRAMA	40
	Character of the All Powerful Will-Conquest of self-Mastery of environment-Dramatic Action and the All Powerful Will-Conflict-Exterior action- Nicomède.	
III.	THE WILL IN TRAGEDIES OF CORNEILLE.	57
	Introduction-Aesthetic principle of relation of strength of will to intensity of dramatic action- Pierre Corneille and the Principle-The principle in the chief works of Corneille-Le Cid-Cinna- Horace-Polyeucte-Rodogune-Héraclius.	
IV.	CONCLUSION.	121
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	125

CHAPTER I

THE CONDITIONS SINE QUA NON OF TRAGEDY

The present study is an investigation of the technique employed by Corneille in his effort to compose tragic drama. A related study has been made by Lessing. In a chapter of Hamburgische Dramaturgie he explains his findings concerning one of the plays of Corneille. The purpose, however, of the present investigation is to determine whether or not Cornelian technique is a solution of the problem of writing true drama about the pure will in all its force.

The sources of data have been chosen for their value as basic poetic theory. Their principles have been applied to the chief works of Corneille.

The scheme of the development of this investigation may be stated in a three-fold question:

1. What are the conditions sine qua non of tragedy?
2. Is an all powerful will dramatic material?
3. Has Corneille succeeded in making powerful will dramatic?

The tenets of Aristotelian theory concerning the conditions of tragedy will be the first consideration. The Poetics of Aristotle is, possibly, a series of notes taken by a student as he listened to the lectures of the critic. From these fragments scholars of later centuries have reconstructed the theory of tragedy which Aristotle outlined three hundred years before

the birth of Christ.¹

The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy: Character holds the second place. . . Thus Tragedy is the imitation of an action, and of the agents, mainly, with a view to the action.²

Thus does Aristotle require that drama make *μῦθος*, timeless occurrence, and not character, its center of gravity.

Plot is brought into prominence in the opening words of the book, reasons are afterwards carefully stated for placing it first among the six constituent parts of Tragedy and the discussion of the feature of Plot is much more exhaustive than that bestowed upon any of the other parts. And in taking this view Aristotle is at one with himself, and his whole method coheres. Poetry is, in its operation, an appeal to the feelings; therefore Tragedy, which makes this appeal with most strength and condensation, is higher than the other kinds of poetry; therefore plot, which embodies the appeal in its most immediate form, is higher than the other parts of Tragedy.³

Aristotle could scarcely have adopted any other opinion. The culture of the classical man had its own idea of time, and it is time that is the tragic.

The resignation offered in the utterance of "it might have been" or "too late" forms the basis of the tragic. The world's most famous tragedy, Hamlet, lays terrifying emphasis upon the principle.

¹Lane Cooper, The Poetics of Aristotle Its Meaning and Influence, Vol. VI of Our Debt to Greece and Rome, ed. George D. Hadzsits and David M. Robinson (New York: Marshall Jones and Company, 1923), p. 3.

²Samuel H. Butcher, Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art (London: Macmillan and Company, 1902), vi. 14. All quotations from the Poetics are taken from this volume.

³A. O. Prickard, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry (London: Macmillan and Company, 1891), pp. 53, 54.

. . .adverse fate so times the rhythm of Hamlet's malady that at any given moment he is in the grip of the emotions which fit him least to deal with the situation confronting him. When the circumstances demand action, he finds himself so deeply depressed that he can do nothing but brood. When he needs his finest poise to wield the weapon of his reason, he is beaten by gusts of uncontrollable excitement. With each new revelation of this irrepressible conflict Hamlet's inner tension mounts until at the final catastrophe his tortured will explodes in a wild frenzy of unconsidered action.

By the end of the first act, the audience has been given a full view of both phases of Hamlet's emotional disturbance. But only the most discerning would catch so soon its inner rhythm. His malady must continue to fall to its ebb and mount to its crest before its regular configuration becomes unmistakable. The next time that Hamlet appears to any characters in the play, he is obviously under the spell of his depression.

From this new "low" in his depression Hamlet is rescued. . . Once his emotions are swept clean by the breath from his healthful past, he is able to plan and to act. But . . . he again becomes the slave of his malady, and his mood mounts quickly to emotional tumult.⁴

The rhythm of Hamlet's melancholy interprets the aesthetic movement of the action.

It explains, for example, why he could not kill the King when he came upon him at prayer. At that moment, a mood of depression darkened Hamlet's mind--the inevitable reaction to the excitement he had just felt at the success of his play in catching the conscience of the King. His will is paralyzed. Resolute action of any sort is beyond his power. So he cannot make use of the . . . opportunity to revenge his father's murder.

It is thus that the element of time charges the world's greatest tragedy with tragic irony.⁵

⁴Oscar James Campbell, "What is the Matter with Hamlet?", The Yale Review, 32:309, December, 1942.

⁵Ibid., 32:316.

"Classical man's existence--Euclidean, relationless, point-formed--was wholly contained in the instant. Nothing must remind him of past or of future."⁶

The tragedy of the Greek is the "blind Casual of the moment."⁷ Aeschylus endeavored to make drama convey "a single impression of concentrated terror."⁸

Classic protagonists, as Oedipus and Antigone, stumble upon a situation.

A Greek tragedy, to be sure, depicts only the culmination of a disastrous series of circumstances, but Sophocles represents upon the stage more of the working out of the catastrophe than does Aeschylus.⁹

With Aeschylus, characterization is not the determinative factor. His first concerns are well-nigh mathematical precision in the architecture of the plot, imaginative diction, the impressions of awe and grandeur, religious problems, and the like; and he constructs personages only so far as is required for the development of the action. I would not give the impression that he is not a master in the drawing of character; on the contrary, he seems to me supreme in this art and moreover consciously to exercise it. But though he himself has well-defined plastic conception of even the most insignificant of his creatures, he will never model the action merely in order to bring one of them into high relief. Engrossed with the plot, diction, and ethical problems, and building the drama so as to lend prominence to these elements, he stops over characterization only that he may give his personages reasonable motives for their actions.¹⁰

⁶Oswald Spengler, The Decline and Fall of the West, tr. Charles F. Atkinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927), I, 132.

⁷Ibid., p. 130.

⁸Chandler Rathfon Post, The Dramatic Art of Sophocles, (Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Vol. 23, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, 1912), p. 116.

⁹Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 71.

The characters of the Supplices have but typical traits.¹¹ In the Persae Aeschylus does not attempt to portray character.¹² Sophocles' aesthetic inspired him to reject "the notion of a drama which depended for its proper understanding upon something which preceded or came after."¹³ This eminent critic regrets, however, that Sophocles discarded the trilogic system of composition:

To a poet who possessed so deep an insight into human nature, it might have afforded, with its extended range of time, a splendid opportunity for delineating the gradual development of character.¹⁴

A French critic suggests:

. . . peut-être, que ni les moeurs grecques ne permettaient sur le théâtre ni la finesse des Athéniens ne réclamait la peinture préalable des amours d'Antigone et d'Hémon puis, qu'il est des sentiments si connus, -- amour de deux fiancés, amour d'une mère, -- que les démarches en peuvent être intelligibles et même émouvantes sans tant de 'préparations.'¹⁵

Sophocles does engender curiosity as he

builds up his plot in such a way as to afford himself an opportunity for such study; and whereas in Aeschylus other forces cooperate with character to effect the dénouement, he produces the issue from the entanglement wholly through the qualities of his personages. He

¹¹Joseph Edward Harry, "Aeschylus and Sophocles," Greek Tragedy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933) I, 3.

¹²Ibid., I, 15.

¹³A. E. Haigh, The Tragic Drama of the Greeks (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), p. 141.

¹⁴Loc. cit.

¹⁵Jules Lemaitre, Impressions de théâtre (Paris: Bouvin et Cie; N.D.), VIII, 84.

even alters and manipulates the mythical material so that he may the more readily and brilliantly practise his hobby.¹⁶

With Sophocles, however, the change of character is usually that of purification.

The personalities are already formed in main outlines as they are to remain throughout the drama. Antigone in the prologue itself exhibits her strong will and devotion to her brother. . .¹⁷

Sophocles by producing dénouement by a predominance of the rôle of human character diminishes the emphasis of the rôle of the gods.¹⁸

Inside the general scheme of the plot Sophocles chooses certain types of scene to display character. The difference between the methods of Sophocles and Euripides may be broadly stated thus. Sophocles displays his characters by contrasting them with other characters, Euripides by the situations which he makes them face and the monologues which he makes them speak. A comparison will make the first point clear. When in the Coloneus Theseus welcomes Oedipus to Athens, Oedipus is won by the nobility and generosity of his host, and in the warmth of Theseus' welcome he becomes a wise and kindly old man. No one but Theseus or some one like Theseus could have this effect on Oedipus. But in the Alcestis Admetus' sense of hospitality is defined, not by contrasting him with Heracles, but by the situation--the arrival of a guest in the midst of his lamentations.¹⁹

Schadewaldt points out that when Aeschylus' characters soliloquize they usually address the gods,

¹⁶Post, op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁸Loc. cit.

¹⁹T. B. L. Webster, An Introduction to Sophocles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 85.

Sophocles' characters address other men, but Euripides' address their own souls. Since a character in an emotional crisis naturally turns to whatever being seems nearest to him, we perceive that Euripides' characters no longer feel the nearness of the gods, and even that of other men is less real than the mysterious and undependable quality of their own soul; . . .²⁰

How different the maturing of traits of the past existence of the Western tragic heroes, Lear, Macbeth! Herein lies the idea of time possessed by Western culture, the development of a whole life.²¹

The argument that the classical man lived each day for itself is illustrated in Aristotle's favoring the tragedy of the moment, the Situation-Drama. Is there development of character in Greek tragedy?

When a character expresses view or adopts a course of action which we should not have expected from our first estimate of him, it is justifiable to speak of development of character. We can find such changes as early as Aeschylus. Eteocles in the Septem changes from the prudent ruler to the reckless son of Oedipus, who cannot be restrained from meeting Polyneices. The change occurs suddenly and unexpectedly during the last of the messenger's seven speeches, and the chorus, when Eteocles leaves the stage, sing of the agency of the Curse. This change is credible to the audience because they know the story, and in so far as they allow with Aeschylus that a curse may enter a man's life and change his character. Aeschylus is more interested in the intervention of the curse than in the change of character in Eteocles.

Euripides has similar abrupt changes. Aristotle complains that in the Iphigenia in Aulis the character of Iphigenia is inconsistent; her supplication to

²⁰John A. Moore, Sophocles and Arete (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), p. 45, citing W. Schadewaldt, Monolog und Selbstgesprach (Berlin: 1926).

²¹Spengler, op. cit., p. 130.

Agamemnon is in no way like her later heroism. But Euripides has represented, however abruptly, a credible change of outlook, to which Polyxena in the Hecuba provides a parallel. His object is not so much the representation of character as the dramatic situation, the heroic self-sacrifice of Polyxena, and Iphigenia.²²

Some scholars seriously doubt that the representation of Neoptolemus of Sophocles' play the Philoctetes offers a study in character drama. Can the Greek drama with its unity of time present a development of character?

Neoptolemus's mood certainly undergoes transformation. He begins as the reluctant but submissive tool of Odysseus's stratagem to circumvent Philoctetes, but revolts and returns the bow of Hercules which he has got possession of by lies which, like his father Achilles in the Iliad, he hates worse than the gates of hell; and thus the dénouement and the reconciliation of Philoctetes must be effected by the appearance of Hercules as 'deus ex machina.' Is this a study of character development, or can we only say that the true character, after momentary eclipse, shines forth again?²³

The Ajax, one of Sophocles' closest approximations to character drama permits the spectator to see Ajax only at a crucial moment of his life.²⁴

Other students have concluded that Euripides' comprehension of an individuality is incomplete:

Such is Euripides' estimate of human character, mechanistic and diagnostic. He continually portrays the collapse of personality, Medea, Heracles or Phaedra, in the face of circumstance and psychological stress, until the individual is no longer anything but a bundle of contradictory impulses. Again, in accordance with sophistic notions, he adopts a certain externality of analysis: if persons are liable to dissolution, they

²²Webster, op. cit., pp. 94, 95.

²³Paul Shorey, "Sophocles," Martin Classical Lectures (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), I, 82.

²⁴Joseph Edward Harry, "Aeschylus and Sophocles," op. cit., I, 96.

can only be watched from without, they cannot be understood from within, as single persons. Here is the weakness of the sophistic method of trying to understand conduct by general laws: the individual somehow eludes us. All of us probably feel that Euripides analysis of Phaedra or Medea, searching as it is, fails to attain a complete comprehension of the soul. When the personality dissolves, its ethical nature is disrupted.²⁵

But the great strength of Sophocles is his interior grasp of character, his sense of the dignity and integrity of a noble personality. Consequently, we must try to understand his dramas, not in terms of fate or tragic sin, but of honor and ἀρετή.²⁶

For Sophocles little plot is necessary. His subtle dramatic art and complete psychological analysis can develop a simple situation into a revelation of character and destiny. He subordinates the rôle of fate to the dominion of character and the unavoidable condition of life. He transforms tragic pathos into a "sense of the universal human fellowship in frailty and suffering."²⁷ The assertion is further supported by the fact that the Oracle concerned itself with but the contemporary event, that the Dorian Greek chose a timber style of architecture rather than a selection of stone-technique.²⁸ The Greek historian Thucydides, furthermore, is a luminous example of the Classical man's interest in the self-explanatory event of the present. The history of Thucydides does not provide perspective.²⁹

²⁵John A. Moore, Sophocles and Aretê, p. 45.

²⁶Ibid., p. 59.

²⁷Shorey, op. cit., I, 95.

²⁸Spengler, op. cit., p. 132.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 9, 10.

How does Aristotle analyze the structure of the incidents? He has determined,

But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality.³⁰

Further, "Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete, and whole, . . . A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end."³¹ The explanation of Aristotle is similar to that of his master.

You will allow that every discourse ought to be a living creature, having a body of its own and a head and feet; there should be a middle, beginning, and end, adapted to one another and to the whole?³²

Aristotle amplifies the affirmation that, "Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete and whole . . ."³³ He demonstrated that a writer may select from the infinitely various incidents in one man's life only those events which can be reduced to unity.³⁴ Another expression of the same requisite is,

. . .the structural union of the parts being such that, if any one of them is displaced or removed, the whole will be disjointed and disturbed. For a thing whose presence or absence makes no visible difference, is not an organic part of the whole.³⁵

³⁰Poetics, vi. 9.

³¹Ibid., vii. 3.

³²Plato, Phaedrus, quoted in Lane Cooper, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1913), pp. 28, 29.

³³Poetics. vii. 2.

³⁴Poetics. viii. 1.

³⁵Ibid., viii. 4.

Second, the dramatic action is a coherent series of events. It is the function of the poet to relate "what may happen,--what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity."³⁶

It is therefore evident that the unravelling of the plot, no less than the complication, must arise out of the plot itself, it must not be brought about by the Deus ex Machina.³⁷

Aristotle takes the Oedipus Tyrannus as the type of well-constructed play, and the effectiveness of modern performances bears out his judgment.³⁸

The action moves from the very beginning straight to the goal, never diverted, never interrupted. . . No other tragedy shows such mastery in development of plot and character.³⁹

Sophocles has awakened sympathetic curiosity:

It does in fact grip, as the phrase is. The way the effect is got illustrates an essential difference between Greek and modern plot-interest. Generally speaking, we expect to be puzzled, intrigued, surprised by the plot, and, generally speaking again, they knew the outcome, and were interested chiefly in seeing how it was brought about, and at what point the personages themselves would realize whither they were tending. In the Oedipus we observe a man and a woman as it were at Niagara, in a frail boat, unaware that they are drifting into the rapids that will sweep them over the falls. And we watch with breathless suspense to see when the quicker and better informed perception of the woman will first dawn upon the man, and then become a horrible certainty.⁴⁰

³⁶Ibid., ix. 1.

³⁷Ibid., xv. 7.

³⁸Shorey, op. cit., p. 67.

³⁹Harry, op. cit., p. 147.

⁴⁰Shorey, op. cit., pp. 67, 68.

Sophocles the tragedian subtly marks and defines "the very efforts of Oedipus to escape the conclusion which he begins to forebode."⁴¹ Tragic irony deepens the effect.

Irony in this sense refers to the sinister meaning which the spectator, who is in the secret, feels in words which have no such suggestion for the personages. Our modern irony of fate and nature, in Hardy's novels for example, is a similar feeling transferred from a particular plot to all life and existence by the author and the reader, who are supposed to know that the very nature of the world is ironically inimical to human hopes, desires, delusions, and happiness.⁴²

. . .the difference in technique of plot construction between the three tragedians, the difference is ultimately one of ends. Aeschylus' story is represented as an exemplification of the divine law, which is gorgeously enunciated in the choruses and its majesty sustained by music and spectacle. Euripides, in his later plays at least, shows the unpredictable workings of chance, and is always more interested in the elaboration of the particular scene, whether lyrical, emotional, or rhetorical, than in the structure of the play as a whole. Sophocles' careful craftsmanship, his choice of scenes, his construction of the plot, his use of music, spectacle, and dramatic irony are primarily directed to the presentation of character and the identification of the audience with the characters thus presented.⁴³

In the history of modern drama the plays of Eugène Scribe exemplify careful construction. These dramas are the most perfect modern example of la pièce bien faite. The fourth act of Les Trois Maupins provides an example of perfect dramatic technique. The act is

⁴¹Ibid., p. 68.

⁴²Loc. cit.

⁴³Webster, op. cit., p. 124.

dazzling and bewildering in its complexity, and in the skill with which it is developed, supplies almost the entire interest of the action. This act takes place in a room which resembles the city of Thebes, with its hundred doors: doors to the right, doors to the left, visible doors and secret doors. It is here that Scribe's dexterity triumphs.

Imagine a central point in a complicated railway system which is crossed at intervals of a few moments by trains starting from all points, north, east, south, and west; suppose also that the departure of each train is so calculated that it must reach this crossing absolutely on time to the very second, as an inappreciable delay or advance would be sufficient to cause a catastrophe, or rather a number of them--as many catastrophes as there are trains. Does this comparison suggest sufficiently the swiftness of the grouping and ordering and the precision of the movement which, in the heat of the action, make the scenes and the characters follow each other with lightning rapidity? Only Scribe, with his genius for combinations, his composure before the glare of the footlights, could keep situations, scenes, and actors from colliding as they circulate in the limited space in which the dramatist has confined them.⁴⁴

Le Verre d'eau illustrates the orientation of a character, rather than an individual, toward a definite objective; the placement of obstacles; the removal of some or all of these obstacles by the employment of clever devices. The conflict is usually one of situation, not of character. This is consequent to the

breathless rush to a clever dénouement, through a series of brilliant exhibitions of légèreté de main results in paleness of characterization; his characters get their personality more from the actors' interpretation than from the play itself.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Neil Cole Arvin, Eugène Scribe and the French Theatre (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924), p. 168.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 230.

On the contrary Augier has created characters of marvelous reality.⁴⁶

Inanimate objects frequently effect the complication.⁴⁷

L'action de sa pièce est d'un bout à l'autre une oeuvre de logique et de dextérité. Aussi, avec quelle attention on l'écoute! comme il s'élève à l'entrée de tel ou tel personnage un frémissement universel! C'est qu'il est en situation; c'est que par l'artifice de la composition, toute l'intrigue converge à ce moment sur lui, et qu'on ne sait comment il va se tirer du mauvais pas où il est engagé.⁴⁸

Third, the component parts of the dramatic action are significant. A plot with irrelevant incidents violates a fundamental principle of dramatic construction.⁴⁹ "Of all plots and actions the episodic are the worst."⁵⁰

Fourth, the dramatic action tends toward a certain end. ". . .and to arouse this pity and fear in such a way as to effect that special purging off and relief (catharsis) of these two emotions. . ."⁵¹

What is the meaning of the specific effect of tragedy? It is impressive to realize that the text of the Poetics contains approximately ten thousand words but that Castelvetro's "exposition" of it required three hundred eighty-

⁴⁶Brander Matthews, French Dramatists of the Nineteenth Century (Fifth Edition, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), p. 133.

⁴⁷Dorothy J. Kaucher, Modern Dramatic Structure (University of Missouri Studies, Vol. 3, No. 4. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1928), p. 7.

⁴⁸Francisque Sarcey, Quarante Ans de Théâtre (Paris: Bibliothèque des annales, 1901), IV, 136.

⁴⁹Ingram Bywater, "Commentary," Aristotle on the Art of Poetry (New York: Clarendon Press, 1909), p. 194.

⁵⁰Poetics. ix. 10.

⁵¹Lane Cooper, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1913), p. 17 amplifying Aristotle, Poetics, vi.

four thousand words. It is the catharsis clause which has been one of the passages most frequently discussed in the past three hundred years. For centuries the traditional belief had been the signification of a moral effect which tragedy produces through the "purification of the passions." It is pertinent to recall that Corneille assumed the purely ethical intention of the drama.⁵²

No explanation concerning the function of tragedy could prove more helpful than a passage of Butcher's essay concerning the subject. In it the critic offers a logical exposition of the purpose of tragic action. He begins by referring to a passage of the Politics.

In the Politics after explaining the action of the musical catharsis he [Aristotle] adds that those who are liable to pity and fear, and, in general, persons of emotional temperament pass through a like experience; . . . they all undergo a catharsis of some kind and feel a pleasurable relief.⁵³

Aristotle had introduced the whole passage here referred to with: "What we mean by catharsis we will now state in general terms; hereafter we will explain it more clearly in our treatise on Poetry."⁵⁴ There is, unfortunately, a lacuna at this point of the Poetics. Thus the critic may but refer to the Politics for the information so much desired. Butcher observes:

The tone of the passage and particular expressions show two things plainly; first, that there the term is consciously metaphorical; secondly, that though its

⁵²Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., pp. 243, 244.

⁵³Ibid., p. 251, citing Aristotle, Politics. v. (viii.) 7. 1342 a 11.

⁵⁴Ibid., v. (viii) 7. 1341b 39.

technical use in medicine was familiar, the metaphorical application of it was novel and needed elucidation. Moreover, in the words last quoted, 'all undergo catharsis of some kind,' -it is pretty plainly implied that the catharsis of pity and fear in tragedy is analogous to but not identical with, the catharsis of 'enthusiasm.'⁵⁵

Fortunately Aristotle did analyze the catharsis of this form of religious ecstasy. Butcher remarks:

The persons subject to such transports were regarded as men possessed by a god, and were taken under the care of the priesthood. The treatment prescribed for them was so far homoeopathic in character, that it consisted in applying movement to cure movement, in soothing the internal trouble of the mind by a wild and restless music. The passage in the Politics (v. viii 7. 1341b 32-1342 a 15) in which Aristotle describes the operation of these tumultuous melodies is the key to the meaning of catharsis in the Poetics.⁵⁶

Butcher continues his commentary with:

But the word, catharsis as taken up by Aristotle into his terminology of art, has probably a further meaning. It expresses not only a fact of psychology or of pathology, but a principle of art. The original metaphor is in itself a guide to the full aesthetic significance of the term. . .Applying this to tragedy we observe that the feelings of pity and fear in real life contain a morbid and disturbing element. In the process of tragic excitation they find relief and the morbid element is thrown off. As the tragic action progresses, when the tumult of the mind, first roused, has afterwards subsided, the lower forms of emotion are found to have been transmuted into higher and more refined forms. The painful element in the pity and fear of reality is purged away; the emotions themselves are purged. The curative and tranquillising influence that tragedy exercises follows as an immediate accompaniment of the transformation of feeling. Tragedy,

⁵⁵Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., p. 252.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 253-255.

then, does more than effect the homoeopathic cure of certain passions. Its function on this view is not merely to provide an outlet for pity and fear, but to provide for them a distinctively aesthetic satisfaction, to purify and clarify them by passing them through the medium of art.⁵⁷

How does Aristotle define the emotions of pity and fear for which he requires tragic action to provide an outlet and aesthetic satisfaction?

Fear Aristotle defines to be a 'species of pain or disturbance arising from an impression of impending evil which is destructive or painful in its nature.'⁵⁸

Pity is a sort of pain at an evident evil of a destructive or painful kind in the case of somebody who does not deserve it, the evil being one which we might expect to happen to ourselves or to some of our friends, and this at a time when it is seen to be near at hand.⁵⁹

Aristotle correlates pity and fear in concluding, "Pity however, turns into fear where the object is so nearly related to us that the suffering seems to be our own."⁶⁰

In the dramatic representation of pity and fear there is no essential change in the emotion of pity. The object of the emotion remains the character who suffers more than he deserves to undergo. On the contrary, the emotion of fear is very considerably modified. It is no longer the pain arising from the thought of impending evil to one's own existence; psychic distance has been created.⁶¹ It is the "sympathetic shudder" one feels for a man like

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 253-255.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 256, quoting Aristotle, Rhetoric, tr. Welldon, ii. 5. 1382 a 21.

