



THE INFLUENCE OF NIETZSCHE ON
THE PLAYS OF EUGENE O'NEILL

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ABSTRACT

Having read much of Nietzsche's published work, particularly The Birth of Tragedy, The Joyful Wisdom and Thus Spake Zarathustra, Eugene O'Neill absorbed many of his ideas and attempted to transfer the philosophical concepts into dramatic form. He copied out many passages from Nietzsche's work (see Appendix) and used them directly or adapted them in order to relate Nietzsche's ideas to the newly developing theories of theatre and dramatic presentation in the United States of America and to the emerging character of twentieth century America as O'Neill observed it.

O'Neill explored such controversial concepts as Eternal Recurrence (Chapter II), Socialism (Chapter III), the evolution of the Superman (Chapter IV), the Dionysian influence (Chapter V), Nietzsche's pronouncements on the death of God and the re-valuation of Christianity (Chapters VI and VII) and Nietzschean pronouncements on life and death (Chapters VIII and IX). He created plays which are a dramatic analysis and interpretation of the nature of man and the world he inhabits, and throughout O'Neill's playwriting career the influence of Nietzsche is evident. From the early one-act sea-plays and the elaborate and innovative plays of the '20s and '30s where Nietzsche's influence is most clearly observed, to the more dramatically realistic final plays, O'Neill adapts and integrates Nietzsche's philosophy. In many of his most original and complex dramatic works he produced plays which are both a reflection of Nietzsche and a vehicle for his own philosophical and theatrical theories.

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CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATIONS	(v)
Chapter I INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter II ETERNAL RECURRENCE	25
Chapter III THE SOCIALIST	70
Chapter IV THE SUPERMAN	112
Chapter V DIONYSUS	146
Chapter VI GOD IS DEAD - LONG LIVE WHAT?	198
Chapter VII ANY GOD AT ANY PRICE	244
Chapter VIII THE LIFE FORCE	308
Chapter IX IMAGES OF LIFE AND DEATH	349
APPENDIX	377
BIBLIOGRAPHY	393

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATIONS

The quotations contained in the Appendix to this thesis are a transcription of notes O'Neill made on several sheets of paper now in the possession of The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Conn. The nine sheets of paper used by O'Neill have the quotations written in the order that they appear in Thus Spake Zarathustra but two, from 'Of the Flies in the Market', are written upside down on the page, indicating that they were perhaps not all recorded at one sitting. Each quotation is divided from the next by a roughly drawn line and in fourteen instances the source is given, either by the section heading in inverted commas, for example "Of Priests" or by a rough circle drawn round an abbreviation, for example Shadow. In the Appendix I have given the section from which each quotation comes in parentheses. O'Neill's transcription is extremely accurate; except for the occasional use of 'thro' rather than 'through' there are virtually no discrepancies. There is no indication when these notes might have been made, but although they were perhaps not together on one occasion, they were obviously made during a fairly short period of time since the handwriting is of consistent size and form throughout. O'Neill's handwriting varied a great deal and shrank in size and legibility as he grew older, so it would be reasonable to assume that the quotations were copied down while he was still a young man, perhaps during his twenties or thirties, at the time when he was most absorbed in his study of Nietzsche.

It is clear that the translation O'Neill used was that by Alexander Tille. This was first published in 1896 as Volume VII of a collected edition of the works of Nietzsche by Macmillan and Co. in the United States. Dr. Tille's translation was based on a German edition prepared by Dr. Fritz Koegel, published in Leipzig in 1894, and was published under the supervision

of the Nietzsche-Archiv at Naumburg. In his translation of Thus Spake Zarathustra Tille has attempted to give the meaning of the German text as exactly as possible but he does say 'Where several interpretations of words or sentences were possible, as is rather frequently the case, that interpretation was chosen which seemed to agree best with the context, although the decision of this question is in many cases quite arbitrary'. This translation is now considered to be a poor rendering of Nietzsche's work but it is, nevertheless, the one that was used by O'Neill and the convoluted and peculiar style is evident in the quotations that O'Neill copied down.

In addition, it is obvious that O'Neill, who had no German, used a further translation of Thus Spake Zarathustra. In some of the terminology he uses in the plays, for example the reference to the 'Blessed Islands' in both Mourning Becomes Electra and Lazarus Laughed, it is clear that he has used the Thomas Common translation. This was published in 1909 as Volume Four of The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, edited by Dr. Oscar Levy. This collected edition was published in 18 volumes between 1909 and 1918 and included The Birth of Tragedy, Volume Three, translated by Dr. William A. Haussmann, also published in 1909. It is not known whether O'Neill read The Birth of Tragedy in this edition but it seems likely since his own copy of The Joyful Wisdom, translated by Thomas Common and published as Volume Ten in 1910 is now in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, at Yale University. All the translations in Dr. Levy's edition are considered to be far from accurate and many have been revised but there is no doubt that in the three works that O'Neill certainly read, and in the translation by Alexander Tille of Thus Spake Zarathustra, O'Neill was attracted by the poetic and rhetorical quality of the language as well as the content of Nietzsche's philosophical arguments.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Eugene O'Neill first came across an edition of Nietzsche in Benjamin Tucker's bookshop in New York when he was eighteen years old. This bookshop, haunt of Socialists, Anarchists, and seekers of 'advanced literature' was the source of many works by Shaw, Ibsen, Strindberg, Tolstoi and Gorki, among others, considered to be irreverent and unacceptable by the America of the time but which the young O'Neill eagerly read. His discovery of Thus Spake Zarathustra meant the beginning of many years of thought, argument, experimentation and confusion, both personally and dramatically, as he tried to come to terms with the German philosopher. When asked some twenty years later, in 1928, if he had a literary idol, O'Neill replied that the answer was 'in one word - Nietzsche'. (1)

In order to establish the importance of Nietzsche for O'Neill, and the profound effect that the philosophy had on the playwright, it is necessary to cover some of the ground that has been dealt with by O'Neill biographers, notably Sheaffer (2) and Gelb (3). His childhood and adolescence have been well documented but one must examine the facts and see what there was in the young O'Neill which drew him to the writings of a man whose background and life were remarkably different from turn-of-the-century America.

The societies in which the men lived, their personal experiences and their reactions to the environment in which they found themselves were

(1) A Eugene O'Neill Miscellany (unsigned) New York Sun 1.12.28. Reprinted in Sheaffer, Louis, O'Neill Son and Playwright J. M. Dent (London 1968) Ch. 7.

(2) Sheaffer ibid.

(3) Gelb, Arthur and Barbara O'Neill Jonathan Cape (London 1962)

certainly dissimilar, but it is interesting that the philosophy which Nietzsche produced springs directly out of his observation of life around him and his dissatisfaction with the Europe of his time, as well as his own personal problems, rather than a purely intellectual consideration of life and the universe. His adoption of an almost self-compensatory philosophy, a reaction against the growing nationalism of Germany and the cultural 'decadence' which he felt was prevalent in Europe would, at first sight, seem to have little appeal for an eighteen year old American, so what was there in the young man that made him so ready to adopt the teachings of this questionable philosopher?

Both Nietzsche and O'Neill had very strong religious roots, in the one case Lutheran, the other Roman Catholic. America in the 1900s was establishing itself as a successful 'respectable' country to which many religious elements had contributed, not the least of which was the strong Irish Catholicism to which O'Neill's family adhered. However, his family were rather separate from the moralistic, conventional American society in that they were theatrical people, constantly travelling the country to perform, so Eugene was brought up with two opposing factors in his life; rigid religious doctrine on one hand and a bohemian hotel room existence on the other. It is hardly surprising that he felt a separateness of values and a conflict in the way that he first began to know the world. His childhood was physically unstable; the early years spent moving about the United States with his father's successful productions and their accompanying back-stage life. This unconventional environment was disapproved of by his pious, devout mother who did not associate herself

with the 'despised' theatrical people and who behaved, as far as the child was concerned, in an inexplicably distant way. His childhood was characterised by periods of separation from his father, mother and elder brother Jamie, culminating in, as it must have seemed to him, banishment to a Roman Catholic boarding school at the age of seven. The relationships between his parents and his brother were loaded with recriminations, constant antagonism, guilt and later open hostility, given dramatic expression many years afterwards in Long Day's Journey into Night as well as indirectly in other plays.

At St. Aloysius School the offices of the Church were part of life and there was little possibility of questioning them. In any case, both O'Neill's parents had made it clear that religion was all-important, even in the strange life that they led. O'Neill was moved to another school at the age of twelve and only saw his parents when they stayed on vacation in the house that his father had bought in New London, Connecticut. By this time Jamie was openly sceptical about religion, had joined his father's company as an actor, and was scandalising the family by his bouts of drinking and frequenting prostitutes. This undoubtedly had a marked effect on Eugene, and it was exacerbated by a scandal about a past affair of his father's, resulting in a much publicised court case.

The contrast between life at home with such a fraught family atmosphere and the non-acceptance of the family in many social circles in New London, and the rigid discipline administered by a religious order began to affect Eugene in that he could no longer align the teachings of the Church and its concept of a benevolent, caring God with what was actually happening around him. In a diagram that he drew in adult life, he evaluated this period as 'Reality found and fled from in fear - life of fantasy and

religion in school - inability to belong to reality'. (4) This feeling of unreality was further emphasised when he found out about his mother's illness, which gave rise to the long periods of distance, both physical and emotional, from her family. For years Ella O'Neill had behaved strangely and often went away from the family for 'cures', after which she showed a closeness and affection for her son which lasted until she was 'ill' again, and the distance and strangeness returned. Eugene had fears that it was a problem of her sanity and seriously began to doubt his faith when he realised that his fervent prayers had not changed the condition of his mother or relieved the atmosphere at home. He insisted, much against his father's wishes, on being sent to a non-Catholic school and his feelings of doubt and confusion were finally confirmed when, one night, Ella attempted to commit suicide by throwing herself in the river in New London, again an event referred to in his most autobiographical work, Long Day's Journey into Night. The explanation of her addiction to morphine came as a tragic revelation to O'Neill, together with the accusations and recriminations directed towards his father, but the emotional shock and turmoil served to convince him that his attitude towards the God of the Roman Catholic Church had been right - there was no benevolence, no pity, no prayer capable of altering the situation. He refused to go to church and the period of doubt and confusion appeared to be over, only to be replaced by years of searching for some alternative. His early indoctrination by Roman Catholicism served to produce strong feelings of guilt and spiritual torment which could not be dispelled by rational thought. After all, he was only fifteen when his perception of life was changed so dramatically and the repudiation of his religion occurred.

(4) Reproduced in Sheaffer op. cit. p.506.

The search for an alternative took the form of reading books and plays and poetry which were very different from the expressed morality of the society in which he had been brought up. Even the melodramas in which his father had so successfully appeared had a strong moral tone and the theatre with which he was so familiar merely catered for the tastes and accepted mores of the majority of American people. O'Neill's quest for a new mode of life and thought was 'helped' by Jamie who took him to brothels, bars and parties and attempted to 'educate' his young brother that way. Alcohol and sex may have been a solution for Jamie, but it was only part of one for Eugene, for whom Swinburne, Dowson, Baudelaire and Ibsen proved an equally strong influence. It was in his search for books and entertainment that he discovered Tucker's bookshop and Nietzsche. Having spent a year at Princeton, where he passed the time drinking and going on excursions to New York with his brother, Eugene embraced completely the teachings of Nietzsche, as expounded in Thus Spake Zarathustra.

This work attacked all that society considered true and respectable. It denounced the Christian religion, it put forward a completely new concept of good and evil, and it was written in such a dramatic, poetic style with overtones of Old Testament prophecy that it fulfilled the need in Eugene for a replacement 'religion'; for a guide to the way that one could live life; for a rationalisation of his guilt and confusion. The emotional tone of the work was what he had been looking for. It was both a work of literature and a philosophy. Nietzsche's imagery was striking and effective; he used the sea as a recurrent image, which appealed to O'Neill who had conceived a passion for the sea and the boats he had come to know at New London; life was portrayed as a wanton woman to be

chased after and subdued; there were references to alcohol and the drunkenness of Dionysus; and above all, the proclamation that God was dead.

It is necessary to consider Nietzsche's own life in an attempt to see how such a philosophy had been produced. The son of a Lutheran pastor, Nietzsche had been an outstanding scholar but reacted strongly against his mother's wish for him to be a theological student. A very studious child, he went on to study Classics and became a professor at Basel University at the age of twenty four. Although an academic success, in his personal life Nietzsche had innumerable problems, particularly his poor physical condition regarded by many subsequent scholars to be a syphilitic inheritance from his father. (5) He had a series of troubled and unsatisfactory personal relationships with both men and women, notably with the brilliant but eccentric Lou Salome, and later with Richard Wagner and his wife. There was a constant conflict between Nietzsche's intellectual striving and achievement and his diseased physical condition which required long periods of solitude and quiet. This conflict became the basis for his work, and as his mind became more confused and he suffered more and more from the headaches and the inability to make himself work, he withdrew into his solitary world where he could construct an analysis of society as he perceived it and postulate theories of change. Nietzsche built up his theories from rather a remote viewpoint. Although he had enjoyed the company of friends and a fairly wide social circle, his aggression and resentment about his own physical and mental condition meant that his philosophy was often an emotional response rather than a coolly argued and logical analysis. His work became an attempt at self-justification and self-preservation as he struggled to overcome both real and imaginary

(5) Hayman, Ronald, Nietzsche Weidenfeld and Nicholson (London 1980) p.10

problems. His sister Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche, who later had extensive control over both Nietzsche and his writings, claimed after his relationship with Lou Salome had gone beyond what she felt was proper and acceptable, that 'I had to face it, Fritz has changed, he is just like his books.' (6)

In these books he criticised Germany for being obsessed with militarism and nationalism and he advocated a 'European' society. He watched the beginnings of socialism, which he despised, and the advances made in scientific thought during the latter part of the nineteenth century, and he translated what he considered to be the ills of contemporary society and culture into parallels with his own struggle, living as he did with his diminishing physical and mental faculties. While travelling in Europe and periodically returning to Germany he conceived a philosophy which pivoted on a repudiation of the masses - 'the rabble' or 'herd' - and the evolution of a Superman (Übermensch) who would have nobility and strength and who would be a leader in a new society. This, coupled with what he thought of as feebleness and weakness in mankind, for which he held Christianity responsible, and his repudiation of religion, was the basis of Nietzschean philosophy.

His literary output was extensive, ranging from the highly scholarly The Birth of Tragedy on the origins of Greek theatre, to the imaginative outpourings of Thus Spake Zarathustra, to the confused and often incomprehensible Ecce Homo. His close involvement with Richard and Cosima Wagner, supporting their attempt to create a new cultural and theatrical experience, was initially seen by the music-loving Nietzsche as a means of furthering

(6) Binion, Rudolph Frau Lou: Nietzsche's Wayward Disciple Princeton University Press (New Jersey 1968) p.84

his own ideas about music and theatre. He initially saw Wagner's work as a contrast to the social and literary decay that surrounded him but it was not long before the hero-worship on Nietzsche's part gave way to bitter disappointment as he finally turned on Wagner for his glorification of nationalistic mythology and religion. Again there is evidence of Nietzsche's purely personal and emotional reaction clouding his intellectual viewpoint. While writing Thus Spake Zarathustra in the 1870s Nietzsche began the decline into insanity, a madness characterised by his delusions of his own stature in the world and his claims to be Christ, the Pope and Dionysus. The final collapse came in Turin at the beginning of 1889 and after a time in an asylum he was looked after by his sister and mother. He died some eleven years later.

Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche, his supposedly devoted sister, has been the prime reason for the misinterpretation and misuse of Nietzsche's theories that ultimately resulted in the adoption of many of his ideas by Hitler's followers in the twenties and thirties, a time of belief in Nietzsche as a prophet of the New Germany. Many of Nietzsche's ideas are questionable, but a close study of his work shows that, in fact, the National Socialist Party was the complete antithesis of what Nietzsche had wanted. He was opposed to nationalism, particularly German nationalism, was not in any respect anti-semitic, and he was strongly opposed to the adulation of physical strength or the use of brutality. Elisabeth and her husband had been two of the original advocates of a new 'purified' Germany, even to the extent of helping to found a colony of proto-Nazis in South America from where she returned to look after her brother when he became ill. She took advantage of his insanity and the claimed closeness of their relationship to manipulate and suppress many of his writings for her own

political purposes. However, by the time of his death in 1900 his work had spread to other European countries and the United States, influencing Shaw, Ibsen, Jack London among many others and, subsequently, Eugene O'Neill. It is important to remember that all this influence, discussed by Patrick Bridgewater in his Nietzsche in Anglosaxony (7) took place long before the upheavals of Germany and Elisabeth's proclamation of Hitler as the incarnation of Nietzsche's Superman. In the United States Nietzsche was written about in articles, particularly those by H. L. Mencken, and in the Smart Set periodical, in which O'Neill was later to publish, the most pervasive literary influence could be seen. So, O'Neill's discovery in the bookshop in 1907 was of a writer who was highly regarded and whose work was not coloured by the subsequent events and misconceptions that characterise the post-war years.

There is evidence of O'Neill reading at least three works of Nietzsche. He told Benjamin de Casseres in 1917 that Zarathustra

.... has influenced me more than any book I've ever read. I ran into it when I was eighteen and I've always possessed a copy since then and every year I reread it and am never disappointed, which is more than I can say of almost any other book. (That is, never disappointed in it as a work of art. Spots of its teaching I no longer concede.) (8)

It is known that he also read The Birth of Tragedy and The Joyful Wisdom, his copy of which is now in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. It is difficult to determine when he first read the latter two works but he certainly re-read them in Bermuda in 1925, finding The Joyful Wisdom 'wonderful stuff' and commenting on The Birth of Tragedy

(7) Bridgewater, Patrick Nietzsche in Anglosaxony Leicester University Press, 1972

(8) Letter to Benjamin de Casseres, 22.6.27. Reprinted in 'Nietzsche and O'Neill - A Study in Affinity' Orbis Litterarum 23, August 1968

'most stimulating book on drama ever written'. (9) There is no clear evidence that he read any other works of Nietzsche but it seems most likely that he did so, although it is evident that the three already mentioned formed the basis of the philosophy that O'Neill used in the plays. In addition to actually reading Nietzsche's work, it is obvious that O'Neill discussed the philosopher with his friends in Greenwich Village, and read the articles currently being published. His second wife, Agnes Boulton recalls

Thus Spake Zarathustra ... This book had more influence on Gene than any other single book he ever read. It was a sort of Bible to him, and he kept it by his bedside in later years as others might that sacred book. In those early days in the Village he spoke often of Zarathustra and the other books of Friedrich Nietzsche, who at that time moved his emotion rather than his mind. He read the magnificent prose of this great and exciting man over and over again, so that at times it seemed an expression of himself. I have some copies of Nietzsche that belonged to him, which he bought and read before I knew him, and which are copiously marked ... (10)

It is not known which other copies of Nietzsche Agnes Boulton had in her possession but this statement not only indicates the popularity of Nietzsche as a topic of conversation but the lasting influence of Thus Spake Zarathustra on O'Neill.

In June 1913 the newspaper, The Nation stated that those most drawn to Nietzsche were 'socialistically inclined' (11) and most notable amongst O'Neill's friends in the early days in New York were Terry Carlin and George Cram Cook, both of whom were politically and philosophically involved with Anarchism, Socialism and Nietzsche. O'Neill met Terry

(9) Sheaffer Son and Artist Chapter 9

(10) Boulton, Agnes Part of a Long Story Peter Davies, (London 1958) p.56

(11) The Nation 12 June 1913

Carlin in the Hell Hole in Greenwich Village. He was forty years older than O'Neill and had spent a life in slums and amongst derelicts, espousing anarchism and the theories of Nietzsche. He had participated in the riots in Chicago in May 1886 and successively joined the Anarchists and the International Workers of the World and then came to the conclusion that

To give a man a vote in a so-called free country is like giving a lantern to a blind man. What use is it?
(12)

He still adhered to Nietzsche but by the time O'Neill met him he was, in his own words 'very "crummy", badly flea-bitten, over-run with bed bugs, but redemption of it all, I am free and always drunk'. (13) This wrecked man was obviously still impressive and his friendship with O'Neill lasted many years with O'Neill supplying Carlin with a monthly cheque until his death at the age of seventy-nine, although the two men did not meet often. Terry Carlin served as the model for Larry Slade in The Iceman Cometh, a portrayal of disillusionment and ultimate despair, and Carlin's philosophy is clearly expressed in the play. Carlin's vocabulary was Nietzschean, and amidst the alcoholic haze in which he and O'Neill spent their time there must have been much discussion of Nietzsche and his ideas, as well as many other writers and philosophical theories including, rather surprisingly, Light on the Path, 'A treatise written for the personal use of those who are ignorant of the Eastern Wisdom and who desire to enter within its influence.' (14) It is Terry Carlin who is reputed to have suggested that the Provincetown colony read O'Neill's plays, the two men having moved up to Provincetown for the summer. The artists'

(12) Alexander, Doris The Tempering of Eugene O'Neill Harcourt Brace (New York 1962)

(13) Alexander ibid.

(14) Light on the Path, Title page 1885, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adfar, Aladas, India.

colony there contained the other early Nietzschean influence on O'Neill in the person of George Cram (Jig) Cook, who, with Susan Glaspell, his wife, was responsible for creating the theatre on the wharf where Bound East for Cardiff was performed in 1916.

Nietzsche's philosophy had had the same profound effect on Jig Cook as it had had on O'Neill, it contributed to a completely new outlook on life, both practical and creative. As Cook wrote:

Nietzsche brings not only new ethical feeling but new ethical ideas. Not everyone has the courage and ability to admit these new ideas with no fear and no favour and let them win if they can. But those who do so admit the ideas of Nietzsche find in the fight that they wage against the old ideas, more drama, more story, more poetry, than is generally found in drama, story or poetry. (15)

In addition to his own writing of story, play and poem, Cook felt that the American theatre was ripe for some 'new ethical ideas' and O'Neill became the playwright who was to bring this about. Cook's forceful personality was the driving force behind the Provincetown Players and, paradoxically, he was such a decision maker and powerful character that the democratic spirit of the group was often over-ruled. However, there was certainly an upsurge of new ideas about theatre both in terms of subject matter and production which became manifest in Provincetown and later at the McDougall Street Theatre which the group took over in Greenwich Village. Cook was a great believer in Dionysus as a creative force in the universe and early in his life he wrote the following:

The fibred life of the dumb earth-gripping creature - the creature breathed with the leaves, inhaling, inspiring, sap was in its blood, mounting, descending through woody veins. The man sprung to his feet beholding that his life and the tree were of one

(15) Glaspell, Susan The Road to the Temple Ernest Benn Ltd. (London 1926) Ch. XX

stuff. Yea, from such had sprung his body and soul - out of the dust and dew and heat of a million years, out of unnumbered births and deaths, out of the ancient work of things which lived in sunken continents and seas that are no more. In the white oak he beheld the Dryad, the tree soul, which, as the Greek divined, has in it something of humanity. (16)

This is very reminiscent of O'Neill's description of the Dionysian Lazarus in Lazarus Laughed, written ten years after he first met Cook. The passage does indicate the importance to Cook of the unity of the natural world and the importance of the myth of Dionysus and its perception in theatrical terms. Cook's passion for both Greek mythology and for Nietzsche had profound effects on both O'Neill and the American theatre.

Cook felt strongly that contemporary American drama was lacking in the true spirit of theatre, as experienced by the Greeks, and he was against the commercialism of Broadway, as was O'Neill. Cook maintained that all the productions seen in New York and the other large cities demanded nothing of an audience, no real response, no imagination, no depth of feeling or experience. They were simply '... concocted with an eye for the comfort of the Tired Business Man' as O'Neill wrote in Now I Ask You in 1916. This comedy, which satirises the current aesthetic and literary trends, has the characters Leonora, a 'synchronist painter' and Tom, a conventional young American man, discussing Nietzsche. 'Ever read Nietzsche? No, business men don't do they? They go to the Follies.' (17) This comment accurately expresses the view put forward by Nietzsche in The Joyful Wisdom where he states that those who go to the theatre are not men of action but men of business who use the theatre as a narcotic. (18)

(16) Glaspell ibid.

(17) Atkinson, Jennifer McCabe 'Children of the Sea' and Three other Unpublished Plays by Eugene O'Neill NCR (Washington 1972)

(18) Nietzsche, Friedrich The Joyful Wisdom T. N. Foulis (Edinburgh 1910)

Both Cook and O'Neill felt that what the American theatre had to offer in no way reflected the more important, basic forces of life which they felt should be part of an ideal drama as they, and Nietzsche, believed had been the case for the Ancient Greeks. The Dionysian spirit had long disappeared from the theatre and Cook, through his passion for all aspects of Greek civilisation and his reading of The Birth of Tragedy, had very definite views as to what the ideal theatre should be. He wanted to form a group that would work together in the communicative spirit of Dionysus, as he understood that to be, to form a new type of theatre that would relate to an audience in twentieth century America, but at the same time would create a feeling of the religious, mystical responses that were believed to be part of the old festivals of Athens in the fifth century B.C. After seeing a production of Lysistrata, it is not recorded where or by whom, Cook wrote:

One thing we're in need of is the freedom to deal with life in literature as frankly as Aristophanes. We need a public like his, which itself has the habit of thinking and talking frankly of life. We need the sympathy of such a public, the fundamental oneness with the public, which Aristophanes had. (19)

Cook felt that by creating a certain type of group, and writing a new type of play, he might be able to bring the audiences to this state of 'oneness' and communication might be achieved. It can be seen that both he and O'Neill were desirous of creating a theatre that would 'give us what the church no longer gives us - a meaning'. (20)

Cook's method of doing this was to collect a group of like-minded individuals who would be able to write, produce, design and act in new plays dealing with a more fundamental subject matter than the superficiality

(19) Glaspell op. cit. Ch. XXXI

(20) ibid. Ch. XXXI

of the Broadway 'show shop' and which would be staged in new, experimental forms. He stated that:

One man cannot produce drama. True drama is born only of one feeling animating all the members of a clan - spirit shared by all and expressed by the few for the all. If there is nothing to take the place of the common religious purpose and passion of the primitive group, out of which the Dionysian dance was born, no new vital drama can arise in any people. (21)

It would appear that Cook was attempting to include the audience in his 'spirit shared by all' and he, like O'Neill, wanted to recreate a religious fervour in the theatre such as Nietzsche had described in The Birth of Tragedy.

Unfortunately, Cook's vision was not to be totally fulfilled and in the last months of his life, in 1924, after the group had disintegrated and he had gone to live in Greece, his spiritual home, he wrote the following poem:

I who am the audience insofar as the author is one with me,
And author insofar as the audience is one with me,
More than any person's name and fame
I will to hear
The music of the identity of men. (22)

Cook's preoccupation with the Nietzschean ideals of theatre obviously had much influence on O'Neill, reinforcing his own views and making it possible for his plays to be written and produced in the early days of the Provincetown Players as they experimented in the McDougal Street Theatre. However, it was not only in the practical theatre where there was a correspondence between the two men and Nietzsche. A number of common themes and incidences are apparent in both Cook's and O'Neill's work, the most notable being the use the two men made of Nietzschean themes of eternal recurrence,

(21) ibid. Ch. XXXI

(22) ibid. Ch. XXXI

the unity of the universe, and the personality conflicts, as apparently experienced by Nietzsche himself, between the Christian and pagan, symbolised by Dionysus. Cook's play The Spring, produced in 1921, was a disaster in box-office terms but it made much use of both unity and recurrence.

(23) The process whereby man could reach a new understanding of his own position in the universe preoccupied Cook a great deal, as Susan Glaspell records in her delightfully vague work, The Road to the Temple (24).

This biography of her husband is interesting in that it throws light on some of the themes that occur in O'Neill's plays, particularly The Great God Brown. In this play O'Neill explores the conflict between two beliefs - Christian and Dionysian - in the persona of Dion Anthony and this is also the theme for a novel written by Cook called The Needle and the North. In it there is an interpretation of the Christ/Dionysus dilemma though worked out through three characters rather than one. The woman is torn between her love for two men, both of whom are in love with her. One 'with a Christian love like Browning, the other Hellenic, like Goethe'.

(25) The final solution of The Needle and the North is that the two conflicting principles are united within the emotional experience of the one woman, rather than O'Neill's solution of the apparent emergence of one principle over another as he seems to suggest at the end of The Great God Brown. As Cook notes:

And so the final triumph is the union of the two principles in one person - the superwoman, a new being in this world. (26)

(23) Cook, George Cram The Spring (New York 1921). See Ch. II of this

Thesis
(24) Glaspell, op. cit.

(25) ibid. Ch. XXIV

(26) ibid. Ch. XXIV

Here Cook recognises that both principles are necessary for existence. In Dion Anthony O'Neill leaves us in doubt about this union - neither is ultimately triumphant nor is there a unification of the two at the end of the play. The conflict is never truly resolved for O'Neill, as it was never resolved for Nietzsche. Cook's heroine does, however, show elements of O'Neill's later creation, Nina Leeds, who in Strange Interlude tries to unite and blend together all the masculine principles in her husband, lover and son, again rather unsatisfactorily.

The downfall of the Provincetown group as an experimental centre came with its commercial success. Although the group had performed plays by many playwrights, Cook and Glaspell among them, it was O'Neill's plays which received acclaim and invitations to Broadway. This was against all that Cook had been trying to achieve and the group finally disintegrated after Cook's departure, although O'Neill tried to continue with the new regime for some time. Cook wrote to the Provincetown Players, again expressing his Dionysian concept of drama, and voicing his regret that they had not achieved their aim:

As a group we are not more but less than the great chaotic unhappy community in whose dry heart I have vainly tried to create an oasis of living beauty. Some happier gateway must let in the spirit which seems to be seeking to create a soul under the ribs of death in the American theatre. (27)

Years later, in his Memoranda on Masks, (28) O'Neill reflected Cook's belief in the Dionysian impulse to create drama:

I mean the one true theatre, the age-old theatre, the theatre of the Greeks and Elizabethans, a theatre that could dare to boast - without committing a farcical

(27) ibid. Ch. XXXVI

(28) The American Spectator November 1932 Reprinted in O. Cargill, N. B. Fagin, W. J. Fisher (eds.) Eugene O'Neill and his Plays Peter Owen, (London 1962) p.116

sacrilege - that it is a legitimate descendant of the first theatre that sprang, by virtue of man's imaginative interpretation of life, out of his worship of Dionysus. I mean a theatre returned to its highest and sole significant function as a Temple where the religion of a poetical interpretation and symbolical celebration of life is communicated to human beings, starved in spirit by their soul-stifling daily struggle to exist as masks among the masks of the living! (29)

To have found a man like Cook who so firmly believed in the practical aspects of the spirit of Dionysus and the theatre - the working together of individuals to create a communicable spirit and a oneness with an audience - but who drank and caroused as well as being a creative and sensitive being, must have made a large contribution to the working-out of Nietzschean, and more particularly Dionysian, elements in O'Neill's plays. The period during which O'Neill was associated with the Provincetown Players, and the one immediately afterwards when he worked with Kenneth Macgowan, was his most conspicuously Nietzschean. Cook was a man of intense conviction who had a profound effect on O'Neill both professionally and personally both in his own right and as a channel for the exploration of Nietzsche's ideas, as the murals on his farmhouse walls might indicate:

Theatre born of primitive dance. Theatre hardening into Church. Pure Dead Church. Church giving birth to Theatre. Pure Dead Theatre. Theatre transforming itself into living Church. (30)

The man responsible for the staging of O'Neill's most elaborate Nietzschean plays was Kenneth Macgowan, a writer and editor who was fascinated by the theatre as a vehicle for portraying man's most inner thoughts and feelings, and as a means of exploring philosophical and psychological

(29) ibid. p. 121

(30) Glaspell op. cit. p.121

themes through dramatic forms. Macgowan, whom O'Neill met in 1921, the year in which Macgowan's The Theatre of Tomorrow was published (31), became a life-long friend even after their active collaboration on productions had ended; he and O'Neill together developed their ideas of what the theatre should really attempt to achieve. Together with Robert Edmund Jones, the highly acclaimed stage and costume designer, the 'Triumvirate' was formed to run the Experimental Theatre at the Provincetown Playhouse until O'Neill finally associated himself with the Theatre Guild in 1927. These years saw the production and writing of the most spectacular and experimental of O'Neill's plays: The Fountain, The Hairy Ape, Welded, All God's Children Got Wings, The Great God Brown, Marco Millions, Lazarus Laughed, Desire Under the Elms, Strange Interlude and Dynamo. O'Neill was able to fulfil his desire to create a new theatre through working with Macgowan and Jones who believed in the repudiation of the traditional, three-act, realistic play and wanted to move towards drama which would, through new scenic and lighting effects, illuminate man's soul and make the theatre into a powerful spiritual experience. The theatre would resume its religious role, much as Jig Cook had wanted, overlaid with the new knowledge of the unconscious and subconscious which had been acquired through contemporary interest in anthropology and psychology. Macgowan stated his intent in The Theatre of Tomorrow, saying that the new drama

... will attempt to transfer to dramatic art the illumination of those deep and vigorous and eternal processes of the human soul which the psychology of Freud and Jung has given us through study of the unconscious, striking to the heart of emotion and linking our commonest life today with the emanations of the primitive racial mind. (32)

(31) Macgowan, Kenneth The Theatre of Tomorrow Boni and Liveright (New York 1921)

(32) ibid. p.224

This statement can be seen to also reflect Nietzsche's view that man was linked to his past, as he states clearly in The Birth of Tragedy with its considerations of the Dionysian and Apollonian impulses which permeate mankind and its attempt to trace the manifestations of the original Dionysian impulse through succeeding theatrical and social experiences.

Macgowan's vision and Jones's ability to transfer it onto the stage meant that O'Neill was encouraged and inspired to write plays that hitherto would have been unperformable. Although the prevailing mood in Europe at this time was towards Expressionism in drama, what the Triumvirate achieved was something much more in that the American theatre as a whole was still bound by more rigid nineteenth century conventions. O'Neill's obsession with Nietzsche and his fascination with the possibility of plays dealing with themes on a grand and disturbing scale meant that this period in his life was the most creative and absorbing in terms of play-writing. Whether these plays have ultimately proved to be as dramatically successful or as well acclaimed as those he wrote later is a matter for discussion, but there is no doubt that Kenneth Macgowan and Robert Edmund Jones enabled O'Neill to realise his desire to adapt and transform Nietzsche's philosophy into theatrical experience the like of which had never been seen before on the American stage.

It can be seen that O'Neill was influenced by Nietzsche in a variety of ways, both from his reading of the works and, indirectly, through his friends and associates. In addition to his own acknowledgement of Nietzsche's literary influence in 1928, there are many other instances

of O'Neill talking about Nietzsche and trying to influence others to read him. Sheaffer mentions (33) that O'Neill gave Thus Spake Zarathustra to two successive girlfriends, Maibelle Scott and Beatrice Ashe, in New London in 1914 and Gelb claims (34) that he inscribed it with a long quotation about good and evil before making the gift to Maibelle. At Harvard, attending Professor Baker's class the following year, O'Neill met William Laurence, a fellow student with whom he had long discussions about Nietzsche. Laurence is reputed to have carried a copy of Thus Spake Zarathustra with him at all times, as did O'Neill, and Barrett Clark records (35) that O'Neill had 'a worn copy of Nietzsche's Birth of Tragedy in his pocket' at the Hotel Lafayette in New York in 1926. Like Terry Carlin, O'Neill was given to quoting Nietzsche or expressing himself in Nietzschean phrases, often shocking those to whom he spoke as when, in the middle of his love affair with Louise Bryant, he said to Betty Collins: 'Thou goest to women? Do not forget thy whip!' (36) Both Gelb and Sheaffer (37) record that O'Neill copied a passage from Zarathustra when he and Carlotta were making their grand tour of the Orient in 1928. Because of illness and the difficulties of his relationship with Carlotta, O'Neill was not in the happiest frame of mind and he wrote:

I am a wanderer and a mountain climber, said he to his heart. I love not the plains, and it seemeth I cannot long sit still. And whatever may still overtake me as fate and experience - a wandering will be therein, and a mountain climbing: in the end one experienceth only oneself. (38)

(33) Sheaffer Son and Playwright p.283

(34) Gelb op. cit. p.209

(35) Clark, Barrett Eugene O'Neill: The Man and His Plays Jonathan Cape (London 1933) p.15

(36) Sheaffer Son and Playwright p.374

(37) Sheaffer Son and Artist p.315

(38) Gelb op. cit. p.680

O'Neill was extremely fond of noting and quoting Nietzsche. There survives at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University a long list of quotations he made from Thus Spake Zarathustra. These are reproduced and transcribed in the Appendix to this thesis and they form the basis for much of the research in addition to other material examined at the Beinecke Library. It is impossible to ascertain when the list of quotations was compiled, but the handwriting is quite large by comparison with much of the other manuscript material I examined and so one can presume that the list was made quite early in O'Neill's discovery of Nietzsche since his handwriting became smaller and more indistinguishable as he grew older and the effects of his Parkinsonism increased. Many of the quotations are used in the middle period plays which again suggests that the list was made before the early twenties; many are accurate but others seem to have been written from memory; both kinds appear either directly or thematically in a number of plays. This usage will be considered in detail in the following chapters. So important was Nietzsche to O'Neill both personally and professionally that his influence pervades the whole of O'Neill's life. The late plays have many references to Nietzschean philosophy and O'Neill himself said that his own philosophy was best expressed 'by Nietzsche and Spengler' (39) This comment in the late 1940s is the only mention O'Neill appears to have made of Spengler but there is no doubt that he adhered to Nietzsche throughout his life.

In 1936, in his Nobel Prize speech which was to be read for him in Stockholm, O'Neill made reference to Strindberg, the dramatist who had inspired him at the very beginning, and then said:

(39) Sheaffer Son and Artist p.597

For me, he remains, as Nietzsche remains, in his sphere,
the master, still to this day more modern than any of
us, still our leader. (40)

There is no doubt that Nietzsche was a great, if not the greatest,
influence on O'Neill, for the works affected both his private view of
the world and the view that he presented on stage. In the following
chapters I will attempt to show just how all-pervading and inescapable
Nietzsche's philosophy is in the plays and with what dramatic imagination
and skill O'Neill created a new kind of theatre in the United States.
Agnes Boulton may have claimed that at the time she knew O'Neill intimately
Nietzsche 'moved his emotion rather than his mind' but this is certainly
not so when one considers the complexity of ideas, characters and plots
which O'Neill conjured out of the philosophy in later years. Although
the plays are undoubtedly emotional, there is a wealth of intellect and
imaginative interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy throughout O'Neill's
work.

(40) ibid. p.463

CHAPTER II

ETERNAL RECURRENCE

In considering the theory of eternal recurrence in Nietzsche's work and the effect that it had on O'Neill, it is essential to attempt to define what Nietzsche meant by it. This is problematic because in the major works in which eternal recurrence appears, and in those works which we have evidence of O'Neill reading, there is no precise definition which would clarify what the theory consists of. The idea of recurrence is expressed poetically, aphoristically, and as part of the narrative of Thus Spake Zarathustra, but on none of these occasions does Nietzsche attempt to define exactly any of the components which he uses to arrive at a theory of eternal recurrence, and such references are often neither understandable nor consistent. This, naturally, has led to controversy among philosophers and scientists as to precisely what Nietzsche was trying to express, although Nietzsche himself felt that it was 'the most scientific of all hypotheses' (1).

It has been suggested by Walter Kaufmann in his introduction to the modern translation of The Joyful Wisdom otherwise known as The Gay Science (2) that Nietzsche took the theory of eternal recurrence from that formulated by Heine in Strodman's edition Letzte Gedichte und Gedanken von H. Heine, published in 1869. In this work Heine puts forward a scientifically based theory that, given a certain number of atoms present in the universe, in time the exact configurations and combinations of these atoms will inevitably recur and so identical situations will arise again and again if the time span is sufficient. It is debatable whether Nietzsche actually used this particular edition of Heine, although after his death the book was found in his own library. However, in Nietzsche's Nachlass, a collec-

(1) Nietzsche, Friedrich The Will to Power T. N. Foulis (Edinburgh, 1910) Vol. I Note 55

(2) Nietzsche, Friedrich The Gay Science translated by Walter Kaufmann, Vintage Books (New York, 1974)

tion of fragmentary notes, there is a very similar attempt to Heine's to define eternal recurrence in a scientifically acceptable form.

Life is eternal and infinite; space is limited and finite; the number of atoms, the constituent elements of the universe, is determined and finite. From these presuppositions it follows that only a finite number of configurations of atoms is possible and that, therefore, in a sufficiently long period of time, a recurrence of past configurations becomes necessary. (3)

This, however, is today considered to be scientifically unsound. The number of atoms in the universe is not static, it is not a finite number and is, in fact constantly increasing so that, in terms of Nietzsche's theory, there never could be a recurrence of exactly the same number of atoms in a given combination as the possibility of this occurring is always being reduced. Nevertheless, it would seem that Nietzsche felt that this was sufficient grounds for the concept of eternal recurrence, although H. L. Mencken states that he did come to the realisation that it was not scientifically possible and so later dealt with the theory 'as a mere philosophical speculation' (4).

This may clarify the problem which arises when one looks at the difference between the 'scientific' theory in Nachlass and the use Nietzsche makes of eternal recurrence in his other works, especially in The Joyful Wisdom and Thus Spake Zarathustra, both of which O'Neill read. In these two works there is no reference to an atomic explanation of recurrence and it is almost taken for granted that it is a well-known, established theory which Nietzsche uses in a literary fashion without any specific reference to scientific sources or definite proof.

(3) Nietzsche, Friedrich Nachlass XII Reprinted in Pfeffer, Rose Nietzsche, Disciple of Dionysus Bucknell University Press, 1974

(4) Mencken, H. L. The Philosophy of Frederick Nietzsche T. Fisher Unwin (London, 1912)

However, in examining the appearance of eternal recurrence in Thus Spake Zarathustra, it can be seen that Nietzsche actually departs from the 'atomic' concept and replaces it by a circular ring-like concept of eternity and recurrence. Zarathustra, as the 'advocate of the circle' says:

Everything breaketh, everything is joined anew.
Forever the same house of existence buildeth itself.
All things separate, all things greet each other
again. Forever faithful unto itself the ring of
recurrence remaineth.

(The Convalescent One)

It is possible that the first part of this statement does refer to the atomic theory but the last sentence tends to modify this explanation, especially in the light of further statements in this work. The idea of the ring gives us a completely different aspect of eternal recurrence, for the random concept of the atoms reforming is replaced by a solid, visual form, that of the ring. There is constant reference to the ring as the fundamental explanation of recurrence:

... The thirst of the ring is within you. To reach
itself again, for that purpose every ring struggleth
and turneth.

(Of the Virtuous)

and

Oh! how could I fail to be eager for eternity, and
for the marriage ring of rings, the ring of recurrence?

(The Seven Seals)

This last is repeated seven times as a chorus in the song and so the concept of the ring is reinforced in the structure of this 'Song of Yea and Amen'.

In Ecce Homo Nietzsche states that the first proclamation of 'the basic idea of Zarathustra' is in The Joyful Wisdom, Section 341. (5) Here he states that eternal recurrence is simply a matter of repetition:

(5) Nietzsche, Friedrich Ecce Homo T. N. Foulis (Edinburgh 1910) 'The Birth of Tragedy' Section 3

The eternal sandglass of existence will ever be turned
once more, and thou with it, thou speck of dust!

so yet another concept of eternal recurrence is expressed, which could either be an explanation or another image or symbol for the same thing. The hourglass movement is very different from the ring of recurrence in its basic concept - it implies a linear function in that it is only a matter of time before the hourglass is reversed. This is echoed in Thus Spake Zarathustra by the Beasts:

It must, like the hourglass ever turn upside down
again in order to run down and run out -

(The Convalescent One)

This occurs in a section where Zarathustra is also advocating the ring of recurrence, but here he has turned to a classical source for eternal recurrence as he compares it to the 'Great Year', a theory originally Chaldean, which spread through the Hellenistic world. It stated that the existence of the universe is eternal but it is periodically destroyed and then reconstituted in the 'Great Year'. It is similar to the Pythagorean theory that when the spheres are in certain fixed positions relative to one another, the whole process stops and begins again. The time scale of these two theories is immense. The animals say that Zarathustra has taught them that there is such a 'great year of becoming' which is turned like the hourglass and so times and events are constantly repeated.

Because Nietzsche's philosophy was written in a very literary, imagistic style, using narrative and characterisation, rather than a logically consistent analysis in a traditional philosophical mode, the problem arises as to the relationship between Nietzsche's philosophic reasoning and the literary image. After all, he does say in Zarathustra:

So I say to use a simile, and poet-like halt and
stammer. And, verily, I am ashamed that I still need
to be a poet!

(Of Old and New Tables 2)

a sentiment echoed by Edmund in Long Day's Journey Into Night when he denies that he has the makings of a poet. He claims that

I couldn't touch what I tried to tell you just now.
I just stammered. That's the best I'll ever do.....
Stammering is the native eloquence of us fog people.

(Act Four)

It is possible that Nietzsche - the poet rather than philosopher - merely collected a number of theories from various sources and combined them in his work to give the different images of eternal recurrence.

It is not known whether Nietzsche believed that the individual has any consciousness of his previous existences, whether he would experience any signs of recognition of them, or whether he is totally unaware of having existed before. If this latter is the case, what would seem to be the significance or connection between separate but identical existences? Nietzsche's identical repetition is very different from the Eastern concept of recurrence where reincarnation or transmigration of the soul involves a matter of progression towards an ultimate spiritual goal. The Buddhist accepts that each existence is a result of behaviour patterns in a former life and that future lives in different forms are a consequence of actions and attitudes in the present existence, although there is no conscious memory of a previous existence within the individual. This is obviously not what Nietzsche has in mind. His stress is consistently on the exact repetition of an existence or specific incident, with no moral or religious connotations of the progress of the soul. This is a concept which is unique, for in contrast to Nietzsche even Heine does suggest that there may be some improvement:

And thus it will happen one day that a man will be born again, just like me, and a woman will be born

just like Mary - only that it is to be hoped that the head of this man may contain a little less foolishness - and in a better land they will meet (6)

In fact, Nietzsche's own anti-Christian feeling would correspond directly with his sense of identical recurrence because it supports his theory that there is no God, no creative entity which began or guided the universe, and so simple recurrence is a force in itself, self-perpetuating, a natural occurrence with no recourse to a higher authority for guidance. He is totally dependent on a purely physical explanation of the universe and time and eternity. Whatever is done in this life does not appear to matter, to Nietzsche at least, in eternal terms, because nothing will alter it - it will repeat itself eternally and identically.

Nietzsche's concern with the 'moment' is an important, if slightly contradictory, part of the theory of eternal recurrence. Are there moments which one would want to have repeated in some future time? As Zarathustra says:

If ye ever wanted to have one time twice, if ye ever said 'Thou pleasest me, O happiness, O instant! O moment! Ye wished everything to come back!

(The Drunken Song)

This consideration of the moment is interesting because it involves the nature of time and eternity. Is time a continual flow into which significant, recognisable 'moments' are inserted of which one is specifically aware, or is it simply a long chain of moments which are interlinked so closely that they seem to be one constant flow, giving a sense of continuing time? There is also the point that one moment can seem as long as an eternity, so the concept of time becomes a purely subjective phenomenon. This is indicated by:

(6) Heine, H. Letzte Gedichte und Gedanken von H. Heine ed. Adolf Strodtmann (Hamburg, 1869). Discussed in Kaufmann, Walter Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist Vintage Books (New York, 1968) p. 318

... the moment of noon in which time is abolished in which eternity is experienced and perfection reached

and

Did time fly away? Do I not fall? Did I not fall -
hearken! - into the well of eternity?

(At Noon)

Nietzsche tries to show the significance of the moment in Zarathustra.

In 'The Convalescent One' he states that 'At each moment Being beginneth ...' but more significantly in 'Of the Vision and the Riddle' he devotes a whole section to the moment. There is a gateway called 'Moment' where the past and the future meet. There are two lanes, each of them an eternity, one going back and the other forward, 'the ends of which no one hath ever reached'. Their junction is at Moment where there is an awareness of both the past and the future. Nietzsche further complicated the question of time and eternity by having Zarathustra say that the roads 'contradict' each other eternally. This implies that, apart from at a specific, recognisable moment, there is no connection between past and future. When Zarathustra asks the Dwarf:

Must not all that can run of things have run already through this lane? Must not what can happen of things have happened, have been done and have run past here?

This would indicate that there is a passing of events - they happen and pass but do not continue to happen in a repetitive fashion. It would appear that the concept of the ring of recurrence is not applicable here and that eternity is neither reversible nor circular; it is a one way passage of time along a 'road' and so cannot recur.

The Dwarf says that 'time itself is a Circle' but Zarathustra seems to maintain here that eternal recurrence is a matter of forever running along the same road:

And must we not recur and run in that other lane, out there, before us, in that long haunted lane - must we not recur eternally?

This does not fit logically with the idea of the two lanes - how does one return in the same situation if the whole concept is a linear rather than a circular one? The Dwarf seems to be presenting the ring of recurrence which is contradicted by Zarathustra. Zarathustra continues:

And this slow spider creeping in the moonshine, and this moonshine itself, and I and thou in the gateway whispering together, whispering of eternal things, must we not all have existed once in the past?

So, in this one section of Thus Spake Zarathustra there is presented two concepts of recurrence - that of the circle of time and eternity and that of the eternally running roads. If all that has happened has already run down the path, how does this fit into the circular reversible concept? The Ring of Being which Zarathustra extols later shows that time can be a revolving concept so is reversible because it is totally circular and can be rotated and repeated, whereas the two straight roads at 'Moment' simply maintain their linear directions.

Nietzsche's classical studies would have given him some evidence for the circular concept of time in the Platonic idea that was concerned with the measuring of the revolution of the celestial spheres, seen as the movement of eternity. Eternity is itself unmoving but is described by the image of the spheres along their circular orbits. This would correspond to the ring explanation of recurrence and tend to contradict both atomic theory and that of the straight roads. However, it again raises the supposition that Nietzsche put together a number of possible explanations of time and eternity. It is debatable how consistent Nietzsche is trying to be in his exposition of eternal recurrence. He may simply be trying to explain a theory in a variety of metaphorical forms or images, rather than trying to produce an accurate philosophical argument or a worked-out, provable, scientific theory. If indeed he is 'stammering' as a poet, the former explanation seems most likely.