⁵⁹Ibid., ii 8. 1385b 13.

⁶⁰Ibid., ii. 8. 1386a 17.

⁶¹Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., pp. 258-259.

oneself who is undergoing misfortune. It is the impersonal emotion relieved and aesthetically satisfied by the dramatic action which is an image of human destiny. Wordsworth has reconstructed the thought of Aristotle:

Pleasing was the smart,
And the tear precious in compassion shed;⁶²

"pity" and "fear"⁶³ demonstrates that they are essential and that they must be allied for the achievement of the purpose of tragic action. Aristotelian theory does not admit of choice between, or substitution for, pity and fear.

In ancient times Euripides shared with Simonides the reputation for being most skilled in evoking pathos. Aristotle calls him "the most tragic of the poets," by which he meant that Euripides awakened the greatest pity and terror. (Poetics, ch. 13) It is almost as though the weakness of human beings added somewhat to their attractiveness, that the poet feels with such poignancy the painfulness of life. In Euripides there is no consolation for human sorrow; but if he cannot assuage these things he will at least soften them by the beauty of music and spectacle. This is the key note of Euripides' art--to seek restoration from sorrow and evil in the healing power of song.⁶⁴

The Sophoclean Katharsis:

. . . . tranquillizes, soothes, elevates, and restores
to our distracted and dispersed souls their lost
unity, and induces

That serene and blessed mood
In which the affections gently lead us on
Until . . . we are laid asleep
In body and become a living soul.
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony and deep power of joy
We see into the life of things.

⁶²Cooper, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, p. 20, quoting from Wordsworth, "Dedication," The White Doe of Rylstone.

⁶³Ibid., p. 17.

Sophocles is the supreme example of this service of poetry. . . He has always helped me to that quieting of restless will of which Dante speaks and that Schopenhauer says is the function of all true art-- when the cup of Tantalus no longer teases the thirsting lips and the wheel of Ixion stands still. . . How does Sophocles do this for us? . . . To exhibit this would require a detailed study of his dramatic art and style, showing its freedom from the irritating flaws and disconcerting incongruities that check and mar our delight in such even of the world's great art. It is the cumulative effect of this absence of all dissonance and all annoy that finally produces the sense of well being and happy security. This peculiar quality of Sophocles must, I think, be added to the analysis of a modern scholar, who attributes to all great poetry, even the exciting . . . , a like influence which he identifies with the Aristotelian katharsis. "Poetry," he says, "shares with music the power . . . of creating the inward peace which reigns when the whole personality dominates over its minor elements, and of producing the intense pleasure peculiar to this state of psychic equilibrium."⁶⁵

This completes the analysis of four qualities of dramatic action. The action was described as: complete, coherent series of events, significant, and purposeful.⁶⁶ The second consideration of the investigation will be that of dramatic conflict.

Brunetiere emphasized the significance of conflict when he said,

. . . mais ce qui n'appartient bien qu'au théâtre, mais ce qui fait à travers les littératures, depuis les Grecs jusqu'à nous, l'unité permanente et continue de l'espèce dramatique, c'est le spectacle d'une volonté qui se déploie. . .⁶⁷

⁶⁵Shorey, op. cit., pp. 92-94.

⁶⁶Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., p. 348.

⁶⁷Ferdinand Brunetiere, Les Epoques du théâtre français (6e édition, Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1922), pp. 390, 391.

Hegel exposes the necessity of collision as the main tenet of his theory of tragedy.

The substance of ethical condition is, when viewed as concrete unity, a totality of different relations and forces, which however, only under the inactive condition of the gods in their blessedness achieve the works of the Spirit in enjoyment of an undisturbed life. There is implied in the notion of this totality itself an impulse to move forward from itself, and transport itself in the real actuality of the phenomenal world. On account of the nature of this primitive obsession, it comes about that mere difference, if conceived on the basis of different conditions of individual personalities, must inevitably associate with contradiction and collision.⁶⁸

Hebbel develops the Hegelian theory of the necessity of conflict. His aim is "to render the conflict truly tragic and significant by interpreting it as a clash between the individual and the idea."⁶⁹

Nietzsche too emphasizes the necessity of discord in drama.

. . .and along with these we have the mystery doctrine of tragedy: the fundamental knowledge of the oneness of all existing things, the consideration of individuation as the primal cause of evil, and art as the joyous hope that the spell of individuation may be broken, as the augury of a restored oneness.⁷⁰

Brunetièrre has provided a succinct appraisal of the modes of collision: "l'opposition du Moi et du Non-moi et la lutte d'une volonté contre elle-

⁶⁸Georg W. F. Hegel, The Philosophy of Fine Art, tr. F.P.B. Osmonson (London: G. Bell and Sons, Limited, 1920), IV, P. 297.

⁶⁹Israel Knox, The Aesthetic Theories of Kant, Hegel and Schopenhauer, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), pp. 119, 120.

⁷⁰Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, tr. William S. Haussmann, Vol. I of The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, ed. Oscar Levy (3rd edition, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909), p. 83.

^
meme. "71

Butcher has elaborated the first phrase interestingly with the thought that man is limited by the present moment.⁷² Fyfe similarly signals the necessity of there being

something in the hero himself, which obstinately and ironically combines with adverse circumstance, so that at last even his good qualities co-operate with both to fatal issues.⁷³

Racine, in turn, offers a dramatic exposition of the second phrase of Brunetière's modes of collision, "la lutte d'une volonté contre elle-même." The Janenists praised the tragedian for having presented the division, the weakness of will.⁷⁴

Whatever be the mode of expression of conflict the fact of the major importance of conflict dominated the following consideration. The collision determines the dramatic progression. The turning point is inherent in the discord. First, there is a straining, a heightening of the intensity of contradiction; second there is the inevitability of resolution of the antagonistic forces. The moment of the collision, thus, is the prime moment of the dramatic progression.⁷⁵

⁷¹Brunetière, op. cit., p. 393.

⁷²Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., p. 349.

⁷³W. Hamilton Fyfe, "Introduction," Aristotle's Art of Poetry (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 349.

⁷⁴Gustave Lanson, Histoire de la littérature française (18e édition, Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1924), p. 545.

⁷⁵Hegel, op. cit., p. 262.

Although conflict is the soul of the drama, every conflict is not dramatic.⁷⁶ A statement of Aristotle provides the principle on which this assertion is rooted. In it he explains that in real life every action does not express itself in external act, as, for example, the intense activity of speculative thought.⁷⁷ This does not manifest itself in an external deed.

Butcher further stresses the dramatic quality of conflict.

But the action of the drama cannot consist in an inward activity that does not pass beyond the region of thought or emotion. Even where the main interest is centered in the internal conflict, this conflict must have its outward as well as its inward side; it must manifest itself in individual acts, in concrete relations with the world outside; it must bring the agent into collision with other personalities. We therefore exclude from the province of the drama purely mental conflicts action and reaction within the mind itself. . . .⁷⁸

Hegel, too, declares that the action of the drama cannot consist in an inward activity that does not manifest itself in deed. He established in similar terms the requisites of the external act.

The drama, in short, does not take exclusive refuge in the lyric presence of soul-life, as such stands in contrast to an external world, but propounds such a life in and through its external realization. . . .

However much, therefore, we may have as a centre of attraction the intimate soul-life of particular men and women, nevertheless dramatic composition cannot rest content with the purely lyrical conditions of the definite emotional life. . . .⁷⁹

⁷⁶Butcher, loc. cit.

⁷⁷Aristotle, Politics. iv. (vii.) 3. 1325b 16-23, cited by Butcher, loc. cit.

⁷⁸Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., p. 349.

⁷⁹Hegel, op. cit., p. 251.

In contradistinction to the Aristotelian and Hegelian theory of dramatic conflict Maeterlinck devised the technique of the so-called genre, le drame intime.⁸⁰ A study concerning the imaginative faculty of the Flemish suggests the source of Maeterlinck's so-called drama of the imagination.

Ses images ont des couleurs vives et des traits précis. Cette précision de la vision peut s'appliquer au monde des réalités ambiantes et comme tel, devient la source de son réalisme si frappant et si impitoyable. . .

Il y a tout un monde qui nous environne dont nous ne voyons que les signes. Il nous est révélé par la méditation, les pressentiments, les impondérables auréolant les objets les plus ordinaires d'un halo de mystère. . .⁸¹

Maeterlinck formulated the ideal of the so-called genre, le drame intime on reading the Essays of Emerson.

D'après Emerson, les moindre actes de notre vie ordinaire ont un sens caché, intérieur, bien plus élève que celui qu'ils paraissent avoir, et que nous ignorons. Dans un regard, derrière le geste le plus banal et la parole la plus insignifiante, nous manifestons à notre insu une grandeur de héros. Sans que nous le sachions, toutes les puissances de l'âme sont présentes. . . Ce que pense la pensée n'a aucune importance à côté de la vérité que nous sommes et que s'affirme en silence.⁸²

Nevertheless, the critics do apply to the compositions of Maeterlinck the Aristotelian and Hegelian theories of dramatic conflict. One of their assertions is that in opposition to Hegelian principles Maeterlinck's com-

⁸⁰Times (London) Literary Supplement, May 23, 1902.

⁸¹Albert Carnoy, "L'Imagination flamande," PMLA, 33:207, 1918.

⁸²Lucien Solvay, "Maurice Maeterlinck," L'Evolution théâtrale, (Bruxelles: Librairie nationale d'art et d'histoire, 1922), II, 264.

positions do take refuge almost exclusively "in the lyric presence of soul life."⁸³

Maeterlinck . . . minimizes action, transferring the center of gravity from the outer to the inner world, rendering through suggestion certain moods.⁸⁴

A second critic expresses the same thought adding the observation that Maeterlinck patterns symbolism according to the theories of Mallarme and of Charles Morice.

Nommer un objet, a écrit Stéphane Mallarmé, c'est supprimer les trois quarts de la jouissance du poème, qui est faite du bonheur de deviner peu à peu; le suggérer, voilà le rêve. C'est le parfait usage de ce mystère qui constitue le symbole: évoquer petit à petit un objet pour montrer un état d'âme, ou même, choisir un objet, et en dégager un état d'âme par une série de déchiffrements.⁸⁵

Et Charles Morice: "Le symbole, c'est le mélange des objets qui ont éveillé notre sentiment, et de notre âme, en une fiction. Le moyen, c'est la suggestion: il s'agit de donner aux gens le souvenir de quelque chose qu'ils n'ont jamais vu."⁸⁶

A third critic inquires:

What is it which generates that inner excitement and delight in the theatre which springs into being as soon as the figures in a fine play begin to speak; or which will sometimes appear and disappear in the course of a play marking the ebb and flow of the dramatic inspiration? It is the true dramatic essence,

⁸³Hegel, loc. cit.

⁸⁴Frank W. Chandler, The Contemporary Drama of France (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1920), p. 295.

⁸⁵Solvay, loc. cit., quoting Mallarmé and Charles Morice.

⁸⁶Solvay, loc. cit.

something which can never come by effort, but is unmistakable in its presence. It is not in the least the same thing as verbal brilliance or idiosyncrasy. There are some plays which live by their 'style' in this sense. The plays of Congreve or Oscar Wilde, for instance, have no life, outside theatrical situations, but the life of witty expression. Their world is the world of polished phrase, and sharp, clean hammer-blows of hitting the epigrammatic nail on the head over and over again. Or the plays of Maeterlinck or Synge's Riders to the Sea live entirely by a rhythmic speech which are all their own. But the true dramatic essence is something far deeper than these surface effects of patterned language.⁸⁷

The same critic in analyzing the mournful music of Maeterlinck's plays concludes:

It certainly creates an atmosphere all its own, but it is an atmosphere which, instead of giving intensity to drama, seems to make it infinitely remote and artificial. It is all rather like the description of the sound of the tidal bore in Masfield's Nan--'a-wammering and a-wammering.'

There is the same atmosphere of 'escape poetry' in the early poetic romances of Yeats, and in Stephen Phillips, whose Paolo and Francesca seemed great poetry to the theatregoing public of a generation ago, when Maeterlinckian melancholy was the fashion in tragedy. But it was all very bogus. When Giovanni sees the bodies of the lovers lying dead, he is overcome with their beauty, and Lucrezia cries 'What ails you now?' Giovanni replies,

She takes away my strength.
I did not know the dead could have such hair.
Hide them. They look like children fast asleep.

We have only to compare this with the scene of Ferdinand looking upon the body of the Duchess of Malfi and her children, to feel immediately the difference between a

⁸⁷Elizabeth Drew, Discovering Drama (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inclusive, 1937), p. 112.

literary affectation and the voice of a dramatist.

Ferdinand. Is she dead?

Bosola. She is what

You' have her....Do you not weep?

Ferdinand. Cover her face; mine eyes dazzle: she died young.

When drama reaches out to become as richly articulate as it can possibly be, and poetry reaches out to become richly human as it can possibly be, the result is true poetic drama. It is not an application of one art to another, it is a fusion of two worlds of artistic experience which become another entity. This entity, however, continues to exist in the worlds of its component parts. As we have said before, a play of Shakespeare, or any other poetic play, can be criticized at a variety of levels. It is a story; it is a picture of a group of characters; and it is a sequence of individual passages of poetry of different degrees of beauty, sound and sense. But it is also a dramatic poem. The poet and the dramatist become one. Of course, one or other may obviously predominate. Maxwell Anderson in Winterset, for instance, is a dramatist who has found himself driven towards poetry in order both to make his characters adequately articulate, and to create the necessary heightening of pitch which he feels his tragedy demands to set it away from all the associations which its environment inevitably suggest, and give it a larger reference. T. S. Eliot, on the other hand, is a poet who has found himself driven towards the theatre, to extend his scope, and completely to objectify his material. Anderson's drama is better than his poetry; Eliot's poetry is better than his drama; but neither uses one art simply as a trimming to the other; each is organic to the whole. Both Winterset and Murder in the Cathedral have been conceived as a unity in which the genius and method of drama have brought something to the essence of poetry, and the genius and method of poetry have brought something to the essence of drama, and they fuse and melt into each other and become indissoluble.⁸⁸

Solvay concludes,

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 213-215.

C'est sur cette manière de symbole, sur cette terreur vague et mystérieuse, que M. Maeterlinck a construit, dirais-je, toute son esthétique littéraire; . . .⁸⁹

An imitator of the so-called statuesque drama is Anton Chekhov. His achievement is the negation of the Hegelian precept that the drama propound the soul-life "in and through its external realization."⁹⁰ A lecturer on Chekhovian technique remarks, "the theatre seems to demand that something should really happen."⁹¹ Another critic of Chekhovian technique describes the

. . .totally different kind of plot, tissues of which, as in life, lie below the surface of events and, unobtrusive, shape our destiny. Thus he all but overlooks the event plot; more he deliberately lets it be as casual as it is in real life.⁹²

Chekhov's choice, may be analyzed as "spatial reality."

The 'spatial reality' of a play may appear in many ways. It can be apparent in a grouping of moods and emotions corresponding roughly to the arrangement of the plastic elements in a painting; or in a treatment of themes comparable to the same elements in a musical composition; or it may live in an atmosphere through which the temporal events are viewed; or in some symbolic or emotional flavor which gives the temporal events some special significance. . . .

But the spatial element may predominate very greatly. In Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida it is purely his attitude towards the story, everything he uses is to illustrate, not the facts themselves, which interest us. Or in Webster's Duchess of Malfi, although there is an embarrassment of chaotic incident and accident in the plot, it is the grouping of moods

⁸⁹Solvay, loc. cit.

⁹⁰Hegel, loc. cit.

⁹¹Oliver Elton, "Chekhov," Studies in European Literature being the Taylorian Lectures (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), Second Series, p. 21.

⁹²William Gerhardt, Anton Chekhov a Critical Study (London: Richard Cobden-Sanderson, 1923), p. 106.

and personalities, the sense of the warp and woof of reflection and groping introspection which is going on all the time beneath the melodramatic action, which is the real life of the play. In The Cherry Orchard, Chekov dispenses with plot altogether as a vital element. The events in time, that little trickle of action which runs through it, are so tenuous as to be almost negligible. This does not mean that the characters are not so vividly individualized, but that it is their static relationships in which we are really interested. We know, as soon as we see what Madame Ranevsky is, that the cherry orchard will be lost, but what absorbs us is the theme of the interrelation of all that the cherry orchard stands for, with that group of characters and their moods and emotions. It is not the facts that they live through in the play which matters, it is the quality of their living which matter. It is the revelation of their charm, their inconsequence and incompetency; their mingling of genuine emotion with triviality of spirit, their infinite incapacity for action and gesture among material things--drinking a cup of coffee, kissing an old man, stroking a piece of furniture, hunting a pair of galoshes. It is all this which is the reality of the play--a spatial reality.⁹³

The focus of the two areas of vision, the play as a series of events in a causal sequence and the play as a collection of abstract elements, a most interesting dramatic study presents itself. Ibsen has utilized it in Hedda

Gabler:

Tesman. But how could you do anything so unheard of? What put it into your head? What possessed you? Answer me that. Eh?

Hedda. (suppressing an almost imperceptible smile)
I did it for your sake, George.

Tesman. For my sake!

Hedda. This morning, when you told me about what he had read to you--

Tesman. Yes, yes--what then?

Hedda. You acknowledged that you envied him his work.

⁹³Drew, op. cit., pp. 119-121.

Tesman. Oh, of course I didn't mean that literally.

Hedda. No matter--I couldn't bear the idea that anyone should throw you into the shade.

Tesman. (in an outburst of mingled doubt and joy)
Hedda, Oh, is this true? But--but--I never knew you to show your love like that before. Fancy that!

Hedda. Well, I may as well tell you that--just at this time--(impatiently breaking off) No, no; you can ask Aunt Julia. She will tell you, fast enough.

Tesman. Oh, I almost think I understand you, Hedda! Great Heavens! do you really mean it! Eh?

Hedda. Don't shout so. The servant might hear.

Would it be possible to reveal and contrast and relate character, mood and emotion more vividly and economically than in the 'spatial rhythm'. . .

[motivated by Ibsenian technique?]⁹⁴

Brunetière infers that balance be sustained by interiorization and exteriorization:

Ces conditions sont-elles essentielles au théâtre? Oui et non, et il faut qu'on distingue. Pour l'interiorité des mobiles d'action, oui: et tout drame où les personnages ont quelque chose de manifestement passif, où ils sont actionnés du dehors, esclaves enfin des circonstances, n'est pas un drame, mais un roman.⁹⁵

To represent truly dramatic conflict, then there must be an expression of the conflict between individuals.⁹⁶ In describing this action, Aristotle uses the verb, dran, the strongest possible word.⁹⁷

This completes the analysis of the dramatic quality of conflict. The

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 126-127.

⁹⁵Brunetière, Histoire de la littérature française (Paris: Librairie Delegrave, 1921), IV, 231.

⁹⁶Hegel, op. cit., p. 265.

⁹⁷Poetics. iii. 2.

third consideration of the investigation will be that of dramatic character.

Aristotle has determined that character depends upon two elements, ēthos and dianoia.

ēthos is the moral element in character. It reveals a certain state or direction of the will. . . . Dianoia is the thought, the intellectual element, which is implied in all rational conduct, through which alone ēthos can find outward expression, and which is separable from ēthos only by a process of abstraction.⁹⁸

The conditions of dramatic representation do not change ēthos essentially for it reveals itself in word and act as it does in actuality. Dianoia, on the contrary, is definitely altered when it is transferred to the imaginative for it manifests itself only in speech.⁹⁹

Aristotle indicates the secondary importance of character in summarizing, "The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy: Character holds the second place."¹⁰⁰

A writer condemns Greek drama for having occurrence, not character its centre of gravity. He develops the thought by illustrating that the Greek agent experiences struggle as coming from the outside. The decisive event comes upon-befalls Ajax and Philoctetes, Antigone and Electra.¹⁰¹ However, could Greek tragedy have been constructed otherwise? All the Greek tragedies seem to have had an Aition.¹⁰²

⁹⁸Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., pp. 357, 358.

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 340, 341.

¹⁰⁰Poetics. vi. 13, 14.

¹⁰¹Spengler, op. cit., I, 318.

¹⁰²Euripides, "Introduction," Iphigenia in Tauris, tr. Gilbert Murray (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. iii.

A second objection that the same critic makes is that what befalls an agent in the Greek drama comes upon him, brutally, as accident. The critic affirms that in this occurrence the "psychological antecedents (even supposing them to have any) play no part."¹⁰³ Again his observation is correct, but for a second time one inquires, did not consecrated usage ordain it to be thus? Greek tragedy offered simple issues, situations which were not complicated by the qualities of an individual character.¹⁰⁴ Hegel sketches the plan:

The genuine content of tragic action subject to the aims which arrest tragic characters is supplied by the world of those forces which carry in themselves their own justification and are realized substantively in the volitional activity of mankind. . . Such are, further, the life of communities, the patriotism of citizens, the will of those in supreme power. . .¹⁰⁵

The Hegelian requisites continue with a statement that renders the desired "psychological antecedents" of character untenable.

It is of a soundness and thoroughness consonant with these that the really tragical characters consist. They are throughout that which the essential notion of their character enables them and compels them to be.¹⁰⁶

Bywater expresses the truth similarly when he explains that the author makes the character, the ideal personalities, speak and act according to the law of character he has assumed for each.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³Spengler, loc. cit.

¹⁰⁴Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., p. 358.

¹⁰⁵Hegel, op. cit., p. 295.

¹⁰⁶Loc. cit.

¹⁰⁷Bywater, op. cit., ix. 145b 7, p. 189.

Aristotle is content, logically, to represent character with the broad strokes that befit it for a drama which projects occurrence, not character, as a center of gravity. Spengler, accordingly, is accurate in the third objection he makes to Greek drama.

Zeus, Apollo, Poseidon, Ares are simply "men,"
Hermes the "youth," Athene a maturer Aphrodite, . . .
And the same is true without reservation of the
figures of the Attic stage.¹⁰⁸

Yet this criticism and the following corollary of the Hegelian theory of tragedy are analogous.

. . . And this is so because the spiritual powers which are exclusively distinct in the mythological Epos, and which, by virtue of the many-sided aspects of actual individualization tend to lose the clear definition of their significance. . .¹⁰⁹

The characters in the Greek drama are "universals." They are generic or typical rather than individual.¹¹⁰ Aristotle asserted that ". . . poetry tends to express the universal."¹¹¹

The clause ". . . for poetry tends to express the universal" is rich in connotation. In preparing to compose the Poetics Aristotle drew up a list of the plays produced at Athens.¹¹² The student of the twentieth century can reconstruct some of the prize winning plays as he reads these lines. One of

¹⁰⁸Spengler, op. cit., p. 319.

¹⁰⁹Hegel, op. cit., p. 255.

¹¹⁰Bywater, op. cit., p. 255.

¹¹¹Poetics. ix. 3.

¹¹²Pyfe, op. cit., p. xiv.

the conditions of these dramas was the universal meaning and validity of the characters. Aristotle must have contemplated the artistic principle of structure that a modern critic has reconstructed.

. . . Apollo stands before me as the genius of enlightenment and of the principle of individuality, while at the joyous cry of Dionysus the bars of individuality are burst and the way is opened to the heart of being, to the innermost heart of things.¹¹³

The fact of freedom from the disturbing elements of individuality in the issues of the plot and in the dramatic characters is indicative of the triumph of action over emotion. A fragment of an account of the birth of tragedy suggests the issue of emotion into deeds.

The satyr as being the Dionysian chorist, lives in a religiously acknowledged reality under the sanction of the myth and cult. The tragedy begins with him; that the Dionysian wisdom of tragedy speaks through him, is just as surprising a phenomenon to us as, in general, the derivation of tragedy from the chorus!¹¹⁴

The Greek drama is the first fusion of the epic and lyric elements.

Dionysian art therefore is wont to exercise two kinds of influences on the Apollonian art-faculty: music firstly incites to the symbolic intuition of Dionysian universality; and secondly, it causes the symbolic image to stand forth in its fullest significance. From these facts. . . I infer the capacity of music to give birth to myth, that is to say, tragic myth. . .

The dominance of the Apollonian image is the source of Situation-Drama; the Poetics but elaborates the fact of the triumph.¹¹⁵

¹¹³Nietzsche, op. cit., p. 121.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 60.

¹¹⁵Poetics. vi. 14.

The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were the soul of a tragedy. Character holds the second place. . . Thus Tragedy is the imitation of an action, and of the agents, mainly with a view to the action.¹¹⁶

Thus does Aristotle consolidate the theory that Greek drama be Situation-Drama, not Character-Drama.