Related to the ring concept of time and eternity is the position of the individual and his place in the universe. The recurrent theme in Nietzsche's work is that everything will recur - even the spider and the moonlight.

Zarathustra's animals say:

But the knot of causes recurrereth, in which I am twined.
It will create me again.

(The Convalescent One (ON))

This brings in the Nietzschean consideration of unity; everything knotted together and part of the same natural process:

I come back, with this sun, with this earth, with
this eagle, with this serpent - not for a new life,
or a better life, or an eternal life.

and the animals say:

... all things recur eternally, ourselves included;
and that we have been there infinite times
before, and all things with us.

which is an indication that everything in nature is intertwined in existence and so it can be presumed that Nietzsche believed that there is a unity between man and nature and the forces of time. The fact that he had renounced the Christian God who guides the universe might certainly dispose Nietzsche towards the mechanical repetition of eternal recurrence, rather than the idea of a divine hand which planned or guided the behaviour of the individual, no matter how chilling and comfortless this idea might be. Nietzsche would state that a man was answerable to himself within the context of his environment - which environment would also be part of the cycle of eternal recurrence. As Zarathustra says:

I want myself eternally again as a ring within the
larger ring of the world.

(Dionysian Dithyramb 20)

but this gives no promise of a future existence which might be more satisfactory or pleasurable. Man, by this argument, is static.

The unity of man and nature lines up with the cyclical theories of existence and these are evident in all societies and have prevailed from the earliest times. The Ancient Greeks, whom Nietzsche had studied in detail, and all subsequent societies, have as part of their structure and belief the concept of cyclical regeneration. The annual seed sowing, fertility rites, harvest, the celebration of the New Year; all emphasise the closeness of man and his environment and celebrate the rebirth of life in each new cycle of time. Such rituals are archetypal gestures which can be traced throughout history. The celebrations may be of a religious or social nature but cyclical recurrence encompasses all facets of the unity of man and nature and is close to Nietzsche's ring concept of recurrence and repetition. Because the same acts are repeated each year by an individual within his society, but often without knowledge of their origin, and these same traditional observances are continued from one generation to the next, there is a prevalent sense that time is an endlessly repetitive concept rather than a progressive one. However, this concept of unity does contradict the theory of identical eternal recurrence in many ways, as the rebirth and regeneration of nature and man is what is stressed rather than identical repetition. Nietzsche's work contains both ideas - often intermingled - and so again there is confusion about exactly what he meant by eternal recurrence.

Zarathustra's animals say:

At every moment existence beginneth. Round every
Here rolleth the ball There. The midst is everywhere.
Crooked is the path of eternity.

(The Convalescent One)

Pfeffer, in her book Nietzsche: Disciple of Dionysus (7) states that Nietzsche's search was for totality, unity and eternality and that he

(7) Pfeffer op. cit. p.168

wanted to find 'a nexus between God, nature and man' which would transcend the particularity of the individual. It is certain that the God who Nietzsche might have been searching for would not be that of the Christian faith. Like Goethe, Nietzsche seemed to embrace the doctrine of pantheism, which embodied 'God' in all things natural and provided a unity between man and his surroundings, all being subject to the same force and influence.

Again in 'The Convalescent One' Zarathustra says that:

I myself am amongst the causes of the eternal recurrence.

He is a prophetic figure who not only sermonises about eternal recurrence, but is himself resurrected after seven days as an example of such recurrence. He returns to 'this one and the same life' and to the close relationship with his animals, in particular the eagle and the serpent, and it is they who are his solace and comfort. This unity and closeness serves to emphasise a unity between man, animals and nature and Zarathustra later says:

Everything goeth, everything returneth. Forever rolleth the wheel of existence. Everything dieth, everything blossometh again. Forever runneth the year of existence.

(The Convalescent One)

An important consideration of the theory of eternal recurrence and unity is the personal aspect; Nietzsche's own unsatisfactory life. Having put forward the idea that everything ultimately recurs in exactly the same form - as the animals say of Zarathustra, that he would

... come eternally back unto this one and the same life, in the greatest and the smallest things, in order to teach once more the eternal recurrence of all things...

(The Convalescent One)

one has to consider how this affected Nietzsche's state of mind. Given the despair of his own deteriorating physical and mental condition, how could he face the possibility that at some time in the future he would again be subjected to the selfsame problems and horrors with which he was having to contend? Walter Kaufmann suggests that Nietzsche would find this possibility 'gruesome' (8) and one does not know whether Nietzsche himself simply believed this theory he had invented or whether he justified it by explaining that certain things return because they are beautiful, worthwhile moments and so worth having return, even if all the undesirable factors return with them. There is conflicting evidence in Nietzsche's work about this point and although he states that one should desire the recurrence of all things he himself seemed to have a differing outlook. He states in Thus Spake Zarathustra that the individual should have a positive desire for the recurrence of all things:

The thirst of the ring is within you. To reach itself again, for that purpose every ring struggleth and turneth.

(Of the Virtuous)

There must be a desire to return, a desire to be part of the whole universe no matter to what the individual would be returning. In 'The Drunken Song' Zarathustra says:

And even unto woe ye say 'pass, go, but return!'

because the recurrence of woe also means the recurrence of joy and delight and 'eternity is sought by all delight'. Nietzsche states that man must come to terms with his existence and accept all that it involves, whether joy or woe, for ultimate acceptance of everything means that this is a triumph of the will of the individual, part of the philosophy of the 'will to power'. In contrast with this, Zarathustra does say that the

(8) Kaufmann, Walter Introduction to The Gay Science p.17

aspect of the least returning with the greatest is abhorrent to him and, in this aspect at least, it would be fair to consider Zarathustra as a spokesman for Nietzsche. His disillusionment with men - 'All too small the greatest one', and his loathing that 'The small man recurrerth eternally (The Convalescent One) does contradict Nietzsche's professed desire for acceptance of the whole unity of the eternally recurring universe, but does reflect Nietzsche's constant vacillation between accepting his life as it was and attempting to rebel violently against it, predominantly through his writings. He states that, in spite of his professions through Zarathustra, that 'I do not wish for life again. How have I borne it? Creatively. What gives me strength to bear the sight of it? The prospect of the superior man, the affirmer of life. I have tried my self to affirm it - ah!' (9) However, he does seem fascinated that it might happen, as he says in The Joyful Wisdom:

What if a demon crept after thee into thy loneliest loneliness some day or night and said to thee: 'This life, as thou livest it at present, and hast lived it, thou must live it once more, and also innumerable times; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and every sigh, and all the unspeakably small and great in thy life must come to thee again, and all in the same series and sequence and similarly this spider and this moonlight among the trees, and similarly this moment, and I myself. The eternal sand-glass of existence will ever be turned once more, and thou with it, thou speck of dust!' - Wouldst thou not throw thyself down and gnash thy teeth, and curse the demon that so spake?

('The Heaviest Burden'
Book Fourth 341)

Later in this section he states that the thought of it would 'transform thee and perhaps crush thee' and that it would truly become a heavy burden upon one's life. One is left wondering, like Walter Kaufmann,

(9) Nietzsche, Friedrich Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe Abteilung VII. Vol. I Reprinted in Hayman op. cit. p.353

how crushed Nietzsche was by the theory that he had formulated, and just how far he could truly follow his philosophy of affirmation and acceptance. It can be seen that there are many aspects of eternal recurrence and unity and it is not clear whether Nietzsche believed that there was an overall, proveable explanation for these theories, or whether he was content to have considered as many possibilities as were available to him and which took his fancy, simply leaving the question in the realms of speculation. This, of course, is relevant in the analysis of O'Neill's debt to Nietzsche because there was not really a rigidly worked out philosophy for him to adopt and it was possible for him to interpret Nietzsche's ideas in a variety of ways.

O'Neill based his knowledge of eternal recurrence on his readings of Zarathustra and The Joyful Wisdom and many of the quotations he noted (see Appendix) from these works are specifically concerned with eternal recurrence and unity. There is a great deal of evidence in the plays that he used both these quotations and also adopted a more general interpretation of these two ideas, often in a highly individual way. Although it is almost certain that O'Neill did not know of the atomic theory from Nietzsche's notebooks and fragments, it is very likely that he read of Nietzsche's interpretation in H. L. Mencken's The Philosophy of Frederick Nietzsche, published in America in 1908. (10) However, he does not use it in the purely atomic form that Nietzsche had discussed, preferring to develop it in his specific use of electricity in several plays. Although atomic theory is alluded to in Strange Interlude and Welded, the proposed trilogy which had Dynamo as its initial play is the most obvious example of O'Neill's development of atomic theory. Finished in 1928, at least

(10) Mencken op. cit.

four years after O'Neill began it, Dynamo is attempting to show that the old ideas and religious beliefs have been replaced by modern science, symbolised by the dynamo and electricity. O'Neill is attempting to

... dig at the roots of the sickness of today ... the death of the Old God and the failure of science and materialism to give any satisfying new One ... (11)

and so he develops the concept of man having unity with his natural surroundings in a new, non-naturalistic way by using twentieth century scientific development and its effect on society. The question of science having replaced religion is indicated in The Joyful Wisdom

"In order to prove that man after all belongs to the good-natured animals, I would remind you how credulous he has been for so long a time ... why should man be more distrustful and more wicked? Because he now has science, - because he needs to have it!"

(Outside the Lecture Room, 33)

O'Neill embodies the new 'religion' in the dynamo and Reuben states that her 'power houses have become the new churches'. The dynamo is described as the source of life which Reuben explains by electricity. Reuben says that she is 'the Great Mother of Eternal Life' who sings 'the hymn of eternal generation, the song of eternal life' (Act Three Scene One). O'Neill attempts to convey the dynamo as having an overwhelming power and he hoped that Reuben and the audience would be imbued with a sense of the dynamo's power and appreciate that it was credited with the perpetration of eternal life, a very different concept from the universal but mechanical interpretation by Nietzsche. For Reuben the dynamo has become a new force in the universe, a controlling entity or God replacement, and this crazed obsession which exists in Reuben's mind has to be observed and understood by an audience. This dramatic situation is very different from Nietzsche's view which was that any god which might be in existence

(11) From a letter to George Jean Nathan Reprinted in Cargill, op. cit. p.115

was purely part of the universe and not its controller. Whether one believed in the Christian God or not, it is indisputable that O'Neill was trying to show that for some individuals science had become the prime explanation for existence in the modern age, and as a representative of this phenomenon Reuben's dialogue is overweighted with technical language and theory.

O'Neill attempts to make the connection between the individual and this new force in life by stating in a stage direction that the functioning of the dynamo, the purring sound, is at one with human rhythm

... making the heart strain with the desire to beat
in its rhythm of unbroken, eternal continuity.

(Act Three Scene Three)

What he is doing here is taking the Nietzschean concept of the unity of man and his environment, but replacing the world of nature by the new scientifically determined world. However, although the dynamo is a product of the new science, it is inextricably connected with the natural world because electricity is a natural phenomenon. O'Neill is making the link between the electrical force and the atomic structures of the human and the natural world and the stage directions show clearly that he had this in mind.

The life force in man is akin to the life force in the electricity generated by the dynamo - man is only compounded of protons and electrons as is the electrical force. There is a long explanation by Reuben in which he tries to connect the chain or cycle of events which produce the electricity:

It's the sea rising up in clouds, falling on the earth
in rain, made that river that drives the turbines
that drive Dynamo.

As 'our blood plasm is the same right now as the sea was when life came out of it' then we are connected with this universal chain:

We've got the sea in our blood still! It's what makes our hearts live.

The same sea makes Dynamo function but, as Reuben says,

... the sea is only hydrogen and oxygen and minerals, and they're only atoms and atoms are only protons and electrons even our blood and the sea are only electricity in the end!

(Act Three Scene One)

Here O'Neill is finding a complex way of inter-relating man and the natural universe and there is a further connection with atomic theory in the play when Reuben says:

And think of the stars! Driving through space round and round, just like electrons in the atom! But there must be a centre round which all this moves, mustn't there? There is in everything else.

(Act Three Scene One)

which can be compared to Zarathustra's statement:

Round every Here rolleth the ball There. The midst is everywhere.

(The Convalescent One)

Like the structure of the atom with its centre and revolving particles, the universe is a constantly revolving and moving entity.

What O'Neill has done with the scientific theories is to introduce them into the natural cycle and show that they, too, are part of the unity of the universe. It is an essentially twentieth century explanation and O'Neill has taken the Nietzschean 'scientific' theory one step further in suggesting that the 'God' which might be involved in the structure of the universe has taken control in a way very different from anything that Nietzsche could have conceived. It will be seen that this is a common development by O'Neill in terms of unity and recurrence; the directing force is portrayed in many different ways. In Dynamo O'Neill

has chosen a rather complicated way of exploring the interlinking of man and nature and the universe, but it serves to show that he felt that the question of the life force and eternal recurrence was important. He deals with these aspects in many plays, but nowhere else does he attempt such an obviously complex and 'scientific' explanation, perhaps because he had decided to explore the 'new science God' in this play.

Electricity and atomic structure are referred to in other plays but are considered from differing view points. In Days Without End John states that it is '... electricity or something which whirls us' (Act Three Scene Two) and considers it to be a power that cannot be resisted. He says that 'we are all the slaves of meaningless chance' (Act Three Scene Two) which implies that he is equating electricity with a natural force, part of the life force or fate, a substitute for God. This can be compared to Dynamo where there is the assertion that the purring sound of Dynamo can be the 'song of eternal life', a song which influences Reuben's actions. For him it becomes an idol to worship, much as it does for Azuma-zi in H.G. Wells's story The Lord of the Dynamos, written in 1894 and although O'Neill is using the idolisation of a generator as symbolic of the shift in mankind from religion to science he also attributes an additional power to the machine, a suggestion that the machine is capable of thought or instruction. This is in contrast to Reuben's assertion that the dynamo is simply part of the natural chain of existence - merely the latest expression of the life force which has existed since life came out of the sea. It must, however, be recognised that Reuben's claims for and worship of the dynamo spring from a deranged mind, a mind which elaborates on and manipulates ideas, and so the theories put forward by him detract from any serious consideration of O'Neill's intention to

put forward a significant explanation of eternal recurrence and atomic theory based on Nietzsche.

There are further references to electricity and atoms in Strange Interlude when Darrell attempts to explain to Nina about the possible effect of fate upon their relationship. He says:

But perhaps we'll become part of cosmic positive and negative charges and meet again.

(Act Nine)

Although this would be a characteristic explanation for Darrell as a scientist, it is another indication that O'Neill has the atomic explanation of recurrence in mind. Darrell is suggesting that there might be an exact recurrence of both his and Nina's situation, and there is also a return to the proposition that electricity is a God-like force when he is leaving Nina, laughing up at the sky and imploring God to teach him to 'be resigned to be an atom'. (Act Nine) Nina, later in the play, states that 'our lives are merely strange dark interludes in the electrical display of the God the Father' (Act Nine) but as she does not accept Him this has tones of irony. Nevertheless, again electricity is compared to the power of God who is seen as a controlling force, in contrast to the Nietzschean idea of atomic recurrence which is a repetitive force simply operating under its own mathematically determined laws.

It is interesting to look at the stage directions that O'Neill sent to Lee Simonson about the staging of Dynamo. He wants the effect of the thunder to be created:

... thunder with a menacing, brooding quality as if some Electrical God were on the hills impelling all these people, affecting their thoughts and actions.
(12)

(12) Simonson, Lee The Stage is Set, Harcourt Brace, (New York, 1932)

Here is clearly expressed the concept not only of electricity being a God-like force, but that God himself is composed of electricity and can control the individual through the power of the elements. So, O'Neill did seem to see electricity as fulfilling several different functions in terms of unity, life force and the natural chain of being, as well as recurrence. It does not, however make a really convincing alternative to the old religion, either dramatically or philosophically, but O'Neill does show especially in Dynamo that the effect of replacing religion by the 'modern science God' can be damaging and destructive, certainly for an individual like Reuben. What he does also show, in the character of Hutchins Light, is that strict adherence to a conventional religion can be equally catastrophic on both a spiritual and psychological level.

The statement in Dynamo which connects the sea and blood plasma leads on to another aspect of recurrence which O'Neill develops in several plays. For O'Neill the sea is a primeval force which creates life - mankind began there and somehow the mystery of the sea and the influence that it has on many of the characters (as on O'Neill himself) is connected with this force. In one play the theory of eternity and recurrence might be explained by electricity but in others the sea itself is used and it again provides a link with the Nietzschean theory of natural phenomena being connected inextricably with the life and destiny of man.

Once as squirming specks we crept from the tides of
the sea. Now we return to the sea! Once as quivering
flecks of rhythm we beat down from the sun. Now we re-
enter the sun!

(Act Two Scene Two)

The proclamation from Lazarus Laughed might be considered evolutionary fact, but the second part, 'Now we return to the sea!' is a figurative way of expressing the view that man returns to become part of the great

life force after he is physically dead. Men pass but the sea remains as an obvious symbol of our origins and of the constant natural force which permeates the universe. As a natural phenomenon it is closely linked to man and this is imagined in a most poetic way in Long Day's Journey into Night. Edmund says:

I dissolved in the sea, became white sails and flying spray, became beauty and rhythm, became moonlight and the ship and the high dim-starred sky.

(Act Four)

and he also says to his father:

It was a great mistake, my being born a man. I would have been much more successful as a seagull or a fish.

(Act Four)

This close feeling for the sea is, for O'Neill, an indication of man's natural origins and his harmony with his natural surroundings. The stress here is on unity and harmony in the universe and there is the suggestion of constant flow and movement in the choice of the sea as a symbol for the concept of eternity. Atomic theory is again suggested by Michael Cape in Welded when he is talking about his relationship with his wife, and attempting to analyse their love. Unity is once more the basis for his explanation:

It began with the splitting of a cell a hundred million years ago into you and me, leaving an eternal yearning to become one life again.

(Act One)

He and his wife have striven, he says, to regain unity - that of their souls corresponding to that of man and his natural inheritance and surroundings. The rhythm of the universe is also repeated in Lazarus Laughed where the 'quivering flecks of rhythm' become in Welded:

... forms of our two bodies coalescing into one form; rhythm of our separate lives beating against each other, forming slowly the one rhythm - the life of Us - our life created by us - outside, beyond, above!

(Act One)

The rhythm of life, both natural and human, is the essence of the use O'Neill makes in the plays of a cyclical expression and explanation of recurrence. Cyclical recurrence is given its most definite form by Cybel at the end of The Great God Brown. After the death of Brown she attempts to explain the continuity of man and his life and death in natural terms:

Always spring comes again bearing life! Always again! Always, always for ever again! Spring again! - life again! - summer and autumn and death and peace again! but always, always, love and conception and birth and pain again - spring bearing the intolerable chalice of life again! - bearing the glorious crown of life again!

(Act Four Scene Two)

This is an ecstatic declaration of the cyclical aspect of recurrence; everything is linked together, man and nature, and all is reborn and recurs when spring appears. Cybel, as the mythological Earth Mother, is the most appropriate figure to voice this explanation which owes as much to Greek mythology as it does to Nietzsche.

Cybel's expression of recurrence is very different from either Reuben's or Lazarus's, but it can be seen that they are all trying to express a belief in the great life force which governs man's existence and, to a certain extent, his actions. In Lazarus Laughed there is a description of Miriam which is very like the outburst by Cybel:

... eternal acceptance of the compulsion of motherhood, the inevitable cycle of love into pain into joy, and new love into separation and pain again and the loneliness of age.

(Act One Scene One)

All this is meant to be revealed in Miriam's mask and it again shows O'Neill's concern with cyclical regeneration. The description in the stage direction of Miriam as a symbol, a 'statue of Woman, makes the link between the natural movement of the season and life and motherhood

expressed through pain and joy, constantly dreaming of the child at the breast. There are many references in O'Neill's plays to the 'Mother' as being part of a controlling force (see Chapter VII) but it is necessary to note that the mother figure is the most important factor in ensuring the continuation and continuity of mankind and the constant regeneration of any species, although in Lazarus Laughed this role is more clearly expressed by the Dionysian figure of Lazarus himself. He is portrayed as the embodiment of cyclical growth and change and decay that is common to both man and nature and is described as

... the soul of the recurring seasons, of living and dying as processes of eternal growth, of the wine of life stirring forever the sap and the blood and loam of things.

(Act Two Scene One)

Here there is emphasis on the connection between the natural and the human in that sap is essentially a plant constituent, blood is human and loam serves to nurture and ensure growth and development and all are part of Dionysus. The portrayal of Lazarus as such a Dionysiac figure is another manifestation of O'Neill's concern to show unity and recurrence in the plays.

This intention is further explored in Desire Under the Elms, where the elms themselves are a symbol for the actions and characterisations in the play. In the introduction O'Neill states:

Two enormous elms are on each side of the house. They bend their trailing branches down over the roof - they appear to protect and at the same time subdue; there is a sinister maternity in their aspect, a crushing, jealous absorption. When the wind does not keep them astir, they develop from their intimate contact with the life of man in the house an appalling humaneness. They brood oppressively over the house, they are like exhausted women resting their sagging breasts and hands and hair on its roof, and when it rains their tears trickle down monotonously and rot on the shingles.

The characters are portrayed as not only being close to the earth but also part of it, and are governed by the same natural forces that control the processes of living and dying in the agricultural sense. This is especially true of old Ephraim Cabot who is inextricably connected with his farm, the farm that he had tried to escape from and been drawn back to, to put his life into the stony ground. He is affected by the seasons in the same way that the land and the crops that he cares for are, and this is clearly shown when his son is describing the old man's journey away from the farm which had happened some two months before the play opens. Simeon reports Ephraim as saying:

I been hearin' the hens cluckin' an' the roosters
crowin' all the durn day. I been listenin' t' the
cows lowin' an' everythin' else kickin' up till I
can't stand it no more. It's spring an' I'm feelin'
damned.

(Part I Scene 2)

and Simeon describes his departure:

I was finishin' ploughin', it was spring an' May an'
sunset an' gold in the West, an' he druv off into it.

(Part I Scene 2)

Ephraim is, as he says, like the old prophets looking for God's message in the spring, but in fact he is getting old and is subject to the same wish for new life and regeneration as is the earth and the natural world around him. He feels that there should be a new life and a new beginning as he proves by coming back with Abbie. He says to her 'I was growin' old in the spring.' (Part II Scene 2) This is, of course, looked upon rather differently by his sons who consider that 'he knew plumb well he was goin' whorin', the stinkin' old hypocrite'. (Part I Scene 3) Nevertheless O'Neill wanted to convey that Ephraim's life is interlinked with nature and the movement and repetition of the seasons, in spite of his sons' cynicism. His closeness to the farm is amply demonstrated when he says to Abbie:

Sometimes ye air the farm and sometimes the farm be yew. That's why I clove to ye in my loneliness. Me and the farm has got t' beget a son.

(Part II Scene 2)

This necessity for a son is important in terms of securing the possession of the farm, but it is interesting that Ephraim looks upon Abbie and himself as being part of the whole surroundings - he and the farm are one, both subject to the same natural forces. His son Simeon, although he hates the farm and the hard work he has been forced to do on it for many years, also expresses the same feeling of unity between himself and the soil. After the two elder brothers have decided to leave for California Simeon says:

Waal - ye've thirty years o' me buried in ye - spread out over ye - blood an' bone an' sweat - rotted away - fertilizin' ye richin' yer soul - prime manure, by God, that's what I bin t' ye!

(Part I Scene 3)

Here, in spite of the hatred, is a closeness with the land and it shows O'Neill using the idea of human sweat as a natural ingredient to nurture the soil, very much as he does in the description of Dionysus. In Lazarus Laughed, too, there is an exhortation from Lazarus for the people to go:

Out into the woods! Upon the hills! Cities are prisons wherein man locks himself from life! Out with you under the sky!

(Act Two Scene One)

indicating that only in natural surroundings can man be close to the true force which governs his life and his environment.

Ephraim has real closeness with the animals, especially the cows. He goes

Down whar it's restful - whar it's warm - down t' the barn. I kin talk to the cows. They know. They know the farm an' me. They'll give me peace.

(Part II Scene 2)

He does this on two crucial occasions in the play - the night that Abbie and Eben express their passion, drawn together through the wall of their adjoining rooms, and later on the night of the party to celebrate the birth of their child. When events are not following the correct, natural pattern, when there is an indication that man has gone against nature, Ephraim takes refuge with the animals. This link with the cows shows a direct relationship between man and his surroundings and it is taken from Thus Spake Zarathustra where Zarathustra is himself comforted by the cows and discovers a man, the Voluntary Beggar, in their midst, listening to them:

Already half the morning I have been addressing them;
and now they were on the point of giving me their
answer ... For we should learn from them one thing:
to ruminare.

Zarathustra says that the cows 'are thy dearest friends and teachers' and even goes as far as stating 'The kingdom of heaven is with the cows.'

(The Voluntary Beggar) In Zarathustra the cows perform the same function as they do in Desire Under the Elms. The Voluntary Beggar has used the cows in the same way as Ephraim - as a refuge from a society which did not accept him. The cows have not only given him refuge but guidance and Ephraim, like Zarathustra, maintains that 'They know how t' sleep. They're teachin' me.' (Part II Scene 4)

There is a description of Simeon and the brothers in this play when they are eating:

The three eat in silence for a moment, the two elder
as naturally unrestrained as beasts of the field.

(Part I Scene 2)

Unlike Eben, who does not have such a contented and close relationship with the earth the two brothers are as natural as the animals and their

surroundings. Engel, in his book The Haunted Heroes of Eugene O'Neill (13) maintains that the characters in this play are 'reduced' to animals but this is certainly not so. The Cabots are part of their environment, subject to the same influences, and O'Neill is trying to show the unity of man and nature, he is certainly not degrading his characters in likening them to animals. All the men describe both Min and Abbie in natural and animal terms:

She's like the night, she's soft n' warm, her eyes kin
wink like a star, her mouth's wa'm, her arms're wa'm,
she smells like a wa'm ploughed field...

(Part I Scene 2)

and there is Abbie's speech of enticement to Eben:

Hain't the sun strong an' hot? Ye kin feel it burnin'
into the earth - Nature - makin' thin's grow - bigger
an' bigger - burnin' inside ye - makin' ye want t'
grow - into somethin' else - til ye're jined with it
- an' it's your'n ..

(Part II Scene 1)

The play is full of expressions of an animal nature. Eben describes himself as a 'dumb ox' and Abbie is a 'cow', and at the celebration party Ephraim uses such comparisons as 'like a flock o' goats', 'cacklin' like a lot o' wet hens' and he describes himself as getting 'ripe on the bough'. The use of natural vocabulary serves to emphasise the link between the characters in this play and their farming lives. Their descriptions are natural, and far from lessening their credibility as Engel maintains, the vocabulary is appropriate. After all, such men close to the soil would not use any other form of description. O'Neill has cleverly created a play which is most realistic in terms of his characters and their speech and expression, but more than just a description of a New England farm in 1850. He manages to create, by the title

(13) Engel, Edwin A. The Haunted Heroes of Eugene O'Neill Harvard University Press, 1953

and the introductory description of the elms to be used in the stage set, an underlying atmosphere and connection with the life force of nature as it affects man.

In a very different play from Desire Under the Elms, The Fountain, O'Neill comes closest to a dramatic exposition of Nietzsche's theory of eternal recurrence and unity. Rather than simply making references to Nietzsche's work, in this play O'Neill creates a fountain which with its ever-flowing water is both an integral part of the action of the play and a symbol for unity, eternity and recurrence. The presence of the fountain is established at the start of the play when O'Neill states in the stage directions that there is silence in the deserted courtyard except for the splash of a fountain. The audience is thus introduced to the fountain before any of the characters appear and this is in keeping with the significance that it has in the play. The audience is also immediately introduced to one of the main functions of the fountain in the courtyard, as of all the others in the play, when Aswad moodily and bitterly states:

The waters of the fountain fall - but ever they rise again, Sir Spaniard, Such is the decree of destiny.

(Scene One)

The eternal rising and falling of the water is one of the most significant features in this play, as it is symbolic of eternal recurrence, and O'Neill develops this initial statement at great length later on, other fountains in other courtyards constantly re-emphasising the theme. From the fountain in the Governor's Palace at Porto Rico, in the Dominican monastery where a 'crude little home-made fountain' is in the centre, to the quintessential scene where the spring in the forest becomes the most important 'gigantic fountain, whose waters arched with rainbows seem to join earth and sky, forming a shimmering veil' (Scene Four) the audience

constantly has before it the central symbol of the play and the great scene is the one which is most expressive and significant for both Nietzsche's and O'Neill's belief in the unity and eternal recurrence of man and nature.

In Thus Spake Zarathustra there is a reference to a spring in the section called 'The Night Song', described later by Nietzsche as being Dionysian.

(14) This, as well as the folk myth of the fountain of youth, possibly contributed to O'Neill's idea for this play:

Night it is: now talk louder all springing wells.
And my soul is a springing well.
Night it is: only now all songs of the loving awake.
And my soul is the song of a loving one.

In the following section, 'The Dance Song' Zarathustra and his disciples go into the forest in search of a well and it is there that they discover the dancing girls and Zarathustra tells of his meeting with the seductive Life. In addition to possible Nietzschean inspiration there is the play The Spring written by George Cram Cook, also revealing a Nietzschean influence. Cook's play, produced disastrously in 1921 while O'Neill was writing The Fountain, is heavily mystical and deals with a magic spring in a forest showing the link between an Indian tribe and its descendants. The emphasis is on the continuation of the souls of the people through different generations and contains such lines as:

Does each soul connect with every other?
Am I in some way one with every man?

and the young prophet in the play says:

If we felt this hidden oneness of all men
A keen new sense of the identity of human beings -
that is the heart of a great new living religion.
The beauty of the world is infinite. (15)

(14) Nietzsche, Friedrich Ecce Homo 'Thus Spake Zarathustra' Section 8

(15) Cook op. cit.

The play, although based on an American Indian legend rather than a South American one, does contain many of the philosophical ideas which O'Neill makes use of in The Fountain. Whether the play itself contributed, or whether the interchange of ideas with Cook stimulated O'Neill it is difficult to say, but it is certain that Cook was fascinated by eternal recurrence and wrote numerous essays and articles about the unity of the universe and the relationship between man and nature, so it may well be that O'Neill was not only directly influenced by Nietzsche but that he had a further source of ideas and theories on recurrence from Cook.

The quest of Don Juan for the fountain has many interwoven strands, but in his search to regain youth he discovers much more about himself and the nature of the universe, expressing in dramatic form many aspects of Nietzsche's theory of recurrence and unity. At the beginning of the play the tale told by the Moor about a legendary fountain is the first mention of the theme of eternal youth:

This is the Fountain of Youth he said. The wise men of that far-off land have known it many ages. They make it their last pilgrimage when sick with years and weary of their lives. Here they drink and the years drop from them like a worn-out robe. Body and mind know youth again, and these young men, who had been old, leap up and join the handmaid's dance.

(Scene One)

The belief in such a fountain has its origin in the tales of Alexander the Great whose army was said to have bathed in such a magic stream and been restored to youth, and it became subsequently widespread, the fountain supposedly being situated in the Bahamas after the discovery of America. O'Neill uses the granting of authority to Juan Ponce de Leon in 1512 to enable him to discover and claim the island on which the fountain was supposed to exist, as the basis for the play, but O'Neill's Juan makes

his search together with a conquering army attempting to find trade routes for Cathay in order to enhance the wealth and glory of Spain. Against this partly fictional historical background, O'Neill creates a character who finds that his compulsion to be rejuvenated turns into a revelation of a new belief and an understanding and experience of life and the natural world expressed through unity and recurrence, a contrast to the powerful and repressive nature of Spanish Roman Catholic society.

The dreamer in Juan, which from the start of the play has been in conflict with the man of action, gradually comes to predominate, especially with the advent of Beatriz. When she appears he has convinced himself that he is too old to carry on the search for Cathay, but his first view of her revives all his old dreams. He sees her through the waters of the fountain in the courtyard and imagines that she is the spirit of the fountain as well as being the replica of the woman he loved in his youth. There is therefore a double emphasis on the fountain as the source of youth and this scene links Beatriz inextricably with the fountain and so it becomes the symbol of youth for Juan as well as a symbol of recurrence. The awareness that he is an old man makes him want to stay in Porto Rico and attempt to recapture his youth there in his love for Beatriz, but soon there is the realisation, coupled with the political pressures, that to actually venture to find the spring and recapture his health and strength is the only way to win Beatriz. He clutches at Nana's promise of such a spring in his native land and this gives Juan the final impetus to sail. The search at this point in the play is still almost exclusively for the fountain of youth, with all other considerations such as wealth, glory for Spain, and fame now abandoned, although the spiritual disillusionment and revulsion against the Spanish misuse of religion is present.

During the long voyage Juan is deceived many times by Nano in the search for the spring of youth and he constantly thinks of Beatriz as being one and the same as the fountain. She is the spirit of youth and beauty and Juan always expresses himself in poetically beautiful images when thinking of her:

Your spirit inspires all things wherever there is beauty. I hear you call in the song of the waves, the wind is in your breath, the trees reach out with your arms, the dawn and sunset promise with your lips. You are everywhere and nowhere - part of all life but mine.

(Scene Nine)

This is more than just a lyrical, over-romantic fancy of an old man because it does reflect the tale of the Moor told at the beginning of the play:

It is a sacred grove where all things live in the old harmony they knew before men came. Beauty resides there and is articulate. Each sound is music, and every sight a vision.

(Scene One)

Here Nature and Beauty are one, as is Juan's vision of Beatriz and the fountain.

The unification of Beatriz and the natural world is linked to another theme in Juan's search - that of his lost faith. The presence of nature in this play links a religious quest and a quest for youth. The action of the so-called civilised monks in looting, destroying and murdering the Indians as part of an attempt to convert these natural beings, as well as the monks' obvious greed for wealth, has horrified Juan and he loses faith in God and the Roman Catholic Church. The discussions with Luis and the questioning of the motives of the monks are all connected with Juan's search, because in losing his faith he has come to place far more belief in the existence of the fountain than in the traditional

religion. He says that he can no longer believe in Christ but:

I believe in Nature. Nature is part of God. She
can perform miracles.

(Scene Six)

and he also states that:

I have prayed to Him in vain.
Let me be damned for ever if Nature will only grant
me youth upon this earth again.

(Scene Six)

This change in Juan's belief has come about because of his love for Beatriz as well as his revulsion against the underhand, greedy and murderous actions of the monks. He comes to the conclusion that 'There is no God but Love - no heaven but youth' (Scene Six). For Juan the 'myths' and legends of the poets are as powerful and acceptable as the 'myths' of Luis's religion and so the fountain becomes not only a symbol for youth but also a symbol for a natural religion.

The concept of religion as a natural force is directly connected with the teaching of Nietzsche. Because he had stated that the Christian God was dead and that the process of eternal recurrence would carry on in the universe without the guidance or control of an omnipotent God, he came to the conclusion that god existed in all things and so developed a pantheistic view of religion, whereby God became identified with the forces within man and nature. This idea of unity and recurrence is what O'Neill is attempting to portray in The Fountain in Juan's acceptance of the natural world as an embodiment of faith, but O'Neill, as in other plays, cannot fully dispense with the Christian God. Juan does nominally attempt to embrace the worship of nature but there is doubt and confusion in his mind. This, of course, is a very dramatic reflection of the dilemma of O'Neill himself, in his attempt to reject the Church in favour of Nietzsche's philosophy.

When he thinks he is dying Juan prays to the Catholic God and feels that God is invoking justice upon him for his desertion:

True, I prayed for a miracle that was not thine.
Let me be damned then, but let me believe in thy kingdom.
(Scene Ten)

He asks for a test and as if in answer the figure appears in the fountain. Juan realises that God is present, but it is not the God to whom he had prayed. The symbolic figures who appear in such a theatrically effective manner indicate that all faiths are one and that the fountain has become a natural symbol for pantheism. As the fountain is a natural phenomenon it is only fitting that it connects the idea of a natural god with that of the Christian God.

Eternal recurrence and unity are introduced to this scene in the forest when Juan prays to the spirit of Eternal Youth in the fountain and has the revelation that age and youth are not two distinct and separate states: 'Age - Youth - They are the same rhythm of eternal life!' (Scene Ten). O'Neill is using the characters of Beatriz and Juan to suggest that there is an unbroken continuity in man, that there is no real beginning and ending of life, everything is connected and flows as does the water in the fountain. Death loses its power, as it does in Lazarus Laughed, and the figure of Death in the fountain becomes that of Beatriz as her voice comes out of the waters and the spring flowers into the gigantic flowing fountain. The old hag that Juan had previously despised is also transformed into the form of Beatriz and again Juan realises that 'Death is no more'; youth and age and life and death are all part of a great cycle that constantly flows and recurs like the waters of the fountain. This is also emphasised by the appearance of Juan's nephew later in the play. He is the image of Juan in his youth as Beatriz is of Maria, and

so O'Neill is attempting to show that there is a repetition in things. The two fall in love in the same way as their predecessors had done and although they cannot be considered as a dramatic representation of identical recurrence, they are visually so alike and have the same qualities of character as their predecessors that they can be said to represent not only youth but living examples of recurrence.

Juan therefore has come to the understanding in the mystical scene in the forest that not only are age and youth one, but also that God and Nature are one and the fountain becomes:

That from which all life springs and to which it must
return - God!

(Scene Ten)

The eternal return of the waters is paralleled with the eternal return of the universe, all things are forever flowing on and nothing dies except to be reborn again:

Fountain Everlasting, time without end.
All things dissolve, flow on eternally.

(Scene Ten)

In this play, as in Days Without End, O'Neill cannot separate the Christian God from that of pantheism and the natural world and so it is a conflict which he was obviously much concerned with. In both John Loving and Juan Ponce de Leon there is a yearning for understanding, for awareness of a holistic view of the universe, as Juan says:

O God, Fountain of Eternity, Thou are the All in One,
the One in All - the Eternal Becoming which is Beauty.

(Scene Ten)

The Beauty is Beatriz - she is the epitome of beauty both natural and individual - as well as being a symbol of youth, and so the last speech of Juan is an affirmation of all that he has realised. All that is beautiful and natural is part of God and part of mankind:

He is resolved into the thousand moods of beauty that make up happiness - the colour of sunset, of tomorrow's dawn, breath of the great Trade wind - sunlight on grass, an insect's song, the rustle of leaves, an ant's ambitions.

(Scene Eleven)

This can be compared to the speech by Dion Anthony:

Dissolve into dew - into silence - into night - into earth - into space - into peace - into meaning - into joy - into God - into the Great God Pan.

(Prologue)

and Edmund's in Long Day's Journey

I have had the same experience. Became the sun, the hot sand, green seaweed anchored to a rock, swaying in the tide. Like a saint's vision of beatitude.

(Act Four)

This feeling of being at one with the natural surroundings is the same as that expressed most atmospherically by Nietzsche in Thus Spake Zarathustra in the section 'At Noon'. O'Neill noted this section (see Appendix) and copied the quotation:

Just what is least, gentlest, lightest, the rustling of a lizard, a breath, a moment, a twinkling of the eye - little maketh the quality of the best happiness.

and also: O Happiness, O Happiness. Wilt thou sing O my soul.

In The Fountain Juan says as his dying words:

I am that song! One must accept, absorb, give back, become oneself a symbol!

(Scene Eleven)

As the fountain has become a symbol for God and nature and recurrence, so Juan becomes, with his death, part of the unity of the natural world. Zarathustra's soul, too, is part of the perfect world at the time of noon and he asks the sky:

When drinkest thou this drop of dew that hath fallen down on all things earthly? When drinkest thou this strange soul? When, well of eternity? Thou gay shuddering abyss of noon. When drinkest thou my soul back into thyself?

O'Neill's direct use of this quotation can be seen in Juan's last words, not at noon but at sunset,

I have found my Fountain! O Fountain of Eternity,
take back this drop, my soul!

(Scene Eleven)

The transposition of the drop of dew to the drop of water of the mystic fountain does nothing to detract from the essential idea that on his death Juan has become absorbed into the great life force which, like the waters of the fountain, flows on forever and always returns.

There is a direct and consistent parallel between Juan's development of belief and realisation and the Fountain Song which recurs throughout this play. Like the fountain itself, it is a composite of the many themes which are present in the play, and shows the development of Juan's awareness. The initial song, sung by Luis, states that Love is a flower, forever blooming, and Life is the fountain striving to reach the heavens but:

Failing, falling,
Ever returning

The waters of the fountain, which is Life, return

To kiss the earth that the flower may live.

It is Love and Life which are the considerations at the beginning of the play for both Luis and Juan and the song echoes this. When, in the forest, the voice comes out of the fountain there is a change in the song. Life has become a field forever growing and now:

Beauty is a fountain.
Forever flowing

and the idea is conveyed that it is Beauty that can penetrate the mystery of existence, just as Juan felt that Beatriz could. Beauty now flows

Upward beyond the source of sunshine
Upward beyond the azure heaven
Born of God but
Ever returning
To merge with the earth that the field may live.

(Scene Ten)

Here there is the introduction of God and the sense that it is Beauty which is the life-giving water, connecting God and the field of Life. Again Beatriz's song emphasises the unity of all things, for after Juan has made the exultant proclamation that all is united:

O aspiring fire of life, sweep the dark soul of man!
Let us burn in thy unity!

Beatriz's voice rises 'triumphantly' singing

God is a flower
Forever blooming
God is a fountain
Forever flowing.

which is exactly the pantheistic concept in which Nietzsche believed through Dionysus, a god who is part of the natural world and not an omnipotent figure.

The final song, sung by Beatriz and Juan's nephew, shows the linking together of all these previous songs and is indicative of Juan's last realisation:

Love is a flower
Forever blooming
Beauty a fountain
For ever flowing
Upward into the source of sunshine
Upward into the azure heaven
One with God but
Ever returning
To kiss the earth that the flower may live.

This is the final exposition of unity - love, beauty, life, are all one with God and ever return to ensure the continuation of the universe, like the waters of the fountain nourishing the earth.

In Marco Millions O'Neill also uses a song to express continuity and unity and it also introduces the Nietzschean symbol of man as a speck of dust turned within the sand-glass of eternity. Kukachin's song is an acceptance of her fate:

I am not.
Life is.
A cloud hides the sun.
A life is lived.
Nothing has changed.
The sun shines again.
Centuries wither into tired dust.
A new dew freshens the grass.
Somewhere this dream is being dreamed.

(Act Two Scene Three)

This song is immediately preceded by one sung by the women in which continuity is made specific in human terms:

The lover comes,
Who becomes a husband,
Who becomes a son,
Who becomes a father -

and O'Neill shows here that his interest in eternal recurrence is in the continuation of life and mankind both in personal and universal terms. Even if this recurrence is not the identical repetition envisaged by Nietzsche, O'Neill has obviously been preoccupied with it as a theory and this is perhaps most effective when he attempts to explore it in personal terms, on a specifically human scale such as in the Cycle or in Mourning Becomes Electra or even in The Great God Brown, rather than in the more abstract and experimental Lazarus Laughed or The Fountain.

In The Joyful Wisdom, Book Four, Nietzsche introduced the idea of man as dust, a mere particle in the universe and subject to eternal change. O'Neill develops this in Lazarus Laughed and deals with it in two rather different ways. Lazarus says to Caligula :

Are you a speck of dust that danced in the wind?
Laugh yes to your insignificance!

and then he goes on to reiterate the Nietzschean idea:

But as dust you are eternal change and everlasting
growth, and a high note of laughter soaring through
chaos from the deep heart of God! Be proud, O Dust!
Then you may love the stars as equals!

(Act Two Scene One)

Here Lazarus is equating man both with something which is considered as being nothing, commonplace, dust, and with the distant mysterious stars. Both appear to him as specks of matter but they are as important as man in universal terms. All are part of the universe and as such equally part of creation. Like the grains of sand in the hourglass, man is subject to the influence, changeability and effect of time and eternity. Later in the play, as Lazarus is dying, there is the chant:

Life! Eternity! Stars and dust! God's eternal laughter!

which is echoed by the Chorus:

We are stars!
We are Dust!
We are Gods!
We are laughter!

(Act Four Scene Two)

as they affirm that Lazarus's teaching has affected their view of existence.

This view of man and the elementary, insignificant-seeming particles, as minute and numerous as atoms, is further developed by O'Neill in Lazarus's speech in Act Three Scene Two

Millions of laughing stars there are around me!
And laughing dust, born once of woman on this earth,
now freed to dance! New stars are born of dust eternally!
The old, grown mellow with God, bursts into flaming
seed! The fields of infinite space are sown

Here dust is allied to the cyclical concept of recurrence, like the natural world which needs earth to nurture the seed, man begins as a speck-like form and is born, only to die and become dust and once more part of the universe. This can be compared to the words of the service for the burial of the dead which emphasises man's reduction to dust and his hope of resurrection:

.... earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to
eternal life

but in the play O'Neill has made a shift from a resurrection through belief in the Christian God to that of a new life through the natural process of growth and recurrence. Again there is O'Neill's mixture of beliefs as there was in The Fountain, but there is certainly a difference between attempting to portray the change and development of individual belief in Juan, even if dramatically experimental in terms of its illustration, and creating a prophet-like figure given to great declamations and surrounded by a Chorus whose words are perhaps more significant in their sound and rhythm than in their meaning. Nevertheless, the idea that man, the individual, is not annihilated by physical death but merely becomes as a speck of dust to be recycled and reborn is prevalent in Lazarus Laughed and is almost certainly part of O'Neill's desire to create the Zarathustra-like figure of Lazarus and to portray Nietzsche's ideas on stage.

In the structure of some of his plays O'Neill also attempts to emphasise recurrence and there is an indication that this can be done by bringing the action of the play round in a full circle, so demonstrating that that everything will repeat itself again. This is especially evident in The Great God Brown where the Epilogue is in many ways a repetition of the Prologue. In the Prologue Mrs Brown is talking about her youth:

The nights are so much colder than they used to be!
Think of it, I once went moonlight bathing in June
when I was a girl - but the moonlight was so warm and
beautiful in those days

and Mrs Anthony says:

It's cold. June didn't use to be so cold. I remember
the June when I was carrying you, Dion - three months
before you were born.

In the Epilogue Margaret, who has become a mother figure for both Dion and Billy, makes an identical speech to Mrs Brown, with Mrs Anthony's added at the end:

But the nights now are so much colder than they used to be! Think of it, I went in for moonlight bathing in June when I was a girl. It was so warm and beautiful in those days. I remember the Junes when I was carrying you boys

The scenes are set on the same spot on the pier and not only is the scene repeated but the sons of Dion and Margaret are about to embark on their careers and relationships as were Dion, Billy and Margaret in the Prologue. This surely is an attempt at a dramatic exposition of the theory of recurrence, as well as O'Neill's concentration the mother figure as the one who ensures continuity and unity.

In Strange Interlude there is also repetition of structure, but it is not so exact. At the beginning of the play we hear about Gordon Shaw having flown away to war and his death leaving Nina behind, and at the end of the play there is a similar situation. Nina has created her son Gordon to be a replica of his spiritual, if not biological, father and once again Nina is left alone. Gordon and his fiancée, Madeline, fly away and Nina re-lives the original situation:

Gordon is dead, Father. I've just had a cable. What I mean is, he flew away to another life my son Gordon, Charlie. So we're alone again - just as we used to be.

(Act Nine)

and there is an echo of the women in Marco Millions when Nina says:

Sons are always their fathers. They pass through the mother to become their father again. The Sons of the Father have all been failures!

(Act Nine)

So, O'Neill has again indicated the theory of repetition and recurrence, but in this play there is not the same repetition as in The Great God Brown, merely a neat ending which serves to complete the characterisation of Nina and round off the story.

The sense of continuity has another form in O'Neill's plays, but it is not always so obvious. O'Neill is interested in the relationship of the past and future, much in the same way as Nietzsche was in Thus Spake Zarathustra. In 'Of the Vision and the Riddle' there is the discussion about past and future at the gate 'Moment', where there is no distinct past and future. O'Neill has references to this at several points in the plays, not always as specifically stated as his other borrowings from Nietzsche. In a letter to the New York Times, published in 1921, O'Neill stated his purpose in the ending of Anna Christie: (16)

I wanted the audience to leave with a deep feeling of life flowing on, of the past which is never the past - but always the birth of the future.

and this feeling is very much in line with Nietzsche. Anna says when she first lives on the coal barge:

It's like I'd come home after a long visit away some place. It all seems like I'd been here before lots of times - on boats - in this same fog.

(Act Two)

Unlike Chris, her father, she does not see the sea as a malevolent force but as something to which she belongs and, without a conscious memory of her past, feels that she has lived this way before. For her the past is linked to the present day by the life force which connects the old and the new. O'Neill noted (17) the Nietzschean proclamation:

Expelled ye shall be from all father's and forefather's lands!

and this is what Chris had tried to do with Anna - she was not to be subjected to the influence of the sea and so was sent away to the farm in

(16) From a letter to the New York Times December 18 1921 Reproduced in Bogard, Travis Contour of Time Oxford University Press, 1972

(17) See Appendix

St Paul. However, he could not fight the natural force, the continuity which exists, and so Anna is brought back to the sea with a feeling that her past and present are indistinguishable. O'Neill wrote in a letter to Mary Mullett (18):

Our emotions are instinctive. They are the result not only of our individual experiences but of the experiences of the whole human race, back through the ages.

and this, too, states that we are not individuals but part of the history of man, universally and individually.

Tyrone, in A Moon for the Misbegotten, makes the most definitive statement about the past and future when he says:

There is no present or future - only the past happening over and over again - now. You can't get away from it.

(Act Three Scene One)

This seems to be the essence of recurrence as O'Neill sees it. Situations will happen over and over again because the individual is so linked up with his own heritage and with the universe as a whole that he is part of the life process, and whether O'Neill has chosen to express the recurrence through an exploration of electricity, atomic theory, inheritance, the natural regeneration of the seasons and the soil, or as a structural device within the plays, it is certain that Nietzsche's variety of ideas and theories to explain unity and recurrence have been absorbed and developed dramatically in ways which appealed to O'Neill and which complement his use of other aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy.

(18) Mullet, Mary B. The American Magazine, November 1922 p.34

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIALIST

In both Thus Spake Zarathustra and The Joyful Wisdom Nietzsche makes many references to socialists and the characteristics of socialism. He was appalled by the spread of socialism in the latter part of the nineteenth century, which he saw as a specifically German movement initiated by Karl Marx, and subsequently an undesirably pervasive European movement. As a result of the Communist League meeting in London in 1847, the Manifesto of the Communist Party had been published, and this, with the revolutions of 1848 and the emergence of radical political groups throughout Europe, had affected the views of both the working people and the intellectuals. Marx published Das Capital in 1867 and by the time that Nietzsche began writing in the early 1870's there were many followers of the theories of the abolition of class distinction and the removal of the capitalist 'masters' who exploited the masses of 'slaves' who worked in the factories that had been produced by the Industrial Revolution.

Although Nietzsche was disturbed by the spread of socialism, and the fear of revolution predicted by many of his contemporaries, he was not interested in politics per se. The socialist ideals of equality of man and the abolition of certain strata in society were anathema to him, but this reaction did not come in a way that could be said to be politically practical. Nietzsche, like Marx, was concerned with the individual and his relationship to the rest of society and, for the solitary and detached philosopher, the solution to the problem of what he saw as a decaying European civilisation was the conception of the 'superman', an outstanding individual who would eventually re-shape society and further the human race through the exertion of his unique will and power. Nietzsche felt that Marx's doctrines would negate individual progress, evolve a herd mentality, and so ensure the ruin of mankind by the ultimate destruction

of any great or powerful figures who could lead the way to the evolution of a new breed of human being with totally new values. Ironically, Karl Marx is now regarded by many as being such a man, but Nietzsche saw socialism and communism as being the means of destroying any individuality and replacing it with mediocrity and an even more debased set of values than those which already existed. Although there is no evidence to support Nietzsche's close reading of Marx, there is no doubt that he was fully aware of the effect of Marx and his followers on contemporary thought. After all, in 1848 Wagner himself had been forced to flee from Germany after making a speech at the Dresden Fatherland Association which was attempting to achieve a republic, and in Paris he associated with many socialist writers. His faith in the possibility of communism had, however, vanished by the time he met Nietzsche in 1868 and they both shared a passion for Schopenhauer which fuelled Nietzsche's hero-worship for the great composer even more. Nietzsche's many references to socialism are hostile; he was determined to condemn the socialist movement and all that it advocated, rather than to provide specifically political answers to a defined socialist or communist argument. There is, however, evidence of O'Neill reading Marx. He stated that Shaw introduced him to 'Marx, Engels, Kropotkin' (1) and he is said to have read Marx's analysis of capitalism while working in New London as a reporter. Corwin Willson, a fellow student at Harvard, claims 'O'Neill and I discussed politics, and he was in the same boat as I was, wavering between extreme Marxian (sic) socialism on the one hand, extreme Nietzschean individualism on the other - although he admitted to me he leaned strongest in the latter direction.' (2) This conflict within the young O'Neill is shown in the

(1) Alexander op. cit. p.96

(2) ibid. p.195

early plays, where he seems to favour one particular stance, usually socialism, but then tempers it by showing the individual and his need to achieve a rather different awareness of his place in society. This is particularly true in The Hairy Ape, where the socialist argument is expressed by the seaman, Long, and represented by the IWW (International Workers of the World), whilst the Nietzschean idea of individualism is explored through the character of Yank.

In the earlier play, Fog, there is a discussion of socialism and capitalism, the principles of each being discussed by the Poet and the Business man, and in The Personal Equation organised revolutionary action is in conflict with personal desire. In Servitude O'Neill makes use of the terminology of Nietzsche in his attempt to question the value of individualism and the superman, although Servitude is far from being a 'political' play. It is not until the later plays that O'Neill specifically attacks capitalism, this attack taking very different forms in Marco Millions and More Stately Mansions. However, the subject matter is treated in a more oblique and sophisticated manner than the early pronouncements on socialism and capitalism that are made by Long, but O'Neill does return to an expose of socialism in The Iceman Cometh some twenty years later.

O'Neill's adoption of socialism is interesting in that socialism is totally opposed to the philosophy of Nietzsche. Having been 'converted' to Nietzsche in almost all of the main aspects of Nietzschean philosophy, O'Neill chose to depart from him in this instance, although Corwin Willson's comment indicates that there was a certain amount of inner conflict. Nietzsche's abhorrence of socialism is stated in Thus Spake Zarathustra where he describes the preachers of equality as tarantulas, who advocate equality out of jealousy and vengeance, directed against those who are

more powerful and wealthy. In the section called 'Of Tarantulae' he states :

"Vengeance will we use, and insult, against all who are not like us" - thus do the tarantula-hearts pledge themselves.

Nietzsche managed to work out an argument that maintained that the socialists sought power purely for self-gratification and he claims that they used the 'Will to Equality' as their excuse:

"And 'Will to Equality' - that itself shall henceforth be the name of virtue; and against all that hath power will we raise an outcry!" Ye preachers of equality, the tyrant-frenzy of impotence crieth thus in you for 'equality': your most secret tyrant longings disguise themselves thus in virtuous words! Fretted conceit and suppressed envy: in you break they forth as flame and frenzy of vengeance.

Zarathustra will have no contact with the tarantulas, they who have the 'hangman and the sleuth-hound' peering out from behind them, and whom Nietzsche considered to be 'formerly the best world-maligners and heretic burners' (3) For him, the socialists are nothing more than another breed of the power-hungry individuals that have characterised world history.

As far as Nietzsche is concerned, men are not and never will be equal. He cannot see that there would ever be any justification for attempting to create equality; even if it could be achieved, it would not be desirable as it would simply mean a reinforcement of the mass morality and mentality which he despised. Zarathustra states:

With these preachers of equality will I not be mixed up and confounded. For thus speaketh justice unto me: 'Men are not equal.' And neither shall they become so!

(Of Tarantulae)

The tarantulas, in their web of lies, are jealous of those in power and claim that they wish to achieve 'justice' for all. They bite and leave

(3) Nietzsche, Friedrich Thus Spake Zarathustra T. N. Foulis (Edinburgh) 1909 'Of Tarantulae'

a 'black scab' which poisons their fellow men, infecting them with the notion of equality.

Previously, in The Joyful Wisdom, Nietzsche had made a more reasoned and far less imaginative analysis of socialism and the socialist's desire to destroy those in power. He considered that there was no real distinction between the oppressed and their oppressors, between the working and the capitalist classes. He despised all men for their mediocrity and small-mindedness and so Marxist theory had no real relevance for him. To Nietzsche, the suggestion that the united working classes should replace their capitalist oppressors was untenable since all men were inferior beings.

He felt that a new society could never be built in this fashion, for he believed that the overthrown capitalist would be replaced by the power-hungry worker, whose values and behaviour would become the same as those he had previously criticised. Nietzsche saw all men as having been de-moralised and degraded to the level of beasts. This, he believed, had been brought about by the adoption and adaptation of the Christian religion which had, in Nietzsche's eyes, caused men to lose any concept of nobility and individuality and had enslaved them to a worthless set of moral values. He considered this to be particularly true in the newly industrialised Europe of his own time, where individuals sold their labour and themselves yet, at the same time, despised the purchaser who exploited their necessity. His analysis of the attitudes of many workers is perceptive, but his solution to the problem would be to create figures of nobility and greatness, for whom the workers could show respect rather than contempt, and Nietzsche felt that they would welcome the opportunity to follow such a leader.

It is curious that the subjection to powerful fear-inspiring, and even dreadful individuals, to tyrants and leaders of armies, is not at all felt so painfully as the subjection to such undistinguished and uninteresting persons as the captains of industry; in the employer the workman usually sees merely a crafty, blood-sucking dog of a man, speculating on every necessity, whose name, form, character, and reputation are altogether indifferent to him.

It is probable that the manufacturers and great magnates of commerce have hitherto lacked too much all those forms and attributes of a superior race, which alone makes persons interesting: if they had had the nobility of the nobly born in their looks and bearing, there would perhaps have been no socialism in the masses of the people.

(Book One The Joyful Wisdom
'The Lack of Noble Presence')

Nietzsche felt that the majority of men were conditioned for slavery but that in his eyes it was justified to be enslaved to an individual of superior quality - 'born to command'. In the absence of such individuals the ordinary man felt that he, too, might have a chance to rise to greatness as it had simply been chance and fortune that had created the leaders of the industrial world. As Nietzsche points out in The Joyful Wisdom, a man will justifiably reason in this way and come to the conclusion, 'Let us in our turn throw the dice! - and socialism commences.' (Book One, 40). All individuals have a desire for power, but although he advocates the achievement of a 'Will to Power' elsewhere in his work, it was to be cultivated by the 'higher men' that he wanted to create and would be totally different from what he saw as the petty desire to participate in the master-slave game. One belief that Nietzsche and Marx could be said to have in common was their assertion that it was not the individual who was at fault - he was merely shaped and conditioned by the society in which he lived. Their solutions to the social problems were, however, quite opposed. Marx felt that it was necessary to re-shape society, to alter existing social conditions and abolish class structures

in order to improve the world so that each individual could have the opportunity to realise his full potential. Nietzsche's solution was to propose that the character of the individual should be changed, his potential nobility would be built up to achieve supreme power, to breed a new type of 'superman' who would thereby be in a position to effect enormous social change, but Nietzsche never says how this was to be achieved. Nietzsche's interpretation of contemporary society may have been correct, but his remedy for change was essentially philosophical rather than practical. The statement that Marx makes in his Theses on Feuerbach could certainly be applied to Nietzsche:

Previous philosophers have merely interpreted the world; the problem, however, is to change it. (4)

Like Nietzsche, O'Neill felt strongly that the prevalent values in his own society, an America which had developed as a result of the boom in industrialisation, were wrong. His own experiences on board ship, working with many seamen who, like Paddy in The Hairy Ape and Chris in Anna Christie, had made a transition from the old sailing ships and now had to sweat in the stokeholes and engine rooms of the new steam ships, intensified his belief in the de-humanisation of man. It also appears to have made him aware of the exploitation of the working man in other areas. O'Neill felt that socialism in America had become a necessary belief as it was a reaction to the development of the vast corporations and the rise of the powerful business magnates. These men had become wealthy by using new machines and employing men who became part of the machines, with no concern shown by the remote employers for the individuality of their workers. During the period immediately after the First World War, the disparity between rich and poor was becoming increasingly apparent,

(4) Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Selected Works Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968

and there was a great deal of social unrest in America, especially among the workers who had returned from fighting only to discover that their fate was to be exploitation by wealthy business concerns, or, alternatively, that there was no job at all. The Hairy Ape was written in three weeks at the end of 1921, but as early as 1914 O'Neill had predicted the situation in his poem Fratricide, published in the New York Call.

At last a crowning victory;
Then peace. Poor heroes all unnamed
The sad-eyed remnant home from sea
Are cheered, and for a day are famed,
Then cast back into misery
With weakened bodies sick and maimed.

For they must live and they must eat;
Their families are hungry, too.
Back to the dark, foul-smelling street,
The ruthless toil begins anew
Slave for a tainted bite of meat!
The factory shambles claim their due.

Glory is weak, unwholesome fare
For those who cry for lack of bread.
The war is over; who shall care
If they be given stones instead?
With paltry pensions we shall dare
To pay the women for their dead.

(5)

During the post-war period and into the nineteen twenties, the International Workers of the World were responsible for much union activity in the United States, and clashes between the workers, their employers and the police were common both in the big cities and in the agricultural areas of America. It was the world described by John Dos Passos in The 42nd Parallel, Nineteen Nineteen and The Big Money, all published in the early thirties but dealing with the period from 1918 onwards in particular detail. John Steinbeck later depicted the power and inhumanity of 'the Company' and the plight of the ordinary working farmer in The Grapes of

(5) O'Neill, Eugene Poems 1912 - 1944 ed. Donald Gallup Jonathan Cape (London) 1980 p.43

Wrath. With the euphoria after the First World War, with Wall Street showing no sign of the collapse to come, it was a period of strong emotions and reactions on the part of the successful businessman and the poor, underprivileged workers. The young O'Neill had seen socialism as a possible salvation for America before the war and his reading of Marx was supported by the friends he made in Greenwich Village, many of whom were involved in the Provincetown Players. The group of radical thinkers and critics included Jack Reed, the war correspondent who organised a rally of workers in Madison Square Garden, wrote Ten Days that Shook the World, distinguished with a foreword by Lenin himself, and was ultimately buried in the Kremlin. Another so-called extremist was Terry Carlin, the old habitue of the Village who was a follower of Nietzsche and an exponent of anarchism and individualism, the virtues of which were always enhanced by the consumption of alcohol. In this period immediately following the Russian Revolution of 1917, there was much discussion about socialism and many attempts to organise the workers of America. The young New London reporter had found his fellows, and for a time had opted for Marx rather than Nietzsche, although Nietzschean quotations and ideas appeared in his work. The following stanzas from Fratricide show what O'Neill was advocating at the time:

What cause could be more asinine
Than yours, ye slaves of bloody toil?
Is not your bravery sublime
Beneath a tropic sun to broil
And bleed and groan - for Guggenheim!
And give your lives for - Standard Oil!

Comrades awaken to new birth!
New values on the tables write!
What is your vaunted courage worth
Unless you rise up in your might
And cry: "All workers on the earth
Are brothers and WE WILL NOT FIGHT!" (6)

(6) ibid.

The 'new values on the tables' are certainly not those that Nietzsche advocated in the section of Thus Spake Zarathustra, 'Of Old and New Tables'. O'Neill's call to the poor workers to unite and rebel is very different from the long section of Zarathustra in which Nietzsche proposes a total change in the morality and structure of society, to be brought about not by the 'comrades' but by the Superman who Zarathustra preaches will be the salvation of mankind. Nietzsche's vision is a far cry from a show of solidarity on behalf of the 'slaves of bloody toil'.

In contrast to those who were involved with the plight of the poor workers in America, there were the self-satisfied businessmen and politicians whose values are portrayed by O'Neill in The Hairy Ape, More Stately Mansions, and, to a lesser extent, in the other plays. In The Hairy Ape there is the expressionistic picture of the 'gaudy marionettes' on Fifth Avenue, with their windows full of glaring merchandise and their inability to see Yank and Long, and the portrayal of the bigoted politician in the extract from Senator Queen's speech. Mildred and her aunt are also of the politician's class, although Mildred does make some attempt in her social work to discover 'how the other half lives'; an attempt which is shown by O'Neill to be as superficial as the rest of her attitudes. It is in Senator Queen's speech, read out to Yank in jail, that O'Neill gives an accurate indication of the views of many of his contemporaries:

There is a menace existing in this country today
which threatens the vitals of the fair Republic ...
I refer to that devil's brew of rascals, jailbirds,
murderers and cut-throats who libel all honest working-
men by calling themselves the Industrial Workers of
the World; ...

For they represent an ever-present dagger pointed at
the heart of the greatest nation the world has ever
known, where all men are born free and equal, with
equal opportunities to all, where the Founding Fathers
have guaranteed to each one happiness, where Truth,
Honour, Liberty, Justice and the Brotherhood of Man
are a religion ...

(Scene VI)

This emotive and deluded speech reflects the attitude of many of O'Neill's materially successful citizens, and the point is made more astringently by the fact that both Senator Queen and Long maintain that all men are 'free and equal', when to the men in jail, as well as to O'Neill himself, this is patently a lie. In The Hairy Ape O'Neill is suggesting that both the socialists and the capitalists are misguided, for neither can understand, or provide a solution for, the ills of America at that time. Both Queen and Long believe that their cause is backed by Christianity and on this point O'Neill is following the Nietzschean assertion that the problems of society are initially caused by the corruption of the Christian doctrines. The equality of man is an illusion, and those who attempt to rectify inequality by socialism, Nietzsche suggests were merely intensifying the mistaken values of Christianity. In The Antichrist he states that 'The anarchist and the Christian have a common origin ... (7) and in The Hairy Ape O'Neill also makes a connection between the Church and socialism.

Senator Queen sees American democracy as akin to religion, the principles of which are 'absorbed with one's mother's milk , taught at our father's knee', and he considers that the IWW want to destroy the American Constitution. He states that they want to:

... tear down society, put the lowest slum in the seats of the mighty, turn Almighty God's revealed plan for the world topsy-turvy, and make our sweet and lovely civilisation a shambles, a desolation where man, God's masterpiece, would soon degenerate back to the ape!

(Scene VI)

Long, when speaking to the men in the fireman's forecastle says:

All men is born free and ekal. That's in the bleedin' Bible, maties.

(Scene I)

(7) Nietzsche, Friedrich The Antichrist T. N. Foulis (Edinburgh) 1909 Section 57

and later:

We're free and equal in the sight of God ...

(Scene IV)

Yank doesn't believe in any religion, and all his fellow seamen are cynical about Long's claims. He is told to 'join de Salvation Army', and all the men repeat the word 'God' with 'cynical mockery'. For them Christianity and socialism are much the same; neither has any practical power to improve the lot of the working man. Like Brecht in St. Joan of the Stockyards, O'Neill connects socialism with the Salvation Army, no doubt from personal observation around the wharves of New York, and Yank describes the influence of the evangelising Army in his contempt for Long's speeches:

De Bible, huh? De Cap'talist class, huh? Aw nix on dat Salvation Army-Socialist bull. Git a soap-box! Hire a hall! Come and be saved, huh? Jerk us to Jesus, huh? Aw g'wan. I've listened to lots of guys like you, see. Yuh're all wrong.

(Scene I)

After his encounter with the IWW, Yank again repeats this view of the socialists and shows how ineffectual he thinks their aims are. O'Neill wanted something more than better working conditions, although these were important. A respect for the individual, his thoughts, ideas, and beliefs was what O'Neill and the character he created in Yank wanted. For him this was the beginning of a change, not merely the levelling-out of social class by a conventional, comfortable, Christian morality.

This is expressed by Yank:

Dey're in de wrong pew - de same old bull - soapboxes and Salvation Army - no guts! Cut an hour offen de job a day and make me happy! Tree square a day, and cauliflowers in de front yard - ekal rights - a woman and kids - a lousy vote - and I'm all fixed for Jesus, huh? Aw Hell! What does dat get yuh? Dis t'ings in your inside, but it ain't your belly. Feedin' your face - sinkers and coffee - dat don't touch it. It's way down - at de bottom. Yuh can't grab it, and yuh can't stop it. It moves, and everything moves.

(Scene VII)

Yank's is the bewilderment and dissatisfaction of the individual who feels that he doesn't belong anywhere in society, and neither religion nor socialism can solve his problem. This desire for individuality is something which is intangible, deep inside him, which has to find an outlet and understanding. This 'need to belong' is the reason for Yank's actions from the moment that he realises his feeling of being a valuable part of the energy and power of the ship has been destroyed by Mildred's visit to the stokehole, and he attempts to discover who and what he really is.

O'Neill's portrayal of socialism, certainly through Long, in this play is of the text-book variety. However, any power that it has to convince an audience of socialist values is superseded by the tragedy of Yank, and, in fact, socialism in terms of the play, is shown to be a failure as it can neither improve society, nor can it provide Yank with the answers to his individual questioning. Doris Alexander (8) considers Yank to be O'Neill's 'Everyman' and in the course of the play he is seen as groping for an understanding of the world in which he finds himself, a quest prevalent in many of O'Neill's plays. Yank cannot understand that he is put in the position of an inferior being by the class structure of society. He regards his degradation as being purely a personal quarrel with Mildred and her father, in spite of Long's attempts to convince him otherwise. On Fifth Avenue Long tries to convert Yank from this personal resentment to thinking of Mildred's insult as a matter of class distinction, a concrete example of the power of the capitalist class and their attitude to those who have made their wealth possible. He says to Yank:

Yer been actin' and talkin' as if it was all a bleedin' personal matter between yer and that bloody cow.

(8) Alexander, Doris 'Eugene O'Neill as Social Critic' American Quarterly Winter 1954

I wants ter convince yer she was on'y a representative of 'er class. I wants to awaken yer bloody clarss consciousness. Then ye'll see it's 'er clarss yer've got to fight, not 'er alone.

(Scene V)

Yank's class consciousness is never aroused. His desire to join the IWW is based solely on his wish to destroy the Douglas family. Once he believes that they are responsible for keeping him in the position he is, in his simplistic way he wishes to destroy them, to 'blow up de factory, de woiks, where he makes de steel.' (Scene VII) Yank cannot understand that the capitalists cannot simply be blown up, as he has no wider understanding of the socialist argument than his hatred for Mildred. He is mystified by the openness of the IWW and cannot comprehend their rejection of him. He has suffered a personal insult by Mildred's behaviour and he is incapable of relating this act to his fellow workers and their subjection, so the socialism of Long has no real meaning for him.

Long sees society as being very clear-cut; the workers on one side, the 'capitalist clarss' on the other, and he tries to convince his fellow seamen that they are being exploited and treated like animals. For Long, the 'lazy, bloated swine that travels first cabin' are the ones to blame for the sailors' working conditions:

They dragged us down till we're on'y wage slaves in the bowels of the bloody ship, sweatin' and burnin, up, eatin' coal dust! Hit's them's ter blame - the damned capitalist clarss!

(Scene 1)

Later, after Mildred has made her visitation to the stoke hole, Long condemns her and all that he associates with her:

Hinsultin' us! Hinsultin' us, the bloody cow! And them bloody engineers! What right 'as they got to be exhibitin' us 's if we was bleedin' monkeys in a menagerie? Did we sign for hinsults to our dignity as 'onest workers? ...

'Er old man's a bleedin' millionaire, a bloody Capitalist! 'E's got enuf bloody gold to sink this bleedin' ship! 'E makes arf the bloody steel in the world! 'E owns this bloody boat! And you and me, comrades, we're 'is slaves! And the skipper and mates and engineers, they're 'is slaves! And she's 'is bloody daughter and we're all 'er slaves, too!

(Scene IV)

This is the first time that Yank begins to realise that he is different from others, he is a slave, a hairy ape. The speech of Long's awakens some awareness of the situation but Yank cannot relate his being a slave of the Douglas family to any other aspect of Long's socialist arguments. O'Neill has portrayed Long as a typical example of the politically indoctrinated individual who uses many of the cliches and slogans of the socialist press. However, O'Neill did have sympathy for these ideas although Long is not a character that might be able to convince an audience of O'Neill's own beliefs. He is, in many ways, a caricature of a man who has swallowed socialism whole. Long's warning to Yank to control himself when they are on Fifth Avenue is very much in the style of a manifesto:

Easy goes Comrade. Keep yer bloomin' temper. Remember force defeats itself. It ain't our weapon. We must impress our demand through peaceful means - the votes of the on-marching proletarians of the bloody world.

(Scene V)

This is completely lost on Yank and he attempts to attack the Fifth Avenue promenaders with the only weapon he knows, brute force. This is all he has left, because Mildred's reaction to him had removed any pride or confidence in himself that he had previously had. In spite of Long's exhortation Yank still thinks in individual terms and all his reactions relate to Mildred. His invective on Fifth Avenue is directed at a 'white-faced tart' and his ravings in jail are plans to get even with her. The

visit to the IWW is with the aim of blowing up the Douglas empire and that, if achieved, would be something to be written about in a letter to Mildred. The 'white-faced skinny tarts and de boobs what marry 'em' is how Yank describes the people who stare at the gorilla in the zoo, and so there is a constant reiteration of his initial reaction to Mildred, and an attempt to prove himself in her eyes, to prove that he is not just a 'hairy ape'.

In contrast to his earlier work, which appears to have pro-socialist convictions, O'Neill takes a rather different stance in The Hairy Ape. The most important feature of this play is Yank's quest to find someone, or somewhere, to belong to, and Long's brand of socialism has failed to help him. The individuality of Yank is what the play is about, and so here, in spite of the obvious socialist arguments, O'Neill is taking a Nietzschean line. Yank is certainly far from the concept of the 'higher man' that Nietzsche wanted to create, but O'Neill uses him as a symbol of the modern world, in showing that society is incapable of understanding the individual who does not fit into a prescribed pattern. For O'Neill, Yank is a casualty of the modern, mechanised world, a man who suffers in the capitalist system and whose story is worthy to be told, but he is also a dramatic creation to illustrate Nietzsche's opinion of contemporary mankind. Nietzsche thought of man as being at an intermediate stage in the course of evolution, the stage where man has developed from ape to man but has not yet taken the further step to the superman, a step equally as great. He states in Thus Spake Zarathustra that:

Man is a rope stretched between the animal and the
superman - a rope over an abyss.
(Prologue 4)

This is part of the main philosophical argument in this work, in that the most important philosophy of Zarathustra is the need for the creation of

the superman, closely linked with the theory of eternal recurrence.

Zarathustra compares man to the ape:

What is the ape to man? A laughing stock, a thing of shame. And just the same shall man be to the superman, a laughing stock, a thing of shame.

Ye have made your way from worm to man, and much within you is still worm. Once ye were apes, and even yet man is more of an ape than any of the apes.

(Prologue 3)

It is clear that O'Neill has taken the image of the 'hairy ape' from Nietzsche who, undoubtedly, adopted it from Darwin in whom he was extremely interested. Darwin's assertion that mankind had developed from the animals in a naturalistic way, without any direction or guidance from a divine source, appealed to Nietzsche and formed one of the bases for his own philosophy of the superman, so taking Darwinism to its logical conclusion. O'Neill created Yank as being in the Nietzschean transitional stage, a 'laughing stock' and a 'thing of shame', whose shame is brought about by Mildred's reaction and the laughter of his fellow seamen. The play does show that Yank is more specifically related to the de-humanising effect of twentieth century society as O'Neill saw it; Nietzsche's concept of man in his transitional stage is a suitable device for O'Neill to use in order to make this clear. Nietzsche believed that man, as part of the common herd, was quite content to be simply that - one among many. For Yank it is initially true. He feels that he does belong, both to the ship and its power and to the men he works with - all are part of his life and he does not question how he fits in. With Mildred's visit to the stokehole he recognises that he doesn't belong in the way that he had imagined; that there is an alien species of human being that considers itself superior to him. It is this realisation that destroys his illusion of being an important individual within his limited sphere. Until the advent of Mildred he was important:

I'm de ting in de coal dat makes it boin
I'm de muscles in steel, de punch behind it ...

(Scene I)

Unlike Long, Yank does not consider himself to be a slave. He feels he is a vital part of the whole machinery, both of the ship and of the structure of society as he is able to comprehend it:

Slaves, hell! We run de whole woiks. All de rich guys dat think dey're somep'n, dey ain't nothin! Dey don't belong. But us guys, we're in de move, we're at de bottom, de whole ting is us!

(Scene I)

Paddy might be nostalgic about the days of the sailing ships and consider that the sailors are now animals imprisoned in the steel cage of the stoke hole, but Yank is proud of his part in the new mechanised world - he is the oil in the engines, the smoke, the iron to make the steel, the speed which characterises the modern world and makes its wealth and achievement. He has a specific function, but it is as part of a piece of machinery. It was this aspect of the modern world which O'Neill hated; the turning of the individual into nothing better than a cog wheel or lever.

In Thus Spake Zarathustra Nietzsche presents a similar deformation of the individual in the section entitled 'Redemption'. The men that Zarathustra encounters have been conditioned by their society in order to use only one part of their physical or mental capability, so enabling them to fulfil a particular function useful to the maintenance of the existing social pattern. These 'reverse cripples' consist of an eye, an ear, a mouth, according to their function, but are unaware of their deformity. Yank's brawn, his muscle power, his mechanical job of stoking in appalling conditions, is his contribution to the machine age in America, and until

Mildred arrives he is unaware that he is in any way deformed. O'Neill's attempt to counterbalance the purely physical nature of Yank with his subsequent pose as Rodin's 'The Thinker' is perhaps rather heavy-handed and would possibly amuse an audience rather than gain sympathy for Yank. However, it does fit in with the expressionistic nature of this play and indicates that O'Neill is trying to show that an individual needs to utilise other aspects of his potential and must be a balanced whole, not merely an extension of a piece of machinery with no power of thought or reasoning. This was, of course, a matter for contemporary thought and experimentation among writers, artists and playwrights of this period, perhaps the most striking example being the film Metropolis.

Until his belief in himself is destroyed, Yank is exultant about his strength and power. When this happens he loses all sense of belonging and his pride is shattered. He sees himself being regarded as an animal, a 'filthy beast', a 'hairy ape escaped from the Zoo', but he still is determined that he will show Mildred how important he is, determined to 'show her I'm better'n her, if on'y she knew it'. (Scene IV) This bravado on Yank's part does little to compensate for the loss of self-esteem and although he begins to think of himself as nearer to animal than man, this is equally as alienating in that he is without the connection to, or harmony with, the natural world that any animal would have. Long is of the opinion that they are all animals, kept in captivity by the capitalists, but Yank regards the animal comparison differently. He makes an attempt to go back to his animal origin in his search for understanding and belonging, implying that there is a nobility about the animal which is very different from Long's view of animals as being degraded and worthless. Yank's attempt is obviously unsuccessful; O'Neill felt that

modern industrial man found it difficult to have links with the natural world, and so Yank's quest is a failure. In an article on The Hairy Ape O'Neill stated:

The Hairy Ape was propoganda in the sense that it was a symbol of man, who has lost his old harmony with nature, the harmony which he used to have as an animal and has not yet acquired in a spiritual way. (9)

It is the quest for spiritual harmony that O'Neill is primarily concerned with in many of his plays. The function of his drama was, in many cases, to attempt to show this search for individual understanding, something O'Neill felt was almost impossible to achieve in the America of his own time. He may have stated that the struggle was 'to belong' but in The Hairy Ape it is not absolutely clear what Yank is striving to belong to. Ideally, it would appear that O'Neill felt that the individual should belong to a world where man was part of both the natural universe and the structured society around him. However, in The Hairy Ape Yank is attempting to return to his animal origins because he has little concept of what the rest of the world is about, although by the end of the play he does have some awareness of the world outside the stokehole. It is impossible for Yank to return to his animal origins; O'Neill felt that man had come too far to return. Nietzsche may have thought that man was 'more of an ape than any of the apes' but in characterising Yank as a 'hairy ape' O'Neill has chosen to use the ape as a symbol of the dehumanised man rather than man in a stage of inadequate development of human nature. It is his way of showing his opinion of the world around him, much as Elmer Rice does in The Adding Machine where all the characters have become merely numbers, easily dispensable, with no individuality. O'Neill's view of the Expressionist movement in theatre did, however

(9) Interview for the New York Herald Tribune March 16, 1924 Reprinted in O. Cargill, N. B. Fagin, W. J. Fisher op. cit. p.110

differ from such exponents as Rice and Brecht whose characters were often representations of a type rather than an individual. O'Neill said in 1924:

I personally do not believe that an idea can be readily put over to an audience except through characters. When it sees 'A Man' and 'A Woman' - just abstractions, it loses the human contact by which it identifies itself with the protagonist ... the character Yank remains a man and everyone recognises him as such. (10)

This is O'Neill's special gift - that his characters such as Yank or Jones in The Emperor Jones have an individuality that the creations of many other Expressionist writers do not possess, and consequently are more complex and sympathetic.

When Yank is talking to the gorilla in the zoo, he tells him that he has been able to see farther than the steam and fire of the stokehole. The experience on Fifth Avenue did nothing to make Yank really aware of another aspect of the world as he was still in a dazed state and had been subjected to Long's preaching of socialism. However, on the Battery Yank sat and watched the sunrise, watched the ships sailing and was aware of the sun and the clouds and the sky. For the first time he had begun to have some experience of the natural world but he still couldn't feel part of it, couldn't 'get in it' in the way that Paddy had been able to experience the feeling of being at one with the world on the old sailing ship - when the sea 'joined all together and made it one'. For O'Neill this was belonging, as Edmund describes in Long Day's Journey into Night, but Yank cannot feel it in this way. He has gone too far; he is too much part of the modern, mechanistic world, but can no longer feel part of that world. Like the gorilla that has been taken out of its natural habitat, the green woods and the jungle, he does not fit. The

(10) ibid.

gorilla is an object of derision, a specimen in a cage, and as Yank had been peered at by Mildred in the stockhole, with a mixture of curiosity and revulsion, so 'de white-faced skinny tarts' gaze at the gorilla in the zoo, while at the same time they are scared of it. It may be the king of the wild, but in captivity the gorilla seems powerless. Nevertheless, Yank believes that the gorilla can belong, through his supposed dreaming about the past, while Yank hasn't the ability to do even that. He feels he belongs nowhere, he is neither man nor animal, he has no past to look back on or to dream about which can give him a sense of origin. The gorilla is the nearest thing Yank can relate to, only because he has been called an ape, and this ape is the nearest to man. However, he comes to the conclusion that they are both in the same club in that they both have the physical strength to conquer their captors. Yank returns again and again to the one thing that he is sure of, his physical strength, and like a prize fighter invites the gorilla to help him show the world this one last indication of his importance and self-esteem. In crushing him, the gorilla could be thought of as not accepting that Yank belongs anywhere. Even the last of Yank's attributes is not enough to ensure survival. With Yank's death O'Neill proposes that 'perhaps the Hairy Ape at last belongs'. (Scene VII) O'Neill is implying that death is the only solution, that without the spiritual comfort and understanding and feeling of belonging in life, man should simply pass back into that wider universe that he mentions in Dynamo and Lazarus Laughed. In this implication O'Neill is making use of a further Nietzschean idea, stated in The Birth of Tragedy.

This is the statement that man's greatest mistake was to be born at all. Nietzsche tells the tale of Silenus, the companion of Dionysus, who says

to King Midas after the hunt to capture him, that the most desirable thing for man was 'not to be born, not to be, to be nothing'.(11) The second best, he advises, is 'soon to die'. Yank has already committed the crime of being born, for, as he says to the Policeman, all he has ever done is::

Enuf to gimme life for! I was born, see? Sure, dat's de charge. Write it in de blotter. I was born, get me!

(Scene VII)

O'Neill also uses this theme in All God's Chillun Got Wings when the voice of the black singers echo through the street and the third man sings 'with a brooding, earthbound sorrow' the third verse of the well-known song:

Sometimes I wish that I'd never been born,
Sometimes I wish that I'd never been born,
I wish that I'd never been born.

(Act I Scene 4)

In The Hairy Ape O'Neill appears to be agreeing with Silenus. Life on this earth is not worth having; it is better to die than to suffer in a spiritual vacuum and experience alienation. Writing to Kenneth Macgowan in 1921, O'Neill pointed out that in this play:

I have tried to dig deep in it, to probe in the shadows of the soul of man bewildered by the disharmony of his primitive pride and individualism at war with the mechanistic development of society. (12)

For O'Neill there seemed to be no solution to the problem of coping with life in that society, except, perhaps, death. In Fog the Poet shares some of O'Neill's views. The dead child in the lifeboat is the object of the Poet's pity, but it is also used as an example of the hardships and struggles of man in the modern world. As the Poet says:

(11) Nietzsche, Friedrich The Birth of Tragedy T. N. Foulis (Edinburgh) 1909 Section 3

(12) Bryer, Jackson ed. 'The Theatre We Worked For' The Letters of Eugene O'Neill to Kenneth Macgowan Yale University Press 1982

What chance had that poor child? Naturally sickly and weak from underfeeding, transplanted to the stinking room of a tenement or the filthy hovel of a mining village, what glowing opportunities did life hold out that death should not be regarded as a blessing for him?

The Poet is sickened by the world around him and has contemplated death himself as a solution to life in an unacceptable world. He asks the Businessman:

Did you ever become so sick of disappointment and weary of life in general that death appeared to you the only way out?

He is called a socialist by the Businessman, but O'Neill here is not putting forward specific socialist argument. The Poet himself says he is a humanist, in spite of what the Businessman considers to be his socialist ideas. Again O'Neill makes reference to the supposed Christian values upon which American society is based, when he has the Poet question the responsibility of the individual for those around him:

I mean supposing we - the self-satisfied, successful members of society - are responsible for the injustice visited upon the heads of our less fortunate 'brothers-in-Christ' because of our shameful indifference to it. We see misery all around us and we do not care. We do nothing to prevent it. Are we not then, in part at least, responsible for it?

This humanist view of shared responsibility is totally against anything Nietzsche advocates, in that the main aspect of the Nietzschean criticism of society is what he saw as the herding together and caring for each other. This was what Nietzsche felt had caused society to deteriorate in to a mass of petty morals and virtues, negating the opportunity for the individual to advance. In Fog O'Neill is specifically advocating socialism in the person of the Poet, who is, in fact, more of a Nietzschean figure, but he is opposing the ideals of the capitalist businessman.

Inevitably, the Businessman has never experienced this world-weariness and desire for death, and he has little concern for the poor. As O'Neill also states in Fratricide:

Who pays the price that some must pay?
Whose widows mourn, who orphans cry?
The poor? The poor who must obey
The poor who only live to die. (13)

In twentieth century America, O'Neill felt, the poor had little chance of making a life that was satisfactory. They were exploited and treated with contempt and so perhaps death was the only way out. In other plays, especially The Great God Brown, The Fountain, Beyond the Horizon, death does provide the an^{SN}swer to the problems of life in an unacceptable society, but these deaths are not the deaths of the hopeless and despairing poor.

Yank's death, like many of the others in the plays, is extreme pessimism on O'Neill's part. He felt that having lost any religious inspiration, any conviction about God, any sense of being part of a greater universe, man was trapped and de-humanised by the modern world. The individual might strive to belong to the intangible, unseen force of which he felt some deprivation, but with the pressures of the world this content was impossible to find. In The Hairy Ape O'Neill considered that he was dealing with 'the one subject for drama', and that was man and his struggle with his own fate. 'The struggle used to be with the gods, but it is now with himself, with his own past, his attempt 'to belong'.' (14) Yank's struggle is certainly with himself, and to a certain extent, his immediate evolutionary past as represented by the gorilla, but there is little evidence in this play that there is a greater, more spiritual

(13) O'Neill, Eugene Poems 1912 - 1944 ed. Donald Gallup Jonathan Cape (London 1980)

(14) Interview for the New York Herald Tribune op. cit.

answer for him. At the end of the play Yank can only, perhaps, belong in death to the unseen force and power that guides the universe and which O'Neill attempts to show in The Fountain and Lazarus Laughed. Yank certainly does not belong to the world of the gorilla; there is no going back, but there is no progression of the individual soul.

Nietzsche, in Thus Spake Zarathustra, also accuses mankind of wanting, not to proceed and create a new form of man, but to regress. He considered that man, although animal-like, is something to be surpassed and Zarathustra makes the accusation:

All beings have hitherto created something beyond themselves: and ye want to be the ebb of that great tide, and would rather go back to the beast than surpass man?

(Prologue 3)

O'Neill uses this specifically in Yank's search. This is precisely what Yank does, rather than trying to seek for a more satisfactory or progressive solution. He had been too conditioned by his war 'with the mechanistic development of society' to have any concept that there might be something better. In this play O'Neill shows that socialism is not the answer, nor is there any indication of a Christian solution, so there is nothing else but death. Yank cannot begin to see any future, he cannot fit in where he is, and there is no going back. As he says:

I ain't on oath and I ain' in Heaven, get me? I'm in de middle trying' to separate 'em, takin' all de woist punches from bot' of 'em.

(Scene VIII)

Part of Yank's problem is the failure of the democratic system in America, something which O'Neill, and later Arthur Miller, was particularly concerned about. The great 'American Dream' of equality and opportunity had not come into being, at least in the eyes of the socialists, the IWW, the anarchists, and, perhaps without fully realising why, the ordinary men

like Miller's Willy Loman who had fully accepted the system but felt that they as individuals had failed. The men in Harry Hope's saloon, the inadequacies of Billy Brown, the problems of John Loving, all are indications of the failure of the environment in which these characters live in that it cannot provide answers to their individual questioning. The majority of the population accept the views and behaviour patterns dictated to them by the state, without being able to criticise. In Days Without End John Loving expresses a blatant criticism of the American people, which is overtly Nietzschean in origin:

It is so obvious that they deliberately cheat themselves because their fear of change won't let them face the truth. They don't want to understand what has happened to them. All they want is to start the merry-go-round of blind greed all over again. They no longer know what they want this country to be, what they want it to become, where they want it to go. It has lost all meaning for them except as a pig-wallow. And so their lives as citizens have no beginnings, no ends. They have lost the ideal of the Land of the Free. Freedom demands initiative, courage, the need to decide what life must mean to oneself. To them, that is terror. They explain away their spiritual cowardice by whining that the time for individualism is past, when it is their courage to possess their own soul which is dead - and stinking! No, they don't want to be free. Slavery means security - of a kind, the only kind they have courage for. It means they need not think. They have only to obey orders from owners who are, in turn, their slaves!

(Act Three Scene One)

The inability of the individual to be aware of, and assert his position, if he has any belief in it after the pervasive influence of his surroundings, is stated by Nietzsche in 'Of Old and New Tables'

And such is always the nature of weak men: they lose themselves on their way. At last asketh their weariness: Why did we ever go on the way? All is indifferent.

To them it soundth pleasant in their ears. Nothing is worthwhile. Ye shall not will! That, however, is a sermon for slavery.

The image of man as a beast is one which recurs a great deal in Nietzsche's work, especially in Thus Spake Zarathustra. The citizens who, John Loving considers 'function only as pigs' in an early draft of Days Without End (15) live in a society which is nothing better than a pig-wallow. The blind followers of the Ass Festival in Zarathustra are said to behave like pigs:

To chew and digest everything - that is the proper way of swine.

and he associates the saints of the wilderness with swine in 'The Higher Man'. Men are described as poisonous flies, tarantulas, but the most common image is that of the pig. Like John Loving, Hutchins Light in Dynamo considers that man has been weaned away from the faith of his forefathers by the mechanistic age, and in the original manuscript (16) he claims that machinery 'degrades us to the level of swine'. In Welded O'Neill uses the parable of the Prodigal Son in his creation of Cape and his action of going to visit the prostitute. He is disgusted with himself and Eleanor and he says that he will 'lay me down among the swine', indicating both his opinion of what he is doing with the prostitute and also, perhaps, that he is hoping for a similar reconciliation with Eleanor that the Prodigal Son received from his father. The use of animal imagery in Nietzsche's work is his way of making clear his revulsion from his own society, both in its elementary stage of development of man as an ape and in the level to which it had sunk which he considered to be no better than that of the lowliest animal. For him, and for O'Neill, their respective societies had become governed by the mob, the rabble, the morality of the greatest number. It is this that Nietzsche bitterly reviles

(15) Days Without End 5th Draft ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

(16) Dynamo Act One Scene One ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

throughout his work, and for which his concept of the Superman provides the only hope of salvation. O'Neill is not a follower of this particular solution but is more concerned about the existing position of the individual in society and how that society has swamped individuality and lost any desire for change or a revision of the accepted standards. Nietzsche's view does seem to be at odds with O'Neill's early adoption of socialist ideas and his reading of Marx, but the main concern throughout his later work, as in Nietzsche's, is the salvation of the individual and the development of a self-awareness and spiritual understanding within that individual. However, the all-powerful Superman and the ordinary bewildered characters like Yank or John Loving are totally different conceptions of the individual. X

In the quotations that O'Neill copied from Nietzsche (see Appendix) there are many that refer to the plight of the individual surrounded by a hostile, uncomprehending and soulless mob. In Thus Spake Zarathustra The Wizard says 'Today is of the mob!' (The Wizard) and this is a sentiment which recurs many times. Nietzsche felt that the individual must fight against the so-called virtues and mores of the multitude, in that these were the prime factors which made man indifferent, unthinking and self-satisfied. However, he maintains that anyone who aspires to be a 'higher man' must realise that he will experience hardship, alienation, and will be reviled by the rabble. Nietzsche considered that the 'petty folk' had become master, that it was the happiness of the greatest number which had become the criterion by which a society was governed and this, he believed, had led and would continue to lead to mediocrity. Nietzsche's view of Europe in his time with the growing feeling towards democratic rule, the establishment of socialism, and the decline in morals which he termed 'decadence', meant that mankind would be incapable of progression.

What was right for the masses must, according to Nietzsche, be wrong and detrimental to mankind, a view to which Marx was completely opposed. Zarathustra states that the individual must strive to be different and never be engulfed by the masses. The individual was the only hope for the world and through the development of the individual the Superman would be created.

Surpass, ye higher men, the petty virtues, the petty policies, the grains-of-sand regards, the swarming of ants, the miserable ease, the 'happiness of the greatest number' and rather despair than give in!

(Of Higher Man 3)

The mob may proclaim that all men are equal, but Nietzsche advocates that there are men who could be born to be superior, and in order to achieve this state they must counteract the pervasive influence of the mob, reject the herd mentality and assert their individuality. This individualism is prevalent in other works of Nietzsche, and in O'Neill's plays, but the position of the individual is clearly stated in Thus Spake Zarathustra in the section 'On the Rabble':

And many a one who turned away from life only turned away from the rabble: he cared not to share with them well and fire and fruit.

Zarathustra states that the rabble pervade everything, they poison the well, contaminate the fruit and dampen the fire so causing the world to become a place of loathing, of smells and of depravity - a veritable monster. The individual must, according to Zarathustra, remove himself from this world and climb the highest mountain, isolating himself from the mob and living in a cave as Zarathustra does, breathing pure air and tasting pure water. Only in this way can the stillness necessary to his superior state be achieved. This physical removal to the heights is symbolic of what both Nietzsche and O'Neill wanted the individual to achieve in both a mental and spiritual way.

The rabble advocate submission and resignation. They value the debased Christian values of humility, servitude, and patience in order to alleviate what was, as far as Nietzsche was concerned, the pettiness of their sufferings. They regard anything which demonstrates power, strength or greatness with suspicion and hatred and so suspect any individual who attempts to be different or assert his values and beliefs. With regard to religion it could be considered that Nietzsche and Marx had a shared belief. Marx stated that religion is 'the opium of the people' (17), but unlike Nietzsche he felt that religious conviction was an expression of the real suffering that the ordinary people were experiencing. Marx said that religion was 'the sigh of an oppressed creature' (18) and he believed that this oppression and suffering could be alleviated by social reform. Nietzsche believed that religion was a mis-conceived, mis-used and comforting sop to the mob; the controlling factor that kept their values and behaviour constant and provided a pattern for mediocrity. Nietzsche saw the Christian religion as an agent working against individuality and change, and any form of progress for humanity. Marx had a doctrine that he wanted to put in the place of religion, one that would relieve the suffering of the 'oppressed creature' whose only outlet for his pain and incomprehension was his religion. O'Neill had very little with which to replace his loss of faith. Conventional Christianity had failed him, but unlike either Marx or Nietzsche he was unsure of what to put in its place. Like John Loving in Days Without End, socialism, individualism, pantheism, buddhism, all were explored but both personally and in the plays they are found to be lacking. O'Neill's early reading of Marx may have provided him with an answer to the social and political

(17) Marx, Karl Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy' of Right Cambridge University Press, 1970

(18) Marx, Karl ibid.

problems of contemporary America, but like Loving his individual soul was left without guidance or understanding and, like Loving, the happiness could not be found in marital relationships at least at that stage of O'Neill's writing career. However widely O'Neill's viewpoint might range in his plays, he is never as doctrinaire as his mentors were.

In Thus Spake Zarathustra the mob argue that in the sight of God all men are equal, but Nietzsche believed that because God was dead, He must be replaced by the higher men, the demi-gods, the supermen; they were to be the new gods and agents of change and enlightenment. O'Neill noted a passage from 'Old and New Tables' (see Appendix)

For one day it might come to pass that the mob would become master, and all time be drowned in shallow waters.

Therefore, O my brethren, a new nobility is requisite which is opposed unto all mob and all that is tyrannic and writeth on new tables the word 'noble'. For many noble ones are requisite, and noble ones of many kinds in order that there be nobility. Or, as I said once in a figure: 'That exactly is godliness, that there are Gods, but no God'.

(Old and New Tables 11)

This speech is echoed in Lazarus Laughed, in the original manuscript (19) where Lazarus states:

This must Man will as his end and his beginning!
By this faith must he grow into Man, the demi-God!

but it is changed in the final version of the play to man accepting the power of laughter as his faith, and the only giver of laughter and life being God, not men developed into demi-gods or supermen. O'Neill accepted that the mob were undesirable, but he does not follow the view of Nietzsche that a new nobility of supermen should evolve. This perhaps shows his unwillingness to subscribe to such an ill-defined and impractical doctrine,

(19) Lazarus Laughed Act Two, Scene Two ms. American Literature Collection
Beinecke Library, Yale University

and it is an indication of his imaginative sensibility that he does not attempt to create a figure in his plays who would conform to Nietzsche's ideal. For O'Neill the one God of the Christian religion cannot be forgotten. In the nineteen thirties O'Neill was depressed about the rise of Hitler and the Nazi party, with their debasement of Nietzsche's teaching of the superman which went so far as to have Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche claim that Hitler was the incarnation of her brother's ideal, (20) and he wrote to Kenneth Macgowan in 1938:

How do you like our best of all possible worlds these days? Me, I'd as soon be a native son of a sty ... It's time God got plumb disgusted and unleashed a new improved Black Death ... I'm getting sore exasperated with the latest stupid repetition in the history of man's stupid greed and particularly annoyed with the stupidity that will not recognise them as repetitions ... (21)

Like Nietzsche, O'Neill felt that the unthinking masses were the downfall of society, for around him he saw the unquestioning acceptance, even enthusiasm, for all that was given out in the name of the state and democracy. Apart from the reaction of a few individuals, the status quo was simply accepted; there was no attempt on the part of the ordinary citizen to hold a wider view of government; materialism and comfort had blunted the perception of the majority of the population. O'Neill felt that not only had religion produced a false and hypocritical sense of values, but that the state with its Christian-based precepts had produced a self-satisfied mob of people who had no understanding of the individual who wanted something different and held different values. These individuals, O'Neill felt, were trapped by the enslaving power of materialism advocated by the great American democracy; they had no chance to be free to believe in anything different. The majority of the population, like the slaves

(20) Lavrin op. cit. p.117

(21) Bryer op. cit. p.246

referred to by John Loving, clung to the security of being enslaved by an employer who was in turn enslaved to the state.

Nietzsche condemned the state, and O'Neill's opinion of America and the way that the state affected the individual is almost identical with that of Nietzsche. Unlike Marx's view that the state must be the salvation of the individual, both Nietzsche and O'Neill saw it as the cause of the downfall of man. Nietzsche stated that the state was 'the coldest of all cold monsters'. In Thus Spake Zarathustra there is a section on the state called 'The New Idol' which analyses and condemns the attitude of the people to the state and the nature of the state:

Coldly it uttereth its lies; and this is the lie that creepeth out of its mouth: 'I, the state am the people'.