The Apollonian characters present from another angle an individuality that is overwhelming. "Their experiences lack not mass but relation; there is something atomic about them."¹¹⁷ "Thus it is the sense-actual person of Oedipus, his 'empirical ego' that is hunted and thrown by Destiny."¹¹⁸ His destiny is not of the analytical type as that of Lear.¹¹⁹ The Apollonian character is the chalk and line of a portrait; the Faustian is that of the most beautiful colors laid on harmoniously.

The Apollonian characters were distinguished by masks.¹²⁰ The observation has been made that "The Greek tragic form flourished only among the Greeks; for the rest of the world it has been, and continues to be, an exotic."¹²¹ On the contrary, there was, for example, in the nineteenth century the Atalanta in Calydon of Swinburne, which was a successful imitation

¹¹⁶ Loc. cit.

¹¹⁷ Spengler, op. cit., p. 316.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 129.

¹¹⁹ Loc. cit.

¹²⁰ Haigh, The Tragic Drama of the Greeks, pp. 29, 39, 68.

¹²¹ Arnold Smith, The Main Tendencies of Victorian Poetry (Birmingham: The Saint George Press, Limited, 1907), p. 149.

of Greek drama.¹²² A contemporary dramatist, Eugene O'Neill, has a deep appreciation of the Greek point of view.¹²³

. . . In his use of realistic masks--as distinct from the representative masks of old Greek tragedy--O'Neill plunged into a new and fascinating mode of extending the scope of emotion and spiritual contrast on the stage. . . His characters wear masks when talking to certain people--discard them when talking with others. As their speech and attitudes change, their faces change as well. It is a method of heightening, more completely than the facial muscles of actors can achieve, the range of emotions through which his characters charge and recoil.¹²⁴

The program notes of The Great God Brown announced that the masks were a "means of dramatizing a transfer of personality from one man to another."¹²⁵

The dramatist himself explained:

I realize that when a playwright takes to explaining he thereby automatically places himself "in the dock." But where an open-faced avowal by the play itself of the abstract theme underlying it is made impossible by the very nature of that hidden theme, then perhaps it is justifiable for the author to confess the mystical pattern which manifests itself as an overtone in The Great God Brown, dimly behind and beyond the words and actions of the characters.

.
Brown is the visionless demi-god of our new materialistic myth--a Success--building his life of exterior things, inwardly empty and resourceless, an uncreative creature of superficial preordained social grooves, a by-product forced aside into slack waters by the deep main current of life-desire.

¹²² Ibid., p. 149.

¹²³ Sophus Keith Winther, Eugene O'Neill (New York: Random House, 1934), p.155.

¹²⁴ Richard Dana Skinner, Our Changing Theatre (New York: Dial Press, Inclusive, 1931), pp. 44, 45.

¹²⁵ Kenneth Macgowan, The Great God Brown (Program Notes) quoted by Barrett H. Clark, Eugene O'Neill (New York, Robert M. McBride and Co., 1933), p. 159.

Dion's mask of Pan which he puts on as a boy is not only a defense against the world for the super-sensitive painter-poet underneath it, but also an integral part of his character as the artist. The world is not only blind to the man beneath, but it also sneers at and condemns the Pan-mask it sees.

.....

Brown has always envied the creative life force in Dion--What he himself lacks. When he steals Dion's mask of Mephistopheles he thinks he is gaining the power to live creatively, while in reality he is only stealing that creative power made self-destructive by complete frustration. This devil of mocking doubt makes short work of him. It enters him, rending him apart, torturing and transfiguring him until he is even forced to wear a mask of his Success, William A. Brown, before the world, as well as Dion's mask toward wife and children. Thus Billy Brown becomes not himself to anyone.¹²⁶

A critic considers the dramatist's own amplification of this explanation unsatisfactory. He finds O'Neill's self-analyses lacking in clarity. The dramatist's suggestion of the objectification of emotions is:¹²⁷

And now for an explanation regarding this explanation. It was far from my idea in writing Brown that this background pattern of conflicting tides in the soul of Man should ever overshadow and thus throw out of proportion the living drama of the recognizable human beings, Dion, Brown, Margaret and Cybel. I meant it always to be mystically within and behind them, giving them a significance beyond themselves, forcing itself through them to expression in mysterious words, symbols, actions, they do not themselves comprehend. And that is as clearly as I wish an audience to comprehend it. It is a Mystery--the mystery any one man or woman can feel but not understand as the meaning of any event--or accident--in any life on earth. And it is this mystery I want

¹²⁶Clark, op. cit., pp. 159-162.

¹²⁷Joseph Wood Krutch, The American Drama since 1918 (New York: Random House, 1939), p. 79.

to realize in the theater. The solution, if there ever be any, will probably have to be produced in a test tube and turn out to be discouragingly undramatic.¹²⁸

A critic of O'Neill ascribes the fascination which the characters of O'Neill exert upon their creator to their sense of futility:

They, to use the words of one of them, 'belong' to something, and the most tortured of his characters are those who, like Dion in The Great God Brown, have lost all sense either that they 'belong' to anything or that there is anything in the universe to which it is possible to belong.¹²⁹

A second critic believes that "simplicity of mind and an extreme plasticity of emotion" must predominate over "every shade of individual interpretation"¹³⁰ in a successful representation of The Great God Brown.

A third critic has denied that the primary importance of The Great God Brown pertains to the device of masks. He affirms, rather, that the play is significant in its representing the "author's most direct attempt to expose in terms already more or less familiar in current literature the ultimate source of his tragic dilemma."¹³¹

Another critic of O'Neill complains that although the characters struggle with fate the spectator realizes in the opening scenes that they will not conquer. "They are doomed from the start by the particular limitations of the mood under which they were originally conceived and never experience even

¹²⁸Clark, op. cit., pp. 159-162.

¹²⁹Krutch, op. cit., pp. 82, 83.

¹³⁰Clark, op. cit., p. 164.

¹³¹Krutch, op. cit., p. 90.

triumphant moments."¹³²

Which type of character is the ideal protagonist to excite tragic emotion? Aristotle, after warning against a choice of three inartistic representations states,

There remains, then, (4) the case of the man intermediate between these extremes: a man not superlatively good and just, nor yet one whose misfortunes come about through vice and depravity; but a man who is brought low through some error of judgment or shortcoming, one from the highly renowned and prosperous--such a person as Oedipus of the line of Thebes, Thyestes of Pelops' line, and the eminent men of other noted families.¹³³

Thus it is an *ἁμαρτία* that the tragic story turns.

No philological discussion of an *ἁμαρτία* could be more helpful than the one propounded in Butcher's essay. His language will be followed,

. . .As a synonym of *ἁμαρτήματα* and as applied to a single act, it denoted an error due to inadequate knowledge of particular circumstances. According to strict usage we should add the qualification, that the circumstances are such as might have been known. . .But *ἁμαρτία* is also more laxly applied to an error due to unavoidable ignorance. . .

Distinct from this, but still limited in its reference to a single act, is the moral *ἁμαρτία* proper, a fault or error where the act is conscious and intentional, but not deliberate.

Lastly the word may denote a defect of character, distinct on the one hand, from an isolated error or fault, and, on the other, from the vice which has its seat in a depraved will. . .In our passage there is much to be said in favour of the last sense, as it is

¹³²Vergil Geddes, The Melodramadness of Eugene O'Neill (Brookfield, Connecticut: The Brookfield Players, Inclusive, 1934), p. 11.

¹³³Poetics. xiii, amplified by Cooper, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, pp. 40.

here brought into relation with other words of purely moral significance, words moreover which describe not an isolated act, but a more permanent state.¹³⁴

It was ἀμαρτία in its three-fold meaning which blinded the intellect of Oedipus, the probable prototype of the Aristotelian tragic hero. In dramatic irony Oedipus, at last, puts out his eyes.¹³⁵

This completes the analysis of dramatic character. The conclusions presented concerning the necessity of action, conflict and character as conditions of tragedy will gain further support in the consideration of the next chapter, "The All Powerful Will and Drama."

¹³⁴Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., pp. 317-319.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 320.

CHAPTER II

THE ALL POWERFUL WILL AND DRAMA

Many brilliant scholars have analyzed the qualities of the all powerful will. One is justified however to pursue the inquiry further in order to cast more light upon the possibility or impossibility of relationship between the all powerful will and drama.

An illustration of the all powerful will is, obviously, that of le héros cornélien. It is the Will--and that alone--which is the activating principle of each of these characters. A play which elaborated the characteristic elements of the powerful will was offered by Corneille when he declared:

La tendresse et les passions, qui doivent être l'âme des tragédies, n'ont aucune part en celle-ci: la grandeur de courage y règne seule, et regarde son malheur d'un œil si dédaigneux qu'il n'en saurait arracher une plainte.¹

Thus Corneille exaggerated Will-Culture, the distinguishing mark of the Western drama.

It is not the notion of Will, but the circumstance that we possess it while the Greeks were entirely ignorant of it, that gives it high symbolical import.²

¹Charles Marty-Laveaux, editor, "Au Lecteur," Nicomède, Oeuvres de P. Corneille (Les Grands écrivains de la France, editor, Ad. Regnier, nouvelle édition, Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1922), V, 501. All references to the texts of Corneille's plays are to those of this edition.

²Spengler, The Decline of the West, p. 310.

The designation of Western Culture as a Will-Culture is significant of the historical disposition of its soul. The expression of the first person distinguishes the idiom, ego habeo factum which replaced the less dynamic feci. The flying buttress is an I. Will identified itself with space in the exploration of the Westerner as, for example, in the act of Columbus. There is another illustration of the similarity between space-as-depth and will in the depth-perspective of oil painting. The artist conceived the space-field as infinite; the observer chooses his distance and thus defines his dominion.³ Similarly Baroque drama co-ordinates scenic representation and character. It is primarily a tragedy of willing. Life develops from within outward; in the Greek drama the tragic comes from the outside.⁴ Baroque architecture, too, is forceful and massive. "Vignola's facade of the Gesu in Rome is will become stone."⁵

In contrast to the dynamic of the Western culture is the static of life of the Classical soul. The Greek envisaged the soul "as an Olympus of little gods and to keep these at peace and in harmony with one another is the ideal."⁶

Logically the Western drama is a maximum of activity.

A Baroque tragedy is nothing but this same directive character, man, as incarnate will brought into and developed in the light-world, and shown as a curve instead of as an equation, as kinetic instead of as poten-

³Ibid., p. 311.

⁴Ibid., p. 319.

⁵Ibid., p. 313.

⁶Loc. cit.

tial energy. The visible person is the character as potential, the action the character at work.⁷

An inquiry into the intense Will-Culture of Corneille reveals:

Il n'est pas difficile de comprendre ce qu'il a représenté pour son créateur: une transcription de son propre élan intérieur, certes, de sa volonté de dominer, mais aussi une pâle revanche sur le destin. Rejeté . . . Pierre Corneille trouve alors dans sa mythologie personnelle ce héros qui est maître de lui comme de l'univers et pour se venger, il en caresse longuement le dessin.⁸

The critic has inquired concerning the dominance of the influence of the Quarrel of Le Cid upon Corneille:

Ou y a-t-il plutôt, déjà, un refus de se laisser toucher, un désir de ne chercher dans l'art qu'une patrie idéale, sans amour, sans passion, un terrain vide pour luttes oratoires?⁹

The student may not know his response according to the theory expressed in the "Examen" of Le Cid. Corneille reveals in the review that it is a retrospect dated many years after the presentation of Le Cid.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the play itself manifests Corneille's avoidance of the choice of hero possessed of an hamartia. The poetic theory expressed in the "Examen" is identical with that employed in the composition of the play. A comparison of the French poetic theory with the Aristotelian emphasizes le héros cornélien, être de fer.

⁷Spengler, op. cit.

⁸Robert Brasillach, Pierre Corneille (Paris: A. Fayard, 1938), p. 194.

⁹Ibid., pp. 184, 185.

¹⁰"Examen," Le Cid, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, III, 91.

There remains, then the character between these two extremes, that of a man who is not eminently good and just, yet whose misfortune is brought about not by vice or depravity, but by some error or frailty.¹¹

. . .et la haute vertu dans un naturel sensible à ces passions, qu'elle dompte sans les affaiblir, et à qui elle laisse toute leur force pour en triompher plus glorieusement, quelque chose de plus touchant, de plus élevé et de plus aimable que cette médiocre bonté capable d'une faiblesse. . .¹²

A critic has described the mécanisme cornélien which Corneille employed as an older writer but which he appropriated also though less frequently in constructing comedies.¹³

Brasillach believes that Corneille's interpretation of character in serious plays is orientated by the trend of thought suggested in La Querelle du Cid. Thus after the first silence in the career of Corneille, Augustus is but the poet's idealization of the graduate of a college which emphasized mastery of the ego. The critic sees in the text of the play the mise-en-scène of the lessons of Corneille's masters:

Mais désormais, après les conseils du silence dans une oeuvre qui prend une direction assez différente de la direction de Clitandre et du Cid, on peut dire qu'on a vu naître un nouveau personnage . . . et qu'elle la postérité appellera, avec sa manie simplificatrice, . . . le héros cornélien.¹⁴

Corneille's aim in a system of Will-Culture was a very powerful Will. He represented a protagonist shaping destiny with the instrument of will as a

¹¹Poetics. xiii. 3.

¹²Corneille, loc. cit.

¹³Brasillach, op. cit., p. 188, citing Jules Lemaitre.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 186.

sculptor cuts away marble with a tool. His faith in the "imaginative will," is vivifying like Wordsworth's. He expressed confidence in its capability.

"Qui veut mourir, ou vaincre, est vaincu rarement."¹⁵

Brasillach complains of Corneille's choosing, for the theatre, characters endowed with very powerful will. He ventures:

Si cela était possible, Corneille montrerait l'acte volontaire en soi, hors, du monde des accidents, sans une matière où il s'applique, se prenant lui-même pour but.¹⁶

Corneille asserts that a plot for such characters should have for its theme a great affair of state or some passion more virile than that of love. While he does not fail to consider love as an interest he does definitely regard this emotion as a consideration of secondary importance.¹⁷

To visualize the effect of his choice one may employ a metaphor of Mather. The reader may imagine the plaiting of a braid in the colors of Rubens' triad; azure, rose and corn yellow. Whichever tint of the triad be chosen for the beginning of the plaiting will not thus gain predominance. If a strand of a tint be doubled or tripled, however, what a difference will be effected.¹⁸ It is of consequence, too, when, of the choices Corneille had for theme, he doubled and tripled many times over the choice of "quelque passion . . . plus mâle que l'amour."

¹⁵Horace, II, i, 382-385.

¹⁶Brasillach, op. cit., p. 188.

¹⁷Corneille, Discours du poème dramatique, I, 24.

¹⁸Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., Concerning Beauty (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935), p. 20.

If Corneille require of la haute vertu that she leave the emotions unmitigated in order that the triumph of the will be more glorious, so too does he demand that la haute vertu dominate its environment.¹⁹

Each of the protagonists of Corneille's chief works is integer vitae despite inharmonious environment. The achievement is manifest amid the assaults of Rodrigue, Horace, Augustus, Polyucte, Rodogune, Héraclius and Nicomède and of other characters of the less familiar plays.

Corneille's desire of representation of the increasingly powerful will is seen by comparing the characters of Rodrigue and Nicomède. Although Rodrigue is capable of reasoning at the greatest intensity of emotion he experiences, he does have, momentarily, the discord of his own divided will.

. . .Allons, mon âme; et puisqu'il faut mourir,
Mourons du moins sans offenser Chimène.

Mourir sans tirer ma raison!
Rechercher un trépas si mortel à ma gloire!
Endurer que l'Espagne impute à ma mémoire
D'avoir mal soutenu l'honneur de ma maison!
Respecter un amour dont mon âme égarée
 Voit la perte assurée!
N'écoutons plus ce penser suborneur,
 Qui ne sert qu'à ma peine.
Allons, mon bras, sauvons du moins l'honneur,
Puisqu'après tout il faut perdre Chimène.²⁰

On the contrary Nicomède does not know the discord of a divided will. Nicomède was composed about fifteen years after the presentation of Le Cid. It

¹⁹"Examen," Nicomède, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, V, 507.

²⁰Le Cid, III, vi, 329-340.

is the play written the year which is the chronological center of Corneille's career as playwright. There is about Nicomède a certain raideur and artifice which distinguishes the later heroes of Corneille.

At the core of Nicomède is the powerful will's mastery of environment.

. . .la grandeur de courage y règne seule, et regarde son malheur d'un oeil si dédaigneux qu'il n'en sauroit arracher une plainte!²¹

Corneille explains in the "Examen" of Nicomède his disregard of poetic theory concerning tragedy:

Voici une pièce d'une constitution assez extraordinaire: aussi est-ce la vingt et unième que j'ai mise sur le théâtre; et après y avoir fait réciter quarante mille vers, il est bien malaisé de trouver quelque chose de nouveau, sans s'écarter un peu du grand chemin, et se mettre au hasard de s'égarer.²²

The poet specifies the change he refers to by indicating:

La tendresse et les passions, qui doivent être l'âme des tragédies, n'ont aucune part en celle-ci: la grandeur de courage y règne seule, et regarde son malheur d'un oeil si dédaigneux qu'il n'en sauroit arracher une plainte.²³

Croce points to the simple truth when he observes that ". . .e non rendono possibile l'impossibile."²⁴ The standard method of conveying the sense of character of Nicomède must be by the exhibition of objective acts. It would indeed be converting the impossible into the possible had Corneille

²¹"Au Lecteur," Nicomède, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, V, 501.

²²"Examen," Nicomède, Les Oeuvres de P. Corneille, V, 505.

²³Loc. cit.

²⁴Benedetto Croce, Ariosto, Shakespeare e Corneille (Bari: G. Laterza e figli, 1920), p. 243.

achieved a dramatic effect in his treatment of "la grandeur de courage in Nicomède."

Elle y est combattue par la politique, et n'oppose à ses artifices qu'une prudence généreuse, qui marche à visage découvert, qui prévoit le péril sans s'émouvoir, et qui ne veut point d'autre appui que celui de sa vertu et de l'amour qu'elle imprime dans les coeurs de tous les peuples.²⁵

Corneille, at the close of the "Examen" of the play, expressed his pleasure at the change he made in Aristotelian theory regarding the definition of tragic function:

Dans l'admiration qu'on a pour sa vertu, je trouve une manière de purger les passions dont n'a point parlé Aristote, et qui est peut-être plus sûre que celle qu'il prescrit à la tragédie par le moyen de la pitié et de la crainte. L'amour qu'elle nous donne pour cette vertu que nous admirons, nous imprime de la haine pour le vice contraire. La grandeur de courage de Nicomède nous laisse une aversion de la pusillanimité; et la généreuse reconnaissance d'Héraclius, qui expose sa vie pour Martian, à qui il est redevable de la sienne, nous jette dans l'horreur de l'ingratitude.²⁶

The spectator cannot but remark:

What is disastrous is that the writer should deliberately give rein to his "individuality," that he should even cultivate his differences from others; and that his readers should cherish the author of genius, not in spite of his deviations from the inherited wisdom of the race, but because of them.²⁷

The powerful will manifests itself. Its course is straight, unswerving, like

²⁵"Examen," Nicomède, V, 505.

²⁶Op. cit., V, 508.

²⁷Thomas Stearnes Eliot, After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934), p. 35.

that of a mountain torrent. It is cold, ironic. The spectator looks about a world of intrigue, violence, and suspicion. A family is cleft by strife. The imagery is grim, belligerent.

Je vous vois à regret, tant mon coeur amoureux
Trouve la cour pour vous un séjour dangereux.²⁸

Préparez-vous à voir par toute votre terre
Ce qu'ont de plus affreux les fureurs de la guerre,
Des montagnes de morts, des rivières de sang.²⁹

Retourner à l'armée! ah! sachez que la Reine
Le sème d'assassins achetés par sa haine.³⁰

The powerful will of Nicomède is self-poisoned. He has incurred paternal and royal displeasure by succeeding too well.

Te le dirai-je Araspe? il m'a trop bien servi;
Augmentant mon pouvoir, il me l'a tout ravi:
Il n'est plus mon sujet qu'autant qu'il le veut être;
Et qui me fait régner en effet est mon maître.
Pour paroître à mes yeux son mérite est trop grand:
On n'aime point à voir ceux à qui l'on doit tant.
Tout ce qu'il a fait parle au moment qu'il m'approche;
Et sa seule présence est un secret reproche:
Elle me dit toujours qu'il m'a fait trois fois roi;
Que je tiens plus de lui qu'il ne tiendra de moi;
Et que si je lui laisse un jour une couronne,
Ma tête en porte trois que sa valeur me donne.
J'en rougis dans mon âme. . .³¹

The noun fer is typical of the play. Le héros cornélien possesses a will of this metal.

²⁸Nicomède, I, i, 9-11.

²⁹Ibid., III, i, 783-785.

³⁰Ibid., I, i, 99-101.

³¹Ibid., II, i, 413-425.

Seigneur, si j'ai raison, qu'importe à qui je sois?
Perd-elle de son prix pour emprunter ma voix?³²

The iron fortitude of Nicomède clangs a protest against any discordant force.

A ce dernier moment la conscience presse;
Pour rendre compte aux Dieux tout respect humain cesse. . . .³³

The opening line of the play sounds a keynote of triumph for powerful will:

Après tant de hauts faits, il m'est bien doux, Seigneur, . . .³⁴

The lines which end the play have the same tonality.

Prince, qu'à ce défaut vous aurez son estime,
Telle que doit l'attendre un coeur si magnanime.³⁵

The first person singular which Nicomède employs to describe a military manoeuvre bespeaks his confidence in his will to power:

Je la défendrai seul, attaquez-la de même.³⁶

Par mon dernier combat je voyois réunie
La Cappadoce entière avec la Bithynie, . . .³⁷

The suggestion of resistlessness blends with the suggestion of the imperialism of Rome. There is frequent mention of her great power and her plan to annex Bithynia.

De quoi se mêle Rome, et d'où prend le sénat
Vous vivant, vous règnant ce droit sur votre Etat?³⁸

³² Ibid., I, ii, 189-191.

³³ Ibid., IV, ii, 1259-1262.

³⁴ Ibid., I, i, 1.

³⁵ Ibid., V, ix, 1847-1849.

³⁶ Ibid., I, iii, 271.

³⁷ Ibid., I, i, 27-29.

³⁸ Ibid., II, iii, 557-559.

The imagery of laurel introduces the triumph suggestion which will be emphasized throughout the play by the static of powerful will:

De voir, sous les lauriers qui vous couvrent la tête
Un si grand conquérant. . .³⁹

There is the suggestion of violent powerfulness in Prusias' menace to the fiancée of Nicomède:

Préparez-vous à voir par toute votre terre
Ce qu'ont de plus affreux les fureurs de la guerre,
Des montagnes de morts, des rivières de sang.⁴⁰

Nicomède promises a vengeance of blood:

L'offense une fois faite à ceux de notre rang
Ne se répare point que par des flots de sang.⁴¹

The imagery of imperial Rome is blended in the pure will theme of Nicomède:

Carthage étant détruite, Antiochus défait
Rien de nos volontés ne peut troubler l'effet:
Tout fléchit sur la terre, et tout tremble sur l'onde;
Et Rome est aujourd'hui la maîtresse du monde.⁴²

The Prince endowed with the powerful will "marche . . . et ne veut point d'autre appui que celui de sa vertu, et de l'amour qu'elle imprime dans les coeurs de tous les peuples."⁴³ Thus does the will of le héros cornélien rival the imperial will of Rome:

. . . est ce d'avoir conquis
Trois sceptres, que ma perte expose à votre fils?

³⁹ Ibid., I, i, 4-6.

⁴⁰ Ibid., III, i, 783-786.

⁴¹ Ibid., IV, ii, 1225-1227.

⁴² Ibid., III, ii, 905-909.

⁴³ "Au Lecteur," Nicomède, op. cit., V, 502.

D'avoir porté si loin vos armes dans l'Asie,
Que même votre Rome en a pris jalousie?⁴⁴

The terse, frequent, laconic repartee in the dignified alexandrine is a fitting expression of the Nicomedian will:

Pure will distinctly silhouettes Nicomède as a Colossus in contrast to the conspirators of the palace intrigue. To the father who announced that the eldest son is to be sent to Rome as a hostage Nicomède's accent is that of scorn:

J'irai, j'irai, Seigneur, vous le voulez ainsi,
Et j'y serai plus roi que vous n'êtes ici.⁴⁵

Nicomède expresses conscious superiority of the powerfulness of his will when he assures the king:

Tout est calme, Seigneur: un moment de ma vue
A soudain apaisé la populace émue.⁴⁶

Nicomède seeks to reward himself for the realization of his will to power by frequent allusion to his achievements.