Nietzsche believed that the state devoured the individual, giving him a sense of totally false values. It 'swalloweth and cheweth' all those who do not strongly assert their different beliefs, and, in the eyes of both Nietzsche and O'Neill, it had become a replacement for the old religions. The 'monster,' state roars in 'The New Idol':

On earth there is nothing greater than I: it is I who am the regulating finger of God.

and O'Neill shared this view of the state in a letter to Barrett Clark in the 1930s (22)

God with a change of whiskers becomes the state - and then there's always a Holy Book - dogmas - heresy trials - an infallible Pope - etc. - etc. until you become sick. It appears we apes always climb trees and fall out of them - with a boringly identical behaviour pattern.

The state of America, with its strongly religious overtones and supposedly Christian basis was, to O'Neill, simply another manifestation of the hypocrisy

(22) Cargill op. cit. p.401

and falsity of conventional religion. In Days Without End Father Baird makes the statement that John had tried many religions and political beliefs, including 'the slave-owning state - the most grotesque God that ever came out of Asia!' (Act One) As years went by, O'Neill appeared to have rejected his Marxist ideals and decided that the state and the power of organised religions were both as evil and destructive of man as each other. O'Neill's socialism is ultimately viewed in the same light as his early religious experiences - as failing to produce any self-knowledge or spirituality within himself, and hence within any thinking individual. Neither the American state with its provision for men to gain money and power, nor the socialist state, particularly that emerging in the USSR with its claim to make men truly equal, could satisfy O'Neill.

Nietzsche considered that the state was 'invented for the superfluous'. The masses were content because the state seemed to fulfil all their needs and wishes - at least they were told so by the state. The ultimate horror of the state was revealed in the large cities which had evolved within Nietzsche's life-time, a product of industrialisation. In Thus Spake Zarathustra he gives a picture of the city and advises the individual to leave it far behind:

Spit on this town of shopkeepers and turn round!
Here the blood floweth rotten and lukewarm with
a scum through all the veins. Spit at the great
city, which is the great rubbish heap where all
the scum simmereth together!

Spit at this town of the pressed-in souls and the
narrow breasts, the pointed eyes and sticky fingers -
At this town of obtruders, impudent ones, writers
and bawlers, of over-heated ambitious ones -
Where all that is tainted, feigned, lustful, dustful,
over-mellow, ulcer yellow, conspiring, ulcerateth
together -

Spit on the great city and turn round!

(Of Passing)

Although this is spoken to Zarathustra by a fool, Zarathustra agrees with him and wishes that the city could be burnt by a pillar of fire. He then passes onward in search of his cave and his animals. O'Neill, in spite of being born in New York and spending a great deal of his time there, hated the city and was only really happy when out by the sea, away from the pressure and noise, so that he could be himself and write his plays. His succession of homes in Provincetown, Bermuda, Georgia, California, France and Boston are an indication of this. In Lazarus Laughed Lazarus echoes Nietzsche's view of the city when he exhorts his followers to leave:

Out with you! Out into the woods! Upon the hills!
Cities are prisons wherein man locks himself from
life. Out with you under the sky! Are the stars too
pure for your sick passions? Is the warm earth smelling
of night too desirous of love for your pale introspective
lusts? Out!

(Act Two Scene One)

and later Miriam contrasts the evil and corruption of the Roman world with the hills of Bethany, where with the sun and sky and sea she and Lazarus could find peace.

Even in O'Neill's most seedy and urban play, The Iceman Cometh, there is the indication that life away from the city is desirable and Cora and Chuck have as their pipedream a farm in Jersey. However, this late play returns to the question of commitment to the socialist and anarchist cause in the persons of Larry, Parritt and Hugo. These three are very different characters from the early socialists such as Long, or the totally committed Olga of The Personal Equation. (23) Parritt is trapped and conditioned by the Movement until he commits the crime of betraying his mother to the police. Hugo, the revolutionary from Europe who has suffered

(23) The Personal Equation ms. Houghton Library Harvard University

in solitary confinement for his beliefs; and Larry who claims to have 'Given up the movement' because of his inability to be totally committed to seeing things in black and white, but being forced to see both sides of the question. Here 'the Movement' appears to be Anarchism, but in this play O'Neill treats Anarchism and Socialism as being one and the same.

Hugo's singing of revolutionary songs and his declaration of revolutionary slogans punctuate the play, often very amusingly, as he surfaces from his drunken sleep over the bar tables. He alternates between bullying demands for a drink and giggling, playful greetings to the other characters. His pipedream is of revolution, of a socialist society where all will be equal, but it is shown to be false when he displays a desire for power when his aristocratic tendencies lead him to complain that the champagne is not properly iced. Through Hugo, based on Hippolyte Havel who was an inhabitant of Greenwich Village, a friend of O'Neill's and who had a habit of calling the diners in the restaurant where he served 'bourgeois pigs' - a denunciation which no-one apparently took seriously - O'Neill shows a rather pathetic character whose dream has been destroyed. Hugo has undoubtedly suffered for what he believed in and his behaviour is regarded sympathetically by the other characters in Harry Hope's saloon, but it is an opportunity for O'Neill to comment on the real motivation for many of the socialists. Nietzsche's assertion that a socialist was just as greedy for power as those whom he wanted to destroy, is clearly brought out in Hugo who, under Hickey's influence, reveals his desire to wield power when Larry wakes him up to tell him that the revolution is beginning. Hickey, he claims, and not Bakunin is the great Nihilist. Hugo finds himself proclaiming that he is not a finished man, but the great day of revolution will be his day when it comes. He is confused and horrified at what he hears himself saying, and again there is an echo of Nietzsche and the swine imagery when he refers to:

... the leedle proletarians, ve vill have free picnic
in the cool shade, ve vill eat hot dogs and trink
free beer beneath the villow trees! Like hogs, yes!
Like beautiful leedle hogs!

(Act Two)

Hugo is very much the cartoon anarchist with his flowing tie and his thick-lensed spectacles, and O'Neill uses him to be critical of that type of socialist whose motivation is to achieve his own rather ill-defined ends. His function in the play, however, is rather comic and he is not as important or profound as either Parritt or Larry.

Don Parritt, the boy consumed with guilt and on the run from the police and himself, has a far more vital part in the play, both from a structural and character point of view. He is said to be based on Don Vose, a participant in the McNamara case during the 1910s when a number of anarchists bombed the Los Angeles Times and the protesters were finally apprehended through an informer in the movement, the son of a leading anarchist woman. This is transformed into the Rosa Parritt arrest in the play, and it is gradually revealed that it is Don who has betrayed his mother to the police. So strong were her beliefs and her desire to have freedom, to be a free woman in all her relationships and modes of living, that her imprisonment is seen as a living death by her guilt-ridden son. He may as well have murdered her directly. Parritt pesters Larry from the moment of his arrival at the saloon but as the truth of his story is hinted at, falsely explained, and finally revealed in a hysterical breakdown, there is a parallel to Hickey's own hinting and final confession of guilt. In this process of revelation, Parritt criticises the Movement, tries to show what the Movement has done to him with its indoctrination and idealism. O'Neill again makes a comparison between a total commitment to socialism and religious fervour when he states that Rosa felt about

the Movement 'like a revivalist preacher about religion' and Larry explains her attitude to his defection as trying to 'bring the sinner back to repentance and a belief in the One True Faith again'. (Act One)

The socialists got onto their soapboxes and preached their doctrine like any evangelist or Salvation Army preacher, a further religious comparison being made by Willie Oban who is trying to get a drink out of Parritt. He says that Hugo is the only 'licensed preacher of that gospel' allowed in Harry Hope's, so as in The Hairy Ape O'Neill is indicating that both doctrines are equally inadequate.

Parritt's false claim that he had become patriotic nauseates Larry, both for the fact that it is patently a false confession and Larry is beginning to realise what Parritt has done, and also that O'Neill is indicating that just such cant and pseudo-patriotism is as nauseating to himself. The 'damned foreign pipedream' that Parritt despises is just as false as the homegrown American pipedream that O'Neill so criticised. When Parritt finally confesses that he did betray his mother for money his story does not convince, but it is soon clear that he has had no personal freedom; he had been told that family life was bourgeois; he had been brought up with his mother having a succession of different lovers to prove how free she was; and in his way, Parritt was as trapped and resentful and bitter as Hickey in his relationship with Evelyn. The similarity of their final confessions, the outburst of 'You damned bitch' links the two men together in their hatred of their respective women, but Parritt's final word is about the Movement. He cynically says that his death will give his mother the chance to play

... the great incorruptible Mother of the Revolution, whose only child is the Proletariat. She will be able to say: 'Justice is done! So may all traitors die! She'll be able to say 'I'm glad he's dead! Long live the Revolution!

(Act Three)

Parritt's suicide is the only solution; he could not continue to live with his burden of guilt, but as his executioner Larry realises that he is not as detached and impartial as he had believed. He may claim to be through with the Movement but he is appalled at what Parritt has done. He still has the underlying feeling of sympathy for the cause as well as the pity for Parritt's situation.

Although Larry is believed to have been based on O'Neill's friend in the Village, Terry Carlin, his portrayal in this play reflects much of O'Neill himself. Like O'Neill, Larry is 'through with the Movement' but, like O'Neill, he can still see the two sides of the question. The Iceman Cometh is O'Neill's masterpiece which questions truth and illusion, but at the same time it is his statement of life and what man needs in order to continue living. Larry has a conflict between his Irish Catholicism and his socialist principles, and, at the end, is the only true convert to death that Hickey has made. O'Neill may have postulated elsewhere that death is the only answer, but for Hickey, Parritt and, finally, Larry, it seems that it is the only real solution. All the rest is merely a pipedream, as illusory as those of the inhabitants of Harry Hope's bar, and as such a pipedream all doctrines and beliefs are equally invalid for life. Larry had given up the Movement because:

I saw that men didn't want to be saved from themselves, for that would mean they'd have to give up greed, and they'll never pay that price for liberty. So I said to the world, God bless all here, and may the best man win and die of gluttony!

(Act One)

Later in the play he again talks about the greed of the socialists and, in Nietzschean fashion, says:

I know they're damned fools, most of them, as stupidly greedy for power as the worst capitalist they attack ...

(Act One)

and this is his problem. He has to see both sides of the question, cannot be committed to one cause or the other because to him they are all the same, and this disillusionment is very similar to that of O'Neill. However, Larry may have been converted to watching from the grandstand, to waiting for death to come, but O'Neill attempted to put forward in the plays a view that showed that man's lot can not be improved by religion, socialism, nor anarchism. The answer is either to die, or to wait beneath the willow trees, but it is significant in The Iceman Cometh that O'Neill shows socialism in quite a positively undesirable and unacceptable light after the more consistent view in the early plays where it did appear as a viable alternative for society.

CHAPTER IV

THE SUPERMAN

The answer to what he saw as the contemporary problem of the stinking cities and the mob mentality was, for Nietzsche, the development of the individual of nobility, the superman. However, O'Neill was far more concerned about the plight of the lonely one, the individual who did not fit in to the existing society. In the preparatory notes for Dynamo (1) he stated that the problem was:

The tragic struggle in the individual of the soul of man against races of men.

and this was the essential difference between him and Nietzsche. Nietzsche was advocating that the individual should remove himself from the mob and progress towards the goal of being a higher man who would ultimately control and improve society; O'Neill condemned the materialism he saw around him, the soulless mechanistic world which had deprived man of his origins and awareness and his concern was for the individual within that society. O'Neill wanted to show that spiritual and intellectual understanding could be achieved for its own sake, not in order to wield power or gain leadership. Nietzsche's concern was with a new nobility; O'Neill's with the ordinary man who had been confused and alienated by the world in which he lived. This man must seek for a religious or spiritual experience for himself, not in order to control a mob. The quotations (see Appendix) that O'Neill took from Nietzsche contain many that are concerned with the individual and the problem of being a 'lonely one' Among them are:

Beware of the good and just! They would fain crucify those who invent their own standard of virtue - they hate the lonely one.

and And when I lived among them I lived above them.
Therefore they became angry at me.

(Of the Way of a Creator)

(1) Dynamo ms. preliminary notes American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University

and, specifically related to the state:

Where the state ceaseth, there beginneth that man
which is not superfluous; there beginneth the song
of the necessary man, the single, irreplaceable melody.

(Of the New Idol)

Nietzsche expressed the position of the individual who was separate from the mob in terms of physical greatness and height - those who could be potential supermen looked down upon the swarming multitude. As Zarathustra says:

Everywhere I see lower doorways. He who is of my kin
can still pass through them, but he must stoop. Oh,
when shall I return unto my home where I shall have
to stoop no more - to stoop no more before the small!

(Of Virtue that Maketh Smaller)

The virtues of the mob, their petty concerns, are too insignificant for Zarathustra to concern himself with, and Nietzsche shows this clearly in the section called 'Of Virtue that Maketh Smaller' (or in the Common translation 'The Bedwarfing Virtue'). After his wanderings to see what had been happening among men, Zarathustra says:

'What do these houses mean? Verily, no great soul
put them there to be its likeness!

Did a silly child take them out of the toy-box?

Would that another child would put them back into his
box!

And these public rooms and bed-rooms - are men able
to go in and out there?

The diminutive people are likened to 'silken dolls' and elsewhere in the work to flies, to grains of sand, to poor earth and poor herbs, and all these images reinforce the greatness of the higher man. O'Neill does certainly not share this view. His characters are lonely, isolated, confused, and have superior values to those around them who belong to the mob, but they are essentially among them, not above them. There are only two occasions where O'Neill makes use of examples of Nietzschean

imagery which reduce man to insignificance, once in The First Man and several times in Days Without End. Curtis Jayson is having to fight the clutches and social pretensions of his family as they are shocked at the supposed scandal of his wife and his best friend, and he likens their pestering to that of flies:

Why does a man have to be maddened by fools at such a time!

Leave me alone! You're like a swarm of poisonous flies.

(Act IV)

and in Days Without End the malicious 'Mephistophelean' Loving sneers about John's adultery:

As for the adultery itself, the truth is that this poor fool was making a great fuss about nothing - an act as meaningless as that of one fly with another, of equal importance to life!

(Act Three Scene One)

Later in the play, John echoes Nietzsche's desire for a superman when he claims, with an 'idealistic exultation coming into his voice' that:

We need a new leader who will teach us that ideal, who by his life will exemplify it and make it a living truth for us - a man who will prove that man's fleeting life in time and space can be noble. We need above all, to learn again to believe in the possibility of nobility of spirit in ourselves! A new saviour must be born who will reveal to us how we can be saved from ourselves, so that we can be free of the past and inherit the future and not perish by it!

(Act Three Scene Two)

This 'pseudo-Nietzschean' saviour is condemned by Loving representing the negative side of the Christian argument because such a saviour would advocate that the mob should remove their feet from the 'trough of swill' in which they live and this would be strongly resisted. John may claim that he wants a superman who will save the world by his example and whirl it 'On to Hercules' - a fitting phrase as it encompasses the Nietzschean idea of the power and strength of the superman - but, by the

end of the play, O'Neill invokes the Christian God to save John Loving, rather than having the triumph of the noble individual in Nietzschean fashion.

In Servitude, written in 1914 some years before The First Man and The Hairy Ape, O'Neill uses the Nietzschean superman to express the nature of individualism. This play is an exploration of marital relationships, in many ways in the style of Shaw or Ibsen, both of whom O'Neill had read with enthusiasm. Through the pompous Roylston and the worshipping Mrs. Frazer O'Neill puts forward a very Nietzschean and Shavian view of individualism. Centred around a critique of society, especially the big business concerns in America, the whole play, although it has the overtones of a romantic, social drama which is hardly in the Nietzschean mode, is a questioning of the role of the individual within a relationship and in society as a whole. Roylston advocates the expression of individualism in the plays that he writes, and this is shown in Mrs. Frazer's recounting of the effect that these plays had on her:

I was in love with an ideal - the ideal of self -
realisation, of the duty of the individual to assert
its supremacy and demand the freedom necessary for
its development.

(Act One)

Mrs Frazer was looking for an ideal, a superman, who would justify her decision, based on Roylston's plays, to shake off the mundane ties of her marriage. With her discovery that Roylston is just as hypocritical and false as her own marriage had seemed, she sees him for the egoist he is and is sadly disillusioned:

Last night I thought - you were on such a high pedestal -
I thought of the superman, of the creator, the maker
of new values. This morning I saw merely an egotist
whose hands are bloody with the human sacrifices he
has made - to himself!

(Act Three)

O'Neill has chosen a Nietzschean concept to express the very common disillusionment experienced in life when an idol is discovered to have 'plated feet'. However, the use of the superman here is rather different from what Nietzsche had in mind. He wanted a 'creator of new values', a man who would change the moral attitudes of the world, but Roylston is far from achieving any stature of the kind that Nietzsche had envisaged. Nietzsche's higher man would not only make new values, but would also be far above the petty restrictions of the surrounding world. Part of Mrs Frazer's disillusionment is that Roylston did care about the position they were in, and what the world might construe from her presence in the house. Roylston may affect to express a disdain for social convention, but this is shown to be false. O'Neill does suggest that a true individual, one who strives to be different, should not consider the opinion of others, and this is a truly Nietzschean idea although Roylston's selfishness in thinking of himself as 'the only individual in the world' and attempting to impose this view on others is unsatisfactory. In fact, he is shown to be a reverse of a Nietzschean superman - he is, after all, one of the mob. Unlike a truly 'creating one' he has no consideration of the effect of his plays on others; he simply destroys what exists in relationships and society and can offer nothing valid in its place. He is a conceited, egotistical being with none of the nobility of spirit that either Nietzsche or O'Neill would ideally have wished for. Mrs Frazer may say that:

It is the duty of the individual to triumph over
environment

(Act Three)

a sentiment in keeping with Nietzsche's view of society, but it has little validity in Servitude in that neither Roylston nor Mrs Frazer are convincing examples of the right kind of individualist. O'Neill is perhaps suggesting,

as in The Hairy Ape, that man cannot 'triumph over environment'. The ideas and terminology that O'Neill has taken from Nietzsche are overweight for this play although they do work far more successfully in the expressionistic The Hairy Ape. Mrs Frazer's decision to look for her own individuality and her freedom from her very ordinary marriage would be better illustrated without the obviously inappropriate Nietzschean vocabulary. Ibsen's Nora in A Doll's House is a far more convincing character than Mrs Frazer and although her marital problems are different from those of O'Neill's character, being personal rather than specifically linked to a critique of the social system, her decision to leave her husband is an expression of her individuality which is movingly and convincingly conveyed without inappropriately grafted-on philosophical concepts which O'Neill chooses to employ in Servitude.

Nietzsche says in 'The Spirit of Gravity' that:

One must learn to love one's self - thus I teach - with a whole and healthy love, that one may find life with oneself endurable and not go gadding about.

This is what Nora is striving for, and this self-love must be a noble and improving love, not a self-satisfied blind love, as Roylston's is. Mrs Frazer's return to her husband and Roylston's acknowledgement of his wife's sacrifice is an indictment of marriage and 'servitude' to another individual - a concept very far removed from Nietzsche's idea of the individual. O'Neill did seem to have Ibsen in mind, in that he uses a quotation from Emperor and Gallilean in a speech by Roylston:

Servitude in love, love in servitude! Logos in Pan,
Pan in Logos! That is the great secret - and I never
knew!

(Act Three)

but this is as inappropriate as the concept of Roylston as the superman in that it invests him, and the other characters in the play, embroiled

in their marital problems, with a weight and seriousness that O'Neill does not show them possessing in terms of the plot and their characterization. The 'sovereign individual', the 'great lonely one' as Mrs Frazer laughingly puts it, is neither realised in dramatic terms, nor in philosophical ones.

Like Fog, which was written at the same time as Servitude, the play shows a concern for the business side of American life. In Fog O'Neill creates the Businessman as an indifferent capitalist, unconcerned about those less fortunate than himself. He refuses to have any responsibility for the way the world is, and he is content as long as he is making money. Like many others in America, he is an example of hard work having brought material reward, and he is willing to support this mode of life without any thought of the more unfortunate members of society who had not his initial advantages. His lack of feeling and concern is compared with the humanism of the Poet, and O'Neill indicates that business has become the only consideration for many like this man. One speech specifically indicates this:

I'm a businessman pure and simple and the farther I get away from that business the more dissatisfied I am. I've built up that business from nothing - and it's sort of like a child of mine. It gives me pleasure to watch over it and when I'm away I'm uneasy.

The man is bored travelling in Europe, unaware of the situation of the others on the ship in the steerage section, and he shows a total lack of compassion except for his claim to have been crying for the woman; a claim which is not convincing. In Servitude O'Neill does give a critical picture of the business world in America as embodied in George Frazer. Mrs Frazer's criticism of her husband and his attitudes is a fore-runner

of the criticisms of capitalism in Marco Millions, More Stately Mansions and, to a lesser extent, The Great God Brown. The so-called 'Napoleons of finance' that characterised America of the twenties and thirties were also an integral feature of the play cycle that O'Neill shelved and subsequently partially destroyed, A Tale of Possessors, Self-dispossessed, which was to show the rise of one of the great industrial families. George Frazer is criticised by his wife for being shallow, and, like the Businessman in Fog, never concerning himself with 'what lay beneath the surface'. Making money, doing business deals, growing into an ever larger corporation, was what counted, with no sign of consideration for the means by which the money was made. Mrs Frazer implies that her husband's business deals were unscrupulous and she discovers him to be far from the man she had envisaged before marriage. Her picture of him is a valid indication of the public opinion of the great financiers of the early years in America, the 'financial giants, the daring gamblers who fought their battles to the bitter end of ruin'. George Frazer was seen publicly as a man who worked for the good of the country who was

.... doing his part in their gigantic enterprises,
laboring to effect ever larger combinations in order
that this country might thrive and become ever greater
and more productive.

(Act One)

but his wife was sadly disappointed in him as a man. Through Mrs Frazer's criticism O'Neill is showing that these men are not to be implicitly believed in because of their financial greatness. They may have been regarded by many in America as 'supermen' but their power and status was seen by O'Neill as essentially corrupt and destructive; commercialism in America being a large factor in the alienation and downfall of the individual. In The Hairy Ape it is capitalism which alienates Yank; it is the pressure of money and business which weans John Brown away from the

artistic life in Bread and Butter, so destroying his creative ability and individuality; it is capitalism that makes Simon Harford incapable of writing his philosophical treatise and which helps to destroy him as a man; and in The Great God Brown O'Neill creates a picture of the successful businessman and his unsatisfactory, unfulfilled life. O'Neill said of Billy Brown that he was:

.... 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 ... (2)

Marco Polo is O'Neill's clearest picture of an empty capitalist, a man whose whole existence is related to making money and who has no religious or spiritual awareness or comprehension of the world around him. In Marco Millions O'Neill is parodying a relatively common phenomenon in the nineteen twenties and the American magnate was the target for many writers. Marco Millions was written during the period from 1923 to 1925, only a short time after Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt. Babbitt is essentially a middle class man on his way up, as is O'Neill's Marco, but Marco's final X success echoes that of the well-known Americans who were being satirised elsewhere. Bertolt Brecht satirises Pierpont Morgan as Pierpont Mauler in St. Joan of the Stockyards and F. Scott Fitzgerald was writing The Great Gatsby, published in 1925. The rise of the business baron, such as Carnegie or Ford, previous to this period was regarded by many as a new form of feudalism, with these individuals and their vast corporations having the power to enslave thousands of workers. This certainly would have been a view shared by many of O'Neill's contemporaries in Greenwich Village. The Foreword to Marco Millions is a mock apology for the popular misconceptions about Marco Polo and the millions that he made, and O'Neill's

(2) New York Evening Post 1926. Reprinted in Clark op. cit. p.141

'whitewashing of the good soul of that maligned Venetian' carries a sufficient tone of irony to give a clear indication of his feelings about the new 'supermen' of American commerce. In Long Day's Journey into Night and Moon for the Misbegotten he makes reference to the true incident, obviously much enjoyed by the O'Neill family, of the pigs belonging to a poor Irish farmer straying into the millionaire's ice-pond, and in both tellings the farmer has the advantage over the Standard Oil millionaire. Standard Oil seems to embody for O'Neill the rise of the capitalist corporation, with its creation of a new aristocracy based solely on money, and he referred to it as far back as 1914 in Fratricide. In both plays, the Harder/Harker millionaire is shown to be arrogant, incompetent and cowardly, an unworthy opponent for the Irish farmer.

Nietzsche, too, was concerned about the rise of the great industrialists and public figures of his own time, although in his opinion they were really men of mediocrity, small in stature and only worthy of his contempt. In 'The New Idol' he pictures such men and the power they have gained by worshipping the new idol of the state:

Just see these superfluous ones! They steal the works of the inventors and the treasures of the wise. Culture they call their theft - and everything becometh sickness and trouble unto them!

Just see these superfluous ones! Sick are they always; they vomit their bile and call it a newspaper. They devour one another and cannot even digest themselves. Just see these superfluous ones! Wealth they acquire and become poorer thereby. Power they seek for, and, above all, the level of power, much money - these impotent ones!

See them clamber, these nimble apes! They clamber over one another, and thus scuffle into the mud and the abyss.

Towards the throne they all strive; it is their madness - as if the happiness sat on the throne! Oft times sitteth filth on the throne, - and oftentimes also the throne on filth.

The multitudes of insignificant people were served by the state and also helped to perpetrate the evils of it. Their 'striving towards the throne' is futile, petty and worthy only of dismissal by Nietzsche. For those who were not taken in by the 'cold monster' of the state there was hope that they would grow into something greater, if only they could fight absorption by the rabble. Zarathustra says that 'Much-too-many are born' and the state, whether that of the capitalist or the communist, entices them and 'cheweth them as cud'. For those that escape this fate, those with individuality and potential for higher thought and action, there is hope that they will succeed in changing mankind.

In 'The New Idol' Nietzsche makes the closing paragraph an exhortation to look towards the superman:

There, where the state ceaseth - pray look thither my brethren! Do ye not see it, the rainbow and the bridges of the Superman?

Both Nietzsche and O'Neill have contempt for the state-worshippers, the men who use it to make their fortunes and who acquire outward glory and respectability. Nietzsche makes the point that the state likes 'to sun itself in the sunshine of good consciences' but these are, it is implied, good consciences of a very dubious sort. The outward respectability and public virtue of the businessman and the politician is founded on hypocrisy and dishonesty and is despised by both Nietzsche and O'Neill, although for different reasons. Nietzsche saw the hypocrisy as part of the pettiness of the herd morality and mentality, while O'Neill regarded the public face of the business magnates as being a cover for their inhumanity and lack of real feeling for those men who worked in their thousands to make them rich. O'Neill's first picture of such a man is in the play Bread and Butter, written in 1914. Edward Brown, the town alderman and later Congressman, is a pompous, bourgeois businessman who has achieved

a certain amount of local success and a good social position. The conflict within the play is between the artistic and creative aspirations of John Brown, and the materialism and commercialism of the world represented by his brother. Edward has all the outward appearance of being an honest man and he prides himself on his honour and his integrity, considering his artistic brother to be a wastrel and a disgrace to the family. John calls him a 'sanctimonious hypocrite' and this trait of character is revealed when he is trying to persuade Maud to become divorced. He may claim that divorce is the 'greatest evil of modern times and a grave danger to the social life of the nation' but he is willing to compromise his principles when it comes to a personal desire to have Maud. Edward is a thoroughly unlikeable character and O'Neill attempts to show in this play that the artistic life and the opportunity for an individual to fulfil a creative urge is what is important. Once John gives up trying to be creative and becomes stifled by the mundane business community, he can no longer live a satisfactory life and with the pistol shot at the end of the play O'Neill again indicates that death is better than an unfulfilled and alienated existence. In many respects Bread and Butter is a forerunner of The Great God Brown, although the conflict between Billy and Dion Anthony is explored in a more philosophical and dramatically experimental way.

A later example of the American businessman is Sam Evans in Strange Interlude. Sam is ultimately successful after he has been inspired by the birth of the son that he thinks is his, and O'Neill portrays him as typical of the American success story in that he begins from nothing and becomes extremely wealthy. Again there is a comparison between the business world and the artistic one in that Charlie Marsden is a writer and he leads a very different life from Sam. However, in this play this conflict

is not thematically central; Nina's development and her relationships with the men in her life is the core of the play, but it is Charlie who makes the critical comments, again using Nietzschean imagery, about the kind of man Sam becomes:

... his kind are inheriting the earth ... hogging it, cramming it down their tasteless gullets!

Later he comments upon the contemporary business scene:

What a fount of meaningless energy he's tapped! ... always on the go ... typical terrible child of the age ... universal slogan, keep moving ... moving where? never mind that ... don't think of ends ... the means are the end ... keep moving!

(Act Six)

Though far less forceful, in that Charlie is a rather weak and in many ways pathetic character, Marsden's thoughts about Sam are similar to those of Nietzsche when he describes men he despises as being constantly moving like buzzing flies but achieving nothing of significance. In the eighth act of the play, on the yacht, Sam is the accepted picture of success with his 'stubborn and self-opinionated' expression and his 'flushed, apoplectic look'. Even his death, at the height of his son's triumph, is that of the over-fed, hypertensive businessman who leaves behind the requisite fortune, some of which is ironically to be used for a philanthropic purpose in financing Darrell's research station, in the true style of the efficient, charitable, concerned business magnate of the period.

O'Neill's most comprehensive, and elaborate, portrait of the businessman is Marco Polo whose concern to make money is shown throughout the play. Totally absorbed with making his millions and unaware of any other aspects of life, he is a comic figure, a caricature of a businessman, but the comedy does not diminish the sincerity and subsequent sadness of the

relationship with Kukachin. Her lack of love and her death are genuinely moving when compared to Marco's crass and materialistic progress. Marco chooses to ignore real love offered to him by Kukachin because he is too absorbed by his business ventures and self-aggrandisement to see that she loves him. This is made dramatically clear in the scene on the boat when Marco is looking into her eyes, as instructed by Chu-Yin. There is a moment when Marco seems about to realise Kukachin's love; it is interrupted by the call 'One million!'. This 'One million in God's money' is sufficient to tear Marco away and cause Kukachin to threaten suicide. Marco has no understanding of her feelings and her comment about his relationship with Donata, waiting at home in Venice for him to make his fortune, echoes Nietzsche's opinion of the ordinary man and woman:

There is no soul even in your love, which is no better
than a mating of swine!

(Act Two Scene Three)

The poem the young Marco writes about Donata is full of images 'mineral' and 'monetary'; what is important to Marco is that he will have sufficient millions to his credit to marry Donata. His travelling with the firm is in order to become 'really big and important' and he views the marriage with Donata as something that will 'bring the two firms into closer contact'. The relationship between Marco and Donata is really non-existent, even though he carries her miniature with him, and their reunion is superficial and certainly without any real feeling on Marco's part. When asked to take Kukachin to Persia, Marco's first wish is to obtain permission to trade in the ports along the route and he angles for a bonus and a recommendation when he delivers her. Kukachin's response to this is rightly insulting and ironic as she is faced with the prospect of what is considered to be a politically convenient and desirable marriage.

She awards Marco the Order of the Lion, throws gold coins over him and his father and uncle with the instructions 'Here! Guzzle! Grunt! Wallow for our amusement!' (Act Two Scene Three). Again O'Neill is using the Nietzschean imagery of those who are absorbed with money being like swine wallowing in mud.

This play is in a very different style and tone from O'Neill's other portrayals of businessmen in that it is a highly elaborate, expensively staged and pageant-like work, relying on its large cast, tableaux scenes and lavish costumes to convey the ancient world of the East. It is full of jokes and satire which are, perhaps, incongruous in the opulent setting, but O'Neill is attempting to show that the total materialism of Marco is a never changing facet of life. This play is a parody of what O'Neill saw around him in America and he manages to make Marco and the situations he finds himself in easily recognisable. There is a further strand in the play which is the consideration of Marco's lack of spirituality or soul. This may serve to illustrate O'Neill's opinion that such men do not have a soul, but in the play it is often an uncomfortable addition to what could be a totally amusing satire. Marco is contrasted with the Great Kaan who, although a powerful ruler and a man of inestimable wealth, has a strong religious awareness and a sense of the meaning of life and death. He tries to find out about Marco's immortal soul and comes to the conclusion that 'He has not even a mortal soul, he has only an acquisitive instinct' (Act Two Scene One). This comment by the Kaan is in keeping with O'Neill's opinion of many of his fellow Americans, and he manages to show that the Polo family could exist perfectly well in the twentieth century.

When Marco arrives back in Xanadu as Mayor of Yang-Chau, O'Neill creates an extremely amusing picture of the regalia worn by the three men and of their extravagant behaviour. Chu-Yin reports from the window that:

He wears over his Mayor's uniform, the regalia of Cock of Paradise in his secret fraternal order of the Mystic Knights of Confucius! The band of the Xanadu lodge is with him as well as his own.

(Act Two Scene One)

Marco talks to veterans, chucks babies under the chin, responds to the crowd and behaves like a popular public figure. When the other men appear they, too, wear 'a queer jumble of stunning effects that recall the parade uniforms of our modern Knights Templar, of Columbus, of Pythias, Mystic Shriners, the Klan etc.' (Act Two Scene One). In these directions O'Neill makes the comparison between Marco and a United States Senator and there is no doubt that he is satirising the whole paraphernalia of the successful man. Although this aspect of the play is amusing, and Marco is portrayed as a child who takes pleasure in his success, the more sinister aspects of his behaviour are clearly shown. He takes pride in his achievements as Mayor and O'Neill is strongly criticising the capitalist attitudes to taxation as he shows Marco having taken taxation to its logical conclusion:

For one thing, I found they had a high tax on excess profits. Imagine a profit being excess! Why, it isn't humanly possible! I repealed it. And I repealed the tax on luxuries. I found out that the great majority in Yung-Chau couldn't afford luxuries. The tax wasn't democratic enough to make it pay! I crossed it off and wrote on the statute books a law that taxes every necessity in life, a law that hits every man's pocket equally, be he beggar or banker! And I got results!

(Act Two Scene One)

Like Senator Queen in The Hairy Ape, Marco has the pretence of equality to support his argument, and, like Senator Queen, he also puts any real

protest down to a 'mere handful of radicals'. He taxes culture, sends anyone who is not happy to jail and ultimately, as Kaan states, prohibits all free expression of opinion. Marco's pride in his work is only exceeded by his pride in his inventions of gunpowder and paper money and again O'Neill questions the presence of a soul in such a man. Kaan wants to know whether, in killing the hero of the imaginary city with gunpowder, Marco had conquered his soul and Marco's reply is:

Well! you can't consider souls when you're dealing with soldiers, can you?

(Act Two Scene One)

This lack of humanity and concern for the rights of the individual to live is again shown when the boat is being loaded to take Kukachin to Persia. Marco is proud that the boat was loaded in time and declares:

We killed six slaves, but, by God, we did it!

(Act Two Scene Two)

These two comments are indicative of O'Neill's opinion about the soulless and uncaring society in which he lived. Man had ceased to be important, he was merely a means to gain more money and wealth used by a few individuals to wield power in the world. Chu-Yin's earlier comment that under Marco's leadership Yang-Chau's soul had been replaced by a brand new Court House is similar to the point made in The Great God Brown that the new Capitol, the symbol of American government and democracy, needs a more elemental force such as the old god Silenus, to temper its function. The state, progress, and the new values of mankind are alien both to O'Neill with his concern for the individual and the expression of his soul, and to Nietzsche with his belief in the degradation of man and his mediocre values.

The portrayal of Marco as having no soul but gold and greed is hardly balanced by Kukachin's claim for the existence of Marco's soul in her

descriptions of the occasions when she claims to have seen it. Again O'Neill recalls the natural world, the sunrise, sunset, stars and moon and so he claims that Nature is wonderful, in an attempt to show that this is one way that man can still relate to something greater and more significant than the materialistic world in which he lives. Kukachin believes that because of his appreciation of such things Marco must have a soul but her argument is not strong enough to counteract the obvious characterisation of Marco as 'an idol of stuffed self-satisfaction', a typical example of the man of the age in which O'Neill lived. He may have appeared as a 'superman', a man of extreme energy, power and wealth to those who worshipped such qualities, but certainly not for O'Neill.

As he does in The Fountain, O'Neill attempts to show the comparison between the religions of the world, but in this play he is concerned to make clear that in spite of the different beliefs that they may have all men involved in commerce are the same. Whether he is a Christian, Buddhist, Magian or Mahometan, the salesman is obsessed with profit, speculation and money, and the repetition of the allegorical scenes along the road to the Great Kaan's palace in Cathay show this extremely clearly. This exposition is balanced at the end of the play by the attitudes of the different worshippers to death, when questioned by Kaan. Again, O'Neill is stating that in spite of the differences in formal religious belief, all men state that 'Death is'. This scene comes immediately after the Polo's return to Venice, where O'Neill creates a banquet of magnificent vulgarity at which the Polos show off their wealth with lavish dishes, music, scattered gold and a grand theatrical disrobing to reveal even more splendour and wealth. The repetition of the word 'million!' and the 'grand Chamber of Commerce style' speech by Marco are commented upon

by Kaan, and one feels, O'Neill, in the statement:

The Word became their flesh, they say. Now all is
flesh! And can their flesh become the Word again?

(Act Three Scene One)

This adaptation of Biblical style is Nietzschean in tone, and comes very pointedly after the banquet. Nietzsche, too, felt that gluttony and greed was indicative of the attitude of the rabble and he attacks the rich with their passion for food and drink. The Voluntary Beggar describes them to Zarathustra as dripping 'like bulgy bottles out of all-too-small necks' and he is invited by Zarathustra to partake of the pure, natural food of corn, honey and water as an antidote to the corruption and bloat- edness of the well-fed world. The Voluntary Beggar is disgusted by the excesses of the rich and criticises them in a manner similar to the attitude of many socialists. He is disgusted:

At the culprits of riches, with cold eyes and rank
thoughts, who pick up profit out of all kinds of
rubbish - at this rabble that stinketh to heaven.

(The Voluntary Beggar)

Doris Alexander claims that

O'Neill's most bitter condemnation of the status quo
is thus based on his Nietzschean philosophy. Both
O'Neill and Nietzsche believe that the state produces
soulless conformity, that those who seek worldly power,
money, do so out of inner weakness and sterility. (3)

This is true to a certain extent. There is no doubt that O'Neill shared Nietzsche's view of society and the obsession with money and power which was manifest to them both. It is certainly the case that Nietzsche saw man as being weak, ineffectual, mindless, with no desire to progress or to look to the future and so temporal success and wealth became a compensation for a lack of inner strength and will power. However, O'Neill

(3) Alexander op. cit.

had two slightly different views of the state and all that it entailed. He did agree with Nietzsche that the state produced conformity and destroyed man's soul, but in his plays O'Neill shows that it is often a conflict within the individual that drives him to pursue worldly success. Rather than an inner weakness or sterility, it is the creative or artistic urge which produces inner confusion and alienation in John Brown, or Billy Brown and his artistic counterpart Dion, because this desire to express the individual soul is not recognised by society as fulfilling a useful function. Alternatively, the religious conflict such as that experienced by John Loving, or the ideological conflict of Simon Harford, provide an internal factor which leads to the dissatisfaction that an individual feels with himself and the life he leads. This is hardly sterility or conformity, or inner weakness, for they do not easily give in to the demands of the status quo, and their worldly success is only one aspect of their character. O'Neill is concerned to show that society dehumanises, as it does with Yank, but he also wants to show that alienation and sterility is the result of striving after worldly significance and this cannot replace an inner, spiritual self-awareness. This is particularly true in the case of Simon Harford in More Stately Mansions, one of the two surviving plays from the proposed cycle portraying the rise of American commercialism.

The character of Simon Harford is established in A Touch of the Poet, although he never appears in the play. He is the young, idealistic son of a rich and influential family who despises the way his family have gained their wealth in business and who wants to prove his independence by living alone in the wilds. He feels at one with Nature and is writing a book about:

.. how the world can be changed so people won't be greedy to own money and land and get the best of each other but will be content with little and live in peace and freedom together, and it will be like heaven on earth.

(Act One)

This idealism is intruded upon by Sara Melody, with her all-absorbing desire to be a rich lady and ride in a fine carriage, and with their love Simon becomes diverted from his purpose. He resorts to poetry and dreaming. It is a dream of freedom in what he claims is the tradition of the family, although that had soon become corrupted by the women of the family into commerce. Sara later does the same with Simon, and even Deborah with her obviously unbalanced mind realises that his idealism is not of a practical nature. She does not believe that Simon will write his book on paper, although, as she says, 'it is already written on his conscience'. It is this conscience which proves to be Simon's difficulty in More Stately Mansions, together with the treatment he receives from Sara and Deborah. By the end of A Touch of the Poet Simon Harford has taken the first step of compromise in that he accepts the offer of working in a friend's cotton business so that he can make enough to live on for himself and Sara. He still hopes to have enough time left over to:

.. write his book, and keep his wisdom, and never let himself become a slave to the greed for more than enough that is the curse of mankind.

(Act Four)

However when More Stately Mansions begins, Simon has abandoned the writing of his book and become a successful businessman in his own right, having resigned in disgust from his father's firm. Simon accuses his dead father of sneering at the common people, and he claims that he wants to establish a free society where men will not be tempted by greed and possessions. He is a champion of the ordinary man, at least in theory,

and follows Rousseau in thinking that men must return to Nature in order to establish their goodness and unselfishness which Rousseau believed was a basic quality. He tells his mother that:

We must return to Nature and simplicity and then we'll find that the People - those whom Father sneers at as greedy Mob - are as genuinely noble as the false aristocracy of our present society pretends to be!

(Act One Scene One)

The Harford family have no feeling for the working men that have made their vast fortune; their 'thick ankles, and ugly hands and dirty finger-nails' are the first consideration for Deborah. Under Sara's influence Simon has become involved in commerce, although he claims that he has kept his ideals, but in the course of the play he does develop into the grasping capitalist that O'Neill so despised. As O'Neill wrote to Carpenter (4), the theme of the cycle of which More Stately Mansions was a part, was the materialistic nature of the American dynasties - 'Gold was to be the God'. Sara's defence is that human nature cannot be changed and so she and Simon must make as much as they can for their own comfort and he must become a slave to the 'greed for more than enough'. This is a never-ending task and Simon becomes as much enslaved to Sara and her business ambitions as the men he had so desperately, and idealistically, wanted to free in his youth. When he throws away his book, he admits to himself that he is getting pride and satisfaction out of the competitive nature of the commercial world and congratulates himself on escaping the fate of his mother who simply dreams her life away in a walled garden cut off and forgotten by Life. Simon is constantly reiterating his views on slavery, having become enslaved himself by his passion for Sara, and he voices a very Nietzschean opinion in his comment upon masters and slaves all being the same:

(4) A letter to F. I. Carpenter 24.3.46. Reprinted in Sheaffer Son and Artist p.441

As if at the end of every dream of liberty one did not find the slave, oneself, to whom oneself, the Master, is enslaved!

(Act One Scene Three)

Nietzsche makes this point in Thus Spake Zarathustra, in the section 'Of Self-Overcoming' when he speaks about the relationship between master and slave. The weaker man is persuaded to serve the stronger, but in that service he, too, finds that he has the will to be master. Ultimately, man cannot command because he cannot 'obey his own self'. The commander 'beareth the burden of all who obey, and this burden easily crusheth him'. Simon finds that in attempting to find personal liberty he becomes enslaved not only to his family and business, but to his own inadequacies. He may talk about his company, saying

It must attain the all-embracing security of complete self-possession - the might which is the sole right not to be a slave!

(Act Two Scene Two)

but this security is never achieved. Simon has become enslaved not only by Sara but by his own desire for power and control and he becomes more and more ruthless. 'The only moral law here is the strong are rewarded, the weak are punished', he tells Joel, and so he manages to build up a huge empire. He does become an unscrupulous and greedy trader and his final plan is what he sees as the crowning success for the company, owning the slaves that pick the cotton which is the beginning of the whole process of Simon's industry.

However, O'Neill does demonstrate in this play the feeling that he had expressed in an interview in 1946 (5)

It's [America's] main idea is that everlasting game of trying to possess your own soul by the possession of something outside of it, too

We are the greatest example of 'For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

(5) ibid. p. 442

This quotation from St. Mark's Gospel is precisely a description of Simon Harford. Having built up his empire and become rich, Simon feels that he is empty, aimless and restless; he has lost all meaning to himself and although he attributes this to a reaction after a business deal it is soon obvious that he has, indeed, lost his soul. All his idealism is gone, he has been totally absorbed by the company and totally consumed by Sara and her desire for wealth and power. O'Neill shows the confusion and despair which comes to Simon, and compares his position in relation to the company with his relationship with Sara. In order to keep their marriage alive, Sara becomes Simon's 'prostitute' selling herself symbolically in the office, and he is enslaved to her and also debased by her as he is by the company, with its ruthless business dealings. He may have despised his father for covering up his greed with 'Sabbath potions of God-fearing unction at the First Congregationalist Church' (Act Two Scene Two), as the Mannons do in Mourning Becomes Electra with their New England Puritanism, but Simon does not even have that consolation. In handing over the business to Sara because she is more suited to it, Simon makes her earn it by prostituting herself, and here O'Neill is making a striking comment on the nature of commercial dealings. They are as sordid and soulless as a transaction with a whore, although elsewhere in his plays O'Neill does have some sympathy for the position prostitutes are forced into by society. Simon gradually turns more and more to his mother and her madness in the garden as his feeling of alienation, despair and horror at what he has become increases. He utters wild speeches in his attempt to return to his childhood, one particularly in Nietzschean fashion. Here it is the imagery of the pig-sty again when Simon tries to persuade Deborah to take him away inside the summer house:

God, if the reality of dog-eat-dog and lust-devouring
lust is sane, then what man of honourable mind would
not prefer to be considered lunatic! Come, Mother!
Let us leave this vile sty of lust and hatred and the
wish to murder!

(Act Three Scene Two)

This speech, with its echoes of Hamlet and Gertrude, shows Simon's deterioration, partially owing to the loss of all his ideological theories of man, and partly because of the consuming jealousy and hatred for each other of Sara and Deborah. Simon becomes Nietzschean in his attitude to humanity in that he claims that there is an insane impulse in man's vanity:

... to believe human lives are valuable, and related
to some God-inspired meaning. But the obvious fact is
that their lives are without any meaning whatever ...

(Act Three Scene Two)

In Simon's madness he wishes to die in pursuit of his childhood fairytale and leave the 'starving scavenger hogs of life' to devour our 'carrion' (Act Three Scene Two). Simon's insanity is the result of denying his original belief, his understanding of the more spiritual aspects of mankind, and he loses 'the touch of the poet in his soul' which he had had and which had been destroyed by Sara and her commercial greed. Even when she resolves to give everything up to look after Simon, she immediately plans to manipulate the business in order to ensure an income for them all. One is left wondering, as with Bernick at the end of The Pillars of the Community, how true the conversion is, and how genuinely Sara will be able to cope with a new life as a mother substitute for Simon.

More Stately Mansions is O'Neill's most serious criticism of capitalism as it was manifest in the United States and he shows through the character of Simon that adherence to the accepted values in modern society can result in the loss of soul and an inability to live with oneself. Marco

Polo never had a soul so his plight, and the play in which he appears, is far less serious than both the plight of Simon and the working out of his problem. Marco is a parody rather than a fully fledged character, while the conflict between Billy Brown and Dion in The Great God Brown is of a more artistic, creative nature rather than a straightforward criticism of the commercial world and the nature of the state. Much earlier, in Beyond the Horizon, O'Neill had explored the plight of a man who gives up his natural desires and feelings for business, in the character of Andrew Mayo. He gives up the farm and, contrary to his instincts, goes into business in South America. He becomes disillusioned and cynical and his brother Robert declares that in spite of his own weakness and failure and his sad marriage to Ruth:

... you're the deepest-dyed failure of the three, Andy.
You've spent eight years running away from yourself.
You used to be a creator when you loved the farm.
You and life were in harmonious partnership.

(Act Three Scene One)

After his experiences in the grain business, exploiting wheat farmers and losing and winning large sums of money, Andrew is sick and despairing. He has lost his honesty and his natural feelings for the land, and he has, as Robert says, got far away from the truth. This truth is to himself and to his natural environment, and in denying that, as Robert himself has done by remaining on the farm rather than going away to sea, he has ceased to be a whole man. This is comparable to what happens to Simon, although Simon is troubled as much by his women as he is by the denial of his beliefs and feelings, and, of course, More Stately Mansions is a less schematic and more dramatically innovative and convincing play.

O'Neill does depart from Nietzsche in his consideration of the conflict between man's natural spirituality and his mode of life in modern society, in that Nietzsche was ready to condemn all men apart from his 'superman', whom he regarded as a new saviour. O'Neill certainly does not adhere to this aspect of the philosophy and he only makes one attempt to portray a superman figure in his plays. Because of his early response to socialist doctrines and his interest in Marx, O'Neill is more concerned about the ordinary man and what society does to corrupt and destroy him. This constant theme in the plays indicates that whatever else O'Neill may have thought of Nietzsche, he responded to socialism because of his human sympathies, sympathies which Nietzsche certainly did not appear to possess. O'Neill's use of the concept of the superman, translated into his own experience and the way that society regarded the new, admirable leaders of industrial America as a kind of supermen, meant that there was a consistent concern in the plays for the ordinary man and his fate. Unlike Nietzsche, O'Neill does not see the superman as the ultimate solution for mankind, and in fact, in Strange Interlude he shows how destructive the concept can be.

In this play O'Neill does attempt to create a superman, a god figure, in the person of the dead Gordon Shaw. Sheaffer states (6) that this character was based on a real college boy, 'the most golden and god-like collegian of his day.' Gordon's tragic death in the war as a flying ace, is an example of what made a contemporary hero, so it is natural for Nina and Sam and Darrell to think of him as heroic; but there is something much more. Sam had always felt inferior to Gordon Shaw because he was everything that Sam was not - clever, physically strong, attractive, with more than the aura of the golden boy of the college. In Nina's

(6) ibid. p. 244

sick mind Gordon is built up into the figure of a 'demi-god', as Marsden comments when he is considering Gordon's biography. The spirit of Gordon Shaw pervades the entire play; he is as real as the characters which actually appear on stage, and Nina even believes that he has something to do with the conception of her child:

I loved it so at times that Gordon must be its real father, that Gordon must have come to me in a dream while I was lying asleep beside Sam!

(Act Four)

When Nina does have a son by Darrell he is inevitably named Gordon and her whole life revolves round her son as she tries to make him like the original Gordon Shaw. Nietzsche considered that the true function of woman was to bear the superman, and all her love and devotion must be directed towards this end. In 'Old and Young Women' in Thus Spake Zarathustra he says:

Everything in woman is a riddle, and everything in woman hath one solution - it is called pregnancy.

and later in the same section:

Let the beam of a star shine in your love! Let your hope say: 'May I bear the Superman!'

Nina's desire to have a child who will be a replacement for her lost love who was killed is very much of this order, and her wish to give birth to another Gordon Shaw reveals the Nietzschean theme.

In an early draft of Strange Interlude (7) Nina is talking about her need to find God and she says that:

... the only Gods that didn't make me feel ashamed of their creators were the old Greek ones - beautiful Gods - as beautiful as Gordon -

(7) Strange Interlude ms. American Literature Collection. Beinecke Library, Yale University.

Clearly O'Neill is showing that it is a sick mind which would create a god-like figure in Gordon Shaw. Even Darrell accuses her of thinking of Gordon and claims that in their relationship he was a substitute for the dead Gordon, this hero who affects all of the characters in the play. Somehow, they all feel that they have to measure up to the standard of Gordon Shaw, even though Marsden attempts to prove that he came from a very ordinary family and there was nothing heroic or different about him. Nina tries to make her son into the image of the original Gordon and he, too, grows up to be a hero. O'Neill typically, made use of the American preoccupation with the athletic college boy hero so admired in his time, as he had earlier done in Abortion, and this makes the worship of Gordon Shaw more feasible in terms of the play, although he is certainly very far from a Nietzschean hero. However, Marsden does cynically say to himself 'Gordon uber alles and forever!' in response to Sam's hero worship and this undoubtedly does have Germanic connotations. O'Neill has taken the concept of the superman and, as he did with his portrayal of the business barons, moulded it into a contemporary form which would appeal to an audience. Young Gordon grows up to be all that Nina had hoped and he wins the race at the end of the play with a display of strength and courage. In fact, he seems even greater because, as Sam shouts, Gordon Shaw was beaten by death and his son is still alive. Symbolically, Gordon Shaw had been an airman, one who flies high over the rest of mankind, and his namesake flies away at the end of the play with Nina's cry:

Fly up to heaven, Gordon! Fly with your love to
heaven! Fly always! Never crash to earth like
my old Gordon!

(Act Nine)

Nietzsche held the view that the world could be changed by breeding the new nobility, the race of supermen, and on two occasions in Thus Spake

Zarathustra he states that the future will be assured. He saw the role of women as fulfilling one function - to give birth to potential supermen. In 'Of Old and New Tables':

In your children ye shall make amends for being
your father's children. Thus shall ye redeem all
that is past.

and in 'The Land of Culture' the image of the super hero, Zarathustra, flying too far into the future is supported by the assertion:

Unto my children will I make amends for being the
child of my fathers: and unto all the future - for
this present day!

Although O'Neill may not have agreed with the theory that the superman should be the salvation of the human race, his reading of Nietzsche must have been supported by his acquaintance with George Cook who was interested in the Nietzschean superman. He wrote a pamphlet published in 1907 entitled Evolution and the Superman which contains such passages as:

He will know he is not descended from gods or a god - like man who fell. He will know that he, child of the worm, is father of the gods. The gods were man's deep dream of what life is to be. The higher race that springs from man will have to be of stronger will, of greater courage, of subtler knowledge and of greater psychic power than man ... (8)

and Cook also wrote a work called The Chasm which extolled the Nietzschean theory of the superman. In this work he claimed that the chasm was 'between man and the higher race that may follow him, as it is also between the socialist and the Nietzschean feeling about life' (9). The chasm is certainly there in this latter case, and this may account for the fact that O'Neill did not find it easy to equate the two philosophies. It is this constant playing with the two ideals, having to make adjustments

(8) Written for the Monist Society of Davenport. Reprinted in Glaspell op. cit.

(9) Cook, George Cram The Chasm Reprinted in Glaspell op. cit. Ch. XXVI

in his thoughts, which has produced the intricacies in O'Neill's drama. It is not simply a direct translation of philosophy, as Nietzsche wrote it, into dramatic form.

One play which O'Neill wrote in 1915 shows that this problem did not have to be taken seriously all the time. In Now I Ask You O'Neill satirises the attempts of the central characters to adopt Nietzschean philosophy. Lucy Ashleigh is a typical, middle-class, pseudo-Bohemian and she is full of the latest ideas and fashionable philosophical and social trends. She is determined to be different, to live the part of her imaginary heroines and follow the precepts of the latest philosophical works and novels that she has read. She affects to despise the bourgeois values of her parents, feigns to hate their friends and claims not to care what they think of her:

As if I cared for the opinion of the mob - the
much-too-many!

she declares in a Nietzschean manner, and her objection to marriage is voiced in Nietzschean terms:

What is it Nietzsche says of Marriage? 'Ah, the
poverty of the soul in the twain! Ah, the filth of
soul in the twain! Ah, the pitiable self-complacency
in the twain!'

both of these quotations being from Thus Spake Zarathustra 'Of Child and Marriage'. Her affected contempt for her marriage is shown to be as unreal as she claims marriage is, but in this play O'Neill also parodies Nietzsche's concept of the superman. Lucy's friend Leonora is another follower of the philosopher, very fashionable among Bohemian society by that time in America, and she claims that Lucy's husband is an example of the popular concept of Nietzsche's superman, the Blond Beast. She says to Tom:

I mean, you have all the outward appearance of my ideal of what the Great Blond Beast should look like.

and later she claims her painting shows this:

I call it the Great Blond Beast - you know, Nietzsche. It is the expression of my passion to create something or someone great and noble - the Superman or the work of great art.

(Act One)

This total misrepresentation of Nietzsche's thought provides an amusing example of the posing and apparent rebellion of the young people in this play, especially when it is revealed that they are not abiding by their claims for freedom and their repudiation of conventional morality. Now I Ask You deals with such topics as birth-control, changing standards of behaviour, new forms of art, and there are references to such fashionable authors as Strindberg, Dostoevsky and Ibsen. All the posturings of the characters are treated with the same degree of amusement by O'Neill and although the play does deal with the more serious problems of relationships, especially the jealousy of Lucy and the relationship between Gabriel and Leo, it is a light-hearted look at contemporary fashions.

O'Neill emerges as a severe social critic in his plays, as damning and contemptuous of many aspects of American society as Nietzsche was of the Germany of his own time. O'Neill was concerned about his society and he states this clearly in a quotation given by Malcolm Mollan in a newspaper article (10).

Suppose some day we should suddenly see with the clear eye of a soul the true valuation of all our triumphant brass band materialism; should see the cost - and the result in terms of eternal verities! What a colossal, one hundred percent American tragedy that would be ...

(10) Mollan, Malcolm 'Making Plays with a Tragic End' Philadelphia Public Ledger January 22, 1922.

O'Neill's concern for the ordinary man, struggling to make sense of his existence is a part of the doctrine of socialism and is far from the Nietzschean view of the petty individual who deserves no consideration or sympathy, merely contempt. There is a great deal of sympathy for the individual in O'Neill's plays, and a criticism of the so-called heroes of his time, while Nietzsche, in his condemnation of all men desired a hero to put mankind on what he believed was the right path to the future. This vision of the future to be brought about by the superman is a future which is unacceptable to most twentieth century individuals, except perhaps those who shared Hitler's warped visions and his misinterpretation of Nietzschean philosophy as it goes against all accepted moral teachings. O'Neill's view of the future, as explored in the plays, is uncertain. He seems pessimistic about the future of mankind and his frequent assertions that death is preferable to an unsatisfactory life means that he is providing no solutions to social problems, merely stating how soulless, inhuman and devoid of hope the present is. He elicits some understanding and acceptance of the individual who does not fit into the existing framework; perhaps the alienation that he himself felt made him the despairing figure that he was. It is interesting that O'Neill was thought of by many of his contemporaries as an extremist, a destroyer of accepted American values and a propounder of unacceptable, threatening socialist ideas, but on reflection he is very much in the middle, juggling with Nietzsche on the one hand and Marxism on the other to produce plays which do reveal mankind 'with the clear eye of a soul'.

CHAPTER V

DIONYSUS

O'Neill's interest in Dionysus and his attempt to bring the Dionysiac spirit into his plays has a variety of sources. O'Neill's reading of Greek tragedy and his interest in classical theatre would have told him that Dionysus was the deity to whom the Greek civic drama festivals were dedicated. Dionysus was also considered to be the moving force in the development of the Chorus and this supposition would have certainly been reinforced for O'Neill by his reading of The Birth of Tragedy which gives a lengthy interpretation of the Dionysian element in drama, contrasting it with the concept which Nietzsche calls the Apollonian. Apollo is interpreted as the god of the ideal, the god of perfection. Man's aspiration is symbolised by the perfectly proportioned and civilised youth, Apollo, who is in conflict with the primitive forces of the god Dionysus. Dionysus was worshipped as the deity of the vine, the god of fertility and reproduction, who dispensed the riches of the earth while at the same time generating the primitive emotions and feelings which are common to each individual. These basic instincts are revealed in the orgiastic and ecstatic routs of the ancient world in celebration of the cult of Dionysus. Nietzsche's explanations in The Birth of Tragedy are also linked to the qualities later exhibited by Zarathustra, who has many Dionysian elements, and the whole work is full of eternal recurrence, regeneration and renewal, and the relationship between man and the natural world, as well as interpretations of the drunkenness always associated with Dionysus. A further practical influence on O'Neill was his connection with George Cook through the Provincetown Players (1) for Cook was imbued with Greek ideas and believed that drama could only be successful if it were created in what he believed was the ancient mode, through individuals working together in the spirit of Dionysus. In his working out of these

(1) See Chapter I

varied aspects in his plays O'Neill was able to interpret Dionysus in different ways. In some cases it appears to be a direct use of an already stated philosophy or mythological belief, while in others a truly individual interpretation governed by O'Neill's own experience of the society in which he lived.

The complete title of The Birth of Tragedy is The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music or Hellenism and Pessimism, both titles having a direct bearing on what O'Neill was attempting to achieve in his drama. The use of music in drama is an essential part of the theories that Nietzsche put forward about tragedy, linking them with his worship of Wagner at the time he was writing. O'Neill seems to interpret Nietzsche's concept of the Dionysian involvement with music by providing snatches of songs, often popular ones, in the plays and also using background music and chanting. These are both an integral part of the plot and action of his drama in the hope that he could create a subliminal effect on the audience in an attempt to recreate what he felt was a Dionysian atmosphere. His aim was to reveal deep-seated emotional responses in both the characters and the audience, as well as evoke an intellectual or conscious appreciation of what was happening on stage. Nietzsche states:

In song and dance man exhibits himself as a member of a higher community: he has forgotten how to walk and speak, and is on the point of taking a dancing flight into the air. His gestures bespeak enchantment.

(Birth of Tragedy I)

This statement is repeated in a different way in Thus Spake Zarathustra, where it is expressed in the more lyrical and poetic language which is prevalent in that work:

Only in dancing I know how to utter the parable of the highest things.

(The Grave Song)

and

At my foot which is frantic to dance thou castest thy glance, a swinging glance, laughing, asking, melting. Twice only thou movedst thy rattle with small hands. There my foot already swung frantic to dance. To understand thee, my toes did hearken, my heels did rear. For the dancer weareth in his toes his ear!

(The Second Dance Song)

It is through dancing and singing that man can feel part of the Dionysian 'ecstasy' and express himself in revealing the undercurrent of emotions which make him both an individual and part of the universe. These undercurrents are usually hidden and O'Neill felt that there was a desperate need to bring them out since modern society had caused man to become hardened and deny his inner feelings.

Nietzsche, too, states that the true Dionysian magic is not only the relationship discovered between man and man, but also an occasion on which 'estranged, hostile or subjugated nature again celebrates her reconciliation with her lost son, man.' (2) This 'reconciliation' was something that appealed to O'Neill as he wanted to reveal man's place in the universe and his emotional responses to it in several of the plays. Nietzsche suggests that the Dionysian experience can be brought about by music and he felt that the popular song served in the modern world as a reflection of the original Dionysian elemental melody which produced the revelling and abandonment of the ancient Greeks. This phenomenon, which could affect large numbers of individuals simultaneously and induce in them a common response and reaction, breaking down barriers which had been artificially erected by society, was first seen in the Dionysian

(2) Nietzsche, Friedrich The Birth of Tragedy, Part I

revels and worship, but Nietzsche draws comparison with more modern times:

So also in the German Middle Ages singing and dancing crowds, ever increasing in number, were borne from place to place under the same Dionysian power. In these St. John's and St. Vitus's dancers we again perceive the Bacchic choruses of the Greeks ...

(The Birth of Tragedy I)

In addition to this, Nietzsche maintains that music reveals the inner nature of man, the connection of man to the universe, transcending the trappings of ordinary thought and reason. Music is therefore seen as the agent by which the inner life of man can be released and expressed through singing and dancing. In having such an experience man reveals his awareness of, and participates in, universal myths and can celebrate his oneness with his fellows.

What O'Neill was trying to do was to make his audiences respond at this basic level, to attempt to recreate the Dionysian 'oneness' referred to by Nietzsche. This, of course, proved to be an extremely ambitious undertaking, as the audience watching the play in the twentieth century has a whole experience related to the cultural and social mores of its time, not immediately similar to that of the spectators and participants in an Athenian dramatic festival. However, O'Neill did believe, as did Nietzsche, that there were such deep-rooted responses which could be touched and brought out, in spite of the differences in culture, as they were an integral part of the psychological and emotional fabric of every individual. As O'Neill told an interviewer in 1922 (3):

Our emotions are instinctive. They are the result not only of our individual experience but of the experiences of the whole human race, whereas our thoughts are often only the small individual surface reactions.

(3) O'Neill to Mary Mullett. Reprinted in Alexander Op. cit.

It is O'Neill's attempt to achieve this awareness in his plays, in spite of a society whose beliefs did not socially reinforce this response, that caused him to use music in the way that he did.

It will be seen that music is used in a variety of ways. It can be part of the plot and dialogue, as in The Great God Brown where it is talked about by the characters as well as providing a background for the action. It also functions as 'mood' music to underline the emotions and actions that are taking place on stage and convey them more insistently to the audience, as happens in the earlier play, The Moon of the Caribbees. Music has a further function in Mourning Becomes Electra, where it is part of the choral element in the play associated with O'Neill's attempt to reconstruct the chorus as in the original Greek drama, and in Lazarus Laughed the music and the laughter of Lazarus are interlinked in having a similar effect upon Lazarus's followers. This use of laughter as music is truly Nietzschean. In Zarathustra laughter is often connected with dancing and singing:

And he that day reckoned lost on which we did not
dance once! And he every truth called false with
which no laughter was connected!

(Of Old and New Tables 13)

The Great God Brown opens with an orchestra playing in the background, providing popular music for the dancers, and thereafter, in the Prologue and the Epilogue, this music makes a link between the speeches and actions happening on the pier. Dion asks himself why he finds it impossible to respond to the music and dancing, which, as a true Dionysian should be part of his nature, but he finds that the 'life-denying' Christian side of his character makes him afraid and unable to react to the real appeal of the music:

Why am I afraid to dance, I who love music and rhythm and grace and song and laughter? Why am I afraid to live, I who love life and the beauty of flesh and the living colours of earth and sky and sea?

(Prologue)

Yet when he and Margaret have declared their love and his true feelings have been expressed, he says:

Mrs. Dion Anthony, shall we go in and may I have the next dance?

(Prologue)

This is an acceptable social response but it is also an indication that Dion has been allowed to reveal his true feelings and that he can now acknowledge the more sensitive and spiritual side of his character which is usually hidden by the mask. However, the two sides of Dion are not strictly separated into the underlying Christian side and the more public Dionysian face, for it is the latter that does contain many of his true responses and it is an expression of the more artistic side of his nature. The function of the mask and the relationship between it and Dion's 'true' character has further implications discussed later.

Popular music is used later in this play by O'Neill, very much in accordance with Nietzsche's concept of the popular song and its function in society. In The Birth of Tragedy Section 6 he states that the folk song or the popular song is very important:

Its enormous diffusion among peoples, still further enhanced by ever new births, testifies to the power of this double impulse of nature [the combination of the Apollonian and Dionysian]: which leaves its vestiges in the popular song in like manner as the orgiastic movements of a people perpetuate themselves in music. Indeed, one might also furnish historical proofs that every period which is highly productive in popular songs has been most violently stirred by Dionysian currents, which we must always regard as the substratum and prerequisite of the popular song.

Nietzsche does not go on to provide us with accurate historical evidence, but O'Neill's own era was very much that of the popular song. The period immediately after the First World War gave birth to mass communication of popular music with the advent of radio broadcasting, film and widespread passion for the gramophone and dancing. O'Neill himself loved popular songs and was particularly fond of an old player piano given to him by Carlotta, which he called Rosie. In many of the plays there are songs which the audience would have immediately recognised and they very often invoke a feeling of nostalgia for an immediate past. In his book The Plays of Eugene O'Neill (4) John Raleigh gives a well documented account of O'Neill's historical accuracy in setting the songs appropriate to the period of each play. There is no doubt that O'Neill was trying to do more than simply achieve the right atmosphere; he was attempting to bring out a common emotional response on the part of the audience to the popular tunes. He was well aware, like Noel Coward, of the potency of cheap music.

In Cybel's parlour one of the prominent features is a player piano and this sets the scene immediately; it is 'groggily banging out a sentimental medley of Mother-Mammy tunes'. Later Cybel says:

I love those rotten old sob tunes. They make me wise to people. That's what's inside them - what makes them love and murder their neighbour - crying jags set to music.

(Act Two Scene One)

She is expressing Nietzsche's idea that the popular song can touch something basic in the human character. O'Neill hoped that this could be given outward expression by the reaction of the characters to these type of tunes. O'Neill wanted it to be close to the effect of what Nietzsche imagined was created by the early Dionysian music. Dion declares that:

(4) Raleigh, John H. The Plays of Eugene O'Neill Southern Illinois University Press 1965 Ch. 2

Every song is a hymn. They keep trying to find the
Word in the Beginning.

(Act Two Scene One)

He is saying that even though they are only 'rotten old sob tunes' the essentially emotional quality of the music has an appeal for the individual looking for a sense of belonging because the melody is, as Nietzsche says, 'primal and universal'. Cybel comments that 'our Mr. Brown hates that old box', as Billy Brown appears to have lost his capacity to respond. He is portrayed as a typical, materialistic, contemporary businessman who represents all that O'Neill felt was wrong with modern American society. It is the lack of emotional feeling that Brown seeks to remedy by taking Dion's mask after his death. Although he tells Cybel that he objects to the player piano because it is shabby, she rightly perceives that the real trouble is that he is affected by its music:

He doesn't mind the music inside, that gets him somehow.

(Act Two Scene One)

This comment crystallises O'Neill's intention to show that even to the seemingly hardened Billy Brown the music has the ability to arouse hidden emotions, more primitive responses which, true to his upbringing, he tries to ignore and deny in himself.

In The Fountain O'Neill again tries to convey a similar situation when the Moor's song inspires Luis to sing of the fountain and love. In the same way as Brown, Juan initially despises the emotions aroused by music, but he comes to realise that it is not power and self-aggrandisement that he is seeking but love and youth through the fountain. The Moor refuses the demands from the nobles to sing of treasure; when he does eventually sing it is not of the treasure that they had been expecting, not gold nor riches, but of youth and wisdom. Juan is beguiled by this song until, as

he says, Luis had 'tricked it into that old woman's mumble' and he strongly denies its affect on him in front of his friends. But, it is this song, x sung in a language that he does not understand, which sets him on his quest. He pretends to be unaffected by what he has heard, and his companions are genuinely hostile - or at least appear so. They deny that the music means anything to them. Mendoza's slaying of the Moor is an indication that he, like Brown, is a product of a harsh society that wants to deny the expression of true emotion or feeling not in accord with the severely militaristic Spanish way of life, although in dramatic terms the killing is made plausible by the fact that the Moor is an enemy of Spain. Here O'Neill is showing two character types; those like Cybel and Dion who respond immediately to the influence and effect of the music and those who try to deny it has any effect. O'Neill is showing us both the 'deep undercurrents' and the 'surface reactions'.

At the end of The Fountain, after Beatriz appears in the fountain in the forest, her voice helping to create the magical quality of the scene, Juan's nephew and Beatriz's daughter sing 'their version of the fountain song' and again Juan is transported, weeping. The all-absorbing quality of the music and the impact of the song upon the old man is meant to echo the effect that the song had had on the young Juan, and to represent the Dionysian effect, as it has done throughout the play. O'Neill wants to show the old man feeling at one with the universe and a part of nature.

Juan says:

I am that song! One must accept, absorb, give back,
become oneself a symbol.

(Scene Eleven)

Nietzsche, in Thus Spake Zarathustra, shows the song as a means to recall and invoke a more primitive state of being. However, the audiences who

watched the play during its very short run at the Greenwich Village Theatre in 1925, did not appear to respond in the way that O'Neill had envisaged. The play was considered to be a romantic costume drama, whose dialogue was not sufficiently well written as either prose or poetry, and although Stark Young (5) considered it to have reached after 'a certain poignant, tragic beauty and variety of idea' it certainly did not seem to have the effect on the audience that O'Neill had intended.

In Lazarus Laughed the chorus is extremely effective and important as part of the dramatic form of the play. O'Neill attempts again to recreate the Dionysian effect by singing and dancing crowds; this time the moving force of the worship being Lazarus. There are directions throughout the play that music should be played, especially during the early scenes of in Bethany. In Act One Scene Two O'Neill states that it should be Dionysian music - the sound of flutes - and dance music. The relationship between the choric laughter and music is very important in creating both a Dionysian and Nietzschean effect; the laughter is rhythmic and connected with the dancing.

There is continually an overtone of singing laughter emphasising the pulsing rhythm of the dance.

(Act One Scene Two)

and again

Their chorused laughter, now high and clear, now dying to a humming murmur, stresses the rhythmic flow of the dance.

(Act One Scene Two)

O'Neill stated in 1922 that:

... rhythm is a powerful factor in making anything expressive. People do not know how sensitive they are to rhythm. You can actually produce and control emotion by that means alone. (6)

(5) Young, Stark The New Republic December 30, 1925

(6) O'Neill to Mary Mullett. Reprinted in Alexander op. cit.

and he had certainly attempted to do this successfully by using the pulsing drum beat in Emperor Jones produced two years previously. Nietzsche too had commented on the power of rhythm in The Joyful Wisdom. He stated that rhythm could exert a 'magical influence' on those listening, or 'for example, drawing water, or in rowing.'

In Lazarus Laughed the chorus weaves in and out, making patterns like a Greek frieze, in a Nietzschean affirmation of joy and life included by the laughter of Lazarus and the music. Those who deny Lazarus can only move in a grotesque, mechanical way. Like Dion's expressiveness in the Prologue of The Great God Brown, the ability to dance is an expression of true emotion and feeling. Similarly, in Desire Under the Elms, the Cabot brothers feel the urge to dance and caper about when they are filled with the joy of leaving the farm and the expectation of going to California. They are affirming a new life which is about to begin away from the restraints of their father. Ironically, later in the play, Ephraim Cabot himself dances at the party to celebrate the birth of Eben and Abbie's son. In these instances we again have Zarathustra's statement that 'only in dancing' can the highest things be expressed, but O'Neill is showing his ability as a dramatist as he uses dance to reflect the differing characters and moods which are peculiar to each play.

O'Neill's attempt to connect music, dancing and laughter in Lazarus Laughed is directly following Nietzsche, particularly in the use of laughter for the worship of a god-like figure. Lazarus's laughter is meant to achieve the same effect on his hearers as did the music and dancing of the original Dionysian revels, and as did the presence of Zarathustra on his disciples. As O'Neill said in a letter to Arthur Hobson Quinn in 1927:

His (Lazarus's) laughter is the direct expression of joy in the Dionysian sense, the joy of a celebrant who is at the same time a sacrifice in the eternal oneness of change and growth and transmutation which is life, of which his life is an insignificant manifestation, soon to be reabsorbed in the self-affirmative joyous laughter of God. (7)

It is traditionally believed that after Dionysus had gone his followers lost the exaltation that they had felt. The effect was the same with Zarathustra and Lazarus. Once the magic of the mood had been broken, once the instigating power had disappeared and the people had been released from the swirling throngs, they could no longer believe or behave in the same way.

'Go not away!' said the Wanderer who called himself Zarathustra's Shadow. 'Remain with us; otherwise we might be attacked again by the old gloomy affliction.'

(Among the Daughters of
the Desert)

Both the followers in Lazarus Laughed and Caligula at the end of the play, feel like the Seventh Greek who says:

But I have heard that when he has gone people cannot remember his laughter, that the dead are dead again and the sick die, and the sad grow more sorrowful.'

(Act Two Scene One)

He knows, like the Shadow, that once the uniting energy and experience of oneness and belief has gone, 'Men forget!'

Another of the Greeks in Athens, waiting for Lazarus to appear, describes the feeling that results from hearing Lazarus's laughter:

You dance. You laugh. It is as if a heavy weight you had been carrying all your life without knowing it is suddenly lifted. You are like a cloud, you can fly, your mind reels with laughter, you are drunk with joy.

(Act Two Scene One)

(7) Quinn, Arthur Hobson A History of American Drama II Crofts (New York) 1945 p. 252

The description of joy and ecstasy is an attempt by O'Neill to explain what he thought the followers of the original Dionysus must have felt when his wine and flute music beguiled the Ancient Greeks. In this play there is a progression from the music of the flutes to the celebratory military bands in Greece and Rome, to Lazarus's laughter alone which is conceived as music and which O'Neill intended to create the feeling of love and frenzy and drunkenness. This proved difficult to achieve on stage and, in fact, O'Neill felt that there was only one man who could possibly do justice to the role of Lazarus and that was the great opera singer Chaliapin. O'Neill even suggested to Macgowan that the part be translated into Russian:

It would be a wonderful strange effect and as far as most of an average audience understanding what Lazarus means, why it would probably be a lot clearer to them in Russian! Does this sound like pessimism? Well, it is and I am. No director in the world can make anything of my play but a horrible, humiliating fizzle - for me! - until the right Lazarus is found. (8)

This proved an exceptionally difficult task, O'Neill going so far as to suggest that Paul Robeson did the part in white-face (9) and the play was not produced until 1928 at Pasadena, as a community project with an actor called Irving Pichel playing Lazarus. The play, or rather pageant, was well received but it is doubtful that it achieved what O'Neill had intended. He had stated that he would like to see:

... the audience to be caught up enough to join in the responses - the laughter and chorus statements even, much as Negroes do in one of their revival meetings.

(10)

The wish to recreate this Dionysian response was not, apparently, realised;

(8) A letter to Kenneth Macgowan December 1926. Reprinted in Bryer *op. cit.* p. 140.

(9) Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 202

(10) Gelb op. cit. p. 602

there is no record of an audience watching the few productions of Lazarus Laughed responding in the way that O'Neill wished. It is possible that this response might have been achieved had O'Neill used music that an audience could immediately respond to and identify with, in the way that an audience nowadays can react to rock music, but O'Neill himself was pessimistic about the depth of understanding on the part of the audience, so it is unlikely that he would ever achieve a total commitment in this way. Both audiences and critics seem to have been overwhelmed by the visual spectacle rather than the philosophic and religious content of the play.

In The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche quotes extensively from Schopenhauer, who greatly affected his early thinking, and Schopenhauer's views on music expressed in Welt als Will und Vorstellung are related to the Dionysian power of music, although Nietzsche did not always agree with his interpretation. There is one assertion of his that O'Neill appears to have read and tried to realise in his plays, especially the early ones and Mourning Becomes Electra. Schopenhauer states:

... suitable music played to any scene, action, event or surrounding seems to disclose to us its most secret meaning and appears as the most accurate and distinct commentary upon it. (11)

This can be seen in The Moon of the Caribees when the negro chanting on the shore is used to give an indication of the state of mind of Smitty. The 'mournful singing of the Negroes on shore' and the 'mournful cadence of the song' emphasise Smitty's sadness and quiet in contrast to the riotous behaviour on the boat. In The Long Voyage Home there is in the background the sound of an accordion and whooping and dancing which is indictative of the old life Olson is renouncing and is in contrast to

(11) Nietzsche, Friedrich The Birth of Tragedy, 16

his decision not to drink and celebrate as he usually did, but to give up the sea and return home.

There is a much more pronounced musical effect in Mourning Becomes Electra with Seth's singing which permeates the play. It also serves to comment on the action and it is more symbolic than the Negro chanting in Moon of the Caribees. Seth's singing of Shenandoah with its constant reference to getting away 'across the wide Missouri' emphasises the longing that the Mannons, especially Christine and Lavinia, have to escape to the open sea away from their tomb-like home and the influence of the past. The Blessed Isles are the ultimate symbol of freedom which seems unattainable like the words of Seth's song. Christine's suicide, which occurs between two renderings of the song, is commented upon by Seth - she has escaped, but it is from life itself and she is now far away across the stormy water and bound away to the unknown shores of death. In the course of the play Lavinia and Orin do escape to the Blessed Isles but this does nothing to dispel the Mannon guilt which is hanging over them, and in fact makes Orin all the more despairing until he, too, finally kills himself. O'Neill has Seth sing Shenandoah at the very end of the play when everything has been destroyed for Lavinia:

Oh Shenandoah, I can't get near you
Way-ay, I'm bound away -

to which Lavinia's reply is:

I'm not bound away - not now Seth. I'm bound here -
to the Mannon dead!

(The Haunted Act Four)

Here, the symbolic function of the song becomes part of the dialogue in the way that, throughout the play, the words have been an indication of the action and a comment upon it, as well as creating an atmospheric effect. The repetition of the futility of Shenandoah and the futility

of the Mannon's attempt to escape the family curse are one and the same. The freedom sought by the characters in this play is as inaccessible as the goal of the song.

The importance of the sea, both in the person of Adam Brant and in the theme of sailing away to the Blessed Isles, is shown in the choice of this particular sea chant which, as O'Neill says, 'more than any other holds in it the brooding rhythm of the sea' (12). So it is both the quality of the music and the actual words of the song which have an importance in emphasising the action. This is also true of the songs sung on the dockside near Adam Brant's boat when the old Chantyman sings Shenandoah, thus immediately connecting the scene on the East Boston dock with the Mannons. He then goes on to sing Hanging Johnny, which is a prelude to the murder. The lines 'They say I hanged for money' is a link with Brant's vengeance on the Mannon household for leaving his mother in poverty, and the line 'They say I hanged my mother' is an immediate prelude to the killing of Brant that is to follow and the subsequent suicide of Christine when she can no longer live without Brant, murdered by her children. This 'mournful dirge' has an effect on Brant. 'It's as sad as death!' he says and he has the foreboding that he will never sail again. Like Seth, the Chantyman has a song which both sets the atmosphere, discloses the 'most secret meaning' and also comments upon it.

In The Birth of Tragedy Section 1 Nietzsche discusses the mythical quality of music and the basic myth that man believes in throughout the world. The power and tone of Dionysian music, the effect of harmony on the individual, incites man to the 'highest exaltation of his symbolic faculties' and a hidden force struggles for utterance:

(12) Stage direction in Homecoming Act One

Now is the slave a free man, now all the stubborn, hostile barriers, which necessity, caprice, or 'shameless fashion' has set up between man and man are broken down. Now at the evangel of cosmic harmony, each one feels himself not only united, reconciled, blended with his neighbour, but as one with him, as if the veil of Maya had been torn and were now merely fluttering in tatters before the mysterious Primordial Unity.

It is this symbolic quality of music that gives rise to the connection between myth and music, especially in the worship of Dionysus. Mythical beliefs are fundamental to man, both in the religious and the social sense, and the creation of myth, especially tragic myth, is a function of the drama. Like music it can appeal to the fundamental understanding and belief of man, irrespective of his particular social or historical environment.

Nietzsche saw music and myth having the same powerful effect on mankind. In the programme for the original production of The Great God Brown in 1926, O'Neill chose large extracts from The Birth of Tragedy to illustrate his thoughts about 'Tragedy and Dionysus' and it seems likely that it was because of what Nietzsche felt about music that O'Neill tried to achieve certain dramatic effects. The programme states:

How suddenly this gloomily depicted wilderness of our exhausted culture changes when the Dionysian magic touches it! A hurricane seizes everything decrepit, decaying, collapsed and stunted; wraps it whirlingly into a red cloud of dust; and carries it like a vulture into the air. Confused thereby, our glances seek for what has vanished; for what they see is something risen to the golden light as from a depression, so full and green, so luxuriantly alive, so ardently infinite. Tragedy sits in the midst of this exuberance of life, sorrow and joy, in sublime ecstasy; she listens to a distant doleful song - it tells of Mothers of Being, whose names are Wahn, Wille, Wehe ... (13)

O'Neill was fascinated by myths of all kinds, not only the tragic mythical figures of the Greek drama and mythology, but also modern historical

(13) Theatre programme for The Great God Brown 1926 Theater Collection, Lincoln Center Library, New York

figures who had gained mythological status by virtue of their deeds, such as Marco Polo and Christopher Columbus. As he states in the preliminary notes for Lazarus Laughed:

There are plenty of Christian myths. There is no reason why we shouldn't use them - interpret them - a la Greek - thus revive true spirit of religion in the theatre. (14)

However, the spirit of religion that O'Neill was trying to revive was that of the Dionysian ecstasy, the primordial feeling of oneness which is stressed both in The Birth of Tragedy with its Foreword by Richard Wagner, and Thus Spake Zarathustra and, subsequently, in many of O'Neill's plays. O'Neill wanted to do for the American people what Nietzsche had hoped Wagner would do for the German people - bring about the 'gradual awakening of the Dionysian spirit of our modern world' (15).

O'Neill makes further use of myth in The Great God Brown, where Dion Anthony often refers to himself as Pan and he deliberately wears the mask of Pan. The origin of this may have been O'Neill's reading of The Birth of Tragedy as well as his knowledge of mythology through Frazer's The Golden Bough. In a letter to Kenneth Macgowan in 1921 he says:

I am thinking a reading of Frazer's Golden Bough might be the best background spiritually that I could get. I have always wanted to read it anyway. (16)

This comment was in relation to the 'Fountain of Youth' play upon which he was working at the time, but the reading undoubtedly had its effect on other plays, particularly The Great God Brown and Lazarus Laughed which came very soon afterwards. In The Birth of Tragedy Section 11 Nietzsche describes the reference in Plutarch describing the death of Pan:

(14) Lazarus Laughed ms. notes American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University

(15) Nietzsche, Friedrich The Birth of Tragedy Part 19

(16) A letter to Kenneth Macgowan 18.3.21. Reprinted in Bryer op. cit. p. 19

Even as certain Greek sailors in the time of Tiberius once heard upon a lonesome island the thrilling cry 'great Pan is dead': so now as it were sorrowful wailing sounded through the Hellenic world. Tragedy is dead! Poetry hath perished with her!

Here, Nietzsche is bewailing, in a rather elaborate conceit, the loss of the old Greek tragedy, but O'Neill makes the connection between the mythical figures of Pan and Dionysus and associates them both in the being of Dion Anthony. Pan is a deity of the earth and nature and has some common characteristics with Dionysus. He is a satyr, a woodland creature, and a companion of Silenus. Pan played on a reed pipe, the music of the pipes and the flute being specifically Dionysian, and he, too, is associated with drunkenness and mischief. In the Plutarch reference quoted by Nietzsche, the death of Pan is traditionally associated with the birth of Christ, and this has a strong bearing on the character of Dion Anthony. At his death, Dion relinquishes the old order, the masks of Dionysus and Pan, and finds the Christian God. Dion is composed of two opposing forces, the sensitive ascetic Christian side which he finds too painful to experience in coping with life, and the outward, Dionysian mask.

Dion has cultivated the 'Bad Boy Pan' personality, the wild, drunken, capering persona, in order to be able to live in a society which has treated him harshly, particularly in his relations with Billy Brown. When he is without the mask of Pan, it is the Christian side of him that we see, and he tries to deny his feelings by scoffing at them and clasping on the mask which enables him to be recognised by his family and friends.

Blah! Fixation on old Mamma Christianity! You infant blubbering in the dark, you!

(Act One Scene One)

His family associate the mask with 'artistic temperament' although at the same time they despise Dion's drinking, and, as they see it, his wasted life. The conflict within Dion between Dionysus and Christ can be related to the legend which Nietzsche refers to, that when Christ was born all joy, spontaneity and gaiety disappeared from life and the Christian life became one of suffering and misery. O'Neill's knowledge and love of Swinburne may also have helped to support this use of mythology, for in the Hymn to Prosperine the poet is contrasting the joy of the old beliefs and worship with the dullness of the Christian who denies them:

Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean? but these thou shalt
not take
The laurel, the palms and the paen, the breasts of
the nymphs in the brake;

and

Thou has conquered O pale Galilean; the world has
grown grey from thy breath; (17)

Like Swinburne, Nietzsche felt that the coming of Christ and the spread of Christianity had ruined the world and there are several passages in Zarathustra which illustrate this belief. Nietzsche contended that Christianity was hypocritical and worthless, and it would appear that he had the myth about Pan and Christ in mind when considering the beginnings of Christianity:

Verily, many a one of them once lifted his feet like a
dancer, the laughter in my wisdom making signs unto
him. Then he changed his mind. Just now I have seen
him creep crooked unto - the cross.

(Of Apostates)

and

For the old Gods came unto an end long ago. And verily,
it was a good and joyful end of Gods!
They did not die lingering in the twilight, - although
that lie is told! On the contrary, they once upon a
time - laughed themselves unto death!

(Of Apostates)

(17) Swinburne, Algernon Hymn to Prosperine.
Selected Poems ed. L. M. Findlay (Manchester 1982)

while the Christian God is described as an 'old grim beard of a God, a jealous one ...'. In spite of his repudiation of Christianity, when Nietzsche was committed to the asylum he had delusions of being both Dionysus and Christ. In The Birth of Tragedy he shows Dionysus and Apollo to be in opposition in terms of Greek tragedy. This theory is expressed in a well worked out, logical, scholarly manner, but in his later works there would appear to be the beginnings of his delusions of being himself both Dionysus and Christ. O'Neill's re-reading of The Joyful Wisdom in Bermuda (18) immediately before writing The Great God Brown, must have reminded him of the Christ and Dionysus conflict in both Nietzsche's philosophy and his disturbed mind:

Thus I gradually learned to understand Epicurus, the opposite of a Dionysian pessimist; also the 'Christian' who is also a kind of Epicurus ...

(Book Fifth, 370)

and

Do you understand me? Dionysus versus Christ

(Ecce Homo IV 9)

In the Preface to Ecce Homo, written towards the end of his life, Nietzsche states:

I am a disciple of the Philosopher Dionysus, and I would prefer to be even a satyr than a saint.

To return to Pan, O'Neill in his preliminary notes on Dionysus for The Great God Brown stated:

Pan and his children. Pan has almost no story - but a presence - spiritual form of Arcadia and its ways of human life. Breathing of remote nature - things which the religion of Dionysus loves - Pan joins the company of Satyrs/spirits of wild vegetation - the reed music.

(19)

(18) Sheaffer Son and Artist op. cit. Ch. 9

(19) The Great God Brown ms. preliminary notes American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University

It would appear that in The Great God Brown O'Neill is fusing both Pan and Dionysus in the character of Dion Anthony. Pan, in the form of Dion's mask, has become the outward symbol of the Dionysian quality in Dion's nature which is in constant opposition to the Christian belief.

Our first introduction to Dion Anthony is the description of his face in the stage directions:

The mask is a fixed forcing of his own face - dark, spiritual, poetic, passionately supersensitive, helplessly unprotected in its childlike religious faith in life - into the expression of a mocking, reckless, defiant, gaily scoffing and sensual young Pan.

(Prologue)

The mask is a fixing of his own face, not merely a covering for a totally different type of personality. There are both Dionysian and Christian elements in Dion, but he chooses the Pan mask to cover up the more sensitive side of his character because its characteristics are so much more extroverted and open and defiantly against the world. When he declares his love for Margaret he orders her to:

Dissolve into dew - into silence - into night - into earth - into space - into peace - into meaning - into joy - into God - into the Great God Pan!

(Prologue)

that is, away from all the accepted conventions and rules of society based on Christian principles into a deeper, more primitive state of being, that of the old gods, where Dion and Margaret can truly communicate. With the return of the light and reality he shouts:

Great Pan is Dead! (Prologue)

and Margaret immediately feels the shame which society has given her, while Dion once more assumes his public, jesting self which he really despises.

Later in the play he explains to Billy Brown why he has had to assume this personality when he found that his faith in God and humanity had been shattered by Billy's action of kicking out his picture in the sand and hitting and laughing at him when he cried:

One day when I was four years old, a boy sneaked up behind when I was drawing a picture in the sand he couldn't draw and hit me on the head with a stick and kicked out my picture and laughed when I cried.

(Act Two Scene Three)

This is very similar to a passage from a work by George Cram Cook, The Dream City, which he wrote when he was a young man, newly immersed in Nietzsche.

A child of six played on the shore. With his wooden shovel, where sand was moist, he dug a moat and built a wall, erected houses, laid out streets. He found with delight that his water bucket, pressed full of wet sand, would mould a beautiful round tower. He put one on each side of the four great gates. The tide rose and washed the city away.

(20)

Cook's account of this incident is almost identical to a speech of Zarathustra:

Verily, I have taken from you perhaps an hundred words and the dearest play-things of your virtue; and now ye are angry with me as children are. They played on the seashore, - and then came a wave and swept all their toys away into the depth: now they cry.

(Of the Virtuous)

In The Great God Brown O'Neill appears to have made use of the idea of the child playing on the shore, but the tide has been replaced by a more cruel and heartless destroyer.

It wasn't what he had done that made me cry, but him!
I had loved and trusted him and suddenly the good God was disproved in his person and the evil and injustice

(20) Glaspell, op. cit. Ch. XV

of Man was born! Everyone called me a cry-baby, so I became silent for life and designed a mask of the Bad Boy Pan in which to live and protect myself from His cruelty.

As the play progresses we see the effect of the Pan mask on Dion; it reflects the struggle he had had to cope with life. He appears seven years after the Prologue, with a mask that is

... older, more defiant and mocking, its sneer more forced and bitter, its Pan quality becoming Mephistophelean. It has already begun to show the ravage of dissipation.

(Act One Scene One)

This sign of dissipation is part of O'Neill's concept of the Dionysian, for drunkenness and riotous living was part of the cult of the worship of Dionysus. However, instead of a joyful, intoxicated celebration of the worship of Dionysus, in Dion's case it is both a flouting of what society considers acceptable and an attempt to make his life bearable. The real Dion Anthony, as he is shown after an interval of seven years, has withdrawn and become more intense in trying to believe in God again and regain his original faith.

His face is that of an ascetic, a martyr, furrowed by pain and self-torture, yet lighted from within by a spiritual calm and human kindness.

(Act Two Scene One)

and he sits in the draughting room reading aloud from the 'Imitation of Christ' like 'a priest offering up prayers for the dying', finishing by raising his hand over the mask as if he were blessing it.

So, there are two aspects of Christianity shown in this play. One is the Nietzschean idea that Christianity has been the downfall of the world, that it has bred cruelty, wickedness, hypocrisy - all in the name of Christ. The other that Christianity is a true spontaneous, simple faith, akin to that of the joyous worship of the old gods; a faith which can

somehow be retained in spite of the hypocrisy and harshness of life. Dion tries to explain this to Billy when he describes his change to his 'public' personality.

When Pan was forbidden the light and warmth of the sun he became sensitive and self-conscious and proud and revengeful - and became Prince of Darkness.

(Act Two Scene Three)

The final reference to Pan in this play is made by Billy, after he has been wearing the mask of Dion. The designs he has executed in Dion's name have the trademark of Dion. There are hidden designs and features in the decoration of the building which mock its function and those seemingly respectable members of the community who had commissioned it. It is not the wise Silenus who is looking down this time, but Pan:

Only to me will that pompous facade reveal itself as the wearily ironic grin of Pan, as his ears drowsy with the crumbling hum of past and future civilisations, he half listens to the laws passed by his fleas to enslave him!

(Act Four Scene One)

Pan is grinning at the inability of the Christian civilisation to destroy him with its morals and laws, which, in spite of the appearance of respectability are all susceptible to threat from the original, primeval Dionysian force.

For Nietzsche, Pan's death meant the birth of hypocrisy and misery and in this play O'Neill seems to regard it in the same way. The destruction of Dion's true personality, his sensitivity and goodness, is stated by O'Neill:

The world is not only blind to the man beneath, but it also sneers and condemns the Pan-mask it sees.

(21)

(21) Reprinted in Clark op. cit. p. 141

and he continues to point out in the explanation of The Great God Brown printed in, among other newspapers, The New York Evening Post, in 1926:

Dion Anthony - Dionysus and St. Anthony - the creative pagan acceptance of life, fighting eternal war with the masochistic, life-denying spirit of Christianity as represented by St. Anthony, the whole struggle resulting in this modern day of mutual exhaustion - creative joy in life for life's sake frustrated, rendered abortive, distorted by morality from Pan into Satan into a Mephistopheles mocking himself in order to feel alive; Christianity, once heroic in martyrs for its intense faith now pleading weakly for intense belief in anything, even Godhead itself.

(22)

Here O'Neill is giving an explanation which is not fully clear without another explanation: his use of the transformation of Pan into Satan is interesting in that it connects with the term, 'Prince of Darkness', used in the play, and implies that there is a transmutation from the pagan to the Christian, for Satan is, after all, a Christian concept. In the play Dion moves from appearing like Pan to appearing like Mephistopheles. It would appear that O'Neill avoids over-simplification in presenting his ideologies in the two clear divisions that Nietzsche had defined, for rather than the Dionysian element clearly opposing the Christian one, as O'Neill suggests at the beginning of this article, the two sides of Dion are not as clearly separated as O'Neill would wish to imply. However, this apparent confusion of idea is the result of the difference in the modes of thought and presentation of ideas of the two men. Nietzsche was, after all, putting forward a series of worked out philosophical thoughts which in spite of his later personal confusion, necessarily needed a consistency and logical form. O'Neill is presenting a dramatic story, told in visual and emotional terms, so he could achieve remarkable effect by using Nietzsche's philosophical ideas combined with the

(22) Ibid.

presentation of a psychologically interesting character. An inability to deny completely the Christian God is shown several times in the plays, O'Neill seemingly finding it difficult to reject Christianity completely, and so there is often an amalgam of the pagan and the Christian. In Lazarus Laughed, Lazarus is both a Dionysian and Christ-like figure, and in Days Without End John Loving finally returns to the Christian faith, in spite of the attempt by the Mephistophelean Loving to divert him by other philosophies, including that of Nietzsche. In Welded O'Neill affirms the relationship of the Capes by the symbolic cross at the end of the play and in The Fountain there is the same inclusion of Christianity, although this does have a validity in the historical context. In the ending of The Great God Brown O'Neill is following the pattern of Nietzsche's own life, as opposed to his writings, in that there is no separation of the Christian and Dionysian. Whether Nietzsche himself formed the original inspiration for Dion Anthony, or whether it was O'Neill's own religious crisis, one can only speculate, but there is little doubt that O'Neill would have known of Nietzsche's final delusions. Whatever else O'Neill may have read, this aspect of Nietzsche's life was recorded in Halevy's Life of Nietzsche (23) which had been read as early as 1912 by George Cook and the two men must have discussed it.

A further reference to aspects of Dionysus comes in the preparatory notes for Lazarus Laughed (24). O'Neill writes that Dionysus is:

'Son of Lightning' 'Son of fire and dew'
 'Son of God and a mortal woman' 'Free born one'
 'Dew born'

and this note is directly transferred to the chorus in the play. O'Neill

(23) Halevy, Daniel The Life of Frederich Nietzsche Fisher Unwin, (London)1911

(24) Lazarus Laughed ms. preliminary notes American Literature Collection Beinecke Library, Yale University

here is exploring the mythological association of Dionysus with lightning and in Lazarus Laughed as the Greeks are waiting for Lazarus to appear, they discuss what they have heard reported about him:

First Greek	They say an unearthly flame burns in this Dionysus
Second Greek	The sacred fire. He must be the fire born, the son of Zeus.
Third Greek	Many who have seen him swear he is Dionysus, re-arisen from Hades.

(Act Two Scene Two)

This was the final form which O'Neill used in the play, but the original draft (25) gives further information on O'Neill's concept of Dionysus:

Chorus Leader	From Hades, dim land of the Dead, Dionysus the Hunter.
First Greek	Arisen from death as a Jew, to hide from Rome.
Second Greek	Beholding his mother enslaved, the spoil of a brutish tyrant.
Third Greek	Greece, the Mother of Gods, despoiled and ravaged.
Fourth Greek	He, the fire born Deliverer, heir to the thunder of Zeus.
Fifth Greek	Comes with his father's lightning, laughing along the mountains.
Sixth Greek	To restore her ancient freedom: to free her from Rome!

Here parallels are drawn between the myth of Dionysus as O'Neill sees it and the story of the birth of Christ. O'Neill seems to be considering Lazarus as both a Dionysian figure, a god of the Greeks, and a savior in Christian terms. Again, O'Neill is making use of the myth of the Year-daimon in Thus Spake Zarathustra, where it is said that the 'saviour' will exert his power over the universe. Connected with this is the concentration in Zarathustra on the 'Great Noon' which Zarathustra feels is approaching and with which the book finally ends. In this work, Nietzsche expresses Zarathustra in Dionysian terms, very like those that O'Neill subsequently was to use for the coming of Lazarus:

(25) ibid.

O blessed hour of lightning! Oh, secret of the forenoon!
Running fires shall I one day make out of them and
announcers with fiery tongues.
Announce shall they one day with fiery tongues: 'It
cometh, it is nigh, the great noon!

(Of Virtue that Maketh
Smaller 3)

and

That one day I may be ready and ripe in the great
noon; ready and ripe like a glowing ore, like a cloud
pregnant with a lightning, and a swelling milk-udder;

(Of Old and New Tables 30)

The final achievement of Zarathustra is his 'great noon' at the end of
Book IV:

This is my morning. My day beginneth!
Come up, then come up, thou great noon!

(The Sign)

This relates to Lazarus in that O'Neill has synthesised two aspects in
the character of Lazarus; he is prophet and saviour, both pagan and
Christian.