Et quand il forcera la nature à se taire,
Trois sceptres à son trône attachés par mon bras
Parleront au lieu d'elle, et ne se tairont pas.⁴⁷

Par mon dernier combat je voyois réunie
La Cappadoce entière avec la Bithynie.⁴⁸

The kinship of the minor character, Attale, with Nicomède serves to

⁴⁴Nicomède, IV, i, 1153-1157.

⁴⁵Ibid., IV, iv, 1385-1387.

⁴⁶Ibid., V, ix, 1779-1781.

⁴⁷Ibid., I, i, 104-107.

⁴⁸Ibid., I, i, 27-29.

heighten the splendor of Nicomedian will:

Ah! laissez-moi toujours à cette digne marque
Reconnoître en mon sang un vrai sang de monarque.⁴⁹

The strength of will of Nicomède is that which effects extension rather than destruction:

Votre amour maternel veut voir régner mon frère;
Et je contribuerai moi-même à ce dessein, . . .
Oui, l'Asie à mon bras offre encor des conquêtes,
Et pour l'en couronner mes mains sont toutes prêtes.⁵⁰

The father and stepmother of Nicomède try to cause the powerful will of Nicomède to be a barrier to membership in the unity of a family group. For example Prusias declares:

Je ne suis plus ton père, obéis à ton roi.⁵¹

It is interesting to observe that reliance is placed in powers other than the pure will of the main character. Laodice, the fiancée of Nicomède connects the powerful will of her lover and his reign over the hearts of the people. Nicomède satisfies the soldiers and the citizens:

Le peuple ici vous aime, et hait ces coeurs infâmes;
Et c'est être bien fort que régner sur tant d'âmes.⁵²

Arsinoe, the stepmother of the Prince, is cautious because of the loyalty Nicomède inspires:

Irriter un vainqueur en tête d'une armée

⁴⁹Ibid., V, ix, 1823-1825.

⁵⁰Ibid., V, ix, 1800-1805.

⁵¹Ibid., IV, iii, 1330.

⁵²Ibid., I, i, 115-117.

Prête à suivre en tous lieux sa colère allumée
C'étoit trop hasarder; ⁵³

Prusias reckons perforce:

Il est l'astre naissant qu'adorent mes Etats;
Il est le Dieu du peuple et celui des soldats. ⁵⁴

Nicomède himself refers to the people's revolt against his oppressors as an expression of sympathy:

Pardonnez à ce peuple un peu trop de chaleur
Qu'à sa compassion a donné mon malheur; ⁵⁵

It is the Prince who attributes the achievement of his will to power to the supernatural:

Grâces aux immortels, l'effort de mon courage
Et ma grandeur future ont mis Rome en ombrage; ⁵⁶

In the last scene of the play, which is basic for the study of Corneille's interpretation of powerful will, the spectator sees Nicomède as the brother of the Prince would have him seen:

Pour voir votre vertu dans son plus haut éclat;
Pour la voir seule agir contre notre injustice,
Sans la préoccuper par ce foible service; ⁵⁷

Thus does Corneille arrange that Nicomède forgive all his persecutors before realizing the claim to clemency that one of them, his brother, merited. The significance of Prusias' identification of Nicomède's volition and achievement

⁵³ Ibid., I, v, 327-330.

⁵⁴ Ibid., II, i, 449-451.

⁵⁵ Ibid., V, ix, 1793-1795.

⁵⁶ Ibid., II, iii, 658-661.

⁵⁷ Ibid., V, ix, 1830-1833.

is realized:

Qu'il n'a qu'à l'entreprendre, et peut tout ce qu'il veut.⁵⁸

Conquest of self and mastery of environment characterize the static of the powerful will of le héros cornélien.

If Corneille represents the protagonist possessed of a powerful will mastering self and environment, Schopenhauer would have his will discordant, impactuous. Clearly he defines that tragedy

is the strife of the will with itself, which here, completely unfolded at the highest grade of its objectivity comes into fearful prominence.⁵⁹

Schopenhauer differs from Corneille also in the means he proposes as suited for attaining peace for the protagonist. Corneille proposes that the character conquer; Schopenhauer that he surrender.

. . .in some single case, this knowledge, strife of the will with itself as the nature of the world and existence purified and heightened by suffering itself, reaches the point at which the phenomenon, the veil of Maya, no longer deceives it. It sees through the form of the phenomenon, the principium individuationis. The egoism which rests on this perishes with it, so that now the motives that were so powerful before have lost their might, and instead of them the complete knowledge of the nature of the world, which has a quieting effect on the will, produces resignation, the surrender not merely of life, but of the very will to live. Thus we see in tragedies the noblest men, after long conflict and suffering, at last renounce the ends they have so keenly followed, and all the pleasures of life forever, or else freely and joyfully surrender life itself.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Ibid., II, i, 429.

⁵⁹ Arthur Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Idea, tr. R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, Limited, 1891), Vol. I, Bk. 3, 326, 327.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 327.

With the powerful will superior to antagonistic forces the collateral problem is to determine the effect of this ascendancy upon dramatic action.

If it be true that it is only in reflection that to will and to act are different, that in reality they are one,⁶¹ the powerful will which has "de sa gloire fasse taire sa passion" is eccentric from the encircling requisite of Brunetière:

. . .mais ce qui n'appartient bien qu'au théâtre, mais ce qui fait à travers les littératures, depuis les Grecs jusqu'à nous, l'unité permanente et continue de l'espèce dramatique, c'est le spectacle d'une volonté qui se déploie; -et voilà d'abord pourquoi l'action, et l'action ainsi définie, sera toujours la loi du théâtre.⁶²

Brunetière's statement is in reality an amplification of:

. . .in describing what the persons of tragedy do and suffer Aristotle uses the verb dran, the strongest possible word.⁶³

Hebbel, in agreement with Hegel and Nietzsche enriched the connotation of Aristotle's use of the verb dran. Hebbel considers art a revelation of reality.⁶⁴ Like Tolstoi, moreover, he believed the great reality to be "the fundamental contradiction of life," the strife between egoism and altruism.⁶⁵

Reflection upon a phrase of Aristotle's definition of tragedy, ". . .an imitation of an action" suggests the inherent contradiction of the terms con-

⁶¹Ibid., 130.

⁶²Brunetière, Les Epoques du théâtre français, pp. 390, 391.

⁶³Cooper, The Poetics of Aristotle Its Meaning and Influence, p. 32.

⁶⁴Maurice H. Mandelbaum, "Friedrich Hebbel, As Thinker," (unpublished, Dartmouth College, 1929), p. 7.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 12.

conflict and powerful will.⁶⁶ Schopenhauer summarizes:

Thus it is that every epic and dramatic poem can only represent a struggle, an effort, a fight for happiness, never enduring and complete happiness itself. It conducts its heroes through a thousand difficulties and dangers to the goal; as soon as this is reached, it hastens to let the curtain fall; . . .⁶⁷

The powerful will logically tends to minimize conflict.

An inquiry into the possibility of expression of powerful will through exterior dramatic action is another approach to the comprehension of their mutual exclusiveness. A representation of character which gives the will peculiar prominence subsumes cause as the center of interest rather than result. There will be the elaboration of interior rather than exterior action.

A study of Corneille's description of powerful will illustrates its dual force; conquest of self, mastery of environment; its dual effect; negation of conflict, non-utterance in deed.

Corneille's choice of diction, whether for Nicomede or the minor characters reveals the qualities of l'âtre de fer. The characterization of the Prince, the flawless hero, strong-willed, consciously superior, offers an iron-will association. The imagery of the laurel-crowned conqueror and imperial Rome are intertwined. Rhetoric, description of person and imagery are of interpretative value in forging the hard shape of powerful will, le héros cornélien.

⁶⁶Poetics. vi. 2.

⁶⁷Schopenhauer, op. cit., Vol. 1, Bk. 4, 508.

CHAPTER III

THE WILL IN TRAGEDIES OF CORNEILLE

It is a recognized aesthetic principle that the stronger the Will is, the less possibility there is for tragedy, action and conflict. Some of Corneille's chief works will now be analyzed in the light of this truth.

The question to be applied to the plays is: Has Corneille succeeded in making powerful will dramatic? The first consideration concerning the Cid is whether Corneille offers:

an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality.¹

In discussing the Cid it is helpful to consider Corneille's appreciation of the motivating force of the hero. In the dedicatory epistle of the play he wrote:

Madame,
Ce portrait vivant que je vous offre représente un héros assez reconnoissable aux lauriers dont il est couvert. Sa vie a été une suite continuelle de victoires;. . .²

In the "Examen" of the Cid he states:

. . .et la haute vertu . . . a quelque chose de plus touchant, de plus élevé et de plus aimable que cette médiocre bonté, capable d'une foiblesse, et même d'un crime, ou nos anciens étoient contraints d'arrêter le caractère le plus parfait des rois et des princes dont

¹Poetics. vi. 9.

²"Epitre," [dédicatoire], Le Cid, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, III, 77.

ils faisoient leurs héros défigurant ce qu'ils leur
 laissoient de vertu, . . .³

In the text of the play it is pertinent to observe that to emphasize la haute vertu Corneille endows Rodrigue with complete knowledge concerning the ideal of honor which his father expects him to defend. The count is content with his son's comprehension of the magnitude of the offense perpetrated by Don Gomes:

Enfin tu sais l'affront, et tu tiens la vengeance!⁴

Having been enlightened concerning a champion's duty Rodrigue avows the stress of combat:

Que je sens de rudes combats!
 Contre mon propre honneur mon amour s'intéresse: . . .⁵

During the délibération of three stanzas the rudes combats are elaborated in verses as:

Fer que causes ma peine,
 M'es-tu donné pour venger mon honneur?
 M'es-tu donné pour perdre ma Chimène?⁶

The fifth stanza includes what is very probably the most significant line of the play since it affirms the resolution of the hero's will. He will sacrifice the love of Chimène.

N'écoutons plus ce penser suborneur,⁷

³"Examen," Le Cid, op. cit., III, 92.

⁴Le Cid, I, v, 286.

⁵Ibid., I, vi, 301-303.

⁶Ibid., I, vi, 318-321.

⁷Ibid., I, vi, 337.

Rodrigue, possessing a fixed will, acts immediately. Yet one gains knowledge of the action but through the speech of a minor character. It is Don Alonso who announces to the king that Rodrigue has vanquished the father of Chimène:

Sire, le Comte est mort:
Don Diègue, par son fils, a vengé son offense!⁸

Naturally the fact of Rodrigue's having taken the life of Don Gomes reacts forcibly upon Chimène. She pleads:

Il est juste, grand Roi, qu'un meurtrier périsse.⁹

For a second time Corneille endeavors to deny the static in the sphere of the strong willed hero. The complaint of Chimène is ordered to conjure the shape of another obstacle, the rapacity of the Moors. Rodrigue's father accordingly counsels:

. . .Ne borne pas ta gloire à venger un affront;
Porte-la plus avant: force par ta vaillance
Ce monarque au pardon, et Chimène au silence;¹⁰

Logically, with the conquest of the Moors the young captain gains the pardon of the king:

J'excuse ta chaleur à venger ton offense;
Et l'Etat défendu me parle en ta défense:
Crois que dornévant Chimène a beau parler,
Je ne l'écoute plus que pour la consoler.¹¹

Rodrigue's gallant service to his country does not dissuade Chimène from her resolve to have him punished for having wronged her. She insists:

⁸Ibid., II, vii, 633-635.

⁹Ibid., II, viii, 738.

¹⁰Ibid., III, vi, 1092-1095.

¹¹Ibid., IV, iii, 1253,-1257.

Puisque vous refusez la justice à mes larmes,
 Sire, permettez-moi de recourir aux armes;
 C'est par là seulement qu'il a su m'outrager,
 Et c'est aussi par là que je me dois venger.
 A tous vos cavaliers je demande sa tête:
 Oui, qu'un d'eux me l'apporte, et je suis sa conquête;
 Qu'ils le combattent, Sire; et le combat fini,
 J'épouse le vainqueur, si Rodrigue est puni.¹²

Corneille now chooses a third obstacle to glance the firmness of the will of the Cid. A minor character, Don Sanche, offers to avenge Chimène by waging combat with Rodrigue:

Faites ouvrir le champ: vous voyez l'assaillant;
 Je suis ce téméraire, ou plutôt ce vaillant.
 Accordez cette grâce à l'ardeur qui me presse,
 Madame: vous savez quelle est votre promesse.¹³

The foregoing application of the principle of the inverse proportion existent between powerful will and dramatic action reveals a significant fact. Rodrigue expressed strong volition in the stance early in the play, specifically in the sixth scene of the first act. By this strong volition Rodrigue made the decision regarding preference for the defense of his father to love for Chimène.

N'écoutez plus ce penser suborneur,¹⁴

The situations narrated in the remaining four acts of the play are interpenetrated repercussions of the reactions of minor characters against le fer de la volonté cornélienne of the hero. It was found to be a thing of integrity--of immobility.

¹²Ibid., IV, v, 1397-1405.

¹³Ibid., IV, v, 1439-1443.

¹⁴Ibid., I, vi, 337.

The second condition of tragedy to which the relationship of will is to be compared is that of conflict. A collision is the theme of the first four stanzas of Rodrigue's soliloquy. D'Aubignac classifies the reflection as a discours pathétique rather than a délibération. His exposition of the character of such a discours is:

Vous y voyez des esprits agitez par des mouvements contraires, poussez de différentes passions, emportez à des desseins extrêmes, dont le Spectateur ne scauroit prévoir l'évènement, les discours y portent le caractère Théâtral; ils sont impétueux et par les raisonnements et par les figures; et c'est plutost l'image d'une âme au milieu de ses Bourreaux, que d'un homme qui délibère au milieu de ses amis.¹⁵

The dissonance in Rodrigue's will is not prolonged, however. In the stance marked by six strophes the fifth strophe expresses his grave decision regarding the sacrifice of the love of Chimène. The stance is terminated with the end of the first act.

The second point of inquiry is whether there is exteriorization of the conflict in Rodrigue's will. One critic has described the poem as being a "commentary in Alexandrines."¹⁶ The struggle of the divided will of Rodrigue is assuredly a conflict in Alexandrines. Corneille is content to have Rodrigue's utterance in word substitute for that representation of inward activity which passes out of the sphere of emotion into the region of deed.

The spectator becomes familiar with the situations of the following four acts but through the medium of aural comprehension. Though the young captain

¹⁵L'Abbé François Hédelin d'Aubignac, La Pratique du théâtre, ed. Pierre Martino Paris: Champion, 1927), p. 406.

¹⁶Croce, op. cit., p. 265, quoting Klein.

is victorious in the battle with the Moors the great feat is revealed in a communication of Chimène's confidante. A detailed account of the attack is learned but through a narration of the hero himself:

. . .Trois heures de combat laissent à nos guerriers
Une victoire entière et deux rois prisonniers.
La valeur de leur chef ne trouvoit point d'obstacles.¹⁷

The last obstacle which Corneille proposes through the instrumentality of minor characters is, as has been indicated, Don Sanche's challenge to Rodrigue. The mode of representation parallels that of other situations--narration by a secondary personage. Don Fernand announces:

Chimène, sors d'erreur, ton amant n'est pas mort,
Et Don Sanche vaincu t'a fait un faux rapport.¹⁸

Yet "drama does not take exclusive refuge in the lyric presence of soul-life, as such stands in contrast to an external world, but propounds such a life in and through its external realization."¹⁹ Corneille's failure to propound "such a life in and through its external realization" contributes to the unaesthetic movement of the piece.

The third condition of tragedy with which the relationship of strength of will is to be studied is that of character. The Aristotelian theory of construction of plot is interpenetrated with that of the ideal tragic character:

There remains, then, the character between these two extremes,--that of a man who is not eminently good

¹⁷Le Cid, IV, 1, 1107-1110.

¹⁸Ibid., V, vi, 1743-1745.

¹⁹Hegel, The Philosophy of Fine Art, p. 251.

and just, yet whose misfortune is brought about not by vice or depravity, but by some error or frailty. . .²⁰

In the "Examen" of the Cid Corneille rejects the theory of the ideal tragic hero tainted with a primal defect.²¹

After the exclusively interior and therefore undramatic conflict of the stance,²² Rodrigue is represented as integer vitae. Had his choice been otherwise regarding:

L'un m'anime le coeur, l'autre retient mon bras.²³

his character would have created dramatic interest.

Since it is axiomatic that the perfection of being is determined according to its achievement of its end, it is necessary to investigate whether the Cornelian hero, the Cid, inspires pity and fear, that "distinctive mark of tragic imitation."²⁴ Hegel explained the effect of vital sympathy. Lalo evaluates this tenet of Hegel's philosophy of fine art as being the basis of le sentimentalisme esthétique allemand. "Le but de l'homme dans l'art," disait déjà Hegel, "est de retrouver dans les objets extérieurs son propre moi."²⁵ But the spectator gropes in vain for this reflection in the hero of the Cid. Corneille does not represent Rodrigue as man is. To express the

²⁰Poetics. xiii. 3.

²¹"Examen," Le Cid, op. cit., III, 92.

²²Hegel, loc. cit.

²³Le Cid, I, vi, 304.

²⁴Poetics. xiii. 3.

²⁵Charles Lalo, Les Sentiments esthétiques (Paris: Librairies Felix Alcan et Guillaumin Reunies), p. 55.

cause of the spectator's disappointment differently one may say that in the Cid Corneille has failed to create a pure symbol of poetic vision.

If Corneille has failed to exteriorize the action of the Cid in a representation of conflict, it will be of interest to investigate the purposefulness of the kind of action he does narrate. It is intertwined with the history of the century in which he lived.

The life span of Corneille was three quarters of the seventeenth century. This era was dominated by the defense of the doctrine of free will, since the heretical teaching of predetermined will was being opposed to it. Corneille resolved to incorporate in his poetical works the doctrine of free will.²⁶ Racine, on the contrary, preferred to dramatize situations representing the heretical teaching regarding the will predetermined to defeat. The utter failure of a character of Racine to conquer self illustrates the false teaching concerning predetermined will.²⁷ The high success of the Cornelian character in controlling self exemplifies the true doctrine, freedom of the will.

In his poetic theory Corneille avows candidly the end which he believes the dramatic poet should achieve. He links it with an exposition of strong will:

Il est vrai qu'Aristote, dans tout son Traité de la Poétique, n'a jamais employé ce mot une seule fois; [l'utilité] qu'il attribue l'origine de la poésie au plaisir que nous prenons à voir imiter les actions des hommes; . . . mais il n'est pas moins vrai qu'Horace nous apprend que nous ne saurions plaire à

²⁶Auguste Dorchain, Pierre Corneille (Paris: Librairie Garnier Frères, 1918), p. 218.

²⁷Lanson, Histoire de la littérature française, p. 545.

tout le monde, si nous n'y mêlons l'utile, et que les gens graves et sérieux vieillards, les amateurs de la vertu, s'y ennuièrent, s'ils n'y trouvent rien à profiter: . . .²⁸

Corneille details the method of effecting the desired end:

. . .en la naïve peinture des vices et des vertus, qui ne manque jamais à faire son effet, quand elle est bien achevée, et que les traits en sont si reconnoissables qu'on ne les peut confondre l'un dans l'autre, ni prendre le vice pour vertu. Celle-ci se fait alors toujours aimer, quoique malheureuse; et celui-là se fait toujours haïr, bien que triomphant.²⁹

The decision to be deplored is--Corneille chose the material, pure will, for dramatic form. Are they not contradictory terms?

If the suggested interpolations are made in the following criticism one has a summary of the initial error of the Norman poet:

All the grandeur of subject matter, all the greatness and importance of theme is not what makes [dramatic] poetry. It helps, doubtless, but sometimes the significance of the theme so overpowers the poet that he forgets that he is a [dramatic] poet, turning himself into an apologist or a torch bearer.³⁰

In classifying the poetry of Corneille it is interesting to study a plan which is comprehensive. A modern esthetician suggests a classification which transcends Volkelt's scheme. The more recent criticism describes "Corneille as rarely sublime, almost always heroic and at his worst merely grandiose."³¹

²⁸Discours de l'utilité et des parties du poème dramatique, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, I, 17.

²⁹Ibid., I, 20.

³⁰Robert B. Heywood, "Modern Psalmist," Orate Fratres, Vol. XVII, No. I, Section II (November, 1942), p. 5.

³¹Mather, Concerning Beauty, p. 280.

The Cid very probably may be placed in the category, "heroic."

In applying to the Cid the question whether or not Corneille has succeeded in making powerful will dramatic, one may outline the result of the analysis. Corneille in choosing powerful will as material inhibits the representation of dramatic action, conflict and character, the conditions sine qua non of tragedy.

The next investigation will be concerned with applying to Cinna the question: has Corneille succeeded in making powerful will dramatic? A superficial examination of the text would cause the reader to inquire whether numerous délibérations could possibly permit its dramatic diction to conform to the principles of the Hegelian theory.

. . .But none the less this unveiling of the individual heart-life, if it is to remain dramatic, ought not merely to be the exploitation of a vague and variable cloud of emotions, memories, and visions; it should keep its relation to the action constant throughout, should make its result identical with that of the different phases of the same!³²

In what does the action of Cinna consist with which the dramatic diction is to keep this strict relation? The first act is comprised of the délibération of Emilie, the entreaties of the confidante that Emilie take no part in the conspiracy against Auguste, the exposition of the scheme by Cinna, as well as shorter expressions of fear and courage when the chiefs of the conspiracy are summoned by the Emperor. Of the three hundred fifty-five lines of the act about two hundred fifty lines are narrative or expository in character. Yet the definition of soul-life in the drama passes into the sphere of impulse,

³²Hegel, op. cit., pp. 264, 265.

. . .in a word, effective action.³³ The first act does not offer an actual presence of action. It does not provide a basis of comparison for compression or expansion of narration.

The consultation of Auguste, Cinna, Maxime, regarding the question of abdication monopolizes the second act of approximately three hundred fifty lines, about three hundred are those of délibération. Corneille has neglected "the aspect of positive external fact."³⁴

Of the five scenes of the third act, the second, third, and fourth are composed almost exclusively of Cinna's délibération concerning whether or not he will execute the plan of the assassination of Auguste. The unveiling of the individual heart-life is undramatic if it be merely "the exploitation of a vague and variable cloud of emotions, memories. . ."³⁵ Corneille contents himself with this sort of disclosure rather than with "the emotional equivalent of thought." Yet the essential function of poetry is not intellectual, but emotional.³⁶ He does not permit the auditor to make any visual discovery of action in Cinna.

The fourth act of six scenes has two scenes devoted entirely to délibérations while the others but narrate the betrayal of the conspiracy and the supposed suicide of Maxime. This is an extreme interpretation of:

³³ Ibid., p. 252.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 265.

³⁵ Loc. cit.

³⁶ F. O. Matthiessen, The Achievement of T. S. Eliot (Oxford: University Press, 1940), p. 55.

We may have the records of narrative. . . But these also, in general dramatic compression, ought to be marked with greater compression. . .³⁷

The fifth act is filled with discourses which elaborate mental suffering of Auguste in discovering the conspiracy of the ungrateful Cinna, Laxime, and Emilie. Yet:

we deduced from the fact of the drama's presenting an action distinct and independent in its actually visible development the conclusion that a fully complete sensuous reproduction is also essential. . .³⁸

The spectator of Cinna will agree that Corneille has not adapted the action to an external realization. An inquiry into Corneille's treatment of conflict, the second condition sine qua non of tragedy, reveals a beautiful study in the evolution of the character of Auguste. It affords, too, an interesting study of Christian principles for the governance of rulers. The investigator seeks the representation of dramatic conflict, however.

If the spectator assumes with a critic that "conflict is the soul of tragedy"³⁹ and with Schopenhauer that the important thing should be enacted,⁴⁰ he watches expectantly for an exteriorization of conflict in Cinna. Instead, as the play progresses he realizes that he can arrive at the conflict only by thought and not by vision. Corneille presents Auguste in the first scene of the second act.

³⁷Hegel, loc. cit.

³⁸Ibid., p. 293.

³⁹Butcher, "Essays." Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, p. 348.

⁴⁰Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Idea, Vol. I, Bk. 3, p. 299.

Cet empire absolu sur la terre et sur l'onde,
 Ce pouvoir souverain que j'ai sur tout le monde,
 Cette grandeur sans borne et cet illustre rang,
 Qui m'a jadis coûté tant de peine et de sang,
 Enfin tout ce qu'adore en ma haute fortune
 D'un courtisan flatteur la présence importune,
 N'est que de ces beautés dont l'éclat éblouit,
 Et qu'on cesse d'aimer sitôt qu'on en jouit.⁴¹

The undramatic action of the piece is orientated toward the Emperor's desire-contentment.

Mille ennemis secrets, la mort à tous propos,
 Point de plaisir sans trouble, et jamais de repos.⁴²

Cinna counsels Auguste to continue in power.