The final book of Zarathustra was written when Nietzsche was becoming
deranged and his belief in himself as a fusion of Christ and Dionysus is
present within the character of Zarathustra, but it is not clear whether
O'Neill was using his knowledge of Nietzsche's life or the traditional
mythological beliefs associated with Dionysus.

The description that both O'Neill and Nietzsche use for the 'saviour' are
taken directly from the myth in which Dionysus is regarded as the god of
regeneration and rebirth. In the preparatory notes for Lazarus (26)

O'Neill writes:

He is the dispenser of the earth's hidden wealth,
giver of riches through the vine. He is the centre of
a cycle, the hierarchy of the creatures of water and

(26) ibid.

sunlight in many degrees - not only the wood nymphs of tree worship but also the whole satyr circle, grosser, inhuman spirits ...

Dionysus is associated with the decay and revival of vegetation, as a god of the tree with the dying and flowering foliage as the seasons pass. This regeneration is what O'Neill also has in mind in the character of Cybel in The Great God Brown. She is the 'idol of Earth', believed to be the mother of the gods, the goddess of fertility and regeneration and this is expressed in her final speech about the spring. The cycle of regeneration is also explained by Brown when he has inherited Dion's mask:

Now I am drinking your strength, Dion - strength to love in this world and die and sleep and become fertile earth, as you are becoming now in my garden - your weakness the strength of my flowers, your failure as an artist painting their petals with life!

(Act Three Scene Two)

The whole concept of Brown taking over Dion's mask, and hence his life with Margaret and the children, is a further example of the natural cycle in human terms, although it does not prove to be the expected joyous experience which Brown had hoped and is subsequently as tragic and fatal for him as it was for Dion.

The followers of Dionysus in the ancient world celebrated the myth of regeneration in their rites and worship by sacrificing symbols of the god in the hope that they would bring him back again. In Lazarus Laughed there is the ritual sacrifice of Lazarus at the end of the play. He is burned, but finally his death comes on the point of a spear, reminiscent of the sacrificial knife used in the original Dionysian rituals. Nietzsche states in Thus Spake Zarathustra that:

We all bleed at secret tables of sacrifice; we all burn and roast in honour of old idols.

(Of Old and New tables 6)

but in Lazarus's death there is also the suggestion of the Christian martyr, burnt at the stake for his belief, as well as the spear thrust into the side of Christ on the Cross.

The myth of Dionysus tells of the violent death of the god, attacked and torn apart by the Titans while looking into a mirror, and then subsequently reconstituted in his original form when he came back to life. Another version of the story is that while brandishing the lightning of his father, Zeus, he was violently killed and restored to life. All these variations are mentioned in Frazer's The Golden Bough, which O'Neill obviously did read, so there is no incompatibility in thinking of Lazarus as both a Christian figure who returned, like Christ, from the grave and as Dionysus who was reborn; this was clearly what O'Neill intended in the play.

Throughout, Lazarus has Dionysian overtones, but there are instances where he appears specifically as Dionysus. At the beginning of the play, the stage directions indicate that Lazarus has a face which:

... recalls that of a statue of Ancient Greece in its general structure, and particularly in its quality of detached serenity.

(Act One Scene One)

Later in the play, when the old men and Jews want to kill Lazarus, his face

... has filled out, become more distinctly Grecian, purer in outline.

(Act One Scene Two)

and although what O'Neill is describing here is not the Dionysian quality but that of the Apollonian, the perfect, beautiful statue of Apollo that was worshiped by the Greeks in contrast to the Dionysian primitiveness, he is establishing Lazarus, who is after all a Jew, as an easily recognisable Greek in the eyes of an audience. On Lazarus's arrival in Athens he is greeted by the crowd in a tumultuous manner, his procession containing seven young men

... clad in goat skin, their tanned bodies and masks daubed and stained with wine lees, in imitation of the old followers of Dionysus. Rumour has led them to hope and believe that Lazarus might be the reincarnation of this deity.

(Act Two Scene One)

which stage direction reflects the worship of Dionysus as a goat god, closely related to Pan and the satyrs. When Lazarus does arrive he has all the appearance of being just such a reincarnation, as he is preceded by his followers who

... all have wreaths of ivy in their hair, and flowers on their hands which they scatter about.

(Act Two Scene One)

Frazer mentions that as a god of the tree, Dionysus is closely associated with ivy and it was carried by his worshippers. As the play proceeds, Lazarus himself looks younger as, legend has it, did Dionysus, and this rejuvenation is referred to in the stage directions:

His countenance now might well be that of the positive masculine Dionysus, closest to the soil of the Grecian Gods, a Son of Man born of a mortal. Not the coarse, drunken Dionysus, nor the effeminate God, but Dionysus in his middle period, more comprehensive in his symbolism, the soul of the recurring seasons, of living and dying as processes in eternal growth, of the wine of life stirring forever in the sap and blood and loam of things.

(Act Two Scene One)

The connection between Dionysus, born of a mortal, and Christ, cannot be ignored, but the rebirth of Lazarus is expressed clearly in Dionysian terms - those of recurrence rather than resurrection. O'Neill obviously felt that it was this aspect of 'religion', that of the relationship of man to the natural world, that was more important in dramatic terms than the Christian religion in this play. After all, Miriam in spite of her virtues as wife and mother, is made to appear a dark and sorrowful representative of Christianity spending her life moving towards death rather than celebrating life as she is living it. This attitude reflects

Nietzsche's view of the Christian who could not accept this life, but simply waited for the next one with no sense of joy or celebration.

As part of the reception in Athens, Lazarus is given all the accoutrements of Dionysus. His followers

... throw over his shoulders and head the finely dressed hide of a bull with great gilded horns, force into his hands the mystic rod of Dionysus with a pine cone on top, and prostrate themselves.

(Act Two Scene One)

According to Frazer, Dionysus was associated with the pine tree as well as the vine and he makes mention of the wand of Dionysus tipped with a pine cone, as well as certain rites of Dionysus worship in which the followers are clad in bull's hides as they honour Dionysus as the Bull god. Nietzsche makes the connection with the pine tree in Thus Spake Zarathustra when one of the Kings says:

With the pine, O Zarathustra, I compare him who groweth up like thee; tall, silent, hard, alone, of the best and most flexible wood, magnificent -

(Salutation)

So, it would appear that O'Neill is again making use of the myths associated with Dionysus, either directly from Frazer or indirectly from Nietzsche.

In spite of the claims of the waiting Greeks who want Lazarus to be the reincarnated saviour, his function in the play is not so much that of a saviour of men or a freer of nations, but as a prophet proclaiming that there is no death. This is surely because Lazarus is based on the figure of Zarathustra, who proclaimed that God had died and so preached the philosophy that there was no death but only eternal recurrence. There is, however, a great deal of evidence in Thus Spake Zarathustra that Nietzsche had conceived Zarathustra as a Dionysian figure. He states

in Ecce Homo that Zarathustra was a true Dionysian, and the section 'The Night Song' reveals this. Nietzsche stated '... only a God, only Dionysus suffers in this way' (27) and later, of the Dionysus-Dithyrambs written in 1888, he said:

These are the songs of Zarathustra which he sang to himself, so as to endure his last solitude. (28)

Throughout Zarathustra there is indication that Nietzsche saw Zarathustra in this way:

And whatever prey he fetched and caught he laid on Zarathustra's couch so that at last Zarathustra was buried under yellow and red berries, grapes, rose-apples, sweet smelling pot herbs and pine cones.

(The Convalescent One)

and the imagery that Zarathustra uses is almost totally Dionysian at some points:

The world itself hath become ripe, the grape turneth brown.
Now doth it wish to die, to die of happiness. Ye higher men, do ye not feel it? There welleteth up mysteriously an odour.
A smell and odour of eternity, a smell blissful as roses, brown like golden wine, an odour of old happiness!

(The Drunken Song 6)

Here, Nietzsche is connecting the grape, as a symbol of the worship of Dionysus, with the concept of regeneration for eternity and that of true death, which is to die of happiness. This last idea is one that O'Neill adopts in Lazarus Laughed when the followers of Dionysus 'stabbed themselves, dancing as though it were a festival!' They died of happiness, laughing themselves to death.

Later, Zarathustra talks about his soul and it is clear that he regards it in specifically Dionysian terms:

(27) Ecce Homo 'Thus Spake Zarathustra' Section 6

(28) ibid. 'Dionysian Dithyrambs'

O my soul, every sun I poured out over thee, and every night and every silence, and every longing! Thou grewest up unto me like a vine plant. O my soul, over-rich and heavy thou standest there, a vine plant with swelling udders and close brown grapes -

(Of Great Longing)

and in 'At Noon'

... he passed by an old crooked and knaggy tree which was embraced round about by the rich love of a vine plant and hidden from itself. From it an abundance of yellow grapes hung down, offering themselves unto the wanderer. Then he felt a desire to quench a little thirst and to break off a grape.

Later, he expresses the happiness of the world, the perfect moment of noon:

Doth it not this moment drink a drop of happiness - An old brown drop of golden happiness, of golden wine? Something glideth across it, its hapiness laugheth. Thus laughed a God.

(At Noon)

The celebration of the Ass Festival is followed by the drunken dancing of the followers and the ass while Zarathustra stands there 'like one drunken'. After it is over, there is the same reaction, the same flatness as after the original Dionysian revels:

Ye good dancers, now all lust is gone. Wine became lees, every cup became mellow, the graves stammer.

(The Drunken Song 5)

A type of Dionysian celebration with the participants either actually drunken or having the appearance of being intoxicated, is described by Nietzsche in The Birth of Tragedy. Here, it is a straightforward description of what Nietzsche saw as a Dionysian orgy. It is

... brought within the closest ken perhaps by the analogy of drunkenness. It is either the influence of the narcotic draught, of which the hymns of all the primitive men and peoples tell us, or by the powerful approach of spring penetrating all nature with joy, that those Dionysian emotions awake, in the augmentation of which the subjective vanishes to complete self forgetfulness.

(I)

This effect, Nietzsche states, is like that of the crowds of the Middle Ages, who, although they may not actually have been drunken, certainly gave the impression of being so. It is this quality of abandonment and participation that O'Neill is trying to convey in Lazarus Laughed. The contact between man and man is established and all the barriers are broken down in the celebration of Lazarus's message and laughter. However, the joy and frenzy of the crowds in this play are not induced by alcohol, nor narcotic nor the approach of spring. Crassus describes the effect:

For I know they were drunk, and so were we, with a
happiness no mortal ever felt on earth before!

(Act Two Scene Two)

and a Jew says of the laughter that it 'made my ears drunk! It was like wine!' This re-creation of the Dionysian ecstasy, previously denied to the people who lived in fear of their oppressors and, more particularly, of the greatest oppressor, death, shows that once the followers of Lazarus have accepted that there is no death they can abandon themselves to the true joys of life, and it is Lazarus's laughing denial of death that has the same effect as a Dionysian rout.

Alcohol and drunkenness are a major part of many of O'Neill's plays, right from the beginning, but they are not always connected with the aspect of the Dionysian. In fact, many of the most joyous scenes in the plays are nothing to do with alcohol at all and alcohol tends to produce an opposite effect of depression and despair. This is a result of O'Neill's own life experiences and his observations of the reasons for drinking and its effects both on the individual and on society in general. The main premise in many of the plays is that a man drinks to escape from reality, to try to forget an event or a circumstance in which he finds himself and this, of course, is quite different from the Dionysian ecstasy and cele-

bration. The one element that they have in common is the creation of a trance-like state in which everyday life is forgotten and there is a period in which the true state of things can be denied and therefore coped with.

In his own family O'Neill had evidence of this attempt to deny reality in his brother Jamie, who was consistently drunk throughout his adult life, and the situation is explored in Long Day's Journey into Night as well as in A Moon for the Misbegotten. This latter play is much more concerned with alcohol - the discussions between Phil and Josie about whisky and the games that Phil and James play about needing a drink. The light-hearted aspect simply disguises the dependence on alcohol which James especially has, and which is shown in the third act of the play. He is sitting in the moonlight with Josie and he explains to her about the hard drinking over the previous year, since his mother had died. He drinks to forget; to forget that he went back to the bottle when his mother was in a coma because he felt so alone; to forget that the last sight she had of him was when he was drunk; to forget that he couldn't express his sorrow on her death and, finally, to forget the 'blonde pig' on the train with whom he spent the journey while his mother's coffin was in the baggage car. However, in spite of all his drinking James says there is always an inability to forget:

And don't let me get away with pretending I'm so soused
I don't know what I'm doing. I always know. Or part
of me does. That's the trouble.

(Act Three)

In seeking this forgetfulness, James can only achieve the desired oblivion when the alcohol has induced the stupor of sleep. This type of drinking, to induce insensibility, is very different from the Dionysian ecstasy, the glorious feeling of participation in an orgiastic throng by which

real life is truly forgotten. James Tyrone is like the many drunks in Harry Hope's saloon, those who drink themselves into a stupor in order to convince themselves of the reality of their 'pipedreams' and to shut out the true despair of their situation. They can only communicate and tolerate one another's fantasies when they are all in an alcoholic haze, when reality is far away in the bottom of a bottle of whisky. Like Dion Anthony, they drink to cope with real life. Dion's drinking is in keeping with both the Dionysian side of his character and with the despairing wish to escape from life. His drunkenness is as much a mask as Cybel's physical one, the side shown to society and yet despised by that society. This is clearly shown by Brown's attitude to Dion's drinking - he despises him for ruining his own life and the lives of Margaret and the children and for losing the wealth attached to the family business. He fails to see the agony behind the Dionysiac mask:

You don't fit the role of Pan, Dion. It sounds to me like Bacchus, alias the Demon Rum, doing the talking.

(Act Two Scene Three)

But, at the same time, he envies Dion and is afraid of his capacity to live life in a way that Brown cannot do himself. Dion has a great capacity for love and is capable of being loved both by Cybel and Margaret, and he has a creative ability that Brown lacks. When Dion dies he bequeathes his mask to Billy, but in a mocking fashion, knowing that it will bring to Brown the agony that he has experienced. In attempting to live Dion's life, to have Margaret and the boys and assume Dion's outward personality, Brown, too, suffers some of the inward agony that Dion had experienced, an agony of which Brown had hitherto been unaware. He is as much a lost child as Dion has been, but in his new persona, living as Dion, the outward manifestation of his agony is regarded by the draughtsmen as simply being 'on the bottle'. His hectic behaviour and laughter is

similar to an expression of the Dionysian - a laughter in praise of life - but one that has the overtones of hectic despair:

Well, it certainly isn't drink! He hasn't had a drop.
He doesn't need it. Haha! And I haven't either,
although the gossips are beginning to say I'm soused
all the time! Its because I've started to laugh!
Hahaha! They can't believe in joy in this town except
by the bottle! What funny little people!

(Act Four Scene One)

Here he is revealing his inability to cope with being both Dion and himself, and his initial joy at having Margaret is being replaced by the agony of having Dion's mask. Although he doesn't really understand what is happening to him, he is also making a comment that, in the eyes of society, the ordinary citizen who lives according to the respectable rules cannot comprehend or experience real joy and happiness. The nearest they can ever achieve is to have the false sensation of Dionysian abandonment through alcohol. True happiness, according to both Nietzsche and O'Neill, can only be experienced through an acceptance of life as it really is, saying 'Yes' to life with all that it brings, not reaching to grab the nearest bottle of whisky.

O'Neill makes use of Dionysian references throughout his work. One which recurs several times, though it is not immediately obvious as being specifically connected with Dionysus, is that of the mirror, the reflection in the mirror revealing the truth about an individual in spite of his public face. The Dionysian element here is the legend that Dionysus was killed while looking into a mirror, so absorbed that he was unaware of attack by the Titans and torn apart; or, the alternative legend that Juno lured him to his death by enticing him with a looking-glass and the promise of self-knowledge. In Thus Spake Zarathustra Nietzsche uses the mirror not to reveal Zarathustra's true self but to show the opinion of

the world. In the section entitled 'The Child with the Looking-Glass' Zarathustra talks about his dream:

Why then was I terrified in my dream so that I awoke?
Did not a child come unto me carrying a looking-glass?
'O Zarathustra' - the child said unto me - 'look at
thyself in the looking-glass!'
But when I looked into the looking-glass I cried aloud,
and my heart was shaken. For in it I did not see
myself, I saw a devil's grimace and scornful laughter.

λ Perhaps this is both the opinion of the world and the truth of the character of Zarathustra, but it impels him to go out into the world to preach further. Later, in conversation with the kings, the same image is used: ✕

For thine enemies showed us thy picture in their
looking-glass. There thou lookedst with a devil's
grimace and scornful laughter, so that we were afraid
of thee.

(Conversation with the Kings 2)

Here the mirror is used to reveal the opinion of the world at large, showing in the mirror what the 'unbelievers' thought Zarathustra to be.

O'Neill is nearer the Dionysian interpretation of the mirror as a revelation of the truth about oneself in The Great God Brown. In attempting to show Billy Brown the truth about himself, Dion says:

O perfect Brown! Never mind! I'll make him look in
my mirror yet - and drown in it!

(Act Two Scene Three)

Here he is the Dionysus holding up his looking-glass but what O'Neill does is to use the idea of the eye as a mirror, revealing the true soul, and when Brown leaps upon Dion and grabs him by the throat, Dion triumphantly stares into his eyes.

Ah! Now he looks into the mirror! Now he sees his
face.

Brown, horrified by the revelation of his true personality, his inability to love and his jealousy of Dion both creatively and personally, ' ...

lets go of him and staggers back to his chair, pale and trembling'. This holding up of the 'mirror' is Dion's last act - revealing to Brown the truth about himself.

The eye as a mirror is further explored in Marco Millions when Chu-Yin gives Marco the instruction to look into Kukachin's eyes every day on the voyage to Persia. He is hoping that by doing this Marco will realise her love for him, shown through her eyes, and also Marco's 'immortal soul' will be finally revealed, by some reflection in Kukachin's eyes, for she is the only one to believe that there is such a soul. This plan fails and Marco's materialism overcomes his emotions, but at the very end of the play The Great Kaan again expresses the idea of eyes as mirrors. He says of Kukachin:

In her eyes' mirror I watched myself live protected
from life by her affection - a simple old man dying
contentedly a little, day after pleasant day.

(Act Three Scene Two)

This view of himself is, of course, very different from his public persona of the all-powerful, mighty ruler at the head of the elaborate and lavish court. Here, as with Billy Brown, O'Neill is showing that the mirror can reveal the true self, not the worldly self that is seen by others, in contrast to Marco whose worldly self seems to be all that there is. In The Iceman Cometh Hickey's true self is reflected when he looks in the mirror. He know what he is really like:

I'd curse myself for a lousy bastard every time I saw
myself in the mirror.

(Act Four)

in contrast to the lies and pretence he puts on for Evelyn's benefit. In A Touch of the Poet Con Melody has to keep looking in the mirror to reassure himself of his pretence of being the glorious Byronic hero. However, it is the final revelation that he is only an 'auld loon' which

he sees when he looks at the end of the play and realises that it has only been in the mirror that his heroism has existed. He had been

... always admirin' his mug in (the mirror) while he spouted Byron to pretend himself was a lord wid a touch av the the poet ...

(Act Four)

and he is convinced that his old self is dead and his true origins and character are revealed.

In Lazarus Laughed there is a more elaborate image of the mirror:

Life for each man is a solitary cell whose walls are mirrors. Terrified is Caligula by the faces he makes! But I tell you to laugh in the mirror, that seeing your life gay, you may begin to life as a guest, and not as a condemned one!

(Act Two Scene One)

and this is a far more Nietzschean idea of laughter and joy being essential for man to live, rather than him being condemned to the pessimism and dread of those who do not believe in the Dionysian acceptance of life.

Travis Bogard, in his book Contour in Time: the plays of Eugene O'Neill (29), makes a great deal of O'Neill's own preoccupation with mirrors, especially early in his life, and draws the connection between his apparent narcissism and Edmund in Long Day's Journey into Night. This association is, I think, rather stretched and the use of mirror imagery is more likely to have a mythological origin. In Long Day's Journey into Night O'Neill brings in a further mythological source when Edmund says that he has the desire to be absored by the fog and so gain peace.

Who wants to see life as it is, if they can help it? It's the three Gorgons in one. You look in their faces and turn to stone. Or it's Pan. You see him and you die - that is, inside you - and have to go on living as a ghost.

(Act Four)

(29) Bogard op. cit. p 441

Here O'Neill is perhaps again making use of his reading of Fraser and the traditional myth of the Gorgon, combined with the idea of recognising true self in Pan, as in a mirror, but, like Dion Anthony, being forced to deny that real self in relation to the rest of the world. The inner self, the sensitive creative self, has to be hidden and Edmund likens this to being turned to stone inside, to living as a ghost with only the outer shell of personality that can be revealed.

A further Dionysian element which O'Neill uses in the plays is that of lightning. The legend of Dionysus brandishing the lightning of his father, Zeus, is mentioned in Lazarus Laughed by the chorus of Greeks waiting for their reincarnated god, and O'Neill does make the connection between lightning and the Christian God in other plays. This is directly related to what Nietzsche is doing in Thus Spake Zarathustra, where he associates lightning with power and wisdom. Zarathustra likens his teaching to lightning:

It is not enough for me, that the lightning causeth no more damage. I do not want to conduct it into the ground. It shall learn to work for me. My wisdom hath for long gathered like a cloud; it becometh stiller and darker. So doth every wisdom that shall one day give birth unto lightnings. Unto these men of today I do not seek to be a light, nor to be called a light by them. Them I will blind. O lightning of my wisdom! Gouge their eyes out!

(Of Higher Man 7)

Unlike Christ, the light of the world, Zarathustra wants to have the power and force to announce what he sees is the new truth, the significance of man and his future:

I am going to teach men their life's significance: which is beyond-man, the lightning from the dark cloud of man.

(Introductory Speech 7)

Throughout this work Nietzsche uses the imagery of dark clouds, thunder and lightning. The concept of lightning as part of Zarathustra's message is established at the very beginning of the work when, in the Introductory Speech he states to the people of the town:

Where is that lightning to lick you with its tongue?
Where is that insanity with which you ought to be
inoculated?
Behold! I teach you beyond-man: he is that lightning,
he is that insanity!

The darkness of cloud is associated with those that have perceived the message of Zarathustra, the advocate of the 'beyond-man', the 'superman' that he maintains will ultimately be achieved.

I love all those who are like heavy drops falling one
by one from the dark cloud lowering over men: they
announce the coming of the lightning and perish in the
announcing.
Behold, I am an announcer of the lightning and a heavy
drop from the clouds; the lightning's name is beyond-man.

(Introductory Speech 4)

Like the clouds, those who prepare the way for Zarathustra will vanish and leave him to proclaim the climax of his teaching, the lightning of the superman.

Zarathustra's followers also see him as lightning, a personification of the ultimate wisdom. He explains to the young man on the hill that man is like a tree which is waiting for the first lightning and this brings the vehement exclamation from the youth:

Ay Zarathustra, thou speakest truth. It was for my
destruction that I longed when I was striving upwards,
and thou art the lightning that I waited for!

(Of the Tree at the Hill)

and later he is referred to by the Wizard as 'Thou who art veiled in lightnings!' (The Wizard). Throughout there is the dual image - Zarathustra

himself as lightning and his teaching of 'beyond-man' as lightning, since it is the ultimate and most important part of the teaching of Zarathustra.

O'Neill uses lightning in two principal ways in his plays - one a direct derivation from Thus Spake Zarathustra in its meaning and interpretation, and the other for dramatic, visual effect based on Nietzschean imagery.

The two plays that feature lightning most strongly are Dynamo and Lazarus Laughed. In the latter play O'Neill has combined the laughter of Lazarus the Yea-sayer with the lightning of his wisdom in the way that Nietzsche does at three specific points in Zarathustra. In 'The Seven Seals' (or 'The Song of Yea and Amen') there are two references to lightning:

Ready for the lightning in the dark bosom and for the
redeeming beam of light charged with lightnings that
say Yea! that laugh Yea! - ready for foretelling
lightnings ...

and

If I have ever laughed with the laughter of creative
lightning, that is followed by the long thunder of the
deed ...

and in 'The Child with the Looking-Glass', Zarathustra is showing his power:

Too heavily charged was my cloud: between the laughers
of lightnings I will throw hail-showers into the depths.

Lazarus is proclaiming that the Yea-saying and the affirmation of life and the lightning are connected through his laughter, as they are for Zarathustra. O'Neill also uses the visual aspect of the lightning to accompany the laughter of Lazarus and his followers. Lazarus is mentioned as 'Son of Lightning' by the Greeks who hope he can free them from the tyranny of Rome:

Son of the Lightning!
Deadly thy vengeance!
Swift thy deliverance!
Beholding thy Mother,
Greece, our Mother,
Her beauty in bondage,
Her pride in chains!
Hasten Redeemer!

(Act Two Scene One)

A stage direction indicates that, some months later, inside the walls of Rome:

The night is thick and oppressive. In the sky overhead lightning flashes and thunder rumbles and crashes but there is no rain.

(Act Two Scene Two)

and this thunder and lightning punctuates the whole scene, as if in support of Lazarus as a deliverer of the Greeks, a 'Son of Lightning'. To accompany the laughter of the followers from beyond the wall there is further stage direction:

Terrific flashes of lightning and crashes of thunder seem a responsive accompaniment from the heavens to this laughter of thousands which throbs in beating waves of sound in the air.

(Act Two Scene Two)

Crassus later reveals that when he had ordered the legions to slay the followers they were pre-empted by the followers falling on their swords:

They did not wait for our attack. They charged upon us laughing! ... They died laughing, in one another's arms!

(Act Two Scene Two)

and here O'Neill has made a connection between the Nietzschean 'lightnings that say Yea! that laugh Yea!' in a visual and aural sense rather than having Lazarus merely repeat the words of Zarathustra. The noise, spectacle and atmosphere created in this way is indicated by the return of the legions as they burst through the gate celebrating that 'Death is dead!'

No weapons can be seen - only their masks and helmets and armour gleaming in the lightning flashes and in the flickering light of torches. Their laughter seems to shake the walls and make the pillars of the temple dance.

(Act Two Scene Two)

Here O'Neill has created a striking stage effect to present an extraordinary dramatic scene which would be exciting for any audience, although they

would probably be inclined to regard the lightning as an attribute of the Lazarus/Dionysus figure rather than make any immediate connection between it and Nietzsche's work.

In Strange Interlude O'Neill again uses Nietzsche's interpretation of laughter and lightning in relation to God, but in a very different way. Nina believes that God the Father is a cruel being, unlike her conception of God as a mother, and she expresses this in her belief that the Father God laughs at her and her suffering. His laughter is destructive as lightning and Nina's speech while her son is competing in the boat race expresses both her resentment against God for taking the first Gordon away and shooting him down in flames, and her fear of Madeline taking her son away from her:

I hear the Father laughing! O Mother God, protect my son! ... let Gordon fly to you in heaven! ... quick, Gordon! ... love is the Father's lightning! ... Madeline will bring you down in flames! ... I hear his screaming laughter! ... fly back to me! ...

(Act Eight)

In contrast to Lazarus Laughed, the lightning and laughter here are destructive agents of a mocking God rather than part of a joyful affirmation of life and a denial of death.

This power of God, as seen by Nina, is similar to that in Dynamo where the power of God is symbolised by thunder and lightning, at least in the minds of two of the characters. O'Neill again shows his dramatic artistry as he moves away from the Nietzschean concept of lightning as wisdom and truth as expressed by Zarathustra, towards an Old Testament concept of a powerful God that punishes for non-belief and sin. The Reverend Light is afraid of thunder and lightning, but he sees it as a manifestation of the power of the Biblical God:

I ought to conquer that silly fear in myself ... the lightning is God's will ...

(Act One Scene Three)

He does attempt to rationalise his fear in this way but he becomes incapable of sustaining it when, in an emotional crisis later in the play, the lightning acts as a crucial factor in his relationship with his son. His fear has been passed on to his son Reuben, who is afraid of his father's God and the lightning and who sees his loss of faith as a retribution and who questions the existence of God. Ramsay Fife, the mocking, atheist neighbour, makes jokes about God and His power and terrifies Reuben when he challenges God. He teases Reuben by saying:

Are you afraid of a bit of lightning?
I'm thinking your Jehovah might aim a thunderbolt at me but Lucifer would deflect it on to you - and he's the better electrical expert of the two, being more modern in his methods than your God!

(Act One Scene Three)

This is in line with O'Neill's attempt to investigate the 'modern science God' in this play, and it has serious repercussions for Reuben. When thinking about Fife's invitation to God to strike him dead in five minutes if He does exist, Reuben's own thoughts become disbelieving and are immediately 'punished' by the lightning:

(He looks round uneasily, afraid of where his thoughts are leading him. A faint flash of lightning from the distant storm flickers through the window. He starts guiltily and hastily makes a reassuring declaration of faith.)
Of course there's a God! ... He wouldn't pay attention to a fool like Fife, that's all! ...

(Act One Scene One)

Fife's invitation is similar to that of Kublai in Marco Millions where the god in question is Buddha. To the shouts of those who advocate death to those who deny him, the Kublai 'looks up at the ceiling quizzically'.

A thunderbolt? (Waits) No? Then there is no God!

(Act Three Scene One)

The lightning and thunder punctuate the whole of the first act of Dynamo, and every time Reuben has doubts about God there is a lightning flash. When he is listening to Fife's supposed confession 'there is a flash of lightning, brighter than any that has gone before' and he regards this as a punishment for his murderous thoughts. Later, when he is thinking about Ada and is questioning his conscience about sin, he again wonders about the existence of God:

I shouldn't think He'd have to punish adultery and murder ... if there is any God ...
(There is a great flash of lightning and he stands paralysed with superstitious terror).
It comes every time! ... when I deny! ...

(Act One Scene Four)

Reuben is so terrified by his fear of the lightning, and his fear of God as symbolised by the flashes of lightning, that he confesses all to his mother, and, of course, to his father hidden in the closet. His confession is punctuated by flashes of lightning and rolls of thunder and Light's 'fierce, revengeful joy' at hearing his son's words is expressed in Biblical terms:

Lord God of Righteous Vengeance, I thank thee! ...
at last Thou strikest! ...

(Act One Scene Four)

and this is the prime example of how the evangelical Light and Reuben see God - as a vengeful God who strikes down the individual for his sins and lack of faith through the terrifying instrument of His lightning. In Thus Spake Zarathustra Nietzsche also uses this concept of the powerful God-like Zarathustra when he refers to his power over his enemies:

Powerfully my breast will heave, powerfully it will
blow its stormblast over the mountains: thus it will
relieve itself.
Verily, like a storm my happiness and my freedom come.
But mine enemies shall believe that the evil one rageth
over their heads.
Yea, ye also will be terrified by my wild wisdom ...

(The Child with the
Looking-Glass)

Reuben's beating is interrupted by the flashes of lightning which terrify
his father and his obvious fear makes Reuben realise that Light is scared
of both the lightning and God:

He looks scared! ... it was that lightning! ... I'll
never be scared of lightning again!

(Act One Scene Four)

and Reuben's defiance of his father, so soon after his humiliation by
Fife, is again confirmed by the lightning:

You'll never dare touch me again, you old fool!
I'm not scared of you any more!
(There is a blinding flash of lightning. Light, his
nerves already at the breaking point, gives a gasp of
superstitious fright and backs away from his son).

(Act One Scene Four)

This convinces Reuben, finally, that there is no God but that of electricity.
The whole first act of Dynamo is very exciting visually with lightning
and thunder, heightening the emotions and passions portrayed on the stage.
But, it also serves as a preparation for Reuben's conversion to the God
of Electricity and his deranged worship of the dynamo. This conversion,
begun by the realisation of the weakness of his father with his belief in
a God of Vengeance, is completed when he leaves home and, as he later
explains to Ada, stands on Long Hill and watches the storm during the
night:

After that storm was over I'd changed, believe me! I
knew nothing could ever scare me again - and a whole
lot of me was dead and a new lot started living.

(Act Two Scene One)

Reuben may have been cured of his superstitious fear of the thunder and lightning as instruments of the Biblical God, but he has turned this into a worship of the dynamo which ultimately proves as cruel and destructive.

It would appear, then, that O'Neill is using the Nietzschean concept of the power of a god and his message symbolised by lightning but as he does in all his dramatic creations, he has varied its interpretation. For Lazarus the lightning is a positive affirmation of the belief in eternal life, in the joyous celebration of the denial of death, whereas in Dynamo and Strange Interlude the lightning is indicative of the power and cruelty of God. The specifically Dionysian use of lightning is in Lazarus Laughed where, as Dionysus, Lazarus is named as the son of Zeus and brandisher of lightning in a mythological interpretation, but the lightning in the other plays has an obvious Nietzschean connection even though O'Neill's flexibility as a dramatist can relate it to the specific dramatic situation. Nietzsche's choice of lightning to symbolise power and wisdom, the teaching of the prophet Zarathustra, reflects his original conception of Zarathustra as a Dionysian figure, so the original myth is present in both Nietzsche and O'Neill.

CHAPTER VI

'GOD IS DEAD - LONG LIVE WHAT?'

Although Nietzsche condemned the Christian God and His followers, and O'Neill felt that the Roman Catholic God had failed him, both men retained their strongly religious instinct. They both recognised this as a fundamental need in man because it was so strong in themselves. In a letter to Peter Gast in 1881 (1) Nietzsche indicates this:

Whatever I may say about Christianity, I cannot forget that I owe to it the best experiences of my spiritual life; and I hope that at the bottom of my heart I'll never be ungrateful to it.

This, written at the same time that Nietzsche was stating in The Joyful Wisdom that man had outlived Christianity and claiming that 'God is dead', indicates that the need for a spiritual, mystic belief induced an ever-present conflict within him. Likewise, O'Neill could be open to the same assertion that the Old Pope makes in the final book of Thus Spake Zarathustra, that he, like Zarathustra, was 'more pious than thou believest, with such an unbelief! Some God in thee hath converted thee to thine ungodliness'. O'Neill always retained his searching need for a God and this is clear in the plays. As Tom Driver states (2):

O'Neill was anti-religious only in as far as the object of the quest is concerned: he was always extremely religious in terms of the quest itself.

O'Neill's passion for Nietzsche is an indication of his need to believe in a doctrine, a religion, and Nietzsche's socio-religious philosophy satisfied this need, if only for a comparatively short time. Although O'Neill put forward in his plays the idea of the existence of many different manifestations of God, he seemed, like Nina Leeds to retain his need for reassurance as to the existence of a humane, sympathetic god, whether Christian or not.

(1) Lavrin, Janko Nietzsche Studio Vista (London 1971)

(2) Driver, Tom, Essay in
Gassner, John O'Neill: a collection of critical essays Twentieth
Century Views, Prentice Hall Inc. 1964

Nietzsche felt that it was the Christians themselves who had, over the years, destroyed not only the true values and teachings of their religion but their God as well. For Nietzsche, the existing world and its morality, based on Christian teaching, had become debased, hypocritical, false to itself. This was because those followers of Christ had so distorted and corrupted the truth given to them through the Gospels and had put their own interpretation on the values given to them in the Bible, that all had become meaningless. It is thus that he draws his conclusion that 'God is dead' - killed by those that followed Him.

The first indications of this conclusion, most vividly expressed in Thus Spake Zarathustra, is in the earlier The Joyful Wisdom where Nietzsche refers to Buddha's shadow remaining to influence man.

After Buddha was dead, people showed his shadow for centuries afterwards, shadow in a cave, - an immense, frightful shadow. God is dead; but as the human race is constituted, there will perhaps be caves for milleniums yet, in which people will show his shadow.

(Book Third 108)

Later, he tells the story of the madman running into the market place carrying a lantern and seeking God. He is jeered at by the by-standers, the unbelievers, whereupon the madman leaps into their midst.

'Where is God gone?' he called out. 'I mean to tell you! We have killed him - you and I! We are all his murderers! But how have we done it? How were we able to drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the whole horizon? .. Whither do we move? ... Do we not stray as through infinite nothingness? Does not empty space breathe upon us? ... Do we not hear the noise of the grave-diggers who are burying God? Do we not smell the divine putrefaction? - for even Gods putrefy! God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him! How shall we console ourselves, the most murderous of all murderers? The holiest and the mightiest that the world has hitherto possessed, has bled to death under our knife, - who will wipe the blood from us?

(Book Third 125)

The mad man continues to question how man will cope with the guilt of having performed such a deed, and posits the idea that in order to comprehend the magnitude of the deed, man must become a god himself:

Shall we not ourselves have to become Gods, merely to seem worthy of it?

(Book Third 125)

This idea of man becoming a god is one which both O'Neill and Nietzsche adopt, and will be discussed later. The mad man finally realises that the bystanders do not understand him. They look at him in surprise and he concludes that he has come too soon: the reality of the deed has not penetrated their consciousness.

This deed is as yet further from them than the furthest star, - and yet they have done it!

(Book Third 125)

The madman knows that mankind is not yet aware. The old and finished beliefs are still clung to, but the churches are now, the madman claims, 'the tombs and monuments of God'.

The claim that 'God is dead!' reverberates through the rest of Nietzsche's work, particularly in Thus Spake Zarathustra and The Antichrist. Nietzsche gives many explanations for the reason for God's death and the manner in which He died, all centred on the actions and beliefs of the followers of Christ. The God who dies at the hands of mankind is both the 'Jewish' God of the Old Testament and the Christ who died upon the Cross; both, obviously, being linked within the Trinity. One of Nietzsche's pronouncements, through Zarathustra, is that God had died of his pity for men, and this is a theme that O'Neill adopts in several of the plays. Nietzsche, in his criticism of the Christian way of life, was an advocate of self-development, attainment of strength and will power, which he hoped would lead to the achievement of the superman. This meant that he thought that

the individual should have no time for altruism or sympathy for his fellows as Christian teaching demanded. This pity for others and desire to perform charitable service for those in need, Nietzsche felt diminished and weakened the individual when he should be concentrating on the development of his own strength and will. This show of pity on the part of the Christians was condemned on numerous occasions in his work, usually in an adaptation or parody of the teachings of the New Testament.

Nietzsche advocates in Thus Spake Zarathustra that man must love himself above all things, especially above his neighbour. He must put himself first and, contrary to the teaching in St. Matthew to 'love thy neighbour as thyself', Nietzsche states:

Ye flee from yourselves unto your neighbours and would
fain make a virtue thereof ...

He feels that man only shows pity and concern for his neighbour as a means of self-reassurance:

The one goeth to the neighbour because he seeketh him-
self, another because he wisheth to lose himself.
Your bad love for yourselves maketh for yourselves a
prison out of solitude.

For Nietzsche it is a false pity, a false charity, and a compensation for one's own inadequacy that impels the individual to show compassion and pity for others. Nietzsche wanted man to strive for remote love:

My brethren I counsel you not to love your neighbour,
I counsel you to love those who are the most remote.

(Of Love for One's Neighbour)

and this is the love of the superman, the love of ultimate goals and self-surpassing. More important, Nietzsche felt, than the love of the neighbour is the love of the friend - he only can help in the creating process. The friend does not show compassion or pity, but truly shows the way to the achievement of the superman by criticism and by acting as a self-

reflecting mirror. In the section in Zarathustra 'The Pitiful', Nietzsche again advocates the love of a friend as being the means to achieve greatness. This type of love does not involve any obligation or bestowal of charity because it is an equal love. He states that those who are pitiful, who show pity and help those that suffer, are intensifying the shame of the recipient and shame is far from the desirable virtues of the superman. As Zarathustra says, and O'Neill copied down (see Appendix):

Ah, where in the world have there been greater follies than with the pitiful? And what in the world hath caused more suffering than the follies of the pitiful?

(Of the Pitiful)

Man must be warned against showing any such feeling, Nietzsche predicts, as it will bring 'unto men a heavy cloud' and this will bring the wrong conditions for the superman. In the same section he states, through Zarathustra's 'devil':

Even God hath his hell; it is his love for man.

and again the 'devil' proclaims to Zarathustra:

God is dead: of his pity for man hath God died.

O'Neill copied further:

Be it a God's, be it men's pity: pity is contrary unto shame. And not to will to help may be nobler than that virtue which readily giveth assistance. But that is today called virtue indeed by all petty folk: namely, pity. They feel no reverence for great misfortune, for great ugliness, for great failure. Over all these I gaze into the distance, as a dog gazeth over the backs of dense flocks of sheep.

(The Ugliest Man)

In The Joyful Wisdom, Nietzsche had stated:

Our personal and profoundest suffering is incomprehensible and inaccessible to almost everyone; here we remain hidden from our neighbour, even if we eat from the one pot. But whenever people notice that we suffer, they interpret our suffering superficially ...

The self-gratification gained by showing pity, Nietzsche claims, leads to a feeling of 'comfortableness':

... beside your religion of pity you also harbour another religion in your heart that is perhaps the mother of the religion of pity: the religion of comfortableness!

(Book Fourth 338)

This comfortableness and self-satisfaction, this assumption of understanding of others, is what Christianity meant to Nietzsche and he felt it was a denial of the real meaning of Christ's teaching. One must know oneself first to achieve the will and nature of the superman and not be seduced by false virtues of charity or pity which distracts the individual from his ultimate goal.

O'Neill took Nietzsche's concept of pity and used it in The Great God Brown and Welded, as well as referring to it in Long Day's Journey into Night. Dion, in the first act of The Great God Brown, reveals that Margaret cannot understand his true feelings. She is portrayed like the Nietzschean individual who cannot truly apprehend the suffering of another and Dion reacts to her motherly concern with mockery. In a Nietzsche-like parody of the New Testament, he says:

I love Margaret. Her blindness surpasseth all understanding! (Then bitterly) - or is it pity?

(Act One Scene One)

His bitterness is an indication of his resentment of her non-comprehension of his tortured life, and his pride in himself as a creative individual is shattered by her wanting to ask Brown for help. Pride must be allowed to man; it is his last refuge 'without which the Gods are worms'. Nietzsche's claim that pity destroys pride, that it induces shame, is clearly seen in Dion's reaction for he realises that for Margaret's sake and that of his family he must compromise. 'Pride is dying!' he gasps as he finally

acquiesces, and so in true Nietzschean fashion pity and charity have induced shame in Dion. He then puts on his public face in an attempt to reassure his pagan 'other self' in parodying the Beatitudes:

Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit graves!
Blessed are the poor in spirit for they are blind!

(Act One Scene One)

Later in the play he mocks Cybel by accusing her of showing pity for him:

Blessed are the pitiful, Sister!

(Act One Scene Two)

and he is relieved to hear that she is not a moralist in the conventional Christian way; she is not wasting her pity on him. Later, it is evident that Cybel does feel pity for Dion, but in the creation of her as a goddess of earth, a pre-Christian character, O'Neill endeavours to show that she can have a real, true understanding of Dion and Brown, not a self-satisfying hypocritical pity of which Nietzsche accuses the Christian. Dion does feel pity for himself and he addresses his mask as it lies on the desk:

Peace poor tortured one, brave pitiful pride of man,
the hour of our deliverance comes!

(Act Two Scene Two)

and this is indicative of the Christian side of Dion, the pity of living and suffering on earth but with the hope of reaching true Paradise and lasting happiness. This is a side of Dion which Nietzsche would abhor, and his pagan Dionysiac capering is more in line with the teachings of Zarathustra to despise pity and charity. It is possible that O'Neill had more sympathy with the Christian side of Dion as a tortured soul.

In The Joyful Wisdom, Section 13, Nietzsche claims that 'Pity is said to be the virtue of the gay lady', or prostitute, because it is a feeling

belonging to those who have little self-pride and no prospects of greatness; pity is an ignoble emotion. Such individuals who feel pity find those that suffer 'easy prey' and so induce shame both in themselves and in their clients. O'Neill did not share Nietzsche's view of prostitutes and he does not associate them in his plays with the capacity to show pity. Cybel shows true understanding for Dion and Brown, and this capacity to understand is also developed in Welded. O'Neill is sympathetic towards prostitutes, as he showed in the early play The Web, and this is connected with his characterisation of them. In Welded, Cape picks up a prostitute in an attempt to revenge himself on his wife for her destruction of their idealised love and marriage. By giving her the title 'Woman' O'Neill gives the prostitute a universality, extending her to be a representative of her kind. She is proud, she will not take money from Cape for nothing, and she attempts to retain her self-image in the light of Cape's ravings. Cape is aware of her capacity for pity when he appreciates her stand against him:

So - it still survives in you. They haven't killed it - that lonely life of one's own which suffers in solitude.

(Act Two Scene Two)

The prostitute has pride, she does not need any false pity or charity and she is not ashamed. Cape realises for a moment that she is an individual and not simply an extension of his own self-pitying suffering, so echoing Nietzsche's view:

For in seeing the sufferer suffering - thereof was I ashamed on account of his shame; and in helping him sorely did I wound his pride.
Great obligations do not make grateful but revengeful!

(Of the Pitiful)

The prostitutes might be in the power of man, of society, and condemned by that society, but by being genuine individuals as O'Neill thought,

they were in a position to show true pity, not the false, comfortable self-gratifying kind. O'Neill's creation of Anna Christie is a portrayal of a developed and feeling character, not merely a representative of one type of woman. In Long Day's Journey, Jamie goes to visit Mamie Burns's establishment. Jamie is feeling sorry for himself 'and all the other poor bums in the world' and on hearing that Fat Violet is going to be sacked because she doesn't entice enough customers, he feels pity for her. All Jamie wanted was a 'Little heart-to-heart talk concerning the infinite sorrow of life' but Violet's pride is hurt. Like her counterpart in Welded she has pride and is humiliated by Jamie's action. He later refers to his choice of Violet as a 'christian act' but in this O'Neill is equating Jamie's own self-pity with his false pity for Violet and so here he is again giving an example of Nietzsche's pronouncement that pity is only shown by those who are attempting to 'flee unto your neighbours from yourselves'

In Long Day's Journey Edmund directly quotes Nietzsche in an argument with his father. In an attempt to prove that the Roman Catholic religion of his parents has not helped Mary's addiction, Edmund concludes:

Then Nietzsche must be right. "God is dead: of His
pity for man hath God died".

(Act Two Scene Two)

This is ignored by James Tyrone, and so has little weight in the argument, but it does add to the characterisation of Edmund and is indicative of O'Neill's own feeling that God had failed him as a child. This feeling was intensified by his reading of Nietzsche and so is shown through Edmund. In this instance, God's pity is not well defined but within the context of O'Neill's plays there is an indication that he did absorb much of Nietzsche's teaching, whether one looks at the characterisation

of Edmund - O'Neill at that age - or the elder writer giving voice to his beliefs. Nietzsche's whole concept of pity was based on the Christian misinterpretation of Christ's teaching; for the 'petty folk' it had become a laudable and desirable moral characteristic, one which Nietzsche felt did untold harm to the development of the individual. As Zarathustra says:

Do you love your neighbours as yourselves - but first
be such as love themselves.

(Of Love for One's Neighbour)

This may seem a slight contradiction to his words elsewhere, but the most important aspect for Nietzsche is self-love; only by this can the vision of the superman be brought to fruition. O'Neill, however, demonstrates that true pity, as shown in his plays, is a desirable thing.

A further explanation of the death of God by pity is given in Thus Spake Zarathustra when the misuse of the Christian religion is considered.

Nietzsche thought that the followers of Christ had corrupted the teachings in the New Testament and so there was no real understanding or knowledge of what Christ originally meant. Nietzsche separates the concept of God - the 'Jewish' God - and Christ in his work and uses the death of Christ on the cross to symbolise the death of God, not the resurrection of Christ. As a man, in man's flesh, God saw himself being destroyed by other men and the conversation between Zarathustra and the Pope in the last book of Zarathustra puts forward the attitude of God to the crucifixion of his son. The Pope, who had served the old God 'until his last hour' is disillusioned with his role as a churchman, and so he comes to the mountains to seek an alternative to God in Zarathustra. On being questioned about the death of God, when Zarathustra asks:

... thou knowest how he died? Is it true what folk
say, that he was suffocated by pity?

That he saw how man hung on the cross, and could not endure that his love unto man should become his hell and at last his death?

(Off Duty)

the old Pope has no reply. But Zarathustra has again raised the question of pity, the ultimately destructive emotion. God had sent His Son to redeem mankind out of pity for the lot of man, but He could not stand to see that Son, as a man, destroyed by others and so He, too, was put to death. In bringing about the death of Christ, mankind also brought about the death of God. This killing of God at the crucifixion is also paralleled by the subsequent misuse and corruption of Christ's teaching. In attempting to follow it, man has killed any true response and understanding and so again the death of God has been brought about.

The worst Christians, Nietzsche felt, were the priests who contributed initially to the death of Christ and who, as Christ's subsequent disciples, continued to misinterpret and mislead their followers about the true meaning of the New Testament. These men with 'false values and fatuous words' are despised by Nietzsche, who feels that they invent a God for their own purposes:

The minds of these saviours consisted of voids, but into every void they had put their illusion, their stop-gap whom they called God.

In their pity their mind was drowned, and when they swelled over from pity, at the surface there always swam a great folly. Eagerly and with much crying they drove their flock over their wooden bridge, as if they were only a single bridge into the future.

(Of Priests)

Nietzsche feels that these men were ashamed and wanted to conceal their true motives so hid themselves in 'sweet-smelling caves' with 'falsified light' and 'mustified air' which they called churches. His most striking statement in the section 'Of Priests' is that which O'Neill subsequently made use of in The Fountain. Concerning the love of mankind for God,

Zarathustra explains that the priests

.. knew not how to love their God otherwise than by
fixing man to the cross!

O'Neill copied this down and put it, only slightly altered, into the mouth of Nano, the Indian who is captured by the Spaniards. When Nano arrives stealthily on the shore of his native land, he explains to the waiting Indians about the Spaniards and their love of gold. The Spaniard's God is gold, he tells them, and continues to explain his view of the Christians and the way that they tortured their God:

Their Medicine Men tell of a God who came to them long ago in the form of a man. He taught them to scorn things. He taught them to look for the spirit behind things. In revenge, they killed him. They tortured him as a sacrifice to their Gold Devil. They crossed two big sticks. They drove little sticks through his hands and feet and pinned them on the others - thus.

(Scene Seven)

In The Fountain O'Neill gives a picture of the Spaniards and their misguided application of Christianity. This play is not totally accurate in historical terms, but like Peter Sha ffer's The Royal Hunt of the Sun, it shows the development of one man's obsession in relation to the background of the Spanish zeal for discovery, gold and Christian conversion in the New World. Juan is scathing about the church with its obsession to save souls, which he feels is a disguised obsession for wealth, and early in the play O'Neill describes the nobles and priests who are representative of the Spanish court:

They are the type of adventurous cavaliers of the day
- cruel, courageous to recklessness, practically un-
educated - knights of the true Cross, ignorant of and
despising every first principle of real Christianity

..

(Scene One)

Menendez, the Franciscan monk, is cold and cruel, and on the death of the Moor whom he has killed, is scornful of Luis's tears:

What! A soldier of Christ weep for an infidel!

(Scene One)

Later in the play, when Menendez has become a Bishop, he is described in a stage direction:

He looks his years, but his expression of rabid fanaticism has changed to one, not less cruel, of the crafty schemer made complacent by a successful career, the oily intriguer of Church politics.

(Scene Two)

Juan's concern is to serve the state of Spain, to conquer for the Spanish Empire, not for the glory of the church, but the two institutions are shown to be inextricably linked. Because of this, Juan becomes involved with the fanatical priests and monks in their desire to convert the heathen. The link is historical fact, but Nietzsche, too, had commented on the relationship between church and state in The Joyful Wisdom (3). This is further emphasised in Thus Spake Zarathustra when there is a conversation between Zarathustra and the fire-dog of the volcano:

"Church?" answered I, "that is a kind of state, viz the most deceitful kind.

(Of Great Events)

Elsewhere Zarathustra refers to the state as being a replacement for the church; a 'New Idol' (4).

O'Neill portrays Columbus as a religious fanatic rather than purely an explorer and Columbus excuses his desire for wealth to Menendez when he says on the ship:

Is it for myself that I desire wealth? No! But as a chosen instrument of God, Who led me to his Indies, I need the power that wealth can give. I need it for God's glory, not my own!

(Scene Two)

(3) The Joyful Wisdom Book Fifth 358. Relating specifically to Martin Luther

(4) See Chapter 'The Socialist'

Columbus's view of himself is not convincing. He may see himself as a last crusader saving the Indies from the infidel, but his desire for wealth is just as strong as that displayed by the other so-called Christians. Juan accuses Columbus of being half monk and O'Neill emphasises the difference between Columbus's religious dreams and those of Juan to serve Spain and acquire military glory. Juan is wholly contemptuous of those who use the conversion of the natives to Christianity as an excuse for their own greed:

Adventurers lusting for a loot to be had by a murder or two; nobles of Spain dreaming greedy visions of wealth to be theirs by birthright; monks itching for the rack to torture useful subjects of the Crown into slaves of the Church!

(Scene Two)

In the section in Thus Spake Zarathustra, 'Of Priests', Nietzsche expresses this:

Characters of blood did they write on the way they went, and their folly taught that truth is proved by blood. But blood is the very worst witness to truth; blood tainteth the purest teaching, and turneth it into delusion and hatred of heart.

O'Neill refers to the accepted view of the bloodshed and horror committed in the name of Christianity in an explicit way in The Fountain, and in Marco Millions, too, he makes reference to this (5). Marco's invention of gunpowder comes as a result of a prayer which 'spoke of Our Lord as the Prince of Peace'. It made him reflect that there had always been wars and so he invented the most efficient and economical manner of winning them. Later, in the same play, Bayan is advocating war in the name of Buddha, 'the Prince of Peace'. He claims that it would be a righteous war, they would tear down all the Christian idols and set up images of Buddha. In the name of Buddha Bayan cries out 'Death to those who deny Him!' and his followers also shout for death. Kublai waits for

(5) Marco Millions Act Two Scene Two

a sign to show that death will be dealt to those who deny Buddha but no thunderbolt comes from the sky, so he comes to the conclusion that 'There is no God!'. Bayan's wish to destroy those that do not share his belief in Buddha serves to parallel the actions of the Christians throughout history, and is also akin to the comments made in 'Old and New Tables':

"Thou shalt not rob! Thou shalt not slay!" Such precepts were once called holy: before them did one bow the knee and the head, and took off one's shoes. But I ask you: where have there ever been better robbers and slayers than such holy precepts? And for such precepts to be called holy, was not truth itself thereby - slain?

On board ship in The Fountain, when land is sighted, O'Neill makes use of the symbolism of the sword to emphasise again the difference between Juan and Columbus, and to link the church with bloodshed. Columbus gives thanks to God and commands that the monks raise the cross, but Juan raises his sword, the cross of the true soldier of Spain, but also a symbol of the blood to be spilled in the name of Christ. This is recounted many years later when Juan accuses Luis of deserting him for the Church:

Whether you convert by clemency or he by cruelty, the result is the same. All this baptizing of Indians, this cramming the cross down their throats has proved a ruinous error.

(Scene Three)

When the Spaniards land, guided by Nano, the Indian's attempt to reconstruct the cross, upside down, as a gesture towards the invaders, results in Quesada revealing his cruelty as he shoots the native. It is an example of the bloodthirsty nature of the priests in this play, to which Juan refers. The grasping desire for wealth shown by these fifteenth-century Spaniards, their 'Gold God' which is worshipped and sought after more than the true Christian God, is not very far removed from the desire for wealth and material success that O'Neill saw around him. The twentieth

century can treat murder and bloodshed as casually; and the lust for power and wealth is as strong as that displayed by the men in The Fountain, and the hypocrisy, distortion and corruption of the Christian religion is just as evident. Nano's analysis of the Christian religion is similar to that expressed by Nietzsche; God is dead and has been killed by his followers who have found a greater and more immediately advantageous deity to worship.

A very different picture of a priest occurs in Days Without End, where Father Baird comes as a result of a vision to help his nephew. He encounters the split personality of John Loving and is abused by Loving as a representative of the Roman Catholic religion. Loving calls him a fool 'with his bedtime stories for second childhood about the love of God!' because he sees the religious impulse as superstition, a nonsensical childhood belief. O'Neill inter-relates two views of religion - the one joyous, sincere, mystical and truly Christian; the other popular, meaningless, superstitious lip-service to an outworn creed. At Elsa's crisis Loving proclaims that there is no God, and he tempts John to seek for the ultimate nothingness, death, sleep, not the Christian promise of an after-life. Loving feels that he has triumphed over John, triumphed over his tortured quest for a truly religious faith, and taunts John with the Nietzschean concept of a god of nothingness. In dividing the two aspects of John Loving's character, O'Neill manages to show both the sides of religious belief and his own personal dilemma. The superstition and atheism of Loving is ultimately vanquished by the revelation of the love and power of Christ. O'Neill strongly denied his return to the Roman Catholic Church, which was implied in Days Without End, but the critics felt otherwise. As Lionel Trilling indicated:

The philosophic position would seem to be a final one: O'Neill has crept into the dark womb of Mother Church and has pulled the universe in with him. (6)

O'Neill defended himself against this accusation and stated what his intentions were in the play:

It is an attempt to express what I feel are the life-preserving depths in Catholic mysticism - to be fair to a side of life I have dismissed with scorn in other plays. But it is also a psychological study whose psychological truth would be the same essentially, if a Buddhist or a Greek Orthodox hero were involved. It is not Catholic propaganda. (7)

This may have been so, but O'Neill does, in this play, take a conventional, Catholic view of Christ as the worker of miracles. Father Baird has experienced a mystical revelation which sends him to John Loving, and in his prayer he addresses himself to Jesus, advocating the power of the Saviour in whom John could believe if only he would let himself. Like Zarathustra, Loving cannot believe in the value of prayer. He sees it as a devil within the individual that prompts the desire to pray. Nietzsche indicates in 'Of Apostates' a similar view:

But it is a shame to pray! Not for all, but for thee and me and him who hath his conscience in his head. For thee it is a shame to pray. Thou knowest it well: thy cowardly devil within thee who would fain fold his hands and lay them in his lap and have made things easier - this cowardly devil persuadeth thee 'there is a God!'

When John prays, Loving asks if he can hear the demon who laughs, the demon who John feels has possessed him, as well as the laughter of a God who scorns mankind.

At the end of the play, when John has wrestled with the power of Loving and his sneers at the superstition of the church, O'Neill stages a scene

(6) Trilling, Lionel 'The New Republic' September 1936. Reprinted in Cargill, op.cit.

(7) A letter to Bennett Cerf 6.11.33. Reprinted in Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 402

which is a traditional representation of the revelation of the power and love of Christ. In the church, the life-sized crucifix dominates the stage and John is transfixed by the sight of the cross, lit by the light from the stained glass windows. Loving calls the cross 'the symbol of hate and derision' and here he is referring to the Nietzschean idea of the cross being part of Christ's death at the hands of his followers. Their hatred and derision is reflected by the cross, as well as the mocking, malicious god that Loving has described in the play, and O'Neill has shown in his other works. However, the Christian God of love, appropriate to John and Elsa's worship of each other, is shown to be more important and powerful than Loving's claims that there is no God, and the face of the Crucified reveals to John that He has heard him and forgiven him. O'Neill here affirms the grace and mercy of God through His Son and the shining face of Christ affirms the death of the 'damned soul' of Loving. The miracle is complete; Elsa lives and John has rediscovered his faith and it would appear that O'Neill is content with a solely Catholic manifestation. The final lines of the play have echoes of Lazarus Laughed in the claim that 'Death is dead', although this does encompass the Christian belief in an after-life. These lines echo Nietzsche in the inclusion of the Laughter:

Life laughs with God's love again! Life laughs with
love!

and it would appear that with these verbal echoes of Nietzsche O'Neill wanted to indicate that the Roman Catholic Church had not had the final say - although this would almost certainly not have been recognised by the critics who were of the same opinion as Trilling.

Days Without End cost O'Neill many years work. He varied it through eight drafts, making changes in the characters, the theme, and the structure.

His notes and the early drafts show that from originally having included a truly Nietzschean character, Hardy, with very decided views against the established church, he moved towards a Roman Catholic solution and portrayal of belief (8). The notes show that in 1931 he wanted to 'make (if possible) religion less definitely Catholic - more general Christian religion' and his diary in 1933 (9) noted that he was 'making change back to Catholicism - more direct'. So, he veered from Nietzsche to the Church, away and then back again. He wrote to Barrett Clark in 1932 about the play

... there is in it a fresh vision, a new understanding, an inner yea-saying, that is vastly intriguing and stimulating to me. (10)

This Nietzschean expression is modified by his diary note:

Thinking over - disgusted - feel strongly something fundamentally wrong with it as a whole in spite of fine parts but can't get hold of right way to solve. (11)

And a letter to Kenneth Macgowan the following year (12) indicating his struggle with the play:

It was an end I resisted (on personal grounds) but which finally forced itself on me as the one suitable one.

In spite of the comments of the critics and O'Neill's denials of his return to the faith, the play remains a truly Christian one. O'Neill

(8) Days Without End ms. American Literature Collection Beinecke Library, Yale University. It is worth noting that O'Neill did not dispense with Hardy until the 5th draft

(9) Diary July 1933 American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

(10) A letter to Barrett Clark 6.6.32 Reprinted in Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 402

(11) Diary December 1932 American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

(12) A letter to Macgowan 16.10.33 Reprinted in Bryer p. 203

claimed that it had profound implications on a psychological level, and as a 'modern Miracle play' he stated:

No-one saw its larger - and obvious - aspect as a play which beyond its particular Catholic foreground is a drama of spiritual faith and love in general - that is, it was only Jesuits and Catholic theologians who saw this. (13)

Having begun it as a play of Nietzschean philosophy and finally turned it into a play about a Roman Catholic conversion, O'Neill could hardly complain if this were the case.

Nietzsche's repudiation of Christianity did not mean that he ignored or under-valued the existence of Jesus Christ. As far as Nietzsche was concerned, Christ was the only Christian. His followers had merely taken the name and then interpreted His teaching in their own way.

Nietzsche saw Christ as a creator - a creator of new values, new truths, new beliefs - but as such Christ was crucified by His followers, who did not understand the fundamental nature of His life and works on earth.

The superman, too, must be a creator of new values; like Christ the superman must expect vilification, ridicule and even death in order to achieve greatness. This is shown in 'Old and New Tables':

The creator they hate most - him who breaketh tables and old values, the breaker. They call him a criminal. For the good cannot create. They are always the beginning of the end. They crucify him who writeth new values on new tables; they sacrifice unto themselves the future; they crucify the whole human future.

Anyone aspiring to the role of superman must expect opposition from the rabble; he must fight those who think they are good and have true moral values. The role of the superman is one of rejection and condemnation. Nietzsche expressed this with a particular reference to Christ in 'Of Free Death':

(13) A letter to Macgowan 14.2.34 Reprinted in Bryer p. 208

When Jesus the Hebrew knew only the tears and melancholy of the Hebrew, together with the hatred of the good and just, then a longing for death surprised him ... Perhaps he would have learned how to live and love the earth - and how to laugh besides!

Nietzsche constantly makes reference to the crucifixion, the murder of God by His own followers, by those He had come to earth to save. This is initially stated in The Joyful Wisdom, in the section 'The Error of Christ':

The founder of Christianity thought that there was nothing of which men suffered more than their sins. That was his error - and the error of one who felt that he was without sin and who lacked firsthand experience. Thus his soul grew full of that wonderful and fantastic compassion for a misery that even among his people, who had invented sin, was rarely a great misery. - But the Christians have found a way of vindicating their master since then and of sanctifying his error by making it 'come true'.

This is the crux of Nietzsche's argument about Christianity. The Jews had, in following the teachings of the Old Testament and believing in their all-powerful God, 'invented' sin. This was, Nietzsche felt, their greatest mistake, in that the world of the ancient Greeks had no concept of original sin. Having invented sin, the Jews then created all the evils of the world and so Christ was called upon to save them. Since His death in redemption of the sins of the world, the Christians have, so Nietzsche believed, made 'come true' His mistaken concern with sin. His death did nothing to change the nature of humanity and the nature of the world and so the great pity and compassion shown by Christ and the ultimate sacrifice of His death was, in Nietzsche's opinion, wasted. However, the very existence of Christ had given the Jews an opportunity to show what they felt about their old God. Their subsequent actions, in contrast to their supposed beliefs, have further contributed to the death of God. God's pity for humanity, His compassion for mankind, is supposedly shared by His followers but it is not a true feeling. It is in this rather

tortuous and doubtful way that Nietzsche draws his conclusion 'For his pity for man hath God died'.

Christ's ministry and teaching as recorded in the New Testament is used in Thus Spake Zarathustra, both in Nietzsche's condemnation of God and in the reversal of Biblical quotations and allusions to the Gospels. He refers to the Beatitudes in St. Matthew's Gospel a great deal, as does O'Neill, and he shows Zarathustra as having the role of prophet or saviour. This is shown, for example, in the final book when Zarathustra has found his 'disciples', his higher men. He says, in the manner of Christ :

To be sure: except as ye become as little children ye shall not enter that kingdom of heaven. (And Zarathustra pointed aloft with his hands).
But we do not all want to enter into the kingdom of heaven: we have become men, - so we want the kingdom of earth.

(The Ass Festival 2)

This is followed by Zarathustra's joy in the Ass Festival as it revealed the happiness and gaiety of his followers. They are not taking religious worship seriously, they are parodying the worship of God as Zarathustra had parodied the word of God, and they are exhorted by Zarathustra to repeat their worship, their 'divine' service

. . do it from love to yourselves, do it also from love to me! And in remembrance of me!

(The Ass Festival 3)

Here we have the words of Christ at the Last Supper, which are repeated in the administration of the Holy Sacrament, distorted and misused by Zarathustra. Nietzsche also has a parody of the Last Supper in the section called 'The Supper', where the Fortuneteller and the Kings indulge in a meal of spicy lamb in rejection of the wholesome bread for, as Zarathustra says 'But man liveth not by bread alone .. '. This section ends with the beginning of the meal, 'that long meal which is called "The Supper" in history books'.

There are many examples of such a use of the New Testament, but they increase towards the end of Thus Spake Zarathustra as Nietzsche became more and more subject to the delusions in which he saw himself, like Zarathustra, as a new prophet. The signature on his letters veered from 'Dionysus' to 'The Crucified One' thus indicating his state of mind. This is possibly a conflict of the two sides of his belief, or an indication of his self-identification with the superman. As in Dion Anthony in The Great God Brown the Christian and the pagan were often in conflict. In his attacks on Christianity Nietzsche found that he could achieve immense effect by reversing or parodying, often in a shocking and blasphemous manner, the precepts which he was condemning. O'Neill follows this pattern in The Great God Brown, but he also portrays Christ and His teaching in a more serious manner in Lazarus Laughed and Days Without End.

In Lazarus Laughed O'Neill takes the story of the raising of Lazarus and Christ's Resurrection and combines them. He gives Lazarus Nietzschean connotations in that he becomes a preacher of both Eternal Recurrence and the triumph of laughter over the fear of death, but Lazarus is essentially a resurrected saviour. At the beginning of the play, when Lazarus has been raised from four days in the tomb, he tells his family and followers that there is no death. It is the laughter of Jesus that has brought about this revelation:

There is only life! I heard the heart of Jesus laughing in my heart; "There is Eternal Life in No," it said, "and there is the same Eternal Life in Yes! Death is the fear between!" And my heart reborn to love of life cried "Yes!" and I laughed in the laughter of God!

(Act One Scene One)

Here O'Neill has taken the laughter of gods from Thus Spake Zarathustra and combined it with Zarathustra's experience of hearing the laughter of the shepherd, the 'changed one' who laughed in affirmation of life (Of

the Vision of the Riddle). This O'Neill has attributed to Christ in Lazarus's account of his raising from the tomb. In 'The Fortuneteller' Zarathustra's dream is recounted with the description of the 'thousand peals of children's laughter' which opens up the sepulchres and graves. Zarathustra is likened to this laughter with his power to conquer death, and so at the beginning of O'Neill's play Christ, the shepherd, raises Lazarus by laughter. In the argument between the priests and the followers of Lazarus, Mary believes that the joyous laughter in celebration of Lazarus's return from the grave is a betrayal of Christ. The followers are seeing her brother as the new Saviour and denying Christ. Referring to the 'fine Lord' whom the authorities have arrested, a Priest says:

Now their jail-bird is a king, no less! Soon they
will make him a god, as the Romans do their Caesars!

(Act One Scene Two)

The comment about Christ is a foretaste of what will happen to Lazarus when he goes to Rome, and a further indication of the combination by O'Neill of his character Lazarus and Christ. The father of the family curses them all; he claims, in an echo of Zarathustra, that there is a 'great mocking devil that dwells in Lazarus' and claims that Christ is 'the Prince of Devils, that false prophet, Jesus'. The announcement of the crucifixion and the death of Christ results in the rage of the Nazarenes, wanting revenge on those who have murdered their Lord. As Mary screams, insane with rage,

They have murdered Him!
An eye for an eye! Avenge the Master!

(Act One Scene Two)

and her call for vengeance 'Death to His murderers!' results in a tumult of killing and slaughter. The immediate reaction of the Christians is to avenge their Lord with blood; a direct adaptation of the Nietzschean

view that the followers of God were those that killed Him, for they have immediately repudiated His teaching. 'Thou shalt not kill' has been instantly disobeyed and Miriam reiterates Nietzsche's interpretation in her speech:

And Jesus who was the Son of Man, who loved you and gave you life again, has died, Lazarus, - has died!

(Act One Scene Two)

Not only has Christ been crucified, but the whole Christian message has been immediately destroyed. Lazarus's following speech proclaims the theme of the play: there is no death. In stating that 'Even a Son of Man must die to show that Man may live' he indicates the Nietzschean proposition that Christ's death on the cross is final. In this play O'Neill makes no mention of the resurrection of Christ. He is murdered by his followers and the only true resurrection is that of Lazarus proclaiming eternal life through the power of laughter. However, later in the play Tiberius questions the magic power of Christ saying that if he did possess such power he would not have died in pain and weakness on the cross. Lazarus replies, looking upwards and 'smiling with ironical bitterness':

Couldst thou but hear, Jesus! And men shall keep on in panic nailing Man's soul to the cross of their fear until in the end they do it to avenge Thee, for Thine Honor and Glory!

(Act Three Scene Two)

This is an indication that Christ still lives, but it is also a very similar statement to those of Nietzsche, quoted previously, which O'Neill also made use of in The Fountain: man could only show his love for God by nailing Him to the cross.

Lazarus's death is that of a Christian martyr, burning at the stake. In spearing him Caligula proclaims that he has killed God and in doing so

has become the all-powerful Caesar. Even he, who has been a follower of the saviour Lazarus, finds that the human desire for power and earthly glory has overcome his love for Lazarus and so Caligula becomes, in Roman terms, a god. In his madness he repeats Lazarus's laughing words, 'men forget' and this is applicable to all men, even the followers of Christ. Nietzsche's argument is simple: men do forget the goodness of Christ, they killed Him for their own ends and continue to abase and degrade His Word for their own purposes.

In The Fountain O'Neill attempts to show the relationship between the Christian religion and the other main world religions when Juan experiences his vision in the waters of the fountain. He sees not only the vision of youth represented by Beatriz, but also the figures who represent the principal religions. The materialisation of the figures in the water - a Buddhist priest, a priest of Islam, a Dominican monk and a Medicine Man representing the native religions - serve to convince Juan that:

All faiths - they vanish - are one and equal - within ...

(Scene Ten)

leaving him with the waters of the fountain to represent the water of life, eternal and ever-flowing. This is an indication on O'Neill's part that there is a similar basis to all religions more fundamental than the outward symbols of each religion. This idea is further developed in Marco Millions, written a couple of years after The Fountain.

O'Neill's assertion that all men are identical in their basic need for a religion, irrespective of the outward religious observances that are made, is presented at the very beginning of the play. The salesmen gather for shade beneath the tree and each group has a different interpretation of its significance. It is a tree sprung from the toothpick

of the Holy Sakyā; it is the staff of Adam passed through Moses from which water sprang and was finally used to make the Cross and so is sacred to Christ; it is grown from the Tree of Life, brought from Paradise by Zoroaster.

These varying interpretations of the significance and religious nature of the tree show the similarity of belief of the three religions. This is further emphasised by the three consecutive scenes in Act One when the Polos are travelling. Before the Mahometan mosque are grouped symbolic figures - a priest and a warrior as the two constituents of the state; a nursing mother, children playing, a loving couple, a middle-aged couple, an old couple as representatives of the human condition; a coffin. The motionless figures are repeated in the Indian locale in the next scene and in the Mongolian one following. The prostitute, as in other O'Neill plays, is a universal figure moving from one locale to the next, so O'Neill makes the point very clearly and dramatically by these tableaux that, in spite of the outward cultural and religious differences, all mankind is one.

In showing the similarity of the salesmen, O'Neill again takes the opportunity to emphasise the links between religions. The Ali brother tells the story of the birth of Christ as a wonder that happened in that region and so introduces the closeness of the religious belief of the Moslem and Christian. The story written in the Bible is acknowledged by Ali as showing that Jesus was a great prophet, but both the brothers stubbornly deny that He was the Son of God. 'There is no God but Allah', Ali says and the religious and doctrinal difference is firmly stated. The Buddhist merchant tells the Polos of Buddha and his loving kindness which embraces all forms of life and the claim that Buddha was the Incarnation of God

makes Nicolo wonder if he is one and the same as Jesus. The Buddhist continues the story of the birth of Buddha and his immaculate conception by the Light that passed into the womb of Maya. In choosing this particular aspect of Buddhist belief O'Neill again is stressing the similarity between Buddhism and Christianity. The Mongol religion, quoted by the Polos from their guide book appears at first to be rather different. The Mongols have two gods; one of Heaven to whom they pray for health of mind; one of Earth who watches over their earthly goods. Marco makes a comparison with the Holy Trinity which is considered impious but it further emphasises O'Neill's desire to show similarities between religions.

At the end of the play, when Kukachin's body is brought back to the Imperial Palace, O'Neill again shows a collection of different priests - a Confucian, a Taoist, a Buddhist and a Moslem. Each has his own holy book and each one prays his own prayers. However, when asked in turn by Kublai if their beliefs can conquer death each has to reply that 'Death is' - it cannot be prevented. As the Chronicler concludes in his formal speech of mourning, 'Against Death all Gods are powerless.' (Act Three Scene Two) and this is repeated by the Chorus. In contrast to his contention in Lazarus Laughed, O'Neill is stating that death does exist, it is inevitable and cannot be conquered. However, Kublai does exhort his followers to pray and in his prayers he advocates a Nietzschean view of life; a 'Yea-saying' to all that life offers:

In silence - for one concentrated moment - be proud of life! Know in your heart that the living of life can be noble! Know that the dying of death can be noble! Be exalted by life! Be inspired by death! Be humbly proud! Be proudly grateful! Be immortal because life is immortal. Contain the harmony of womb and grave within you! Possess life as a lover - then sleep requited in the arms of death! If you awake, love again! If you sleep on, rest in peace! Who knows which? What does it matter? It is nobler not to know!

(Act Three Scene Two)

Not only does this speech indicate that life must be fully lived and appreciated, but it also reflects the earlier concern of the play which is Marco's attempt to prove he has an immortal soul. The Christian concept of soul which Kublai has not understood is incorporated in this speech and the conclusion that is drawn is a mixture of Nietzscheanism and Christian uncertainty. What does seem important is that, like Nietzsche, Kublai advocates nobility as being the main criterion for living life.

Kublai's prayer is similar to the conclusions of Juan in The Fountain and can be seen as a summing up of the true 'religious' nature of the play. Outward form, ritual and show are unimportant; life is what matters and one must accept this, be a 'Yea-sayer'. The discussion earlier in the play about Marco's immortal soul (Act One Scene Six) is shown by O'Neill to be related both to Marco's materialism and to Kukachin's view that the soul has a natural kinship with the universe. Immortality cannot be proved to Kublai through Marco; he sees only a crass materialist who is afraid to die. Kukachin's perception is dismissed mockingly by her grandfather, and this speech perhaps indicates a wry criticism on O'Neill's part of the Roman Catholic religion and its preoccupation with the visionary. 'I cannot contest the profound intuitions of virgins and mystics.' says Kublai, reflecting Nietzsche's comments in The Joyful Wisdom, Book Fourth, 319, about the gullibility of believers. In an earlier scene in the play Marco buys a relic of Noah's Ark from the fraudulent tradesmen, and it allows O'Neill another occasion to satirise the Church's obsession with relics and miracles. O'Neill makes certain that Marco is shown to be foolish in the purchase of the relic and he indicates that such supposed relics are merely a confidence trick.

Marco's assertion that he is a man 'made by the Almighty God in His own Image for His greater glory' is received by Kublai in 'appalled appreciation' and amazement that Marco could be the image of his Christian God. Here, O'Neill refers to the concept that man is created in God's image and Marco's arrogance in declaring this leads one to doubt the truth of the statement. This is also considered in Thus Spake Zarathustra in 'The Awakening' when Zarathustra finds the Higher Men worshipping the Ass. This 'adored and censed' ass is showered with the praise and prayers of the Higher Men and they endow it with all the qualities, ritual and ceremony associated with a deity. O'Neill copied the passage:

Hath he (the Ass) not created the world after his own image, namely, as stupid as possible?

and Kublai echoes this when he says:

Then the stupid man becomes the perfect Incarnation of omnipotence and the Polos are the true children of God!

(Act Three Scene One)

This comment is pointedly made after Marco has shown great insensitivity to Kukachin's feelings.

The creation of man in the image of God is also referred to in Strange Interlude when Charles Marsden is watching Sam. He sees in him the materialism which has become the new god and thinks that if man has his price so also must God. In showing Marco as believing that he is made in God's image, O'Neill portrays a materialist similar to many of his contemporaries in America who called upon God to witness their behaviour and who had a false 'Christian' attitude to life. To have Marco as a representative of the Roman Catholic religion, sent by Tedalo instead of a hundred wise monks, is a way for O'Neill to make comment upon how mercenary and debased Christian beliefs had become. In doing this he

is, inevitably, following Nietzsche's ideas although there was certainly much contemporary evidence that he could see for himself. The America of the twenties was full of Sam Evans and his kind. Nicolo Polo claims that:

His Holiness meant that Marco, by leading an upright life - not neglecting the practical side, of course, might set an example that would illustrate, better than wise words, the flesh and blood product of our Christian civilisation.

(Act One Scene Six)

The 'practical' side of life has become the most important thing to man, and as Nietzsche saw, in Thus Spake Zarathustra, 'the gold of shopkeepers' governed all (Of Passing). In the last act of the play, where Bayan is trying to persuade Kublai to wage war on the West, using the device invented by Marco, to enlarge his empire, Kublai replies that there is no need to conquer the West; it has nothing to offer them:

It must be a pitiful land, poor in spirit and material wealth. We have everything to lose by contact with its greedy hypocrisy. The conqueror acquires first of all the vices of the conquered. Let the West devour itself.

(Act Three Scene One)

The West may be poor in comparison with the untold 'millions' of Kublai Kaan, but his pronouncement on the greed and hypocrisy of the Christian world is a result of the fine example shown to him by the Polos. Kublai feels that the West has already invaded him and his land. 'Polo has infected you with cant' he tells Bayan and so O'Neill again, as was considered in the chapter on the superman, is showing what he considered to be the greed and hypocrisy of the modern Christian world.

In his attempt to show in the plays that a search for some sort of God was essential to man, O'Neill not only suggests that it is possible to worship alternative gods to the Christian one, but he also takes up the

Nietzschean concept of man becoming a god himself. This is allied to Nietzsche's desire for the superman, the new creation who would be responsible only to himself and an example and embodiment of god-like qualities. The madman with his lantern in The Joyful Wisdom said that man would have to become a god in order to apprehend the magnitude of the murder of God, and Nietzsche's superman is the result of this. In Section 377, 'We Homeless Ones', there is an indication of this theory where Nietzsche is considering the misinterpretation of Christianity. As a result of ancestors who shed blood in the name of Christ, man now claims to be enlightened, humane, righteous and part of an equally perfect society. Nietzsche continues with a criticism of German nationalism, which was beginning to emerge strongly, as an example of this self-righteousness. He claims, as he later does in Thus Spake Zarathustra, that there is in man a hidden quality, a 'hidden Yes' which is stronger than 'all the Nos and Maybes' that afflict him and his environment. Man's conflict, in spite of his outward sureness, must be sublimated into a faith in himself. Like immigrants embarking on the sea, Nietzsche says, one must believe in the outcome, and that outcome must be a faith in oneself. This is again stated in Zarathustra when he is preaching on the Happy Isles:

Once did people say God, when they looked out upon
distant seas; now, however, have I taught you to say,
Superman.

Zarathustra continues, as O'Neill noted:

God is a supposition: but I would have your supposing
reach no further than your creative will.
Could ye create a God? Then be silent concerning all
Gods!
But we could very well create beyond-man.
Not yourselves, perhaps, my brethren!
But ye could create yourselves into fathers and fore-
fathers of beyond-man and let this be your best creating!

(On the Blissful Islands)

This indication that man is truly incapable of apprehending a God in the traditional sense is later elaborated upon in the final book, in the section 'Off Duty'. The Last Pope is claiming that he has watched the death of God and Zarathustra tells him to look away from the old god of vengeance. O'Neill again noted the lengthy quotation from Zarathustra's speech in which he criticises the inability of man to understand the Christian God:

And if the fault was of our ears, why did he give us ears that heard badly? And if there was mud in our ears, go to! who had put it there?
In too many things he failed, this potter who had not served his apprenticeship! But in taking revenge on his pots and creations for having turned out ill, he committed a sin against good taste.
There is good taste in piety also. And at last that good taste said: "Away with such a God! Rather have no God, rather be a fate for one's self, rather be a fool, rather be a God one's self.

What Nietzsche wanted man to do was recognise that he could not create an exterior God - that was merely a supposition on man's part - but within man was the ability to create himself into a new god and ultimately become the superman. This is taken up by O'Neill in Lazarus Laughed. In his speech to his followers, among whom are the Old Men who want Lazarus to be sacrificed but who are compelled by his laughter to dance grotesquely, Lazarus criticises their forgetting of his teachings:

That is your tragedy! You forget! You forget the God in you!

(Act One Scene Two)

He goes on to exhort them to look outward, to look towards the sky, to look towards the star that in this play is the signal of Christ's crucifixion. In a bitter, mocking tone he says:

The Master of Peace and Love has departed this earth.
Let all stars be for you henceforth symbols of Saviours
- Sons of God who appeared on worlds like ours to
tell the saving truth to ears like yours, inexorably
deaf!

(Then exaltedly) But the greatness of Saviours is that they may not save! The greatness of Man is that no god can save him - until he becomes a god!

(Act One Scene Two)

In Zarathustra's dream the stars and 'nocturnal glories' are an indication of his power over death, and O'Neill adapts this with the Star of Bethlehem announcing Christ's death instead of His birth. The god that man must become in Lazarus Laughed is the 'yea-sayer', the acceptor of eternal life and laughter, akin to Nietzsche's superman. Christ, according to Nietzsche, could not save mankind from itself and in O'Neill's play Lazarus can not either, as is shown by Caligula's actions after Lazarus's death. It is suggested that the only hope for man is to create a new type of humanity that would cast off the old teachings and create a new order.

O'Neill takes the idea of God and gods further in the play when, for example, Lazarus has been taken to Rome and honoured with the title of Caesar. He is told that the Romans will build a temple for him, create him a god, to which Lazarus replies, 'When men make gods, there is no God!' (Act Two Scene Two) which is taken from Nietzsche's assertion that no ordinary man could create a god, indicated in Zarathustra's speech on the Happy Isles. This is also an adaptation of the account of the death of the old pagan gods who laughed themselves to death in 'Of Apostates' because of mankind's new worship of Christ:

Is godliness not just that there are Gods, but no God? implying, like Lazarus, that man can create his own concept of a God, a false idol or representation, but he can have no apprehension of the truth of God. In Lazarus Laughed men are denying not Christ or the Jewish God of Nietzsche, but Lazarus's own god, the embodiment of laughter, life and joy.

Later in the play, in attempting to explain to Tiberius what man has become and how he has degraded humanity, Lazarus tries to show that man's apathy and resignation is a result of his lack of faith in himself - man has forgotten the god within. He shows how men reason with themselves:

"We are sick", they say, "therefore there is no God in us, therefore there is no God!"

(Act Four Scene One)

In the original manuscript (14) this speech is much longer and more indicative of Nietzsche's influence:

"We are sick", they say, "therefore there is no God in us, therefore there is no God!
They invent original sin to explain their craven forgetfulness of their original virtue, their innocence as Sons of Laughter!
"We were born soiled" these cowards lie, but never "we have soiled ourselves".
These men have made themselves morbid babies with long beards!

Apart from this speech being a development of Nietzsche's theory of the invention of original sin, requiring a Saviour to redeem it, it is also connected with Zarathustra's speech in the Happy Isles. Zarathustra reveals his own feelings about the absence of a god:

But that I may reveal my heart entirely unto you my friends! if there were Gods, how could I endure it to be no God!
Therefore there are no Gods.

Lazarus proclaims the Nietzschean belief in man's ability to make himself into a god, a superman, by saying:

Oh!, if men would but interpret that first cry of man fresh from the womb as the Laughter of one who even then says to his heart, "It is my pride as God to become Man. Then let it be my pride as Man to recreate the God in me!"

This is a reversal of the Christian belief that God created man, and was subsequently made Man, but it does reflect the Nietzschean idea of Christ

(14) Lazarus Laughed ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

having been killed on the cross, so leaving man no alternative but to make himself a god.

Lazarus tries to instruct Caligula in how to achieve happiness, to renounce evil and become a true believer in joy and laughter:

Believe in the healthy god called Man in you!
Laugh at Caligula, the funny clown who beats the back-side of his shadow with a bladder and thinks thereby he is Evil, the enemy of God!
Believe! What if you are a man and men are despicable? Men are also unimportant! Men pass! Like rain into the sea! Man remains! Man slowly arises from the past of the race of men that was his tomb of death! For Man death is not! Man, Son of God's laughter is!
(He begins to laugh triumphantly, staring into Caligula's eyes)
Is Caligula! Believe in the laughing god within you!
(Act Four Scene One)

This is a directly Nietzschean speech although the emphasis is on Lazarus's direction to believe in the laughing god within rather than the strength and the will power associated with the superman. However, Zarathustra's laughing god is also incorporated so Lazarus becomes both the prophet of joy and laughter and the advocate of the new man rising from 'the past of the race of men'. This speech is a reply to Caligula's confessed failure to have any kindness or compassion, failure to be truly joyful and conquer his lust for power and murder. The ideas in this speech are taken from 'The Higher Man' when Zarathustra is advocating how man should behave when he has reached the heights of the superman:

Ye higher men here, have ye not all - been failures?
Be of good cheer; what doth it matter? How much is still possible! Learn to laugh at yourselves, as ye ought to laugh!
What wonder ye that ye have failed and only half-succeeded, ye half-shattered ones! Doth not - man's future strive and struggle in you?

In connection with Lazarus Laughed where O'Neill reiterates Nietzsche's views of man becoming a god, there is a section in Thus Spake Zarathustra entitled 'Of the Creating One'. In it Zarathustra is indicating that

the herd, the rabble, despise the isolated individual who is striving to be different. He also warns that if man does try to be an individual he must come to terms with himself; he will be his worst enemy especially in solitude. Again there is the idea of the devil within, as O'Neill has shown in Days Without End with Loving's insistence on a mocking devil enticing John and John's feelings of possession by a devil. Zarathustra says:

O lonely one, thou goest the way of the creator: A
God wilt thou create for thyself out of the seven
devils!

(Of the Way of a Creator)

O'Neill made a note of this phrase and it appears in the preparatory notes for Lazarus Laughed (15) but in a misquotation as:

Nietzsche - A God wilt thou create for thyself out of
the seven devils!
Thou lonesome one, thou goest the way of the creating
one.

O'Neill's misquotation, probably from memory, appears to have been in his mind for its connection with man creating a god for and within himself but it does not appear to have been used in the text of the play. There is no mention of a god being created out of the 'seven devils', but Lazarus does advise Caligula to overcome himself, to strive for godly qualities in himself, not destructive ones. It is not until Days Without End that O'Neill specifically mentions a devil within the individual which prompts his actions but then it is also connected with Zarathustra's concept of God as being a devil called 'the Spirit of Gravity'.

In O'Neill's later plays there is little overt mention of God and no attempts to introduce God as an active 'participant' in the action as had been done, for example, in Desire Under the Elms, Dynamo or Strange

(15) Lazarus Laughed notes ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

Interlude. In Long Day's Journey into Night Mary Tyrone refers to her Roman Catholic education and upbringing and there is a discussion amongst the men about their being less devout worshippers than they should be, but God as an obvious force does not enter the play. Even Edmund's denials of God are met with little response. However, in The Iceman Cometh O'Neill does return to a concept of a saviour, but in a very different manner from Lazarus Laughed or the more conventional Christ of Days Without End.

The very title of The Iceman Cometh indicates a Biblical reference as well as having an interpretation based on the popular American joke about the iceman who visits housewives while their husbands are out! The title appears to be taken from St. Matthew, Chapter 25, and is referring to the waiting of the wise and foolish virgins for the coming of the bridegroom, for whom only half have their lamps prepared. In the Gospel the bridegroom is Christ, for whose coming one must always be prepared, but in O'Neill's play the awaited 'saviour' is Hickey the salesman, an appropriate saviour for the materialists of twentieth century America. Hickey tries to bring truth and hope to the 'no-hopers' in Harry's saloon but rather than bringing belief, peace and eternal life, he brings death. Cyrus Day (16) points out that Hickey is a parody of the parable of the bridegroom, Christ, in that he brings not marriage but adultery. O'Neill has used the same story from St. Matthew in The Great God Brown in his choice of an extract from the Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis. Dion reads to his mask, revealing the Christian side of his personality, and ends with a Kempis's exhortation:

- (16) Day, Cyrus 'The Iceman and the Bridegroom: Some Observations on the death of O'Neill's salesman'. Modern Drama I (May 1958) p. 3 - 9

Keep thy heart free and raised upwards to God because thou hast not here a lasting abode. 'Because at what hour you know not the Son of Man will come!'

(Act Two Scene Two)

Dion blesses his mask and hopes that 'Tomorrow we may be with Him in Paradise!' but for those waiting in Harry Hope's saloon there is no Paradise.

There are hints that Hickey has a Christ-like quality when he first arrives. He claims that he has come to speak the truth, to deliver the inhabitants of the saloon from their miserable and deluded lives. His mission began with a walk 'from the wild' of Astoria, as Christ's had with his sojourn in the wilderness, and later Harry claims that Hickey has 'the miraculous touch to raise the dead'. In The Great God Brown, Brown comments that 'the streets are full of Lazaruses' (Act Four Scene One) just after he appears 'reincarnated' in Dion's mask, and in The Iceman Cometh, too, the saloon is full of Lazaruses waiting to be brought back to life by Hickey and his jokes and drinking and periodical drunken bouts.

His attempt to bring them back to a different reality shows Hickey has the qualities of a Christian saviour but Sophus Winther points out in his article (17) on this play that Hickey is an amalgam of many saviours; he has a universal quality but he is seen as a saviour who fails. Larry may advocate a belief in 'the great Nihilist' but this is too strong a term to describe the effect of Hickey on the other characters. They do not achieve the peace of 'Nothingness', an end Loving had advocated as desirable in Days Without End. By the end of the play the inhabitants of the saloon return to their belief in their own pipedreams. Only Larry comes to terms with death, although death pervades the play both in

(17) Winther, Sophus 'The Iceman Cometh: A study in Technique' Arizona Quarterly III (Winter 1947) p. 293

imagery and action. Hickey's comment that the inhabitants of the bar look 'like a lot of stiffs cheating the undertaker' (Act Four) again brings in the Lazarus theme, but for the 'stiffs' there is no miracle, no real coming back to life. Winther notes the many references to the morgue in the play; the irony of Hickey's mission is that in spite of his attempts to make them face themselves as they really are, the characters do remain in the morgue. Even the joke that Hickey tells about old Doc, the snake oil salesman, has a punch-line about filling cemetery plots, and the characters all claim that they feel dead when the drink has no effect on them. They are neither living nor do they achieve the finality of death. They live in a suspension between life and death, believing in their pipedreams and Hickey in spite of his efforts cannot save them. The one death that does occur in the play, apart from Hickey's recounting of his murder of Evelyn, is that of Parritt. Cyrus Day claims that Parritt's death has a likeness to that of Judas Iscariot, the betrayer, but it also has Nietzschean overtones. Parritt can only come to terms with the betrayal of his mother and find peace within himself through death and he appeals to Larry to tell him what to do; to advise him to die. As Nietzsche advocates in 'Of Free Death', Parritt dies 'at the right time'. Nietzsche states that if life is a failure then there is only death left, but it is cowardice that prevents men from killing themselves, from dying freely or voluntarily. Larry's urging of Parritt is an affirmation to him that it is the right time to die, there is no alternative, and he goes to his death gratefully, for his own sake, although not as joyfully as the followers of Lazarus fell on their swords in Lazarus Laughed. Larry is left in despair, waiting for death to come and passively hoping that it will come soon, without the courage to commit suicide himself.

Cyrus Day (18) makes a point of noting the New Testament resemblances in this play; the Last Supper; the twelve 'disciples' of Hickey; the whores seen as the Three Maries; but these are, I think, a little too contrived. O'Neill may have wanted Hickey to be seen as a saviour but I think it is unlikely that he worked out the Christian symbolism to the extent implied by Day. It is significant that Hickey's mission fails. He is not a raiser of the dead, he is a preacher of death who only makes one convert to his Gospel and even Larry has not the courage to actively welcome death. Unlike Lazarus, for whom death did not exist, for whom life was joyous and who could convert followers through his laughter, Hickey affirms death and shows it to be the only answer to a life of misery, both for himself and for Evelyn. He also, by his fear of the electric chair when he is taken away, shows that death is something to fear and this is emphasised by Larry. Hickey's 'message' has saved no-one in Harry Hope's saloon.

In terms of O'Neill's own personal belief, it is significant that Hickey is a failure as a saviour. In the earlier plays there is an effort made by O'Neill to show that there is a need for religious belief and that man's need could be fulfilled by a number of different deities. In later life, however, he seemed to have come to terms with the absence of a God, whether Christian or otherwise. In a letter to Carlotta, as early as 1926 (19) he had said:

God has turned his back and slammed the door and gone away and all the prison is in darkness ...

a belief echoed by Brown as he prays to God in front of the mask of Dion:

(18) Day op. cit.

(19) Draft of letter, probably 28.11.26. Reprinted in Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 236

Bah! I am sorry, little children, but your kingdom is empty. God has become disgusted and moved away to some far ecstatic star where life is a dancing flame!

(Act Four Scene Two)

It seemed that for O'Neill this was true and this is revealed in his plays. In the nineteen thirties he began writing his great cycle of plays, A Tale of Possessors, Self Dispossessed, and he insisted in a letter to Robert Sisk in 1935 (20) that there was

No religion to any of the plays except incidentally as minor realistic details.

This comment could also apply to Long Day's Journey into Night and to the two surviving cycle plays, More Stately Mansions and A Touch of the Poet where Irish Catholicism of the families is part of their characterisation as the Puritanism of the Cabots or Abraham Bentley had been, or part of their background as shown by the Puritanism of the Mannons, but without the active emphasis on the nature of God. It would appear, then, that by the time O'Neill wrote these plays he had given up trying to present God in a variety of forms, and the idea of a saviour is only revived in Hickey. However, The Iceman Cometh is such a return to realism, compared with Lazarus Laughed or The Great God Brown, that the religious aspect is not obtrusive. The style of the late plays shows that O'Neill is no longer questing; he is more concerned with a realistic portrayal of mankind and with conventional religion as part of the society in which his characters exist. Throughout his career O'Neill's plays seem to be a reflection of his own religious questing, especially his adoption of Nietzschean philosophy as a replacement religion. They are certainly an examination of 'the relation between man and God'.

In a letter to a research student in the 1930's O'Neill made a statement about his attitude to God. He had been asked about the presentation of

(20) A letter to Robert Sisk 3.7.35. Reprinted in Bogard op. cit.

God in his plays and he replied:

As for the various presentations of God in my plays, I don't see exactly to what you refer, but perhaps it will clear the matter up when I explain that my childhood training was strict Roman Catholic and that, off and on, of late years I have studied the history and development of all religions with immense interest as being - for me at least - the most illuminating 'case histories' of the inner life. (21)

It seems impossible that O'Neill had not considered that he had presented God in different ways in his plays. By the time he wrote this letter he had written all the plays concerning a variety of gods, and Days Without End, his most Roman Catholic play was written although it had yet to be published or performed. However, looking upon religion as being an essential part of man's inner life is in line with the statement quoted at the beginning of this chapter and the 'primitive religious instinct' to find a meaning for life is clearly revealed in most of his plays. The religious aspect of O'Neill's drama has resulted in some far-fetched criticism such as the article by John McAleer on Anna Christie (22). This calls the play 'a milestone in American symbolic literature' and makes out a case for the structure of the play being paralleled with the Anima Christi, a mediaeval Roman Catholic prayer popularised in the nineteenth century by Cardinal Newman. However, O'Neill's constant statements about his intent in his plays, and his concern with 'the relationship of man to God' even though he was questioning the very existence of God, inevitably must arouse many religious interpretations. In the notes to Lazarus Laughed (23) he states:

(21) Chabrowe, Leonard Rituals and Pathos - the Theatre of O'Neill Associated University Press, 1976

(22) McAleer, John 'Christ Symbolism in Anna Christie' Modern Drama IV (February 1962)

(23) Lazarus Laughed ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

A man's religion is his expression of his ultimate attitude to the universe, the summed up meaning and purport of his whole consciousness of things.

and this is truly reflected in the plays.

O'Neill had seen the theatre as being a way to return to the religious experience undergone by the Greeks in their Dionysian worship, and this would appear to be his intention in the plays of the middle period, especially Lazarus Laughed and The Great God Brown with their emphasis on spectacle, movement, music and the involvement of the audience in an emotional way. The later plays do not have this quality and O'Neill seemed to have come to terms with the theatre as a realistic, naturalistic medium as it is in the first one-act plays that he wrote. Unlike Nietzsche, O'Neill appears to have coped with his own disbelief, if a statement by Carlotta can be taken as a true indication of his feelings. She told Louis Shaeffer (24) that O'Neill had insisted:

When I'm dying, don't let a priest or Protestant minister or Salvation Army captain near me. Let me die in dignity. Keep it as simple and brief as possible. No fuss, no man of God there. If there is a God, I'll see him and we'll talk things over.

Interestingly, Halevy (25) records that Nietzsche's views were very similar. He claims that Nietzsche said to Elizabeth:

Make me a promise, Lisbeth; let my friends only accompany my corpse; let none who are merely indifferent or curious be present. I shall no longer be able to defend myself, and you must do it. Let no priest, let no one come and speak insincere words over my coffin. See that I am buried like a loyal pagan, with no lies told.

O'Neill's statement would indicate that he had totally accepted that the Christian God was questionable and that conventional Christian belief and ritual were not the answer, but at the same time he was willing to

(24) Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 668

(25) Halevy op. cit. p. 213

accept that there was the possibility of there being some sort of deity. In contrast Nietzsche became more and more involved with the Christian concept of God and his delusions of being a Christ figure increased although the conflict within his intellectual notion of the Dionysian and Apollonian was still present. His request to his sister had been made early in his life but by the time he died he saw himself as a prophet, a saviour, who proclaimed his message in his works, especially through his alter-ego Zarathustra. O'Neill's plays did not contain a defined message but were more a reflection of his own religious insecurities and those of the society in which he lived. His use of religious imagery and setting, even in the late plays, such as the 'pieta' of Josie and Jamie Tyrone at the end of Moon for the Misbegotten, or the description of the night clerk in Hughie

Beatific vision swoons on the empty pools of the Night Clerk's eyes. He resembles a holy saint, recently elected to Paradise.

are part of his upbringing and culture and that of his audience, as are the specifically Christian revelations in Days Without End. Only when he is being consciously Nietzschean does O'Neill manipulate and reverse the accepted outward signs and well-known Biblical quotations to create doubt and controversy in the minds of an audience. So, in spite of the alternative ideas of God in the plays, the Christian God does permeate his work as it does the work of Nietzsche, but O'Neill's ultimate attitude appears to be a balanced doubting of the conventional Christian God and a coming to terms with the belief on which his society was founded, in spite of its corruption, whereas Nietzsche could not free himself from his early beliefs and this, in confusion with his intellectual reasoning, resulted in his final delusion and madness.