Vous la replongerez, en quittant cet empire,
 Dans les maux dont à peine encore elle respire,
 Et de ce peu, Seigneur, qui lui reste de sang
 Une guerre nouvelle épuisera son flanc.
 Que l'amour du pays, que la pitié vous touche;
 Votre Rome à genoux vous parle par ma bouche.⁴³

Toward the end of the scene Auguste acting upon the advice proffered decides:

N'en délibérons plus, cette pitié l'emporte.
 Mon repos m'est bien cher, mais Rome est la plus forte;⁴⁴

The treachery of Cinna and Maxime is made known off stage to the Emperor.

Schopenhauer requires, however, that only those historical subjects are to be chosen, the chief part of which can be actually represented. . .⁴⁵ In the fourth act Auguste appears in the second and third scenes. He admits that he

⁴¹Cinna, II, i, 357-365.

⁴²Ibid., II, i, 375-377.

⁴³Ibid., II, i, 601-607.

⁴⁴Ibid., II, i, 621-623.

⁴⁵Schopenhauer, op. cit., Vol. I, Bk. 3, p. 299.

deserves the death that the conspirators were about to inflict upon him.

Quoi! tu veux qu'on t'épargne, et n'as rien épargné!
Songe aux fleuves de sang où ton bras s'est baigné,⁴⁶

This sentiment is gradually displaced by regret at his own seeming helplessness to stem the tide of hate.

Rome a pour ma ruine une hydre trop fertile:
Une tête coupée en fait renaître mille,⁴⁷

His sense of inefficacy, however, is shortly influenced by his deep rooted love of power. He exclaims:

Ou laissez-moi périr, ou laissez-moi régner.⁴⁸

In the third scene the Empress pleads, seemingly in vain, for at the close of the scene she remarks:

Il m'échappe: suivons, et forçons-le de voir
Qu'il peut, en faisant grâce, affermir son pouvoir,
Et qu'enfin la clémence est la plus belle marque
Qui fasse à l'univers connoître un vrai monarque.⁴⁹

In the discourse of the last act Auguste is first overwhelmed by the added knowledge that his friend Maxime and his adopted daughter are members of the conspiracy.

He then cries defiantly:

En est-ce assez, ô ciel! et le sort, pour me nuire,
A-t-il quelqu'un des miens qu'il veuille encor séduire?
Qu'il joigne à ses efforts le secours des enfers:

⁴⁶Cinna, IV, ii, 1131-33.

⁴⁷Ibid., IV, ii, 1165-1167.

⁴⁸Ibid., IV, ii, 1192.

⁴⁹Ibid., IV, iii, 1263-1267.

Je suis maître de moi comme de l'univers;
 Je le suis, je veux l'être. O siècles, o mémoire,
 Conservez à jamais ma dernière victoire!
 Je triomphe aujourd'hui du plus juste courroux
 De qui le souvenir puisse aller jusqu'à vous.⁵⁰

The thought enshrined in

Je suis maître de moi comme de l'univers;
 Je le suis, je veux l'être.⁵¹

confirms Auguste as le héros cornélien. He prefers to conquer his desire to punish the traitors.

The conflict, talked of but not displayed in Cinna, shows Auguste, from the dramatist's point of view, to be the static captain of his will. Corneille does not explain mental conflict through the imagery of physical action. The spectator looks longingly for an exteriorization of conflict that would involve the psychic state.

The third consideration relevant to treatment of pure will in Cinna is the medium of action, character. Regarding the ideal tragic hero Aristotle declared:

It follows plainly . . . that the change of fortune presented must not be the spectacle of a bad man passing from adversity to prosperity; for nothing can be more alien to the spirit of Tragedy; it possesses no single tragic quality; . . .⁵²

The lack of conformity of the character Auguste to this principle will logically conclude in the inherent inability of the character of Auguste to

⁵⁰ Ibid., V, iii, 1693-1701.

⁵¹ Ibid., V, iii, 1696-1697.

⁵² Poetics, xiii, 2.

provoke tragic pity or fear.

The phrase "love of power" crystallizes the essential content of Auguste's feeling and mental activity. Yet neither the use nor abuse of hamartia as it storms through the heart of Auguste excites to dramatic action. Corneille has sounded the depths of the soul-life of Auguste without an external precipitation of action. Moreover, the consideration that Auguste had already committed the outrages which place his life in jeopardy before the play begins suggest that he is an operated figure rather than a character.

In the determination of whether or not the character of Auguste is a medium for actions which will achieve the aesthetic function of tragedy it is pertinent to study Auguste in an effective scene of Cinna.

Auguste's words afford a portrait of himself:

En est-ce assez, Ô ciel! et le sort, pour me nuire,
A-t-il quelqu'un des miens qu'il veuille encor séduire?
Qu'il joigne à ses efforts le secours des enfers:
Je suis maître de moi comme de l'univers;
Je le suis, je veux l'être.⁵³

Here is le héros cornélien, the possessor of strong will. He accentuates the trait with

Je triomphe aujourd'hui . . .⁵⁴

Will in the Schopenhauerian sense is the antithesis of the aesthetic . . . frame of mind.⁵⁵ As an exposition of this definition Schopenhauer asserted that because of its effectiveness and its difficulty of achievement tragedy

⁵³Cinna, V, iii, 1693-1697.

⁵⁴Ibid., V, iii, 1699.

⁵⁵Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, p. 54.

is at the apex of the art of poetry. Schopenhauer continues:

. . .the end of this highest poetical achievement ends with "life itself."⁵⁶

The spectator realizes the jagged contrast that Auguste presents with:

Je suis maître de moi comme de l'univers;
Je le suis, je veux l'être. O siècles, o mémoire,
Conservez à jamais ma dernière victoire!
Je triomphe aujourd'hui du plus juste courroux
De qui le souvenir puisse aller jusqu'à vous.⁵⁷

A recent classification of thirty-six possible dramatic situations designates that of Horace as the thirty-third. It is entitled "Necessity of Sacrificing Loved Ones."⁵⁸

It is interesting to study an elaboration of this situation, Horace, in the light of the Aristotelian principle of division of a tragic unit:

Every tragedy falls into two parts,--Complication and Unravelling or Denouement. Incidents extraneous to the action are frequently combined with a portion of the action proper, to form the Complication; the rest is the Unravelling. By the Complication I mean all that extends from the beginning of the action and the part which marks the turning-point to good or bad fortune. The Unravelling is that which extends from the beginning of the change to the end.⁵⁹

Corneille wisely determined to have the introduction⁶⁰ to the dramatic

⁵⁶Schopenhauer, op. cit., Vol. I, Bk. 3, pp. 326, 327.

⁵⁷Cinna, V, iii, 1696-1701.

⁵⁸Georges Polti, The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations, tr. Lucille Ray (Boston: The Writer, 1940), pp. 73. 74.

⁵⁹Poetics, XVIII, 1.

⁶⁰Gustav Freytag, Technik des Dramas (Leipzig: Berlag Von S. Hirzel, 1894) pp. 102, 103.

action focus on a situation relatively near to the crisis.

Mais aujourd'hui qu'il faut que l'une ou l'autre tombe,
Qu'Albe devienne esclave, ou que Rome succombe.⁶¹

He constructs the rising action to emphasize the suffering of the prolonged warfare between Rome and Alba. Sabine the wife of Horace expresses the unrest that this war, much like a civil war causes:

J'aurois pour mon pays une cruelle haine,
Si je pouvois encore être toute Romaine,
Et si je demandois votre triomphe aux Dieux,
Au prix de tant de sang qui m'est si précieux.
Je m'attache un peu moins aux intérêts d'un homme:
Je ne suis point pour Albe, et ne suis plus pour Rome;
Je crains pour l'une et l'autre en ce dernier effort,
Et serai du parti qu'affligera le sort.
Egale à tous les deux jusques à la victoire,
Je prendrai part aux maux sans en prendre à la gloire;
Et je garde, au milieu de tant d'âpres rigueurs,
Mes larmes aux vaincus, et ma haine aux vainqueurs.⁶²

Corneille offers an exciting force⁶³ which elaborates Sabine's reflection:

L'auroit-on jamais cru? Déjà les deux armées,
D'une égale chaleur au combat animées,
Si meancoient des yeux, et marchant fièrement,
N'attendoient, pour donner, que la commandement,
Quand notre dictateur devant les rangs s'avance,
Demande à votre prince un moment de silence,
Et l'ayant obtenu: "Que faisons-nous, Romains,
Dit-il, et quel démon nous fait venir aux mains?
Souffrons que la raison éclaire enfin nos âmes:
Nous sommes vos voisins, nos filles sont vos femmes,
Et l'hymen nous a joints par tant et tant de noeuds,
Qu'il est peu de nos fils qui ne soient vos neveux.
Nous ne sommes qu'un sang et qu'un peuple en deux villes:
Pourquoi nous déchirer par des guerres civiles,

⁶¹Horace, I, i, 79-81.

⁶²Horace, I, i, 83-95.

⁶³Freytag, op. cit., p. 102.

Où la mort des vaincus affoiblit les vainqueurs,
 Et le plus beau triomphe est arrosé de pleurs?
 Nos ennemis communs attendent avec joie
 Qu'un des partis défait leur donne l'autre en proie,⁶⁴

This plea of the dictator will be realized by the spectator to have been a portentous dramatic moment.

The rising action⁶⁵ is the proposition of the dictator that the officials of each city choose three warriors to combat in the name of the government which they represent:

Nommons des combattants pour la cause commune:
 Que chaque peuple aux siens attache sa fortune;
 Et suivant ce que d'eux ordonnera le sort,
 Que le foible parti prenne loi du plus fort;
 Mais sans indignité pour des guerriers si braves,
 Qu'ils deviennent sujets sans devenir esclaves,
 Sans honte, sans tribut, et sans autre rigueur
 Que de suivre en tous lieux les drapeaux du vainqueur.
 Ainsi nos deux Etats ne feront qu'un empire."
 Il semble qu'à ces mots notre discorde expire:⁶⁶

The climax is the appointment of Horace and his two brothers champions of Rome and of Curiace and his brothers to defend Alba.

Five scenes in the second act, the whole of the third act which is devoted to the farewell of the warriors, and the first scene of the fourth act are forceful. Thus Corneille has attained magnitude in the construction of the middle part of the dramatic movement, but the center is almost devoid of dramatic interest. The sixth scene of the third act will provoke the sense of irony. The confidante reports a false interpretation of the flight of

⁶⁴Ibid., I, iii, 279-297.

⁶⁵Freytag, loc. cit.

⁶⁶Ibid., I, iii, 307-317.

Horace. The second scene of the following act reveals Horace had fled but to enable himself the better to encounter Curiace⁶⁷ and his brothers.

Trop foible pour eux tous, trop fort pour chacun d'eux,
Il sait bien se tirer d'un pas si dangereux;
Il fuit pour mieux combattre, et cette prompte ruse
Divise adroitement trois frères qu'elle abuse.⁶⁸

The tragic force⁶⁹ is the death of Curiace:

Horace, les voyant l'un de l'autre écartés,
Se retourne, et déjà les croit demi-dontés:
Il attend le premier, et c'étoit votre gendre.
L'autre, tout indigne qu'il ait ose l'attendre,
En vain en l'attaquant fait paroître un grand coeur;
Le sang qu'il a perdu ralentit sa vigueur.
Albe à son tour commence à craindre un sort contraire;
Elle crie au second qu'il secoure son frère:
Il se hâte et s'épuise en efforts superflus;
Il trouve en les joignant que son frère n'est plus.⁷⁰

The tragic force is intensified by Camille's dismal cry:

Hélas!⁷¹

The return of the action⁷² is begun by Camille's resolve to express her resentment to her brother for having taken the life of her fiancée:

Dégénérons, mon coeur, d'un si vertueux père;
Soyons indigne soeur d'un si généreux frère:
C'est gloire de passer pour un coeur abattu,
Quand on a tout perdu, que sauroit-on plus craindre?
Pour ce cruel vainqueur n'ayez point de respect;

⁶⁷Examen," Horace, op. cit., III, 278, 279.

⁶⁸Horace, IV, ii, 1105-1109.

⁶⁹Freytag, loc. cit.

⁷⁰Horace, IV, ii, 1113-1123.

⁷¹Ibid., IV, ii, 1123.

⁷²Freytag, loc. cit.

Loin d'éviter ses yeux, croissez à son aspect;
 Offensez sa victoire, irritez sa colère,
 Et prenez, s'il se peut, plaisir à lui déplaire.
 Il vient: préparons-nous à montrer constamment
 Ce que doit une amante à la mort d'un amant.⁷³

The final suspense⁷⁴ is of untenable construction for the mind of the spectator. Corneille hastens to the catastrophe⁷⁵ without an interruption.

Camille's invocation of evil upon Rome provokes her brother:

C'est trop, ma patience à la raison fait place;
 Va dedans les enfers plaindre ton Curiaçe.⁷⁶

The fifth is unfavorably criticized by Corneille himself:

Tout ce cinquième est encore une des causes du peu de satisfaction que laisse cette tragédie: il est tout en plaidoyers, et ce n'est pas là la place des harangues ni des longs discours; ils peuvent être supportés en un commencement de pièce, où l'action n'est pas encore échauffée; mais le cinquième acte doit plus agir que discourir. L'attention de l'auditeur, déjà lassée, se rebute de ces conclusions qui traînent et tirent la fin en longueur.⁷⁷

Horace provides but another illustration of Corneille's skill in the construction of la pièce bien faite. The structure is but a frame. Corneille did not utilize it in this instance, however, solely as a support upon which to stretch the series of volitional situations.⁷⁸ The character Camille ap-

⁷³Horace, IV, iv, 1239-1251.

⁷⁴Freytag, loc. cit.

⁷⁵Loc. cit.

⁷⁶Ibid., IV, v, 1319-1321.

⁷⁷"Examen," Horace, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, III, 279.

⁷⁸Croce, op. cit., p. 244.

proaches the type of tragic character.

The second consideration is Corneille's treatment of conflict in Horace. The elaboration of the conflict of the play is the development of a tenet of Hegelian doctrine.

The genuine content of tragic action subject to the aims which arrest tragic characters is supplied by . . . the love of husband and wife, of parents, children and kinsfolk. Such are, further, the life of communities, the patriotism of citizens, the will of those in supreme power.⁷⁹

Hegel conceived the immediate individuality as the theme of tragedy, as, for example, the ethical substance of love, of patriotism. The Hegelian theory of the origin of conflict is the soldering of the ethical substance with the substance of concrete human life "realized as the determinate aim of a human pathos which passes into action, . . . within a collision of this kind both sides of the contradiction, if taken by themselves, are justified."⁸⁰

Hegel next states the tenet which underlies Corneille's resolution of the conflict embodied in Horace. Yet:

from a further point of view, they tend to carry into effect the true and positive content of their end--specific characterization merely as the negation and violation of the other equally legitimate power, and consequently in their ethical purport and relatively to this so far fall under condemnation.⁸¹

One hears the distressing cry of specific characterization [Camille] in its

⁷⁹Hegel, op. cit., IV, 295.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 295, 296, 297.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 297.

ethical purport as it falls under condemnation.⁸²

Mais as-tu vu mon père, et peut-il endurer
Qu'ainsi dans sa maison tu t'oses retirer?
Ne préfère-t-il point l'Etat à sa famille?
Ne regarde-t-il point Rome plus que sa fille?
Enfin notre bonheur est-il bien affermi?
T'a-t-il vu comme gendre, ou bien comme ennemi?⁸³

Hegel concludes by offering the tragic resolution of the divided ethical substance, "It is through this . . . result that Eternal Justice is [first] operative . . . [and finally conducive to] repose."⁸⁴ He proposes two possible modes of abrogation of "the onesided particularity which was unable to accommodate itself to this harmony, and consequently . . . carry this out."⁸⁵ The mode of abrogation selected by Corneille is, "the onesided particularity [the love of Camille for Curiace] which was unable to accommodate itself to this harmony . . . is committed in its entire totality to destruction."⁸⁶ Horace was laconic in his description of this tragic resolution.

Horace, mettant la main à l'épée, et poursuivant sa soeur
qui s'enfuit.
C'est trop, ma patience à la raison fait place;
Va dedans les enfers plaindre ton Curiace.⁸⁷

Throughout almost the entire play the spectator must depend upon narration of action rather than representation of it. The appearance of Curiace

⁸²Loc. cit.

⁸⁵Horace, I, iii, 252-259.

⁸⁴Hegel, op. cit., p. 298.

⁸⁵Loc. cit.

⁸⁶Loc. cit.

⁸⁷Horace, IV, V, 1319-1321.

on his leaving the battlefield suggests the latter however:

Cessez d'appréhender de voir rougir mes mains
Du poids honteux des fers ou du sang des Romains.⁸⁸

The "Hélas!"⁸⁹ of Camille on hearing of Curiace's death and her last exclamation, "Ah! Traître!"⁹⁰ also approximates truly dramatic action. As an outcry of pure humanity they are effective.⁹¹

The third application of the question of Corneille's making powerful drama regards character. The Hegelian theory of dramatic character embodies the Aristotelian, "genuine dramatic art consists in the expression of individual . . . passions."⁹² The onesided particularly, the love of Camille for Curiace, which has wrought a division in the ethical substance causes Camille to be brought to naught, and the eternal life of⁹³ the Will is not touched by her destruction. It is pertinent to observe in the study that it is the discordant factor of the will which affords material for conflict with other divisions of the substance; it is not pure will, the undivided ethical substance as Hegel employs the term which is dramatic material.

Enfin voilà un cri de nature un cri humain, le cri
d'une femme qui met sa passion au-dessus des règles

⁸⁸ Ibid., I, iii, 237-239.

⁸⁹ Ibid., IV, ii, 1123.

⁹⁰ Ibid., IV, V, 1321.

⁹¹ Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Laocoon, tr. Robert Phillimore (London: George Routledge and Sons, Limited, n.d.), p. 83.

⁹² Hegel, op. cit., IV, 265.

⁹³ Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, p. 127.

conventionnelles de l'honneur, au-dessus des préjugés,
--disons le mot, au-dessus de l'affreux protocole!⁹⁴

Furthermore, Nietzsche establishes a fact of cardinal importance which connects the very achievement of tragic function with the abrogation of the one-sided particularity of the ethical substance. The concordance of love and patriotism as it exists abstractly was cancelled when love was particularized in the human life of Camille.

For in the particular example of such annihilation, only, is the external phenomenon of Dionysian art made clear to us, which gives expression to the will in its omnipotence, as it were, behind the principium individuationis, the eternal life beyond all phenomena, and in spite of all annihilation. The metaphysical delight in the tragic is a translation of the instinctively unconscious Dionysian wisdom into the language of the scene: the hero, the highest manifestation of the will, is disavowed for our pleasure, . . . because the eternal life of the will is not affected by his annihilation. "We believe in eternal life," tragedy exclaims;⁹⁵

In this relation of the individual to the Absolute or the "Idée," the individual always loses. This was the very essence of Hebbel's conception of tragic guilt.⁹⁶ The hamartia existent in the character Camille is Corneille's essential contribution toward the realization requisite of the catharsis clause: "through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions."⁹⁷

⁹⁴Lucien Solvay, L'Evolution, théâtrale, I, 47.

⁹⁵Nietzsche, op. cit., p. 127.

⁹⁶Paul G. Graham, The Relation of History to Drama in the Works of Friedrich Hebbel (Smith College Studies in Modern Languages, Volume 15, Number 1-2. Menasha, Wisconsin: The Collegiate Press, n.d.) p. 100, citing Hebbel, Tagebücher, 1011 (March, 1838).

⁹⁷Poetics, vi, 2.

The metaphysical delight of the spectator is limited, however, by the Hegelian tenet that necessity is the principle of the resolution. The character, Camille, is a medium for, "the imitation of an action . . . through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions."⁹⁸ The spectator may define the appeal of the aesthetic pleasure of Horace as:

Pity is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the human sufferer. Terror is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the secret cause.⁹⁹

In the light of the aesthetic principle that the stronger the will is, the less possibility there is for tragedy, action, and conflict the analysis of Horace is absorbing. The study indicates that the presence of these three conditions is ever in inverse proportion to the strength of will of the protagonist. Though Corneille did not construct truly dramatic action and conflict, his creation of Camille bears the hallmark of the tragic character--an hamartia.¹⁰⁰

The next play to be analyzed is the Tragédie chrétienne. Has Corneille succeeded in making powerful will dramatic in the play, Polyeucte? It is illuminating to contrast Corneille's belief in his achievement of this end with the canons of basic poetic theory. The poet refers to Polyeucte as drama in the dedicatory epistle to the Queen Regent, Anne of Austria: "Ce n'est qu'une

⁹⁸Poetics, vi, 2.

⁹⁹James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (New York: Random House, 1928), p. 239.

¹⁰⁰Poetics, xiii, 3.

pièce de théâtre que je lui présente. . ."¹⁰¹ The first investigation of this apparently simple accomplishment regards whether the plot, the action, of the play Polyeucte fulfills the Aristotelian requisite:

♦

The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy: Character holds the second place. . . Thus Tragedy is the imitation of an action, and of the agents, mainly with a view to the action.¹⁰²

♦

The first scene represents the friend of Polyeucte entreating the nobleman to overcome repugnance to leave the palace. Polyeucte, however, remains fearful to depart to receive baptism lest his absence trouble his wife Pauline. The reiteration of Néarque's plea closes the first scene:

Il le faut:
Fuyez un ennemi qui sait votre défaut,
Qui le trouve aisément, qui blessé par la vue,
Et dont le coup mortel vous plaît quand il vous tue.¹⁰³

Judged in the light of Polyeucte's immediate capitulation Néarque's last entreaty is more persuasive than is apparent. Without a manifest transition Polyeucte in the first line of the second scene repudiates his avowals of the first scene:

Fuyons, puisqu'il le faut. Adieu, Pauline, adieu.¹⁰⁴

Thus in an opening scene of the play Polyeucte makes a momentous decision. He will become a Christian. Yet, this act, upon which the remainder of the

¹⁰¹"Epître," [dédicatoire], Polyeucte, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, III, 77.

¹⁰²Poetics, vi, 14.

¹⁰³Polyeucte, I, i, 104-106.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., I, i, 107.

plot depends, affords but psychological interest. It is not exteriorized. The spectator is informed of Polyeucte's abjuration of pagan belief through the conversation of the neophyte and Néarque¹⁰⁵ and by the announcement of Stratonice, confidente of Pauline.¹⁰⁶ The spectator is limited to the enjoyment of the accidental, the narrative. He must be content with the static rather than enjoy the vision of the dynamic-action.

The serious fault entailed in failing to represent this significant action is worthy of remark. This truth is emphasized by the repeated assumptions in poetic theory that dramatic action be exteriorized.

. . .if it is true that painting and poetry in their imitations make use of entirely different means or symbols--the first, namely, of form and colour in space, the second of articulated sounds in time--if these symbols indisputably require a suitable relation to the whole thing symbolized, then it is clear that symbols arranged in juxtaposition can only express subjects of which the wholes or parts exist in juxtaposition; while consecutive symbols can only express subjects of which the wholes or parts are themselves consecutive.

Subjects whose wholes or parts exist in juxtaposition are called bodies. Consequently, bodies with their visible properties are the peculiar subjects of painting.

Subjects whose wholes or parts are consecutive are called actions. Consequently actions are the peculiar subject of poetry.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵Ibid., II, vi, 649, 693.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., III, ii, 784.

¹⁰⁷Lessing, op. cit., p. 131.

After Polyeucte has affirmed his strong will by embracing Christianity he confides a daring resolve to Néarque.

Je les veux renverser,
Et mourir dans leur temple, ou les y terrasser.
Allons, mon cher Néarque, allons aux yeux des hommes
Braver l'idolâtrie, et montrer qui nous sommes:
C'est l'attente du ciel, il nous la faut remplir;
Je viens de le promettre, et je vais l'accomplir.
Je rends grâces au Dieu que tu m'as fait connoître
De cette occasion qu'il a sitôt fait naître,
Où déjà sa bonté prête à me couronner,
Daigne éprouver la foi qu'il vient de me donner.¹⁰⁸

Corneille fails to present in the mode of dramatic action this important act. The act of the breaking of the idols is the further projection of pure will first demonstrated by Polyeucte's accepting Christianity. The spectator is given "as if by chance all the threads requisite for understanding the whole."¹⁰⁹ The function of the confidante, Statonice, is the function of the deus ex machina. Statonice delays the disclosure. It is only in the ninetyeth alexandrine of the conversation of the confidante and Pauline that the fact of Polyeucte's breaking the images is stated.¹¹⁰

The third link in the succession of the demonstration of pure will is Polyeucte's choice of death, the penalty for abjuration of the pagan belief, rather than security through denial of his new faith.

Adore-les, te dis-je, ou renonce à la vie. Impie!¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸Polyeucte, II, vi, 643-653.

¹⁰⁹Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, p. 99.

¹¹⁰Polyeucte, III, ii, 857-859.

¹¹¹Ibid., V, III, 1675.

Polyeucte chooses to die:

Je suis chrétien.¹¹²

Again Corneille relies upon the undramatic deus ex machina. First there is the testimony of Pauline, then of her father, Félix:

Mon époux en mourant m'a laissé ses lumières;
Son sang, dont tes bourreaux viennent de me couvrir,
M'a dessillé les yeux, et me les vient d'ouvrir.

Je vois, je sais, je crois, je suis désabusée:
De ce bienheureux sang tu me vois baptisée;
Je suis chrétienne enfin, n'est-ce point assez dit?
Conserve en me perdant ton rang et ton crédit;¹¹³

C'est lui, n'en doutez point, dont le sang innocent
Pour son persécuteur prie un Dieu tou-puissant;
Son amour épanché sur toute la famille
Tire après lui le père aussi bien que la fille.¹¹⁴

One realizes the seriousness of the error of Corneille in the selection of the plot, Polyeucte; it is inherently undramatic. Could it be represented otherwise than by phantasiae?¹¹⁵ The practical difficulty of actually enacting the incidents would be difficult, assuredly, if not impossible. An attempt to visualize them emphasizes the essential epical character.

The second point to be discussed regarding Polyeucte is the determination of duration of conflict in proportion to the force of the volition exerted. A critic suggests that Aristotle's statement that plot is the "soul of tragedy" be replaced by the requisite that dramatic conflict is the soul of tragedy.¹¹⁶

¹¹²Ibid., V, iii, 1676.

¹¹³Ibid., V, v, 1724-1730.

¹¹⁴Ibid., V, vi, 1773-1776.

¹¹⁵Lessing, Laocoon, op. cit., p. 89.

¹¹⁶Butcher, "Essays," Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, p. 348.

The decision which Polyeucte makes regarding a change of religion is formulated, however, with little transition and without dramatic conflict.

When Néarque at the closing of the first scene counsels:

Fuyez.¹¹⁷

Polyeucte responds, it seems definitively:

Je ne puis.¹¹⁸

Néarque reiterates the warning:

Il le faut
Fuyez un ennemi qui sait votre défaut,
Qui le trouve aisément, qui blessé par la vue,
Et dont le coup mortel vous plaît quand il vous tue.¹¹⁹

In the subsequent line of the play Polyeucte calmly utters the resolve which marks the crisis of his life:

Fuyons, puisqu'il le faut. Adieu, Pauline; adieu.¹²⁰

Thus does Corneille ignore the principle of the truly dramatic composition, "le spectacle d'une volonté qui se déploie."¹²¹

In treating the second conflict undramatically Corneille very probably realized the practical impossibility of doing otherwise. The representation of the abuse of the idols would present an aesthetic difficulty.

The threatened persecution of the new convert fails also to introduce a

¹¹⁷Polyeucte, I, i, 102.

¹¹⁸Ibid., I, i, 103.

¹¹⁹Ibid., I, ii, 104-107.

¹²⁰Ibid., I, ii, 107.

¹²¹Brunetière, Les Epoques du théâtre français, p. 391.

representation of dramatic discord. It is in lyrics that Polyeucte represents highly interiorized conflict; in detaching himself from honors in this world:

J'ai de l'ambition, mais plus noble et plus belle;
 Cette grandeur périt, j'en veux une immortelle,
 Un bonheur assuré, sans mesure et sans fin,
 Au-dessus de l'envie, au-dessus du destin.¹²²

by entrusting Euline to Sévère:

Possesseur d'un trésor dont je n'étois pas digne,
 Souffrez avant ma mort que je vous le résigne, . . .¹²³

Corneille, in the last scene in which Polyeucte appears, invites the spectator to attend to the intensity of interior combat. Thus one may appreciate the cumulative force of the impact of the obstacles:

Que tout cet artifice est de mauvaise grâce!
 Après avoir deux fois essayé la menace,
 Après m'avoir fait voir Néarque dans la mort,
 Après avoir tenté l'amour et son effort,
 Après m'avoir montré cette soif du baptême,
 Pour opposer à Dieu l'intérêt de Dieu même,
 Vous vous joignez ensemble! Ah! ruses de l'enfer!
 Faut-il tant de fois vaincre avant que triompher?
 Vos résolutions usent trop de remise:
 Prenez la vôtre enfin, puisque la mienne est prise.¹²⁴

The last three lines are significant in an explanation of the failure of Corneille to write a truly dramatic composition in the light of the principle they embody.¹²⁵

The third subject for inquiry is whether Corneille has made powerful will

¹²²Polyeucte, IV, iii, 1191-1195.

¹²³Ibid., IV, iv, 1299-1301.

¹²⁴Ibid., V, iii, 1647-1657.

¹²⁵Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, p. 54.

dramatic through the medium of character. Corneille begins his defense of the major character, Polyeucte, by quoting from the Poetics:

Il reste donc à trouver un milieu entre ces deux extrémités, par le choix d'un homme qui ne soit ni tout à fait bon, ni tout à fait méchant, et qui, par une faute, ou foiblesse humaine, tombe dans un malheur qu'il ne mérite pas.¹²⁶

Corneille although admitting that the character of Polyeucte does not effect the catharsis,¹²⁷ the proper function of tragedy, states nevertheless:

Polyeucte y a réussi contre cette maxime. . .¹²⁸

The provocative question concerning the possibility of a truly Christian hero achieving the tragic function suggests itself:

But is such a drama possible? Is not the character of the true Christian the least dramatic that one can imagine? Do not the silent resignation, the constant serenity, which are the virtues of the Christian, inhibit the tragic function. . .?¹²⁹

In this effort to determine whether Corneille has succeeded in making a powerful will dramatic in Polyeucte, the analysis reveals the enormity of the task which the poet set before himself. The spectator leaves the theatre realizing that the effect depended . . . rather on the great rhetoro-lyric scenes; that Corneille had arranged much for pathos, not for action.¹³⁰

¹²⁶Discours de la Tragédie, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, I, 56, quoting Poetics. xiii. 3.

¹²⁷Discours de la Tragédie, op. cit., I, 59.

¹²⁸Loc. cit.

¹²⁹Lessing, Hamburgische Dramaturgie, ed. Charles Harris (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1901), s. 12.

¹³⁰Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, p. 99.

The omitting of exteriorized conflict suggests the inquiry, "How can the ugly and the discordant, the substance of tragic myth, excite and aesthetic pleasure?"

Here it is necessary to raise ourselves with a daring bound into a metaphysics of Art. . . it is precisely the function of tragic myth to convince us that even the Ugly and Discordant is an artistic game which the will, in the eternal fulness of its joy, plays with itself. But this not easily comprehensible proto-phenomenon of Dionysian Art becomes, in a direct way, singularly intelligible, and is immediately apprehended in the music alone, placed in contrast to the world as an aesthetic phenomenon. The joy that the tragic myth excites has the same origin as the joyful sensation of dissonance in music.¹³¹

Perhaps the key to the disappointment in Polyeucte lies in the fact that Corneille did not ponder the effective presentment of the major character:

Does not his [the character's] expectation of rewarding happiness after this life contradict the disinterestedness with which we wish to see all great and good actions undertaken and carried out on the stage?¹³²

Certainly Corneille constructed a barrier to the dramatic when in the first line of the second scene of Polyeucte he crystallized pure will.¹³³ However, Corneille was praised for constituting his theatre a medium for instruction and edification.¹³⁴ Corneille's Polyeucte embodies a philosophy; it should have replaced the philosophy. Like Goethe "Corneille has not . . .

¹³¹ Ibid., pp. 182, 183.

¹³² Lessing, loc. cit.

¹³³ polyeucte, I, ii, 107.

¹³⁴ Ernest Boyssse, Le Théâtre des Jésuites (Paris: Henri Vaton, Libraire-Editeur, 1880), pp. 92, 93.

sacrificed or consecrated his thought to make the drama"; Corneille regarded the drama as a means.¹³⁵ Logically, then, Corneille could not nor did not expect to achieve the aesthetic function proper to tragedy. Yet "art is the human disposition of sensible or intelligible matter for an aesthetic end."¹³⁶

Despite the incompatibility of the conditions sine qua non of tragedy and the projection of pure will in Rodogune Corneille favored this composition. The French writer cited "la nouveauté des fictions" as one of the characteristics which caused him to prefer it to any other of his works.¹³⁷ ". . . à qui j'aurois volontiers donné mon suffrage, si je n'avois craint de manquer, en quelque sorte, au respect que je devois à ceux que je voyois pencher d'un autre côté. . ."¹³⁸

A French critic employs Corneille's very preference for l'extraordinaire as an explanation of the inferiority of the plot of Rodogune. Corneille had differentiated comedy from tragedy by defining: "La comédie diffère donc en cela de la tragédie que celle-ci veut pour son sujet une action illustre, extraordinaire, sérieuse; celle-là s'arrête à une action commune et enjouée; . . ."¹³⁹

A French critic comments upon the definition:

¹³⁵Thomas Stearnes Eliot, The Sacred Wood (Metheun and Company, Limited, 1934), p. 66.

¹³⁶Herbert Gorman, James Joyce (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inclusive, 1939), p. 98.

¹³⁷"Examen," Rodogune, op. cit., IV, 421.

¹³⁸Ibid., I, 420.

¹³⁹"Discours du poème dramatique," Oeuvres de P. Corneille, I, 25.

Et que dirons-nous de Pertharite, de Rodogune ou d'Héraclius? Corneille a naturellement un faible pour ces situations compliquées ou bizarres; mais, de plus, elles sont nécessaires à ses héros, tels qu'il les conçoit et les aime, pour que la force surhumaine de leur volonté ait de quoi se déployer tout entière et pour qu'ils puissent se créer des devoirs égaux à leur énergie morale. Ainsi la définition qui nous occupe, si elle n'est pas fort juste, est bien franchement cornélienne, et, du reste, comme elle ne vise que le "sujet" de la tragédie, elle ne conviendrait pas mal au drame romantique.¹⁴⁰

A German critic considered Corneille's complication of the historical theme of the revenge of Cléopâtre unaesthetic. He asks that the theatre goer apply to Corneille's construction of the plot of Rodogune the axiom "das Genie liebt Einfal; der Witz, Verwicklung."¹⁴¹ He traces Corneille's changes of historical narrative.

Kleopatra bringt, in der Geschichte, ihren Gemahl aus Eifersucht um. Aus Eifersucht? dachte Corneille: das wäre ja eine ganz gemeine Frau; nein, meine Kleopatra muss eine Heldin sein, die noch wohl ihren Mann gern verloren hätte, aber durchaus nicht den Thron; dasz ihr Mann Rodogunen liebt, muss sie nicht so sehr schmerzen, als dasz Rodogune Königin sein soll wie sie; das ist weit erhabner.¹⁴²

In der Geschichte rächet sich Kleopatra bloz an ihrem Gemahle; an Rodogunen konnte oder wollte sie nicht rächen. Bei dem Dichter ist jene Rache längst vorbei; Die Ermordung des Demetrius wird bloz erzählt, und alle Handlung des Stücks geht auf Rodogunen. Corneille will seine Kleopatra nicht auf halbem Wege stehen lassen; sie muss sich noch gar-nicht gerächet zu haben

¹⁴⁰Jules Lemaitre, Corneille et la Poétique d'Aristote (Paris: Librairie H. Lecène et H. Oudin, 1888), p. 20.

¹⁴¹Lessing, Hamburgische dramaturgie, s. 99.

¹⁴²Loc. cit.

glauben wenn sie sich nicht auch an Rodogunen rächen.¹⁴³

Aber nicht genug, dasz Kleopatra sich an Rodogunen rächen; Dichter will, dasz sie es auf eine ganz ausnehmende Weise thun soll.¹⁴⁴

. . . beide Prinzen sind in Rodogunen sterblich verliebt; wer von beiden seine Geliebte umbringen will, der soll regieren.¹⁴⁵

Schön; aber könnten wir den Handel nicht noch mehr verwickeln? . . . Rodogune musz gerächt sein wollen; musz an der Mutter der Prinzen gerächt sein wollen; Rodogune musz ihnen erklären: wer mich von euch haben will, der ermorde seine Mutter!¹⁴⁶

Lemaître's sharp criticism of Corneille reconstructs the French poet's denial of "Il n'y a de vraiment tragique que les luttes entre parents." Corneille remarked "Il y a quelque apparence que cette condition ne regarde que les tragédies parfaites." Yet he immediately adds, "Je n'entends pas dire que celles où elle ne se rencontre point soient imparfaites. . . Mais, par ce mot de tragédies parfaites, j'entends celles du genre le plus sublime et le plus touchant."¹⁴⁷

Another consideration pertinent to the plot is whether or not the incidents are significant. Are they orientated toward the realization of the function of tragedy? "It [a perfect tragedy] should moreover imitate actions which excite pity and fear, this being the distinctive mark of tragic imita-

¹⁴³Ibid., s. 101.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., s. 103.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., s. 104.

¹⁴⁶Loc. cit.

¹⁴⁷Lemaître, op. cit., pp. 42, 43.

tion.¹⁴⁸

The play opens by the excitation of curiosity concerning which of the prince brothers, Sélenus or Antiochus is the older. To the older their mother, Cléopâtre, is to bequeath the kingdom and bestow the hand of Rodogune.

The fifth scene embellishes the pattern of suspense by Rodogune's avowal of a presentiment:

Et le trône et l'hymen, tout me devient suspect.
L'hymen semble à mes yeux cacher quelque supplice,
Le trône sous mes pas creuser un précipice;
Je vois de nouveaux fers après les miens brisés,
Et je prends tous ces biens pour des maux déguisés:
En un mot, je crains tout de l'esprit de la Reine.¹⁴⁹

Interest is further awakened by Rodogune's refusing to disclose which of the brothers she loves.

The second act begins with Corneille's further realization of the value of piquing curiosity. The Queen Regent exposes her desire of avenging herself upon Rodogune:

Vois jusqu'ou m'emporta l'amour du diadème;
Vois quel sang il me coûte, et tremble pour toi-même:
Tremble, te dis-je; et songe, en dépit du traité
Que pour t'en faire un don je l'ai trop acheté.¹⁵⁰

The weave of the play is reinforced by Cléopâtre's declaration:

Entre deux fils que j'aime avec même tendresse,
Embrasser ma querelle est le seul droit d'aînesse:

¹⁴⁸Poetics, xiii, 2.

¹⁴⁹Rodogune, I, v, 306-312.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., II, i, 423-427.

La mort de Rodogune en nommera l'aîné.¹⁵¹

The tension is prolonged by Rodogune's barbarous plan:

Appelez ce devoir haine, rigueur, colère:
Pour gagner Rodogune il faut venger un père;
Je me donne à ce prix: osez me mériter.¹⁵²

In proceeding to an examination of the incidents of the fourth act one continues to inquire whether they be significant forward movement toward the achievement of tragic effect. Cléopâtre reveals in a soliloquy:

Que tu pénétrés mal le fond de mon courage!
Si je verse des pleurs, ce sont des pleurs de rage;
Et ma haine, qu'en vain tu crois s'évanouir,
Ne les a fait couler qu'afin de t'éblouir.¹⁵³

There is a last crescendo in Corneille's preparation for the dénouement in the closing scene of the fourth act. Cléopâtre failing to destroy the fraternal love of Antiochus and Séleucus cries:

Sors de mon coeur, nature, ou fais qu'ils m'obéissent:
Fais-les servir ma haine, ou consens qu'ils périssent.
Mais déjà l'un a vu que je les veux punir:
Souvent qui tarde trop se laisse prévenir.
Allons chercher le temps d'immoler mes victimes,
Et de me rendre heureuse à force de grands crimes.¹⁵⁴

Thus in four acts of the play Corneille is content to silhouette Cléopâtre's ambitions to rule. He sketches with strokes which reveal. The etchings are: Cléopâtre's determination to disregard the claim of her son to the throne by right of seniority and her consequent offering of the kingdom as a reward to

¹⁵¹Ibid., II, iii, 643-646.

¹⁵²Ibid., III, iv, 1043-1046.

¹⁵³Ibid., IV, v, 1387-1391.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., IV, vii, 1491-1497.

whichever prince take the life of Rodogune; the resolution of Rodogune to withhold the name of the prince she prefers to marry and rather to marry the one who assassinates Cléopatre; the refusal of the princes to each; the vain entreaty of Cléopatre that Antiochus murder his brother; the resolve of the queen to murder both the sons that she may secure the throne.

The spectator searches in each of these incidents a preparation for the excitation of pity and fear. Each incident seems however to contribute to a construction of melodrama rather than drama.

As the movement of melodrama exists but to elaborate the melody, the music, so do the incidents of Rodogune appear to have little significance as parts in tragic action. Truly tragic action must "imitate actions which excite pity and fear, this being the distinctive mark of tragic imitation."¹⁵⁵

The fifth act represents the wicked Cléopatre victim of the poisoned potion. Regarding Corneille's disinterestedness in tragic function a critic applies to the French poet the following:

Denn er weiss so wenig, worin eigentlich dieser Schrecken und dieses Mitleid bestehet, dasz er, um jenes hervorzu- bringen, nicht sonderbare, unerwartete, ungläubliche, ungeheure Dinge genug häufen zu können glaubt, und um dieses zu erwecken, nur immer seine Zuflucht zu den ausserordentlichsten, grässlichsten Unglücksfällen und Freveltaten, nehmen zu müssen vermeinet.¹⁵⁶

Concerning an inquiry of whether Corneille has exteriorized the action one is deeply impressed by the interiority of the action of eighty per cent of the play. Corneille very probably deliberately evoked curiosity by narrative,

¹⁵⁵Poetics. xiii, 2.

¹⁵⁶Lessing, Hamburgische Dramaturgie, pp. 109, 110.

by soliloquy, rather than by the imitation of action.¹⁵⁷ Cléopâtre reveals her true resolve after she has striven to dissimulate her intent to assassinate a rival. She is one of the actors which Corneille himself describes who "énoncent simplement leurs sentiments."¹⁵⁸

Serments fallacieux, salutaire contrainte, . . .
 C'est encor, c'est encor cette même ennemie. . .
 Vois quel sang il me coûte, et tremble pour toi-même:
 Tremble, te dis-je; et songe, en dépit du traité,
 Que pour t'en faire un don je l'ai trop acheté.¹⁵⁹

It is by the narration of interior conflict also that Rodogune informs the spectator. Corneille himself includes her in the group of characters which "Appuient sur des maximes de morale ou de politique."¹⁶⁰

Mais aujourd'hui qu'on voit cette main parricide,
 Des restes de ta vie insolemment avide,
 Vouloir encor percer ce sein infortuné,
 Pour y chercher le coeur que tu m'avois donné,
 De la paix qu'elle rompt je ne suis plus le gage;
 Je brise avec honneur mon illustre esclavage;
 J'ose reprendre un coeur pour aimer et haïr, . . .¹⁶¹

The spectator must seek no more than the recital of resolves or narration of accomplishment. In his extensive preparation of the fifth act Corneille

¹⁵⁷Poetics, Vi. 5.

¹⁵⁸Discours du poème dramatique, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, I, 39.

¹⁵⁹Rodogune, II, i, 395, 415, 424-427.

¹⁶⁰Discours du poème dramatique, op. cit., I, 39.

¹⁶¹Rodogune, III, iii, 875-882.

does not represent the actual execution of ideal intentions and aims.¹⁶²

The analysis of character is particularly interesting in Rodogune since Corneille chose the major character of the type which Aristotle condemns:

Nor again should the downfall of the utter villain be exhibited. A plot of this kind would doubtless satisfy the moral sense, but it would inspire neither pity nor fear; for pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves.¹⁶³

Another Aristotelian principle which Corneille modified was that regarding the first requisite of character. "First and most important it must be good."¹⁶⁴

. . .et s'il m'est permis de dire mes conjectures sur ce qu'Aristote nous demande par là je crois que c'est le caractère brillant et élevé d'une habitude vertueuse ou criminelle, selon qu'elle est propre et convenable à la personne qu'on introduit. Cléopâtre, dans Rodogune, est très-méchante; il n'y a point de parricide qui lui fasse horreur, pourvu qu'il la puisse conserver sur un trône qu'elle préfère à toutes choses, tant son attachement à la domination est violent; mais tous ses crimes sont accompagnés d'une grandeur d'âme qui a quelque chose de si haut, qu'en même temps qu'on déteste ses actions, on admire la source dont elles partent.¹⁶⁵

Lemaître adds:

Et Cléopâtre aussi s'admire; elle considère avec satisfaction l'énormité et la subtilité de ses propres forfaits; elle . . . s'étale dans le sentiment de sa perversité. Jamais on n'a mis tant d'emphase et de

¹⁶²Hegel, The Philosophy of Fine Art, IV, 252.

¹⁶³Poetics. xiii. 2.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., xiii. 1.

¹⁶⁵Discours du poème dramatique, op. cit., I, 31, 32.

rhétorique dans le crime. Et le poète à son tour admire Cléopâtre, estime que sa scélératesse est "un beau cas," . . . Il admire la vertueuse princesse Rodogune, au moment même où elle déclare à Antiochus et à Seleucus qu'elle épousera celui des deux qui tuera sa mère.¹⁶⁶

Another French critic censures Corneille for sinning against the intention of tragedy by confusing the admiration of which Lemaître speaks with surprise. He says succinctly that surprise and admiration though frequently linked are, nevertheless, intrinsically different and that will which is powerful is by no means necessarily good will.¹⁶⁷

Has not, then, Corneille produced an effect which is not tragic, an effect which Aristotle foresaw as issue of a plot centered about the utter villain? Rather Corneille has illustrated his own transcendental interest in pure will. He preferred a demonstration of this in preference to excitation of pity and fear. Corneille crystallized the proof that Rodogune was to be a perfect representation of pure will when he wrote:

. . . mais tous ses crimes sont accompagnés d'une grandeur d'âme qui a quelque chose de si haut, qu'en même temps qu'on déteste ses actions, on admire la source dont elles partent.¹⁶⁸

Brunetière urged his audience to admit:

. . . ce n'est proprement ni le devoir ni la passion qu'il s'est plu à nous représenter. C'est la volonté, quel qu'en fut d'ailleurs l'objet; et ce n'est ni la pitié, ni la terreur même qu'il s'est proposer d'exciter ou de

¹⁶⁶Lemaître, op. cit., pp. 24, 25.

¹⁶⁷Brunetière, Les Epoques du théâtre français, p. 76.

¹⁶⁸Discours du poème dramatique, op. cit., I, 32.

remuer en nous, c'est l'admiration.¹⁶⁹

After the prolongation during four acts of static moments in Rodogune Corneille represents the queen tasting poisoned wine. The representation of her immediate suffering illustrate the definition, ". . .ugliness is dynamic incoherence."¹⁷⁰

Any analysis of Héraclius is beset with a difficulty that the author himself foresaw:

Il y a des intrigues qui commencent dès la naissance du héros, comme celui d'Héraclius; mais ces grands efforts d'imagination en demandent un extraordinaire à l'attention du spectateur, et l'empêchent souvent de prendre un plaisir entier aux premières représentations, tant ils le fatiguent.¹⁷¹

Boileau expressed the thought when he wrote:

Je me ris d'un auteur qui, lent à s'exprimer,
De ce qu'il veut d'abord ne sait pas m'informer,
Et qui débrouillant mal une pénible intrigue,
D'un divertissement me fait une fatigue.¹⁷²

Then too its Byzantine ambient is contradictory to the principle:

In order that a drama may be properly historical, it is necessary that it should be the history of the people to whom it is addressed.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹Brunetière, Les Epoques du théâtre français, p. 76.

¹⁷⁰Vernon Lee and C. Anstruther-Thomson, Beauty and Ugliness and Other Studies in Psychology and Aesthetics, (New York: John Lane Company, 1922), p. 346, quoting Theodore Lipps.

¹⁷¹Discours des trois unités, Oeuvres de P. Corneille, I, 105.

¹⁷²Nicolas Boileau, L'Art poétique, Chant III, vers 29-32, quoted in "Notice," Héraclius, op. cit.; V, 116.

¹⁷³Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Shakespeare and Other Dramatists, Vol. IV of The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. W.G.T. Shedd (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1884) p. 117.

The composition of the plot of Héraclius indicates divergence from Butcher's requisite that the action offer "a coherent series of events" . . .¹⁷⁴

Croce objects to such a plot being praised for "logical" perfection:

This structure of tragedy, with its antitheses and parallelisms, its expedients for accelerating and arresting and terminating the action has been qualified with praise or blame as possessing great "logical" perfection. Logic, however, which is the life of thought, has nothing to do with the balancing and counterbalancing of mechanical weights, whose life lies outside them, in the head and in the hand that has constructed and set them in motion.¹⁷⁵

He distinguishes between artistic and mechanical coherence:

. . . We have said exactly the same thing, without having recourse to logic or to architecture, when we noted that the structure of Corneille's tragedies did not derive from within, that is, from his true poetical inspiration, but rose up beside it, and was due to the unconscious practical need of making a canvas or a frame upon which to stretch the series of volitional situations desired by the imagination of the poet. Thus it was poetically a cold, incoherent, absurd thing, but practically rational and coherent, like every "mechanism."¹⁷⁶

The scene of the play is laid in Constantinople in the year 610.

Phocas, a usurper, has gained imperial power by murdering the emperor, Maurice, and the heirs to the throne. He spares the life of Pulchérie that he may give her in marriage to his son Martian. The difficulty which Corneille recognized in the plot arises from the act of the governess Léontine. She sacrifices her own son, Léonce, removes Martian from the palace to her own home and substitutes Héraclius for Martian. When the people begin to

¹⁷⁴Butcher, "Essays," op. cit., p. 348.

¹⁷⁵Croce, Ariosto, Shakespeare e Corneille, p. 244.

¹⁷⁶Loc. cit.

speak of the survival of Héraclius, Phocas causes Léonce to be arrested. Héraclius in gratitude for Léonce's having once saved his life reveals to Phocas the identity of Léonce. At the death of Phocas Héraclius is recognized as emperor and Martian and Pulchérie marry.

Héraclius is a composition offering deliberation rather than action.

Although a modern critic states:

It used to be considered essential by dramatic theorists that the movement which is so important to the interest of a play should be built into some sort of central conflict which formed the heart and soul of the dramatic experience. But this is an exaggeration. The plays of Chekov alone are enough to prove that it is quite unnecessary to have any obvious conflict and struggle, involving a crisis and a catastrophe, such as was the rule in classical drama.¹⁷⁷

She immediately modifies the statement by suggesting:

But since the basis of all enjoyable dramatic experience is the emergence of character in action, it is, I think, impossible to have drama unless the characters are concerned in some kind of complication, which must necessarily involve some kind of clash between individuals, or between opposing emotions or circumstances or ideas.¹⁷⁸

The clash which a dramatist other than Corneille would probably have chosen would have represented the externalization of strife between the usurper and the heir. Corneille, however, preferred to present strong will deliberating rather than powerful will in the execution of exterior action.

. . . This was what Corneille truly loved: the spirit which deliberates calmly and serenely and having formed

¹⁷⁷Drew, op. cit., pp. 27, 28.

¹⁷⁸Loc. cit.

its resolution, adheres to it with unshakeable firmness, as to a position that has been won with difficulty and with difficulty strengthened.¹⁷⁹

However, the first appearance of Héraclius suggests the perfection of the deliberative will. Despite the ruthless Phocas' menace that Héraclius provoke him not to anger Héraclius replies:

Dussé-je mal user de cet amour de père,
 Etant ce que je suis, je me dois quelque effort
 Pour vous dire, Seigneur, que c'est vous faire tort,
 Et que c'est trop montrer d'injuste défiance
 De ne pouvoir régner que par son alliance:
 Sans prendre un nouveau droit du nom de son époux,
 Ma naissance suffit pour régner après vous.
 J'ai du coeur, et tiendrais l'empire même infâme,
 S'il falloit le tenir de la main d'une femme.¹⁸⁰

In the next scene Héraclius reiterates the firmness of his will when he encourages Pulchérie:

Résolu de périr pour vous sauver la vie,
 Je sens tous mes respects céder à cette envie:
 Je ne suis plus son fils, s'il en veut à vos jours,
 Et mon coeur tout entier vole à votre secours.¹⁸¹

At the beginning of the second act further testimony is given that Héraclius has a fixed will:

Montrons Héraclius au peuple qui l'attend;
 Evitons le hasard qu'un imposteur l'abuse.¹⁸²

In the fourth act Héraclius dismisses even the fears of his fiancée Eudoxe with:

¹⁷⁹Croce, op. cit., p. 225.

¹⁸⁰Héraclius, op. cit., I, iii, 275-283.

¹⁸¹Ibid., I, iv, 333-337.

¹⁸²Ibid., II, ii, 476-478.

Soit qu'il faille régner, soit qu'il faille périr,
 Au tombeau comme au trône on me verra courir.¹⁸³

In the fourth act when Héraclius reveals his identity to Phocas he thus imperils himself.

It is interesting to observe that while Héraclius offers several proofs of strong will in the first four acts, he seems less confident during the soliloquy with which the fifth act begins:

.....

Retiens, grande ombre de Maurice,
 Mon âme au bord du précipice
 Que cette obscurité lui fait,
 Et m'aide à faire mieux connoître
 Qu'en ton fils Dieu n'a pas fait naître
 Un prince à ce point imparfait,
 Ou que je méritois de l'être,
 Si je ne le suis en effet.

Soutiens ma haine qui chancelle,
 Et redoublant pour ta querelle
 Cette noble ardeur de mourir,
 Fais voir . . . Mais il m'exauce; on vient me secourir.¹⁸⁴

To inquire concerning the character of Héraclius as tragic character is to seek in vain for any act of his which reveals:

. . . a marked one-sidedness, a predisposition in some particular direction; a total incapacity, in certain circumstances, of resisting the force which draws in this direction; a fatal tendency to identify the whole being with one interest, object, passion, or habit of mind.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³Ibid., IV, i, 1197-1199.

¹⁸⁴Ibid., V, i, 1543-1551.

¹⁸⁵A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy (Second edition; New York: The Macmillan Company), p. 20.

The feelings of the spectator on seeing strong will sustain itself throughout several scenes waver momentarily and then be confirmed in its strength are not tragic feelings.¹⁸⁶

Perhaps the explanation of the failure of Corneille to have chosen tragic action, conflict and character lies in Croce's analysis of "questo il Corneille veramente amava."¹⁸⁷

Yet Coleridge realized that:

A second promise of genius is the choice of subjects very remote from the private interests and circumstances of the writer himself. At least I have found, that where the subject is taken immediately from the author's personal sensations and experiences, the excellence of a particular poem is but an equivocal mark, and often a fallacious pledge, of genuine poetic power.¹⁸⁸

One might employ the same adjectives that a modern critic chose when referring to Strange Interlude; "discursive, novelistic." The incidents are merely commented upon by the characters. However, though Strange Interlude may "combine to a remarkable extent the vivid directness of the drama with the more intricate texture of the modern novel,"¹⁸⁹ Héraclius is more of the discursive character. Yet, "La poesía, para ser grande y apreciada debe pensar y sentir, reflejar las ideas y pasiones dolores y alegrías de la sociedad en que vive; . . ."¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶Poetics, xiii. 3.

¹⁸⁷Croce, loc. cit.

¹⁸⁸Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, op. cit., III, p. 376.

¹⁸⁹Joseph Wood Krutch (ed.), "Introduction," Nine Plays by Eugene O'Neill (New York: Liveright, Inclusive, 1932), xix.

¹⁹⁰Núñez de Arce, "Prefacio," Gretos del combate, quoted by Cesar Barja, Libros y autores modernos (Los Angeles: Campbell's Book Store, 1933), p.260.

Corneille would have been more successful had he fulfilled a condition which a critic believes essential for an aesthetic accomplishment, "A second promise of genius is the choice of subjects very remote from private interests. . . ."¹⁹¹

From the almost constant fixity of the strong will of Héraclius one realizes the logical sequence of the creation of the character Nicomède.

Corneille was content, then, to substitute the interiorization of action for its exteriorization. His practice was in sharp opposition to the theory investigated in the first chapter of this dissertation. Hegel, Butcher, Brunetière and Elton,¹⁹² for example, emphasize the Aristotelian interpretation of dramatic representation. ". . . the imitators may represent the whole story dramatically, as though they were actually doing the things described."¹⁹³ Lalo, Matthiessen, Schopenhauer, Croce, Lessing, Nietzsche, and Drew realized the implication of Aristotle's dictum.¹⁹⁴

The inquiry concerning Corneille's technique suggests routines which were appropriate to undramatic action. In the Cid Corneille orders that a decisive choice of Rodrigue be communicated to the spectator by a minor character; that utterance in word on the part of Rodrigue be not extended to utterance in act. Cinna offers but elaboration of the mental sufferings of Auguste; even the treachery of Cinna and Maxime is enacted behind the scenes;

¹⁹¹Coleridge, loc. cit.

¹⁹²Supra, pp. 24-32.

¹⁹³Poetics. iii. 6.

¹⁹⁴See pp. 54 ff.

similarly the Cid employs the device of the secondary character's communication of the crisis. In this composition too, the lyric is preferred to the dramatic. Four-fifths of the play Rodogune must be classified as devoid of manifestation. Héraclius narrates the deliberation of a strong will; it does not present the execution of action. Nicomède, the exemplar of pure will all its force could not consequently afford a study of dramatic insuccess.¹⁹⁵

Corneille, however, was not the first to attempt to replace visual comprehension with aural. A critic signals Aeschylus' selection of non-dramatic material. Of the Supplices the investigator remarked that the little action there is has been planned for the chorus.¹⁹⁶ The Prometheus is a characterization of the adamantine Titan.¹⁹⁷ Approximately one-half of The Persae is lyric,¹⁹⁸ with an additional one-fourth reproducing the speeches of Darius and the messenger. The Septem Contra Thebas is "a series of prolonged declamations separated by choral songs."¹⁹⁹ The Choephoroi withholds dramatic action till the second half of the play. On the contrary another critic praises Sophocles as:

. . .an exponent of his classical age, which laid stress upon the golden mean in action, and avoiding excess on one side and the other, exemplifies the virtue of moderation . . . which was to the Greek

¹⁹⁵Cf. pp. 54ff.

¹⁹⁶Harry, Greek Tragedy, I, 3.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁹⁸Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., p. 41.

as charity to the Christian.²⁰⁰

An eminent commentator on the Poetics of Aristotle has elaborated the exposition of the demand for representation of action. His emphasis aids one to determine the seriousness of the failure of new dramatists as well as old in its regard.

.....

4. There seems to be but one view in which Poetry can be considered as Imitation, in the strict and proper sense of the word. If we look for both immediate and obvious resemblance, we shall find it only in DRAMATIC--or to use a more general term--PERSONATIVE Poetry; that is, all Poetry in which, whether essentially or occasionally, the Poet personates; for here, speech is imitated by speech. The difference between this, and mere narration or description is obvious. When in common discourses we relate or describe, in our own persons, we imitate in no other sense, than as we raise ideas which resemble the things related or described. But when we speak as another person, we become mimics, and not only the ideas we convey, but the words, the discourse itself, in which we convey them are imitations; they resemble, or are supposed to resemble those of the person we represent. Now this is the case not only with the Tragic and Comic Poet, but also with the Epic Poet, and even the Historian, when either of these quits his own character, and writes a speech in the character of another person. He is then an imitator, in as strict a sense as the personal mimic.--In dramatic, and all personative Poetry, then, both the conditions of what is properly denominated Imitation are fulfilled.²⁰¹

In the light of the exposition of this requisite it is interesting to study the disregard evinced by the modern dramatist. One inquirer attributes the

²⁰⁰Supra, pp. 6, 9, 12.

²⁰¹Aristotle's Treatise on Poetry, Translated with notes on the translation, and on the original; and Two Dissertations on Poetical and Musical Imitation, trans. Thomas Twining (London: Payne and Son, 1878, pp. 21, 22.

neglect of it to the preponderant influence of Sociology.

. . .It [the drama of the nineteenth century] is scientific, subjective, introspective, historical, archaeological;--full of vitality, versatility, and diligence;--intensely personal, defiant of all law, of standards, of convention;--laborious, exact, but often indifferent to grace, symmetry, or colour;--it is learned, critical, cultured;--with all its ambition and its fine feeling, it is unsympathetic to the highest forms of the imagination, and quite alien to the drama of action.²⁰²

Extreme emphasis upon the scientific or the material does tend to check "the supreme imagination--as if its social earnestness produced a distaste for merely dramatic passion."²⁰³ This trend however was discouraged by ". . . the preponderance of the 'subjective' over the 'objective' caused attention to swerve from the external event to the interior perplexity."²⁰⁴ Another critic of nineteenth century remarked that the complexity of life of the nineteenth century was the proximate cause of the self-consciousness and consequent introspection.²⁰⁵

It was Henrik Ibsen who orientated the modern drama²⁰⁶ in which Aristotelian exteriorization of dramatic conflict began to go inward and disappear. It was but the application of a belief of his of which he wrote enthusiastically

²⁰²Frederic Harrison, Studies in Early Victorian Literature (London: Edward Arnold, 1906), p. 13.

²⁰³Ibid., p. 22.

²⁰⁴Loc. cit.

²⁰⁵Arnold Smith, The Main Tendencies of Victorian Poetry, p. 3.

²⁰⁶Frank Wadleigh Chandler, Aspects of Modern Drama, Chicago (The Macmillan Company, 1918), p. 2.

cally; ". . . Men still call for special revolutions in politics, in external; but all that sort of thing is trumpery. It is the human soul that must revolt."²⁰⁷ Logically a critic could but comment: ". . . It is by the revelation of states of soul rather than by the unfolding of an outer spectacle that they [Ibsen's dramas] compel our interest."²⁰⁸

Ibsen strives, then, to reveal the interior life of a character. He presents a person at the decisive moment of that person's life. The character is given the opportunity to express his own thoughts and emotions to another. It is thus that he reveals himself to the spectator. "The method of attacking the crisis in the middle or near the end enabled Ibsen to deal with a larger segment of human experience."²⁰⁹ The fertile imagination of a Hebbel or an Ibsen vivifies this style of exposition. Ibsenian exposition differs from Aristotelian technique which prescribes: "Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete, and whole, . . . A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end."²¹⁰

Again Ibsen imitates the gradual manner of exposition which Sophocles sometimes selected:

. . . Instead of revealing in the first scene, like Euripides in his typical prologue, and like so many modern dramatists, all the circumstances that have

²⁰⁷Letter of Ibsen to Brandes quoted in Chandler, Aspects of Modern Drama, p. 24.

²⁰⁸Ibid., p. 6.

²⁰⁹T. M. Campbell, Hebbel, Ibsen and the Analytic Exposition. Carl Winters, Universitatsbuchhandlung, Heidelberg, 1922, 55.

²¹⁰Poetics. vii. 3.

preceded the events of the play, he distributes the elucidation throughout, revealing fact after fact, while the action advances, only as they are absolutely required for intelligibility. In Hedda Gabler Ibsen makes no explicit statement about the heroine's pristine relations with Eilert Löwborg until the second act when they begin to have a definite effect upon the denouement. . . It is necessary now to inform the audience that there has existed in the old days a very intimate connection between the two and that Hedda was unable to influence Eilert for good, since in this act she once again seeks to have her hands, as she says, in the man's destiny.²¹¹

Frequently Ibsen placed the clarification of the Vorgeschichte toward the end of the play:

. . . "Schon bei der Nora ward es als eine, jedenfalls die unmittelbare theatralische Wirkung hemmende Eigentümlichkeit empfunden, dass die Keime des tragischen Konfliktes in einer weit zurückliegenden Vorgeschichte stecken, und dass diese erst allmählich während des Fortgangs des Dramas mühsam aus einigen Dialogbrocken herausgelesen werden müssen. Die Gestalten seiner Dramen sind nicht nur im medizinischen Sinne mit einer pathologischen Aszendenz, sondern auch mit einer oft sehr komplizierten Vorgeschichte belastet, und foltern den Hörer und Zuschauer durch geheimnisvolle Winke, Andeutungen, Anspielungen, die eigentlich erst wenn der Vorhang gefallen--oft auch dann nicht--klar werden. Diese Technik hat Ibsen seitdem mit dem ihm eigenen Raffinement weiter ausgebildet. Seine Dramen sind eigentlich nur ein fünfter Akt, die Spitze einer Pyramide. Den Unterbau der psychologischen und tatsächlichen Voraussetzungen hat der Dichter in kleine Stücke zerschlagen, die man zum Teil aus den Reden der Handelnden wieder zusammenlesen kann, aber nur mit unsäglicher Muhe."²¹²

²¹¹Chandler Rathfon Post, The Dramatic Art of Sophocles, pp. 112, 113.

²¹²Palmer Cobb, Hebbel's Julia and the Modern Drama (University of North Carolina Studies in Philology, Vol. 5, Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University Press, 1910), pp. 16, 17.

A second critic studying the Vorgeschichte observes "Man wählt den schwierigeren, aber lebenstreueren Weg, sie im Verlaufe der Handlung allmählich durchsickern zu lassen."²¹³ The same critic suggests that Lessing's mastery of this style of exposition has been imitated by later dramatists. In Heimat Sudermann reserves till the fifth act the confession of Magda although it was a motivating force.²¹⁴

When Ibsen selects the gradual exposition, which is in reality the technique of the novel, does he not substitute narrative for the dramatic? This is the logical result of his rejection of the Aristotelian theory, "Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete, and whole. . .A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end."²¹⁵

Thus the problem which confronts the dramatist who selects the gradual form of exposition arises from the limitations that time, place, and continuity of action place upon the facts of the exposition.²¹⁶

Very frequently the story is rich in dramatic potentialities. The concentration of the action of the drama, however, requires that it be but a part of the Vorgeschichte. In Rosmersholm the spectator realizes only in the third act that Rebecca was responsible for the murder of Beata. Moreover he is informed only in the last act of Rebecca's motive. The tragedy that preceded the play is an example of story that had possibilities for dramatic

²¹³Ibid., p. 17.

²¹⁴Loc. cit.

²¹⁵Poetics. vii. 3.

²¹⁶Cobb, op. cit., p. 20.

representation.

Ibsen has imitated Sophocles, too, in offering a discussion of the problem which is the theme of the play. Sophocles has the good and evil of the hero's constitution investigated in the latter half of the Ajax. In the third act of A Doll's House Ibsen has the proper relationship between husband and wife discussed.²¹⁷

Ibsen étudie surtout des crises de conscience, des révolutions morales

.....
il s'est aperçu que la revendication de l'autonomie morale . . . peut devenir malfaisante et grotesque chez une vaniteuse névrosée comme Hedda Gabler, et n'est plus que l'adoration prétentieuse, féroce,--et stérile, --du "moi."²¹⁸

The same critic observes keenly: "Nous assistons à un drame, non pas de jalousie sensuelle et amoureuse, mais de jalousie cérébrale ou, mieux, d'égoïsme démentiel."²¹⁹

.....
Et elle est monstrueusement orgueilleuse. Elle se croit élevée au-dessus des lois divines et humaines par la précellence et la distinction de sa nature. . .

Mais elle a beau se figurer que cet orgueil est de la grande espèce: il y a, dans sa superbe, beaucoup de snobisme, beaucoup de cabotinage, et pas mal de névrose.

Il y a du snobisme. Car elle se trompe tout à fait sur ce qui est "distingué" et sur ce qui ne l'est pas. Elle méprise les tantes de Tesman: leurs manies de vieilles demoiselles et la simplicité de leurs manières l'empêchent de voir la rare valeur morale de ces deux bonnes créatures. Elle croit, la malheureuse! qu'il

²¹⁷Post, The Dramatic Art of Sophocles, p. 118.

²¹⁸Lemaître, Jules, Impressions de théâtre, vi, 49, 50.

²¹⁹Ibid., vi, p. 52.

n'y a pas de vie distinguée sans chevaux, sans piano, sans luxe. Elle croit qu'il est distingué d'avoir un salon. Elle croit qu'il n'est pas distingué d'avoir des enfants. Bref, elle a sur ce qui fait "l'élégance, de la vie, des idées pitoyables.

Et il y a, dans son orgueil, du cabotinage. Elle est constamment préoccupée de l'effet qu'elle produit sur les autres; elle se regarde; même seule, elle pose pour une galerie invisible qu'elle porte partout en elle-même. Elle veut qu'il y ait, dans toutes ses démarches un reflet de beauté"; mais cette beauté des actes et des attitudes, elle en a une conception très convenue, théâtrale ou livresque, parfaitement niaise au fond.²²⁰

.....
 Parmi ses rêves confus, il y en a un qu'elle formule avec précision: "Je veux, une fois dans ma vie, peser sur une destinée humaine." Cela, c'est la réduction du rêve de Napoléon et de tous les conquérants.

Mais sur qui agira-t-elle? Sur son mari? Elle ne daigne. Il n'y a rien à faire de ce gros nanneton inoffensif et distrait. Elle s'aperçoit alors que ce fou d'Eilert Lövborg vaut la peine, lui, d'être pris et dominé. Il a renoncé à ses vices, il a travaillé, il a publié un beau livre; il en a un autre tout prêt, en manuscrit, ou il a mis toute son âme et tout son génie. Et qui est-ce qui a opéré ce sauvetage et cette transformation? Une petite femme, très douce, très timide, qui s'est dévouée à Eilert, . . .Oui, c'est ce petit mouton de Théa qui a changé la destinée de ce fou génial. Et elle se met à haïr Théa de toute son âme.²²¹

Thus when Hedda comes by chance into the possession of Eilert's precious manuscript she determines to withhold it from him.²²² Eilert makes his decision to commit suicide in his despair at having broken all his promises to Théa. Hedda, Iago-like, ". . .le sachant en tout cas perdu pour elle," en-

²²⁰Ibid., vi, p. 53.

²²¹Ibid., vi, pp. 54, 55.

²²²Supra p. 29

courages Eilert to destroy his own life. She gives her pistol to him.²²³

After Eilert has departed:

. . . la femme simplement et atrocement jalouse éclate un instant sous la comédienne, elle jette dans le poêle le cahier d'Eilert en criant: "Maintenant je brûle ton enfant, Théa, la belle aux cheveux crépus! L'enfant . . . Maintenant je brûle, je brûle l'enfant!"

Dégagé du cabotinage qui le rend grotesque, cet acte d'Hedda est abominable, car c'est un acte de destruction égoïste, un acte purement méchant. Hedda est méchante, parce que, aux âmes médiocres (et elle en est une, et je vous supplie de ne point la coiffer d'une auréole!) la méchanceté finit par paraître la meilleure affirmation de la force. Il y a du néronisme dans cette sottise.²²⁴

After the suicide of Eilert, Hedda is informed that since the weapon which was used has been identified as hers she must appear at court. She exclaims to Judge Brack, "Je suis en votre pouvoir, je dépends de votre bon plaisir! Esclave! je suis esclave!"

Hedda cannot endure the position in which she has been placed:

. . . Le sentiment de son isolement, de son impuissance, et enfin de sa dépendance achève de l'affoler. Et, dans un dernier accès de cabotinage furieux, singeant son mari, raillant Théa, raillant l'assesseur, raillant les deux vieilles tantes, --dont l'une vient de mourir, --Hedda, après avoir joué sur le piano une valse endiablée, se tue d'un coup de pistolet et exhale dans un éclat de rire son âme frénétique.²²⁵

One agrees that the French critic is justified in selecting the appellation "le

²²³Lemaître, Impressions du théâtre, VI, 57.

²²⁴Ibid., pp. 57, 58.

²²⁵Ibid., VI, 60.

scenario psychologique d'Hedda Gabler."²²⁶

Ibsen, then, deliberately chose his theatre to be the theatre of the soul. Consequently he proceeded to substitute concentrated action for the complications of the plot of la pièce bien faite. To achieve this simplification he relegated many elements of story to the antecedent, unseen part of the play. Other facts he revealed through the means of the gradual exposition. The investigator's interest is stimulated at a question that suggests itself. Can the composer of character drama fulfill the requirement of the Aristotelian theory of tragedy?

The Plot, then, is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy; Character holds the second place. . . Thus Tragedy is the imitation of an action, and of the agents, mainly with a view to the action.²²⁷

A comparison of the action enacted on and off the stage of Ibsen's drama, Hedda Gabler²²⁸ will be helpful to determine the extent of Ibsenian divergence from the Aristotelian theory. The first column tabulates the action preceding the play in the order in which the play reveals it through conversation. The second column indicates the action behind the scenes; the third column the action on the stage.

²²⁶Ibid., VI, 51.

²²⁷Poetics. vi. 14.

²²⁸Martha Hobson, "Action Behind the Scenes in Shakespeare and Ibsen," (Unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Chicago, Chicago, 1937), pp. 85-87.

Hedda Gabler

George Tesman has married beautiful Hedda Gabler, very much récherchée. She has extravagant tastes.

George's aunt, Miss Tesman, provides money for her nephew by mortgaging her annuity. George's rival, Eilert Lövborg, has written a remarkable book. Mrs. Elvsted has persuaded Eilert to reform his life and has aided him in writing the book. Mrs. Elvsted has come to the town in which Lövborg resides. Hedda has married Tesman since no one else has asked for her hand in marriage. She has continued a friendship with Judge Brack whom she knew in her youth. Lövborg was also a friend of Hedda.

Mrs. Elvsted calls and leaves a bouquet.

Hedda is impolite to Miss Tesman.

Hedda threatens to shoot Judge Brack. Lövborg will not try to prevent Tesman's success in their profession.

Hedda persuades Lövborg to drink. She gives him her pistol. Hedda burns Eilert's manuscript and deceives Tesman concerning her intention in destroying it.

Tesman and Lövborg are invited to a party by Judge Brack; Lövborg reads his manuscript. Lövborg drinks heavily and loses his manuscript. Tesman rescues it. Lövborg attends a soirée given by Mlle Diana. It is at this time Eilert realizes he has lost his manuscript. Later he is arrested. Tesman's Aunt Rina dies. Lövborg commits suicide. Hedda shoots herself.

Brack informs Hedda that the pistol used by Lövborg has been identified as hers. The Judge threatens her.

It is obvious that Ibsen did not consider action to be the soul of his

tragedy. It is evident, rather, that Ibsen aimed primarily at an exposition of the very complex state of the mind of Hedda Gabler.

Another drama of Ibsen, The Wild Duck, also portrays a révolté with whom his creator does not sympathize. The Wild Duck affords an example of elaborate exposition by gradual revelation.

. . .L'exposition est longue: elle est confuse, ou plutôt diffuse. Ces détails, nous ne les apprenons que peu à peu, à mesure qu'ils se présentent dans le cours de lentes conversations; ils ne sont point groupés méthodiquement pour notre commodité; nous sommes obligés de les retenir au passage et, pour ainsi parler, d'en faire nous-mêmes le total. Cela exige de nous une assez grande tension d'esprit, et cela certes passerait pour un grave défaut sur une scène française. Mais en revanche, grâce à la lenteur même de ces causeries, à cette sorte d'insouciance où l'auteur paraît être de son objet principal, grâce à l'abondance des petits faits familiers et superflus, nous avons, à un degré extraordinaire, le sentiment de la réalité du milieu où va se passer l'action; nous sommes vraiment "dépayés," nous avons vraiment vécu, pendant une heure ou deux, avec la famille Elkdal.²²⁹

The following outline signals the preponderance of story over action.

The scheme is that employed for Hedda Gabler.²³⁰

The Wild Duck

The elderly Elkdal has been in prison. Hjalmar and Gregers were formerly classmates; they have not seen one another for sixteen years. Hjalmar takes

²²⁹Lemaître, Impressions du théâtre, VI, 34, 35.

²³⁰Hobson, op. cit., pp. 85-87.

care of his father. Unknown to Gregers, Hialmar's father has received some help. Werle has provided the money for Hialmar to begin photography. He has also put him in a position to marry Gina Hansen, a former servant in the Werle home. Gregers believes Werle was implicated in the decision regarding Elkdal's imprisonment. Werle was unfaithful to his wife. She thought he preferred Gina to her. There is little happiness in the Werle home. Gregers has not been on intimate terms with his father for years. Hedvig is losing her sight. She has received the wild duck from Werle. Hialmar has neglected Hedvig's education. Gina is the person responsible for Hialmar's business. Hialmar makes an impractical invention.

Hialmar and Elkdal are shooting in the garret. Gregers tells Hialmar of Gina's infidelity. Werle is going blind. Mrs. Soerby gives Werle's letter to Hedvig. Hialmar drinks heavily and dies. A shot is heard--Hedvig has killed herself.

Elkdal comes to Werle's home. Hialmar is ashamed to recognize him. Gregers refuses his father's offer and leaves his house. Elkdal and Hialmar return. Gregers comes to ask if he may lodge with Hialmar. He is shown the wild duck.

Werle tries in vain to persuade Gregers to return. Hialmar neglects his work; he reproaches Gina. He reads the letter and repudiates Hedvig. He returns and affirms his assertion. He takes food greedily. Hedvig's body is brought in.

The results of this analysis is deeper realization of how little action Ibsen represents on the stage. In comparing this tabulation with that of "le scenario psychologique d'Hedda Gabler" one recalls the implication of a familiar definition. A theorist has stated, "The exposition of passionate emotions

as such, is in the province of the lyric poet."²³¹

Ibsen, like Corneille,²³² chose a lyric pattern rather than dramatic material for his compositions.

²³¹Freytag, Die Technik des Dramas, S. 7.

²³²Cf. ante pp. 44, 55, 56, pp. 57 et sqq.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this investigation has been to fit Corneille, as much as he will fit, into the conditions sine qua non of the Aristotelian theory of tragedy. Considering, then, the Poetics of Aristotle as basic theory the conditions were reaffirmed as conflict, action, and character.

Corneille, it appears, has failed to write tragedy. The reason for the failure is the endowing of the protagonist with a very powerful will--le héros cornélien. There is a recognized aesthetic principle that the stronger the will is, the less possibility there is for tragedy, action, conflict. The last is a necessity for all drama. This study reveals Corneille's varying degrees of failure in writing tragedy. This failure is illustrated in Le Cid, Cinna, Horace, Polyeucte, Rodogune, and Héraclius. The evidence presented in this study seems to demonstrate that the intensity of action, the soul of drama, is ever in inverse proportion to the strength of will of the protagonist.

In a review of powerful will in Nicomède the study offers a negative answer to the problem, "Did Corneille write tragedy?" Corneille failed utterly to make of Nicomède a tragedy; the protagonist had a perfect will.

Some elements of Corneille's technique which the inquiry discloses are crystallized in the following statements.

1. Action is seldom represented for the spectator.

2. The plots are frequently complex.
3. The will--and that alone--is the activating principle behind each of the protagonists.
4. The plays are concerned with the exercise of will that approximates pure will.
5. The conflict is interior.
6. The characters are closely integrated and typical.
7. The traits of character are revealed through narration.

Corneille offered an exposition of dramatic theory in the Discours.

They contribute nothing, or almost nothing to poetics. In the light of the following discussion they definitely imprint self-condemnation upon their author.

1. Aristoteles sagt: die Tragödie soll Mitleid und Furcht erregen.--Corneille sagt: o ja, aber wie es kömmt; beides zu gleich ist eben nicht immer nötig; wir sind auch mit einem zufriednen; itzt einmal Mitleid ohne Furcht, ein andermal Furcht ohne Mitleid. Denn wo blieb ich, ich, der grosse Corneille, sonst mit meinem Rodrigue und meiner Chimene? Die guten Kinder erwecken Mitleid, und sehr grosses Mitleid, aber Furcht wohl schwerlich. . .Aber Furcht erregen sie doch.--So glaubte Corneille, und die Franzosen glaubten es ihm nach.

.....

3. Aristoteles sagt: durch das Mitleid und die Furcht, welche die Tragödie erweckt, soll unser Mitleid und unsere Furcht, und was diesen anhängig, gereinigt werden.--Corneille weiss davon gar nichts und bildet sich ein, Aristoteles habe sagen wollen, die Tragödie erwecke unser Mitleid, um unsere Furcht zu erwecken, um durch diese Furcht die Leidenschaften in uns zu reinigen, durch die sich der bemitleidete Gegenstand sein Unglück zugezogen. Ich will von dem Werte dieser Absicht nicht sprechen; genug, dass es nicht die

Aristotelische ist, und dass, da Corneille seinen Tragödien eine ganz andere Absicht gab, auch notwendig keine Tragödien selbst ganz andere Werke werden mussten, als die waren, von welchen Aristoteles seine Absicht abstrahiert hatte; es mussten Tragödien werden, welches keine wahren Tragödien waren Und das sind nicht allein seine sondern alle französischen Tragödien geworden, weil ihre Verfasser alle nicht die Absicht des Aristoteles, sondern die Absicht des Corneille sich vorsetzten. . .

4. Aristoteles sagt: man muss keinen ganz guten Mann ohne alle sein Verschulden in der Tragödie unglücklich werden lassen; denn so was sei grässlich. --"Ganz recht," sagt Corneille, "ein solcher Ausgang erweckt mehr Unwillen und Hass gegen den, welcher das Leiden verursacht, als Mitleid für den, welchen es trifft. Jene Empfindung also, welche nicht die eigentliche Wirkung der Tragödie sein soll, würde, wenn sie nicht sehr fein behandelt wäre, diese ersticken, die doch eigentlich hervorgebracht werden sollte. Der Zuschauer würde missvergnügt weggehen, weil sich allzu viel Zorn mit dem Mitleiden vermischt, welches ihm gefallen hätte, wenn er es allein mit wegnehmen können." "Aber,"--kommt Corneille hintennach; denn mit einem Aber muss er nachkommen, "aber wenn diese Ursache wegfällt, wenn es der Dichter so eingerichtet, dass der Tugendhafte, welcher leidet, mehr Mitleid für sich als Widerwillen gegen den erweckt, der ihn leiden lasst, alsdenn?"--"O, alsdenn," sagt Corneille, "halte ich dafür, dass man sich gar kein Bedenken machen, auch den tugendhaftesten Mann auf dem Theater im Unglücke zu zeigen."¹

With this demonstration of Corneille's assumption of la liberté dans l'art linked with the actual application of the same assumption a French critic's commentary on this freedom is incisive:

Pour la même raison, parce que le classicisme, sur la foi des Romains et des Grecs,--d'Aristote et de Quintilien, ou de Longin,--avait cru fermement à l'existence des genres, et des lois ou des règles

¹Lessing, Hamburgische Dramaturgie, S. 367, 368.

de ces genres eux-mêmes, c'est pour cela que les romantiques les ont niées, les unes après les autres, et qu'ils ont proclamé le principe de la liberté dans l'art.²

The critic explains trenchantly that the phrase la liberté dans l'art could not express a principle of art:

. . .Le droit que l'on revendique, c'est celui d'opposer sa manière de voir, de sentir, ou de penser à celle de tout le monde. . .ce que l'on exige de la critique ou de l'opinion, c'est la liberté de ne pas être troublé dans la manifestation de soi-même par des observations importunes. La liberté de l'art, c'est le droit pour l'artiste de n'avoir que lui pour juge de son oeuvre. . .³

The investigation reveals Corneille's approach to l'emancipation du moi par le principe de la liberté dans l'art. Corneille was a romantic--struggling between four walls.

Had the French poet but realized that Aristotle was constructing a dramatic theory for tragedy of the era immediately preceding the Birth of Christ he and his confrères of the French school might not have striven so vainly to fit themselves into a mold unsuited for them. Corneille was not equipped to elaborate the Poetics from a Greek text. Had Corneille been prepared he might have glimpsed the true pattern for which his intermediaries, "les interprètes latins" showed little insight.

Corneille was caught in fringe and never arrived at the central thought of poetic drama.⁴

²Brunetière, L'Evolution de la poésie lyrique en France au dix-neuvième siècle (Deuxième édition, Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1895), I, 173, 174.

³Ibid., 176.

⁴Corneille, Discours du poème dramatique, p. 34.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

- Allen, James Turney, Stage Antiquities of the Greeks and Romans and Their Influence. Volume XXVIII, 206 pages. George Depue Hadzits and David Moore Robinson, editors, Our Debt to Greece and Rome. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1923.
- Archer, William, The Old Drama and the New. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1926. 396 pages.
- _____, Play-Making: A Manual of Craftsmanship. Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1912. 419 pages.
- Aristotle, The Poetics. Translated by D. S. Margoliouth. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1911. 336 pages.
- _____, Theory of Poetry and Fine Art. Translated by Samuel H. Butcher. Fourth edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927. 419 pages.
- Arvin, Neil Cole, Eugène Scribe and the French Theatre, 1815-1860. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924. 268 pages.
- Baker, George Pierce, Dramatic Technique. Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919. 531 pages.
- Becque, Henry, Querelles littéraires. Paris: E. Dentu, 1890. 280 pages.
- Boysse, Ernest, Le Théâtre des Jésuites. Paris: Henri Vaton, Libraire-Editeur, 1880. 343 pages.
- Bradley, A. C., Shakespearean Tragedy. Second edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1905. 498 pages.
- Brandes, George, The Romantic School in France, Volume V of Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature. 6 volumes. New York: Boni and Liveright, Inclusive, 1924.
- Brasillach, Robert, Pierre Corneille. Paris: A. Fayard, 1938. 496 pages.
- Brunetière, Ferdinand, Les Epoques du théâtre français. Sixième édition, Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1922. 404 pages.
- _____, L'Evolution de la poésie lyrique en France au dix-neuvième siècle. 2 volumes. Deuxième édition; Paris: Librairie Hachette et Compagnie, 1895.

- Brunetièrre, Ferdinand, Histoire de la littérature française. 4 volumes. Troisième édition; Paris: Librairie Delagrave, 1921.
- Buck, Philo M. Jr., Literary Criticism: A Study of Values in Literature. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930. 432 pages.
- Bywater, Ingram, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry. Revised text; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909. 387 pages.
- Campbell, Thomas M., Hebbel, Ibsen and the Analytic Exposition. Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1922. 96 pages.
- Chandler, Frank Wadleigh, Aspects of Modern Drama. Chicago: The Macmillan Company, 1918. 494 pages.
- _____, The Contemporary Drama of France. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1920. 409 pages.
- Clark, Barrett H., Eugene O'Neill. Revised edition; New York: Robert M. McBride and Company, 1933. 218 pages.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, Biographia Literaria, Volume III; Shakespeare and Other Dramatists, Volume IV of The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Edited by W. G. T. Shedd. 7 volumes. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1884.
- Cooper, Lane, Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, An Amplified Version with Supplementary Illustrations for Students of English. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1913. 101 pages.
- _____, The Poetics of Aristotle: Its Meaning and Influence. Vol. VI, 157 pages. George Depue Hadzits and David Moore Robinson, editors, Our Debt to Greece and Rome. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1923.
- Corneille, Pierre, Oeuvres de P. Corneille. Edited by Charles Marty-Laveaux. 12 volumes. Les Grands écrivains de la France. Edited by Adam Regnier. Nouvelle édition, Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1922.
- Croce, Benedetto, Ariosto, Shakespeare e Corneille. Bari: G. Laterza e figli, 1920. 286 pages.
- D'Aubignac, L'Abbé François Hédelin, La Pratique du théâtre. Nouvelle édition. Paris: Champion, 1927. 439 pages.

- Dorchain, Auguste, Pierre Corneille. Paris: Librairie Garnier Frères, 1918. 504 pages.
- Drew, Elizabeth, Discovering Drama. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inclusive, 1937. 252 pages.
- Eliot, Thomas Stearnes, The Sacred Wood. London: Methuen and Company, Limited, 1934. 171 pages.
-
- _____, After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934. 72 pages.
- Euripides, Iphigenia in Tauris. Translated by Gilbert Murray. Oxford: University Press, 1939. 105 pages.
- Freytag, Gustav, Die Technik des Dramas. Siebente auflage; Leipzig: Verlag Von Hirzel, 1894. 314 pages.
- Fyfe, W. Hamilton, Aristotle's Art of Poetry. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940. 82 pages.
- Geddes, Virgil, The Melodramadness of Eugene O'Neill. Brookfield, Connecticut: The Brookfield Players, Inclusive, 1934. 48 pages.
- Gerhardi, William, Anton Chehov: A Critical Study. London: Richard Cobden-Sanderson, 1923. 192 pages.
- Gorman, Herbert, James Joyce. New York: Farrar, Rinehart, Inclusive, 1939. 358 pages.
- Gosse, Edmund, Ibsen. Volume XIII of The Collected Works of Henrik Ibsen. Edited by William Archer. 13 volumes. Copyright edition; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908.
- Haigh, A. E., The Tragic Drama of the Greeks. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896. 499 pages.
- Hale, Edward Everett, Jr., Dramatists of Today: Rostand, Hauptmann, Sudermann, Pinero, Shaw, Philipps, Maeterlinck. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1905. 236 pages.
- Hamilton, Clayton, The Theory of the Theatre. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1910. 248 pages.
- Harrison, Frederic, Studies in Early Victorian Literature. London: Edward Arnold, 1906. 224 pages.

- Harry, Joseph Edward, Greek Tragedy. 2 volumes. New York: Columbia University Press, 1933.
- Hegel, Georg F., The Philosophy of Fine Art. Translated by Francis P. B. Osmaston. 4 volumes. London: G. Bell and Sons, Limited, 1920. 350 pages.
- Hobson, Martha Barbour, "Action Behind the Scenes in Shakespeare and in Ibsen." Unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Chicago, 1918. 112 pages.
- Huneker, James, "Ibsen," Egoists. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918. Pages 317-350.
- Ibsen, Henrik, From Ibsen's Workshop. Translated by A. G. Chater. Volume XII of The Collected Works of Henrik Ibsen. 13 volumes. Copyright edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911.
- _____, Volumes I-XI of The Collected Works of Henrik Ibsen. 13 volumes. Copyright edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911.
- Joyce, James, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. New York: Random House, 1916. 299 pages.
- Klemm, Frederick Alvin, The Death Problem in the Life and Works of Gerhart Hauptmann. Gettysburg: Times and News Publishing Company, 1939. 101 pages.
- Knox, Israel, The Aesthetic Theories of Kant, Hegel and Schopenhauer. New York: Columbia University Press, 1936. 219 pages.
- Krutch, Joseph Wood, The American Drama Since 1918. New York: Random House, 1939. 325 pages.
- Lalo, Charles, Les Sentiments Esthétiques. Paris: Librairies Félix Alcan et Guillaumin Rennie, 1910. 187 pages.
- Lancaster, Henry Carrington, A History of French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century. 5 parts. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1929-1942.
- Lanson, Gustave, Histoire de la littérature française. Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1924. 1266 pages.
- Lee, Vernon and Anstruther-Thomson, Beauty and Ugliness and Other Studies in Psychology and Aesthetics. New York: John Lane Company, 1912. 420 pages.

Lemaître, Jules, Corneille et la poétique d'Aristote. Paris: Librairie H. Lecène et H. Oudin, 1888. 84 pages.

_____, Impressions de théâtre. 9 volumes. Paris: Boivin et Compagnie, n. d.

Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim, Hamburgische dramaturgie. Edited by Charles Harris. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1901. 356 pages.

_____, Laocoon. Translated by Robert Phillimore. London: George Routledge and Sons, Limited, n.d. 336 pages.

Mandelbaum, Maurice H., Friedrich Hebbel as Thinker. Unpublished paper, Dartmouth, 1929. 52 pages.

Marx, Milton, The Enjoyment of Drama. New York: F. S. Crofts and Company, 1940. 242 pages.

Mather, Frank Jewett, Concerning Beauty. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935. 301 pages.

Matthews, Brander, French Dramatists of the Nineteenth Century. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924. 321 pages.

Matthiessen, F. O., The Achievement of T. S. Eliot: An Essay on the Nature of Poetry. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935. 160 pages.

Millett, Fred B. and Bentley, Gerald Eades, The Art of the Drama. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1935. 253 pages.

_____, editors, The Play's the Thing: An Anthology of Dramatic Types. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inclusive, 1936. 571 pages.

Moore, John A., Sophocles and Aretê. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938. 78 pages.

Newman, John Henry, Poetry with Reference to Aristotle's Poetics. Edited by Albert S. Cook. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1891. 36 pages.

Nietzsche, Friedrich, The Birth of Tragedy. Translated by William A. Haussmann, 194 pages. Vol. I of The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche. Edited by Oscar Levy. 18 volumes. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909.

_____, The Will to Power. Translated by A. M. Ludovici, 384 pages. Volume XV, Books 3, 4, of The Complete Works of

Friedrich Nietzsche. Edited by Oscar Levy. 18 volumes. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1904.

O'Neill, Eugene, Days Without End. New York: Random House, 1934. 157 pages.

_____, Nine Plays. Edited by Joseph Wood Krutch. New York: Liveright, Inclusive, 1932. 867 pages.

Polti, Georges, The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations. Translated by Lucille Ray. Boston: The Writer, Inclusive, 1940. 172 pages.

Pope, Alexander, "An Essay on Criticism," Heath Readings in the Literature of England. Edited by Tom Pete Cross and Clement Tyson Goode. Chicago: D. C. Heath and Company, 1927. Pages 477-486.

Price, W. T., The Analysis of Play Construction and Dramatic Principle. New York: W. T. Price, Publisher, 1908. 415 pages.

Prickard, A. O., Aristotle on the Art of Poetry. London: Macmillan and Company, 1891. 114 pages.

Quimby, Mary Agnes, The Nature Background in the Dramas of Gerhart Hauptmann. Philadelphia: International Printing Company, 1918. 68 pages.

Racine, Jean, Oeuvres de J. Racine. Edited by Paul Nesnard. 8 volumes. Les Grands écrivains de la France. Edited by Adam Regnier. Seconde édition; Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1923.

Sarcey, Francisque, Quarante ans de théâtre. Paris: Bibliothèque des annales, 1901. 439 pages.

Schoen, Henri, Hermann Sudermann. Paris: Henri Didier, 1904. 327 pages.

Schopenhauer, Arthur, The World as Will and Idea. Translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp. 3 volumes. Sixth edition; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, Limited, 1909.

Sheppard, John Tresidder, Aeschylus and Sophocles. Volume 3B, 204 pages. George Depue Hadzits and David Moore Robinson, editors, Our Debt to Greece and Rome. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1927.

Sherwood, Margaret, Undercurrents of Influence in English Romantic Poetry. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934. 365 pages.

- Shorey, Paul, "Sophocles," The Martin Classical Lectures. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1931. Pages 57-97.
- Skinner, Richard Dana, Eugene O'Neill: A Poet's Quest. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1935. 242 pages.
- _____, Our Changing Theatre. New York: Dial Press, Inclusive, 1931. 327 pages.
- Smith, Arnold, The Main Tendencies of Victorian Poetry. Birmingham: Saint George Press, Limited, 1907. 208 pages.
- Solvay, Lucien, L'Evolution théâtrale. 2 volumes. Bruxelles: G. Van Oest et Compagnie, Editeurs, 1922.
- Spengler, Oswald, The Decline of the West. Translated by Charles F. Atkinson. 2 volumes. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927.
- Studies in European Literature: Being the Taylorian Lectures. Second Series, 1920-1930. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930. Each lecture is paged consecutively.
- Twining, Thomas, Aristotle's Treatise on Poetry, Translated with notes on the translation, and on the original; and Two Dissertations on Poetical and Musical Imitation. London: Payne and Son, 1878. 565 pages.
- Tyrell, Robert Yelverton, Essays on Greek Literature. London: Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1909. 202 pages.
- Watson, E. Bradlee and Pressey, Benfield, editors. Contemporary Drama: European, English and Irish, American Plays. Chicago: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941. 1177 pages.
- Webster, T. B. L., An Introduction to Sophocles. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936. 202 pages.
- Winther, Sophus Keith, Eugene O'Neill: A Critical Study. New York: Random House, 1934. 303 pages.

PERIODICAL ARTICLES

- Brunetière, Ferdinand, Revue littéraire-Alexandre Hardy et le théâtre français au commencement du XVII^e siècle, Revue des Deux Mondes, 101: 693-707, le 1er Octobre 1890.

Campbell, Oscar James, What is the Matter with Hamlet?, The Yale Review, 32: 309-323, December, 1942. Number 2.

Carnoy, Albert, L'Imagination flamande, PMLA, 33: 204-234, 1918.

Grand, G. Guy, Sommes-nous Cornéliens?, Mercure de France, 277: 112-31, July 1, 1937.

Heywood, Robert B., Modern Psalmist, Orate Fratres, 17: 5-13, November 29, 1942. No. 1, Section II.

The Times (London) Literary Supplement, May 23, 1902, February 12, 1938.

PARTS OF SERIES

Cobb, Palmer, Hebbel's Julia, A Forerunner of Modern Drama. (University of North Carolina Studies in Philology, Volume 5, Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University Press, 1910). 21 pages.

Graham, Paul G., The Relation of History to Drama in the Works of Friedrich Hebbel. (Smith College Studies in Modern Languages, Volume XV, Numbers 1, 2. Menasha, Wisconsin: The Collegiate Press, n. d.). 112 pages.

Green, Elizabeth A. Lay, A Study Course in Modern Drama. (University of North Carolina Extension Leaflets. Chapel Hill: Published by the University, 1921). 58 pages.

Kaucher, Dorothy J., Modern Dramatic Structure. (University of Missouri Studies, Volume 3, Number 4. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1928). 183 pages.

Post, Chandler Rathfon, Dramatic Art of Sophocles. (Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Volume 23. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, 1912). 58 pages.

Shipley, Joseph T., The Art of Eugene O'Neill. Number 19, 34 pages. Glenn Hughes, editor, University of Washington Chapbooks. Seattle: University of Washington Book Store, 1928.

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Mother Mary Fitzpatrick, R.S.C.J. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of French.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Mar 23 / 45
Date

Joseph LeBlanc
Signature of Adviser