CHAPTER VII

'ANY GOD AT ANY PRICE'

Perhaps the most quoted statement of O'Neill's intent as a playwright is the one that he made to George Jean Nathan concerning the role of the playwright in contemporary society. O'Neill considered that:

The playwright of today must dig at the roots of the sickness of Today as he feels it - the death of the Old God and the failure of science and materialism to give any satisfying new One for the surviving primitive religious instinct to find a meaning for life in, and to comfort its fears of death with. It seems to me that anyone trying to do big work nowadays must have this big subject behind all the little subjects of his plays or novels, or he is simply scribbling around on the surface of things and has no more real status than a parlor entertainer. (1)

The 'big subject' was one which dominated many of O'Neill's plays, as it did his life, and it is the same subject with which Nietzsche concerned himself in his analysis and criticism of nineteenth-century Germany, although often from a different viewpoint.

O'Neill felt that many of his fellow Americans had replaced their conventional Christian beliefs with the modern 'religion' of science, partly because the old beliefs seemed inapplicable and outdated and partly because progress and development for America was associated with scientific advance. The public image of America in the early years of the century was that of technological achievement linked to wealth and prosperity - an image which had little connection in practice with the accepted teachings of Christianity on which the society purported to be founded. So, science and materialism were interlinked and were, O'Neill considered, the new gods of the American people. However, the 'primitive religious instinct' which O'Neill recognised as being fundamental to man was not being truly fulfilled by these new gods so man was left confused and floundering.

As the Fortune-Teller claims in Thus Spake Zarathustra:

(1) A letter to George Jean Nathan August 26, 1928 The Intimate Note-Books of George Jean Nathan Knopf, (New York) 1932

All is empty, all is equal, all hath been!

(The Fortune Teller)

Nietzsche, too, made a link between science and religion, although in a different way from O'Neill. In Section 300 of The Joyful Wisdom, 'Prelude to Science', he states that science has had the way prepared for it by magicians, astrologers, and those who practised witchcraft. These practices were related to religious belief and ritual, all corresponding to man's desire to seek for hidden powers, inexplicable phenomena, all a force of some kind which was inspired or governed by a controlling god but which was outside the individual and his capabilities. Modern science, Nietzsche states, is a development of these practices and a result of man's innate curiosity, but the process of scientific investigation and reasoning was something he felt that man should strive for and admire. All the more reason for this view was that it attempted to explain existence without the Christian God, which was certainly an attractive proposition for Nietzsche. Like O'Neill, Nietzsche states that man must have something to believe in. In The Joyful Wisdom section he explains that man has been credulous for a long time, since the days of primitive society where man worshipped gods that fulfilled a specific function within that society. The sun god of the Aztecs, or the mythical deities of the Greeks and Romans all came into this category and now, Nietzsche states, man was fulfilling this need with science. He claims that man is a 'mistrustful animal' who now 'has - and needs - a science'. By this he appears to mean a new explanation for the world in which he finds himself, new criteria by which to measure life and death. However, Nietzsche does imply that man's credulity is at fault - it makes him mistrustful and evil, for credulity must be counteracted by reasoning and analysis; by scientific thought.

Nietzsche states that the study of science had been promoted in the three centuries prior to his own not for its own sake but because it was believed that it was by means of science that God's wisdom and greatness could be better understood. So, science, in its broadest concept, and religion were allied, the one purporting to clarify and benefit the other. Living in an age of exploration, experiment and discovery, Nietzsche could see that attempts were being made to alter the accepted world picture, to produce irrefutable explanations which did not include a reliance on a belief in the power and majesty of a Christian God. This attempt to find the truth, to qualify and explain and analyse was essential, and Nietzsche criticised the founders of religions, and those who continue to believe, because he claims that they had never made an objective assessment or scientific analysis of their experiences. He maintains that they 'thirst for things that are contrary to reason' and want to experience "miracles" and "regenerations" and hear the voices of angels' (2). In contrast, there are those among his contemporaries including, he claims, himself, who are determined to scrutinise experience 'as severely as a scientific experiment' in order to find an explanation for the world in which they find themselves. As far as Nietzsche is concerned, the great majority of people lack an 'intellectual conscience' and they do not want to question the uncertainty and ambiguity of existence, they are content to have faith in the illogical, the inexplicable, the traditional mystical manifestations of the Christian faith. The primitive need to have faith is so basic and essential, Nietzsche believed, that no matter how strongly a religious concept could be refuted by scientific explanation, nothing would destroy it. In section 347 of The Joyful Wisdom, 'Believers and their Need of Belief', he states:

(2) The Joyful Wisdom Book Fourth, 319

Christianity, it seems to me, is still needed by most people in old Europe, even today; therefore it still finds believers. For this is how man is; An article of faith could be refuted before him a thousand times - if he needed it, he would consider it 'true' again and again ...

In The Fountain, O'Neill shows a similar situation in the conflict between Juan and Luis, the soldier turned monk. Juan felt that Christianity had failed him, he could no longer have faith in the God of Roman Catholicism. His quest had turned into a desire for the Spring of Youth, the god of nature and beauty. Luis thinks that the evidence for such a spring is 'merely fable, legend, the dreams of poets' and Juan furiously attacks him for such a statement:

Have praying and fasting made you an imbecile? What evidence had Columbus? And you - you believe Christ lived and died. Well, have you talked with men who saw him in the manger, or on the cross?

(Part Two Scene VI)

Luis may consider Juan blasphemous, but he has no reply. He cannot provide evidential proof for his belief in Christ, it is all a matter of faith.

In Thus Spake Zarathustra the overheard conversation of the nightwatchmen deals with the proof of God's existence:

'Hath he got children? No one can prove he hath, if he doth not prove it himself! I have wished for a long time he would prove it for once thoroughly.'
'Prove? As though he had ever proved anything! Proof is hard for him. He layeth much stress on folk believing him.'
'Ay! Ay! Belief maketh him blessed, belief in him.'

(Of Apostates)

The doubt of the nightwatchmen about God makes Zarathustra 'choke with laughter'. He knows the time is past for such doubts; he knows that God no longer exists.

'Intellectual conscience', the desire to scrutinise traditional concepts, is dear to Nietzsche, his whole philosophy being based on an attempt to

examine the traditional Christianity-based values and so to 'scientifically' reappraise the nature of mankind and society. For him, science meant a questioning, a revision of understanding and belief in the light of new observation and event, and the word 'science' recurs throughout his work from the early appreciation of Socrates in The Birth of Tragedy to the final book of Thus Spake Zarathustra and The Antichrist. In the last book of Zarathustra, Nietzsche presents an example of the individual with intellectual conscience - the scientist with the specialised mind. This is shown by the encounter with the man in the swamp, half-hidden and trodden on by Zarathustra. He is an expert on leeches, a 'spiritually conscientious one' who has made the study of leeches his life's work and says that he feels at one with the brain of the leech. In his investigations he had 'cast everything else aside' and had interpreted the search for knowledge in a restricted and 'rigorous' way. His interpretation of the teachings of Zarathustra had taken his quest for truth to its ultimate length, even sacrificing his own blood in the cause. This characterisation of the man who, bitten by leeches, had increased his knowledge, might appear to be a caricature and verge on the ridiculous in its exaggeration, but Nietzsche shows his respect for the man of science by having Zarathustra invite the leech man to his cave with the other 'Higher Men'. In a later section in the final book of Zarathustra, 'Of Science', the leech man attempts to explain the nature of scientific enquiry as being the result of an innate fear in man, his 'hereditary and fundamental' feeling. The basic fear of the wild beast, and the beast inside man, has been transformed to that of the 'refined, spiritual, intellectual' fear now called 'science'. He claims that this fear is that of insecurity, of trying to find an explanation and an interpretation of a world in which everything is shaking, 'when the whole earth trembleth'. Although Nietzsche admired the scientific

impulse, he shows Zarathustra laughing at this 'old' explanation. Zarathustra has the new message; that of man as a fearless being, courageous, indomitable. He re-interprets the leech man's account of history in terms of courage and adventure - a delight in the unattempted, a seeking for new sensations and experiences, rather than a search for security. This, Nietzsche felt, was the truth of scientific investigation, and must be admired and cultivated in man, especially when he is striving towards the superman.

Nietzsche showed how he valued scientific thought and explanation when he stated that he wanted his new theory of Eternal Recurrence to be the 'most scientific of all hypotheses' (3). Obviously this emphasis on scientific analysis and formulation is present in his questioning of the Christian religion. The repudiation of Christianity and its manifestations in the modern world were fundamental questions in his philosophy, linked to the creation of the new god, the superman. But, he does manage to maintain that the desire for scientific truth springs from the same impulse as that of religious belief. One must have a conviction or faith in what one is trying to prove by scientific means. In The Joyful Wisdom he states that the impulse is:

... still a metaphysical faith upon which our faith in science rests - that even we seekers after knowledge today, we godless anti-metaphysicians, still take our fire, too, from the flame lit by a faith that is thousands of years old, that Christian faith of Plato that God is the truth, the truth is divine.

(Book Fifth, 344)

A further reiteration of man's need to have a faith in something outside himself, whether it manifests itself as religious belief or scientific proof, is asserted here, and it is an important need which, for Nietzsche,

(3) The Will to Power Vol. I note 55

had to be fulfilled by reason. However, he questions the result of such scientific striving and poses the question:

But what if this should become more and more incredible, if nothing should prove to be divine any more unless it were error, blindness, the lie - if God himself should prove to be our most enduring lie?

(Book Fifth, 344)

This highlights the question which pervades the work of both Nietzsche and O'Neill. What if there is ultimately no God? What if it is conclusively proved that He does not exist? What if the truth were that God is a lie? What, then, would man have to believe in? For, it is by implication that Nietzsche suggests that science would not be sufficient to fill the chasm revealed by the absence of God, and O'Neill was convinced that it did not. In spite of all the protests to the contrary particularly in Thus Spake Zarathustra and by the characters in O'Neill's plays, the thought that God might not exist, that He might really be a lie caused both men much anxiety and it is a question that is crucial to the work of both.

Nietzsche may have advocated scientific advance at the end of the nineteenth century, but O'Neill could see in the America of the twenties and thirties the lengths by which science had affected the life of the ordinary citizen and destroyed his relationship with his natural environment. Science had become a new religion and as such had proved, for O'Neill at least, an unsatisfactory one. This shows the difference between the two men in that Nietzsche regarded science as a process of thought, of reason, of objective analysis, while O'Neill interpreted it as an outward manifestation of progress, invention, mechanisation and de-humanisation. He attempted to show this in his plays, notably in The Hairy Ape, Dynamo and More Stately Mansions. He gives specific examples of the way that

man's attitude has changed and the way in which his environment is altered. O'Neill saw that the popularisation of science through technology had led to disorientation and insecurity, to a confused and muddled concept of the world on the part of the ordinary man, and so it could be no replacement for a religious or mystical belief even if, as he sometimes advocated in the plays, that belief was not necessarily the accepted Christian one. Like the leech man, O'Neill saw that the world was tottering and quaking and man was uncertain. The old Christian beliefs no longer seemed relevant to the world in which he lived, and, in fact, he felt in many cases were a positive force against achieving contentment and satisfaction and understanding. The materialism brought about by scientific invention in an industrialised capitalist society had even less chance of success in helping man to a state of equilibrium and faith and it was a mode of life which was far from any acceptable values of morality propounded by the Christian religion. As Charlie Marsden says in Strange Interlude:

It's in every headline of this daily newer testament
... going ... going ... never mind the gone ... we
won't live to see it ... and we'll be so rich, we can
buy off the deluge anyway! ... even our new God has
His price! ... must have!

(Act Six)

Nietzsche, too, describes the compulsion for 'the gold of the shopman' which had taken over society:

The God of hosts is not a God of gold bars. The prince
thinketh, but the shopkeeper directeth!

(Of Passing)

In Days Without End Father Baird comments on the state of the business world in America, going at that time through a decline, and says to Eliot and John:

Ah, who can blame you for whining when your omnipotent Golden Calf explodes into sawdust before your adoring eyes right at the height of his deification? It's tragic, no other word - unless the word be comic.

(Act One)

O'Neill tries to show in his plays the gulf between true mystical belief and the everyday attitudes and opinions of the world, and he showed that this urge to have a belief was strong enough to become distorted, not only into worship of the 'Golden Calf' but into more sinister forms such as the worship of electricity in Dynamo or power in More Stately Mansions. Man may have attempted to replace God by scientific advance and invention, by new scientific explanations, but the primitive need for faith was still there, a necessary part of man's psychological and spiritual make-up. In Dynamo O'Neill's concept is not completely realised in the play but he does state in a letter that the impetus for the play was the conflict between God and science:

It hits at what is the matter with us religiously speaking, with our old Gods and our new sciences, from a psychological and symbolical angle that hasn't been touched before. (4)

A year later, however, he states in another letter that his play had been misinterpreted:

How anybody could think, in the light of previous work, that I would waste time writing a play on the piffling struggle between pseudo-religion and pseudo-science is more than I can make out. (5)

He may call it a 'piffling struggle' here, but it was obviously a struggle which he felt was important as it occurs in other plays. This latter statement in the letter can be seen as a typical O'Neillian denial of

(4) A letter to Teresa Helburn 13.7.28. Reprinted in Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 300

(5) A letter to Dr. J. O. Lief 16.3.29. Reprinted in Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 325

writing a play that might be regarded as commonplace or lacking in any great spiritual truth. The use of the word 'pseudo' is the crux of the comment, the critics having received the play in a less than serious manner.

Nina Leeds in Strange Interlude sarcastically refers to her 'pet doctor', Darrell, who 'couldn't be happy in Heaven unless God called him in because He'd caught something' (Act Two). She claims that Darrell 'believes if you pick a lie to pieces, the pieces are the truth!' suggesting that his non-belief in God is a result of discovering that God is a lie. This suggests that O'Neill had read the passage in The Joyful Wisdom stating that science might find that God was ultimately a lie, 'our most enduring lie'. O'Neill goes on to reveal in Nina what he felt was symptomatic of many of his contemporaries - a confusion and bewilderment about old beliefs and their relationship to new scientific ideas. In her confused state, Nina is searching for something to believe in, something to pray to, after her whole ethos of life has been destroyed with Gordon Shaw's death:

I tried hard to pray to the modern science God. I thought of a million light years to a spiral nebula - one other universe among innumerable others. But how could that God care about our trifling misery of death-born-of birth? I couldn't believe in Him, and I wouldn't if I could! I'd rather imitate His indifference and prove that I had that one trait in common!

(Act Two)

Nina's disturbance and incomprehension of a scientific explanation of God is indicative that she has a need to believe in a God who has some human traits; a God she can relate to. The new 'science God', O'Neill observed, did not bring comfort or solace. He was too incomprehensible and impersonal.

In an early draft of Days Without End (6) the character Hardy, who is subsequently deleted, makes a similar statement to Nina's. As a scientist and follower of Nietzsche he is talking about a book he has written on the nature of science and God, and he complains about his publishers:

They pointed out that good scientists nowadays always devoted last chapters to reconciling science with some conception of God. Imperative, they said, to discover a new God - happy ending so public would swallow the science ...

But my book was Godless. Up to me to create a God. If I had no fresh ideas they recommend rehash the ones my colleagues had evolved - you know, God as Pure Thought, the Great Mathematical Thinker, the Holy Ultimate Equation!

Hardy, O'Neill's most Nietzschean character, is disposed of by the fifth draft of the play, and he, like Nietzsche, claims that God does not exist. O'Neill uses him to put forward many of the popular attitudes of the period, the attempts to disprove the existence of God by scientific means. Hardy shows the need to pander to public taste in order to reconcile popular demands for some sort of deity in which to believe but, like Nietzsche holds out against such demands. Boyd, the fore-runner of Father Baird, sums up this attitude when he remonstrates with Hardy:

You mean, it's the people who are asking you for one (a God) and you've nothing to give them - or you give them empty abstractions that are worse than nothing at all. (7)

In the last altered draft of the play Elsa is used as an example of the search for a God. Called Erda in one of the early drafts, perhaps because of Wagner's creation of the Earth Goddess in his Ring Cycle, she is seen to be seeking a God through Nature; O'Neill making the connection with Erda goddess of the earth. Elsa tells Father Baird where she has been walking:

(6) Days Without End ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University

(7) ibid.

I found myself walking in the park - seeking my old Nature God, I suppose, the one I told you about ... of course, no self-respecting God would be there among the old peanut bags and banana skins! Nothing was there except the City God of Infinite Cheapness - my father's god of Nothing is Omnipotent But Money! And even he was outside the wall in the breadline, along with his human sacrifices, quite bankrupt, poor dear! (8)

Although O'Neill does not include these extracts in the final version of the play they are an indication of the thought and substance behind not only this play, but the others that deal with the modern confusion about the existence of God. O'Neill may have noted in his diary in March 1942 (9) after Eleanor Duke's funeral that it was 'a ghastly religion without religion, funeral parlor, modern affair - it left me feeling that if there is no God we shouldn't invent one', but this is the O'Neill of later years who had spent his playwriting life inventing a variety of gods and perhaps had come to no satisfying personal conclusion. One thing was sure, though, that he tried to show in his plays that man did need some sort of a god, that religion was necessary, and, perhaps, if not for O'Neill's personal salvation, for many of the characters he created, an invented God was better than no God at all.

This happens in Strange Interlude when Nina says that in her grief and depression she sought desperately for belief.

I wanted to believe in God at any price - a heap of stones, a mud image, a drawing on a wall, a bird, a fish, a snake, a baboon - or even a good man preaching the simple platitudes of truth, those Gospel words we love the sound of but whose meaning we pass on to spooks to live by!

(Act Two)

(8) ibid. 8th draft

(9) Diary March 1942 ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University

Here she is voicing the fundamental human need. No matter whether it is a primitive god or the Christ of the New Testament, there must be something to have faith in. Nietzsche expresses the same thought in Thus Spake Zarathustra after Zarathustra discovers the Higher Men worshipping the Ass. The Old Pope explains what has occurred and his explanation is perhaps a contributory factor to the views expressed by Nina:

Rather adore God in this shape than in no shape!
Meditate over this saying, my lofty friend! Thou
findest out quickly: there is wisdom in such a saying.

(The Ass-Festival)

In O'Neill's plays there are characters for whom the science God appears sufficient - for Fife in Dynamo, for Darrell in Strange Interlude, and for Michael Cape in Welded. Cape adopts a pseudo-scientific explanation for his 'divine' relationship with Eleanor. From feeling that they were inextricably linked through the process of evolution and cell-division, he expresses his loneliness in terms of a 'hundred million years of darkness' where he is alone in time crying out to God and being guided to Eleanor (10). This is an attempt to give a scientific slant to the feeling that he and Eleanor were made for each other, destined by some sort of belief in the theories of evolution and the way in which they were misinterpreted. In Marco Millions the Great Kaan voices a similar view:

My hideous suspicion is that God is only an infinite
insane energy which creates and destroys without other
purpose than to pass eternity in avoiding thought.

(Act Three Scene One)

Science has tried to prove itself supreme. It has attempted to explain away the nature of the universe and the God that was supposed to have created it, and the new reverence for science and scientists was apparently taking the place of religion and the priesthood. In Strange Interlude

(10) Welded Act III

O'Neill shows Darrell talking about the new superiority of the scientist. The scientific mind is 'a mind superior to the moral scruples that cause so much human blundering and unhappiness' (Act Four). It is a mind, he thinks, that can truly understand. It can give irrefutable explanations and leave no room for the out-dated questioning and moral interpretations of religion. It is a fact, not a belief open to manipulation and speculation. In a deleted passage from Days Without End, Loving again expresses the 'scientific' certainty of life:

Earth with man on it, jazzing along through space
toward the constellation Hercules. That's a scientific
fact, I believe. Science at least knows that much
about where we're going and what life is all about.
(11)

However, O'Neill did not share his view; these interpretations of the world were not adequate; science did not know what life was really all about and man was, like Nina, left wanting a god to believe in 'at any price'.

In the course of his plays O'Neill created a number of characters who did believe in God, both in the Puritan God and the Roman Catholic God, as well as a variety of other strange and personal concepts of a divine being. He was very critical of organised religion, feeling that it did not fulfil its claims in terms of the lives of ordinary men and women, and, like Nietzsche, felt that religion was responsible for many of man's problems and uncertainties.

PURITANISM

One aspect of O'Neill's criticism of religion was his attitude to Puritanism. The Puritan worship of God and the practice of the rigid Puritan ethic centred on a belief, taken largely from the Old Testament, in a

(11) Days Without End ms. 5th Draft op. cit.

vengeful, harsh, restrictive God. In New England this attitude was most marked, it being the area in the United States where many of the early Non-Conformist and unorthodox religious sects had settled and their often narrow and socially exclusive practices had spread. O'Neill would have come across this Puritanism from an early age, even though he was brought up in a Roman Catholic household, because it affected, as it still does affect, many aspects of East Coast American life. O'Neill has chosen to portray a Puritan God in several of his plays, but in addition to his own observation and criticism of those believers around him, he had support for the portrayal of the God of vengeance in Nietzsche's work.

In criticising Christianity in The Joyful Wisdom, Nietzsche states:

That the Christian presupposes a powerful, overpowering being who enjoys revenge. His power is so great that nobody could possibly harm him, except for his honour.

(Book Third 135)

In this passage, 'Origin of Sin', Nietzsche differentiates between what he calls the 'Jewish' God, against whom every sin committed was a slight and therefore must be punished by that same God, and the gods of the Ancient Greeks who were not omnipotent and were more humanistic in their dispensation of power. For the Greeks there was no concept of original sin, so any act could ultimately be a means of ennoblement in the eyes of the gods, rather than always an occasion for punishment. Nietzsche believed that the Jews separated God and humanity completely, and it is this notion of the unreachable God that he felt had been transmuted into the Christian belief of the all-powerful God whose will must be obeyed. Later, in The Joyful Wisdom, he demonstrates the nature of such a God:

A God who loves men, provided that they believe in him,
and who hurls frightful glances and threatenings at
him who does not believe in this love!

(Book Third 141)

This 'God from the East' is also referred to in Thus Spake Zarathustra where Nietzsche claims that he 'was hard and revengeful and built up his hell for the delight of those he loved best' (Off Duty). In setting several of his plays in New England, O'Neill is able to show the effect of such a belief in a harsh God, both on the characters who believe in Him and on those who refuse to believe, or who have a different concept of God. God can be used as a delineation of character, as in The Rope or Desire Under the Elms where the attitude to God gives psychological force to the character of Ephraim Cabot, or in Mourning Becomes Electra where the Puritan background of the Mannon family is an integral part of the motivation for the actions of the characters, particularly Lavinia and Orin.

In The Rope, in many ways a forerunner of Desire Under the Elms, O'Neill creates Abraham Bentley, an old, mean, Bible-quoting Puritan who connives to dispose of his wealth by a trick. He resents the fact that his daughter had married a Roman Catholic and feels that his 'Papist brat' grand-daughter is spying on him. Abraham finds every occasion to quote Scriptural phrases, usually in condemnation of his family, but O'Neill shows that in the old man there is a discrepancy between his professed faith and his actions. O'Neill felt strongly that there was intense hypocrisy attached to religion, and this is clearly seen in the Puritan characters that he creates. Abraham might call down the wrath of God on his son, abuse his daughter, and scheme about his wealth, but it is all covered with a sanctimonious quoting of the Bible. His actions, particularly

that of going off in search of a woman immediately after he was widowed, do not reflect any true belief in what he preaches. His daughter points this out to him when she talks about her marriage to a Roman Catholic:

... you gettin' religion all of a moment just for spite
on me 'cause I'd left ...
... you sayin' it was a sin to marry a Papist, after
not bein' at Sunday meetin' yourself for more 'n
twenty years.

(Act One)

The essential word in her accusation is spite, for Abraham is a crafty, spiteful, scheming old man. His fits of scriptural declamation do not disguise his intention to leave the money to his son, but there are aspects in this play which are a distortion of the story of Abraham and Isaac. In The Rope Abraham does not expect to sacrifice his son, but he expects and hopes his son will sacrifice himself, by attempting to hang himself from the rope. The hidden gold will then appear as the 'reward'. Perhaps the only occasion in the play where Abraham quotes the Scriptures in an honest way is his repetition of the parable of the Prodigal Son when Luke reappears, but in the rest of the play O'Neill uses his Biblical declamations to represent a totally hypocritical character whose actions bear no resemblance to his supposed beliefs. Abraham Bentley perverts the teaching of the Church, both in speech and behaviour, as does O'Neill's other New England creation, Ephraim Cabot.

Desire Under the Elms is a far more developed and competent play than The Rope. Ephraim Cabot is superficially like Abraham Bentley but he is a more complex and fully realised character who attempts to explain his beliefs in God - in fact these are the essence of his actions in the play. Like Abraham he is mean, cunning and conniving. He, too, hoards gold and is cheated out of it by the end of the play, but his farm is more important to him in that it is an integral part of his daily worship of

God and an expression of what the Puritan God means to him. True wealth and reward in Heaven are earned by sheer physical hardship and toil not the easily won gold stolen by his two sons. When Ephraim discovers that this gold has gone, in his anger he concludes that it could not have been God's gold, it had been earned too easily. This is his attitude throughout the play; God is hard, demanding, vengeful, and only by emulating these characteristics can Ephraim achieve anything like what he believes is a state of grace.

Ephraim's account of his past life indicates this. He boasts of his own hardness and strength, his repudiation of the easy life and the fertile farm in the West and hence his repudiation of an easy God who gave wealth without man making a real effort to earn it. Ephraim resisted the ease of the other settlers, now dead he claims for 'follerin' arter an easy God' (Part II Scene 2) and he returned to the barren land to build his farm from the stones. Ephraim had modelled himself on the Puritan concept of a harsh God and had grown hard like Him, but essentially what he had done was to cast God in his own image. As a consequence he loses all his natural humanity and feeling for his family. To build out of stone, to create His church out of rock, was how Ephraim felt called to God, but in the process he exploited his family, killed two wives through sheer physical and spiritual exhaustion, and earned the hatred of his sons. His natural feelings became distorted, but he is convinced that he is following the dictates of the true God. That, to him, is more important than a loving family relationship. Like Abraham Bentley he is spiteful. As Simeon reports, Ephraim intends to live to a hundred 'if on'y t' spite yer sinful greed' (Part I Scene 2). His sons feel that he has married Abbie just to spite them, to cheat them out of their shares in the farm on which they have toiled for many years. Eben claims that

Ephraim and his God are 'Allus cussin' folks - allus naggin' 'em!' (Part I Scene 4) and this is the manifestation of Ephraim's religious belief. He is the one true believer and God is there to wreak vengeance on all those who do not rigidly follow the teachings of the Bible. The action of Abbie and Eben in killing the baby and deciding to face punishment together initially makes Ephraim want to destroy the farm, but he then sees their action as a warning that he must keep it all for himself. He must remain 'hard and lonesome' like his God. By the end of the play he resumes a position of strength and determination, in spite of the tragedy that has occurred, believing that God has guided Eben and Abbie, using them as a lesson to him and so he thinks that all that has occurred must be the will of God:

I kin hear His voice warnin' me agen t' be hard an' stay on my farm. I kin see His hand usin' Eben t' steal t' keep me from weakness. I kin feel I be in the palm o' His hand, His fingers guidin' me.

(Part III Scene 4)

This is the essence of a strong Puritan belief - all that happens is the will of a God who is punishing and justice-dispensing; who demands that, whatever happens on a human level, His will must be obeyed. The tragedy is that in following such a conviction the natural feelings of man and his relationship to his fellows become warped, distorted and so create even greater tragedies and disasters. In Desire Under the Elms there are many echoes of the Old Testament; in the names of the characters, the views of Ephraim and his family, in the language that they use. All combine to create what O'Neill must have seen as an accurate picture of such a family of the period, the action taking place in 1850. In his article, 'Biblical perversions in Desire Under the Elms', (12) Peter Hays

(12) Hays, Peter L. Modern Drama XI February 1969 p. 423

maintains that the essence of the play is the manner in which the actions of the characters pervert the teachings of the Bible, but this is only a part of the play. By creating such characters in their environment, O'Neill is not only attempting to show how Puritanism can affect the attitudes to life of its believers, but that the Biblical influences are true to their setting. The tragedy of the play is not only that Ephraim and his sons do not follow the real meaning of the religion, but that the Puritan way of life is in conflict with natural desires and feelings. It is no accident that the elms of the title and the stones of the farm play such an important part in the play, for they symbolise the underlying pagan, natural, Dionysian urges and basic instincts which are all contrary to Puritan rigidity of morality and behaviour. This contrast between paganism and Puritanism and the forces at work on the individual are something that O'Neill goes on to develop in later plays.

The denial of humanity, of kindness and softness in Ephraim is an indication of O'Neill's view of Puritanism. In refusing to acknowledge true emotion, true feelings which are natural, all passion and desire become corrupted into a distortion of truth and so are ultimately evil. O'Neill would have read Nietzsche's feelings on this subject for Nietzsche was against all such life-denying effects of Christianity. Being a worshipper of the Greeks, Nietzsche was opposed to the 'Jewish' God and His omnipotent judgement of man. In The Joyful Wisdom he states that passion is something which must not be suppressed lest it become debased and disfigured. In the worship of Dionysus all natural feeling and joy in life is expressed and Nietzsche saw Christianity as denying and damaging this expression. He states:

People like St Paul have an evil eye for the passions;
all they know of the passions is what is dirty, dis-

figuring and heartbreaking; hence their idealistic tendency aims at the annihilation of the passions and they find perfect purity in the divine.

(Book Third 139)

Such Christians Nietzsche contrasts with the Ancient Greeks who elevated passions, who 'gilded and deified them'. The Greeks were 'more happy, purer, more divine'. O'Neill used the Puritan view of life as an example of the ultimate denial of such natural passion and feeling and showed the consequences in his plays, according to Nietzsche's predictions. In Desire Under the Elms and The Rope the result of Puritan self-control is hypocrisy, psychological and social disturbance and tragedy, and this is particularly so in Mourning Becomes Electra. To deny natural feeling, to suppress instinct, to subvert real passion means that, as Nietzsche points out, passion will become coarsened and debased:

... a certain convention of passionateness is now desired, - only not the passion itself! Nevertheless it will thereby be at last reached and our posterity will have a genuine savagery, and not merely a formal savagery and unmannerliness.

(The Joyful Wisdom, 47)

Nietzsche obviously felt that by suppressing natural feelings, mankind would become so debased that it would become totally savage, and capable of acts far more horrific than those of 'formal savagery' which he could observe in his own time.

In Dynamo O'Neill shows the warping of feeling, verging on obsession, in the character of Hutchins Light who is a Puritan minister, and like Ephraim, both a reflection of his God and a man who creates a God in his own image. He is a man of cruelty and pride, a man of vengeance and hatred. In a stage direction O'Neill indicates:

His voice is the bullying one of a sermoniser who is the victim of an inner uncertainty that compensates itself by being booming over-assertive.

(Act One Scene One)

The inner uncertainty of Light is partly owing to having his faith jeered at and questioned by his neighbour, Fife, but also it is an indication, later revealed as an integral part of the plot, that he is afraid of thunder and lightning. O'Neill's use of the lightning as a converting agent for Reuben is also used symbolically to show Light's terror of a natural phenomenon, something he cannot control. He cannot control the elements and he cannot control his fear of them and this goes against the rigidity of the rest of his life. He may rule his wife and son with a mastery that cannot be questioned, but the lightning is a spontaneous natural happening and as such is a threat to him. Light sees God's will in all his actions, but it is God's will as interpreted by his strict Puritanism. Light is a cruel, sadistic individual, wanting in his anger to beat Fife's face to a pulp and then praying to God for forgiveness for 'a murderer's thoughts'. This attempt to quench his suppressed rage does not stop him from trying to have revenge on Fife by hiding in the closet in order to hear Reuben's confession. He has his belt ready to beat Reuben and believes that the fear of God can only be beaten back into his son. When he hears of Fife's supposed murderous activity his reaction is one of 'fierce, revengeful joy'. He thanks God for giving him an instrument of vengeance against Fife:

Lord God of Righteous Vengeance, I thank Thee ... at last Thou strikest!

(Act One Scene Four)

At the very moment of beating Reuben with the belt, the lightning strikes and Reuben is aware of his father's fear. This prevents Light from having any further power over his son, his weakness being so obviously

revealed. Reuben defies both his father and his father's God and leaves home in defiance claiming:

There is no God! No God but Electricity! I'll never
be scared again! I'm through with the lot of you!

(Act One Scene Four)

God's failure to respond to Reuben's challenge to 'strike me dead this second!' convinces him that God does not exist, at least in the way he had been brought up to believe.

O'Neill was using a Nietzschean pronouncement here. He had said in a letter to Benjamin de Casseres in 1928 (13) that he had planned to compose a trilogy, never completed, of which Dynamo was to be the first part with the title 'God is dead! Long live - What?'. Although the question appeared to be answered by electricity in this play, O'Neill continues to suggest alternatives in his other plays. Hutchins Light's worship of his God of vengeance is shown by O'Neill to have destroyed his family, to have contributed to his son's derangement and to have corrupted his soul. Light's self-denial means that pleasure and comfort are also denied to his wife and son. Their house is damp, dark, and he has prevented electric light from being installed. The Christian concept of God as the 'Light of the World' has been excluded from the darkness of the Puritan way of life. Light says of his wife:

Comforts of life! ... she has always desired the
comfortable path ... where the spirit decays in the
sinful sloth of the flesh ...

(Act One Scene One)

and yet later in the play he admits to himself that his desire for his wife is not that of true spiritual love but 'one long desire of the

(13) A letter to Benjamin de Casseres 16.9.28 Reprinted in Shaeffer
Son and Artist p. 306

senses' (Act One Scene Three). His hypocrisy is blatant; outwardly remaining austere and hard, but inwardly succumbing to the desires which he attempts to deny in his son.

In Days Without End Loving talks about the 'God of Punishment' whom John Loving had encountered at school, in conflict with his parents' 'God of Love'. This is similar to O'Neill's own experience as a school boy contending with the opposing forces of school and family. After the death of Loving's parent, in the supposed 'novel', this God of Love reveals Himself as a God of punishment and vengeance, punishment being meted out in his mother's illness whose doubt of God had been expressed when his father died. Loving recounts that the young man then saw God as:

... deaf and blind and merciless - a Deity who returned
hate for love and revenged Himself upon those who
trusted Him!

(Act One)

In the early play The Sniper Rougon avenges the deaths of his wife and daughter and son by killing the Germans, and throughout the play the priest proves to be totally ineffectual with his words of comfort. At the end of the play, before he, too, is killed, Rougon refuses to pray and spits at the God who allows such events to happen. It is a play about revenge, and the implication is that God is not just the vengeful God of the other plays but an uncaring one who punishes indiscriminately. Like Hutchins Light in Dynamo, Loving is presented in Days Without End as seeing God as vengeful, as an instrument of hatred and retribution, and in Strange Interlude Charlie Marsden tries to invoke God's help for his hatred of Nina and Darrell:

I hate them! ... if only God would strike them dead!
... now! ... and I could see them die! ... I would
praise His justice! ... His Kindness and Mercy to me!

(Act Six)

In the same play Mrs Evans speaks of ceasing to believe in God because He had revealed Himself as a God of punishment - punishing those that loved too much:

And I don't believe in Him, neither, not any more. I used to be a great one for worrying about what's God and what's devil, but I got richly over it living here with poor folks that was being punished for no sins of their own and me being punished with them for no sin but loving much.

(Act Three)

Not only are these examples of a Puritan, rigid belief in God, but they are similar to Nietzsche's concept of the 'Jewish' God who 'hurls frightful glances and threatenings' at those who do not believe.

O'Neill continues his portrayal of Puritanism in Mourning Becomes Electra. It is not such an overt expression of Puritanism as in the other plays, being overlaid with the Greek concept of Fate, brought about in modern terms by psychological theory, but much of the tragedy of the Mannons is a result of their New England Puritan inheritance. They have instilled into them a denial of overt emotion, a denial of the enjoyment of life, and a belief in keeping up appearances and being seen as honourable, God-fearing members of the community. Nietzsche's statement that the repression of passion and natural reaction results in the 'really savage' is shown clearly in this play, in the actions of the characters. This savagery is comparable to that of the original Oresteia, although O'Neill's interpretation is overlaid with Freudian theory in the insistence on the relationships between mother and son and father and daughter which are combined with the influence of New England Puritannical conduct and belief.

O'Neill considered that New England was the 'best possible dramatically for Greek plot of crime and retribution, chain of fate' (14) as the area was

(14) Diary April 1929. Reprinted ibid. p. 337

permeated with the influence of many different religious sects which had advocated the rigid self-disciplined, narrow view which had been a characteristic of the settlers there, fleeing from religious intolerance in Europe. This inheritance, combined with an essentially American attitude to money-making and material success, meant that a society existed which was overlaid with the ideals of the Puritan code of morality but which was, O'Neill believed, essentially hypocritical and false. His difficulty was, as he himself stated, to create a play which gave the sense of fate present in the Oresteia, but which would be understandable to a modern audience. He did not want to make the Mannons too specific in their statements of belief and he said in a letter to George Jean Nathan (15) that it was 'One hell of a job' to

... conjure a Greek fate out of the Mannons themselves (without calling in the aid of even a Puritan Old Testament God) that would convince a modern audience without religion or moral ethics ...

Consequently, the play shows the social aspects of life in a New England community, the religious question being absorbed by the public manifestation of years of Puritan influence. This differs from Desire Under the Elms or The Rope, where there is a constant reiteration of Biblical teaching and scriptural proclamation. The repression of emotion in the Mannon family is another indication of their Puritan inheritance, and, as O'Neill was concerned with creating a sense of fate, not a verbalised explanation of action, the Puritan view of life fitted extraordinarily well. The unnatural actions of the Mannon family also relate easily to Nietzsche's view that to deny naturalness and open expression, especially as a result of religious indoctrination, meant the warping and disfigurement of personality and action, and ultimate savagery. This is contrasted well

(15) A letter to George Jean Nathan 7.4.31 Reprinted in Cargill p.55

in the play with the untainted, unspoiled, pagan way of life represented by the symbolism of the South Sea Islands.

The history of the Mannon family is one of hypocrisy, of covering up for past misdeeds, particularly the affair of Marie Brantome and David Mannon. Their relationship was condemned by grandfather Abraham, but Seth maintains that it was jealousy and spite which made him throw them out. Marie, unlike the outwardly rigid and controlled Mannons, was 'always laughin' and singin' - frisky and full of life - with something free and wild about her like an animile' (Homecoming Act Three) and it is this quality of naturalness and animal-like response which the Mannons, as Puritans, deny. Abe Mannon's response to the affair was not only to avoid scandal - an essential part of the motivation of the characters in this play - but to pull down the house in which they had lived and build anew. It is the result of this re-building which is seen when the play opens; the New England mansion in Grecian style, the white pillars covering and masking the grey hard stone underneath. O'Neill created the Mannon house as a visual symbol of the nature of the characters and Christine points this out in Homecoming:

Each time I come back after being away it appears more like a sepulchre! The 'whited' one of the Bible - pagan temple front stuck like a mask on Puritan gray ugliness! It was just like old Abe Mannon to build such a monstrosity - as a temple for his hatred.

(Act One)

Not only did Abe Mannon build a monster of a house, but his Puritan extremism results in a family of monsters, hybrids of pagan and Puritan.

O'Neill, in his diary (16) stated that there was 'a Puritan conviction of man born to sin and punishment' and it is this belief that hangs over

(16) Diary April 1929 ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University

the Mannons. Their Puritan inheritance means that they are brought up to think of life as being a preparation for death, to be endured as a preparation for the next life rather than to be lived, and that punishment would be meted out by a just and wrathful God for any sin committed. On his return from the war, Ezra Mannon describes the Mannon way of thinking when he talks of his forefathers:

They went to the white meeting-house on Sabbaths and meditated on death. Life was a dying. Being born was starting to die. Death was being born. That white meeting-house. It stuck in my mind - clean-scrubbed and whitewashed - a temple of death.

(Homecoming Act Three)

The whiteness of the meeting-house, covering the preoccupation with suffering and death is the same as the false whiteness covering the Mannon mansion. 'The temple portico is like an incongruous white mask fixed on the house to hide its somber gray ugliness' is the description given in the stage direction (17) and this is repeated at intervals throughout the play. It serves not only to emphasise the incongruity of the pagan facade covering the Puritan one, but also the hypocrisy of the whiteness covering the gray impurity of the interior. This hypocrisy is discussed by Nietzsche in Thus Spake Zarathustra in 'The Spirit of Gravity' where he points out, in Biblical fashion declaimed by Zarathustra, 'whoever painteth his house white betrayeth unto me a soul painted white'. The outward form and beauty of the Mannon mansion covers the evil within, and Christine and Lavinia refer to it as a tomb. It is not only tomb-like in appearance, but in effect. As Nietzsche says in Zarathustra:

As corpses they thought to live, in black draped they their corpses: even in their talk do I still feel the evil flavour of charnel houses.

(Of Priests)

(17) Homecoming Act One

The Mannons are as surely trapped in their mausoleum for the living as in one for the dead. The living death, expressed by Ezra in his description of the Puritan's acceptance of death beginning at birth, is similar to that expressed elsewhere by O'Neill particularly in The Hairy Ape and Fog. It is also applied to the 'wisdom' of Silenus stated in The Birth of Tragedy and to Nietzsche's section of Zarathustra called 'The Preachers of Death'. These men for whom it is necessary to 'preach the abandonment of life'

... are the consumptive of soul. When scarce born they begin to die and long for the doctrine of weariness and renunciation. They would fain be dead, and we should approve of their will! Let us beware lest we awaken these dead ones or damage those living coffins!

O'Neill shows this attitude again in Lazarus Laughed where Lazarus, having conquered death and affirmed the joy of life, grows younger and more vibrant, while Miriam, a follower of Christ, is dressed in black and rapidly ages. She is contrasted with Lazarus, being preoccupied with death rather than life.

There is talk in Mourning Becomes Electra about the curse of the Mannons, and it being the manifestation of their Puritan inheritance. They are cursed by their own beliefs. All the actions which come from their adherence to the family tradition and to religion are unnatural, distorted and ultimately tragic, but they are the result of generations of Puritan repression. Seth claims that 'There's evil in that house since it was first built in hate - and it's kept growin' there ever since, as what's happened has proved' (18). The result of Abraham Mannon's hatred has produced the stronger hatred and evil shown by Orin and Lavinia. Seth's claim is true in terms of the motivations of the characters; there may

(18) The Haunted Act One Scene One

be protestations of love but the impetus to act is based on hatred directed at the other family members. This is particularly true in the conflict between Christine and Lavinia, based on mutual hatred and jealousy, first over Ezra and then over Adam Brant. The darkness of the soul which the Mannons inherit from their grandfathers means that they believe in retribution and punishment for their crimes, although this does not hold such a great threat that it makes the crime easy to resist. When his mind is disturbed Orin voices this belief in guilt and retribution, when he says that they should live in darkness:

Perpetual night - darkness of death in life - that's
the fitting habitat for guilt!

(The Haunted Act Two)

and later

Confess and atone to the full extent of the law! That's
the only way to wash the guilt of our mother's blood
from our souls!

(The Haunted Act Two)

In spite of the crimes they have committed, the Mannons still believe that they must be punished, the ultimate punishment being Lavinia's self-imposed solitary confinement in the final act in the play:

I'll live alone with the dead, and keep their secrets,
and let them hound me, until the curse is paid out
and the last Mannon is let die! I know they will see
to it I live for a long time! It takes the Mannons
to punish themselves for being born.

(The Haunted Act Four)

O'Neill has been true to his intention in that he has not obviously invoked an 'Old Testament God' in this play, at least not as a means of characterisation or as an active 'agent' in the plot. Nevertheless, His influence is there through the instilled, inherited limitations of the Mannons, and Lavinia's waiting to be punished by the family's God.

Christine, originally an outsider tainted by the Mannons, attributes to God the damage done to the individual. She says to Hazel:

Why can't all of us remain innocent and loving and trusting? But God won't leave us alone. He twists and wrings and tortures our lives with others' lives until - we poison each other to death!

(The Haunted Act One)

Her speech has echoes of the lament of the Wizard in Thus Spake Zarathustra who sees God as a torturer:

Why gazest thou again,
Never weary of human pain,
With the malicious lightning eyes of a God?
Thou wilt not kill
Only torture, torture?
Wherefore torture me,
Thou malicious, unknown God?

The Wizard repeats several times the phrase about the torture of God. His reference to Him as a malicious God is modified in the Thomas Common translation to 'mischief-loving', which has a lighter connotation. However, this term is used by O'Neill in several of the plays, particularly in Strange Interlude where he portrays God as a God of malice who corrupts and twists lives to wreak vengeance.

The hypocrisy of the Mannons is something which O'Neill makes very clear in the play, with Lavinia and Orin doing their utmost to avoid scandal. This fits in well with the O'Neill adaptation of the Oresteia, for he could not have conceived that the Mannons became entangled in the law and were tried for their crimes. The Puritan obsession with 'white-washing' in the play makes a marvellous justification for the crimes going unpunished by an external agency and so enables O'Neill to achieve his intention of fate expressed in modern terms. The Mannons have maintained their position in New England society and in doing so have avoided any scandal. They have maintained the appearance of a respectable,

virtuous, community-spirited family for so long that they seem to be inviolable, a view which is expressed by the choric characters, the townspeople who comment about them. Even Hazel, who knows them better, is a believer in all that the Mannons appear to stand for, and her comment to Lavinia shows that the family's public image has been well preserved. After all that has occurred - the murders and suggestions of incest - Hazel says:

I know in your heart you can't be dead to all honor
and justice - you, a Mannon!

(The Haunted Act Four)

It is this pretence of upholding honour and justice in the community that the family desperately try to maintain - a white-washed facade to cover their guilty souls. The sins of the Mannon forefathers may have been visited on their children, but those sins are kept tight within the family circle.

PAGANISM

In Mourning Becomes Electra the conflict between paganism and Puritanism is particularly clear in the use of the South Sea Islands. These 'blessed Isles' that Adam Brant refers to, that Orin reads about, and that he and Lavinia visit, are the symbol of all that Puritanism denies. O'Neill uses these islands in the same way in the early play Different, written some ten years before Mourning Becomes Electra, and they are also referred to in Lazarus Laughed. Chabrowe (19) claims that in Different they are the antithesis of Puritanism and this is even more true for their use in Mourning Becomes Electra. Chabrowe states that the islands represent life while Puritanism represents death, but although this is true the islands have other connotations in the play.

(19) Chabrowe, Leonard Ritual and Pathos - the Theatre of O'Neill
Bucknell University Press 1976

In his work diary, when preparing Mourning Becomes Electra, O'Neill noted what his aims were concerning the islands (20)

Develop South Sea Island motive - its appeal for them all (in various aspects) - release, peace, security, beauty, freedom of conscience, sinlessness etc. - longing for the primitive - and the mother-symbol - yearning for pre-natal non-competitive freedom from fear - make this island theme recurrent motive ...

Apart from O'Neill's own experiences travelling on board ship on his voyages as a young man, visiting cultures very different from his own, he has a precedent for this use of the islands in Nietzsche's Second Book of Thus Spake Zarathustra. Zarathustra, sickened by the misinterpretations of his teaching in the world, journeys to the 'Happy Isles', or, in the Tille translation, 'The Blissful Islands'. He goes to speak of his new-found love to his friends and his enemies, a love extolling the superman and the power of the will. In these islands Zarathustra will be in the ideal environment to preach his Dionysian doctrine, to 'lure' back his followers 'with shepherd's flutes'. In these islands where 'figs fall from the trees', Zarathustra delights in the fullness and abundance of nature and the beauty of the surrounding sea, and Nietzsche sets the whole of the Second Book of Zarathustra in these islands. His source was undoubtedly the Ancient Greek belief in the islands of perfection, the Isles of the Blessed, which were reputed to be in the Atlantic Ocean, and were the destination of dead souls. In Zarathustra the emphasis is on the Dionysian element and the Third Book of Zarathustra begins with his return to the mainland and the sordid, decaying world which he despised and which was a contrast to the idyllic islands.

While on the islands Zarathustra encounters maidens dancing in a green meadow. They dance in celebration of the world of nature and Zarathustra,

(20) Diary (undated) ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University

too, wants to sing and dance in celebration of the 'old Gods', and particularly, it is implied, Dionysus. This is an act of defiance against the God of the Christians whom Zarathustra calls his 'devil', the 'spirit of gravity', said to be 'lord of the world'. Wisdom is an alluring maiden who upbraids Zarathustra for his attitude to Life, or so he sings in his song, but he affirms that Life is what is most dear to him, encompassing everything that is both beautiful and ugly (21). The result of Zarathustra's sojourn in the islands is that he exhorts his followers to seek for such a haven for that is where the future of man lies. In looking for a new home, Zarathustra has searched 'for fatherlands and motherlands' but they are full of the despised present-day men and alien to him. Nietzsche extends the image, and Zarathustra concludes that:

I love only my children's land, the undiscovered in
the remotest sea; for it do I bid my sails search and
search.

This is the land of the future, and in the section of 'Old and New Tables' he again states:

Your children's land ye shall love (be this love your
new nobility!), the land undiscovered, in the remotest
sea! For it I bid your sails seek and seek!

(Of Old and New Tables, 12)

As well as being the land of the future, the islands are a paradise of freedom and innocence where nakedness is the desirable state. This is a well-accepted Christian concept of being, in the pre-Lapsarian state, without clothes and without sin. Nietzsche, too, stresses that the superman will appear naked. On the islands the old Gods were 'ashamed of all clothes' when dancing and so he does associate the Blissful Islands with freedom and sinlessness as, later, does O'Neill in the description of the islands by Lavinia. In 'The Second Dance Song', Life tells

(21) Thus Spake Zarathustra 'The Dance Song'

Zarathustra that an island of love has been found:

Beyond good and evil we found our island and our green
meadow - we two alone!

and there is an emphasis on the absence of sin, a return to a Garden of Eden.

In Diff'rent, Caleb Williams' downfall, at least in Emma's eyes, comes on the South Sea Islands. All the men in the whaling community recognise that the islands have power which is irresistible, and their behaviour while there is accepted by their women folk who make allowances for the islands being different from New England. Emma's rigid code of conduct, by which she tries to believe in Caleb as a 'plaster saint' is ridiculed by the other members of her family. Caleb tries to explain how 'diff'rent' the islands make one feel:

Everything is diff'rent down there - the weather and
the trees and water. You sit lookin' at it all and
you git to feel diff'rent from what you do at home
here.

(Act One)

The men forget their homes when on these islands and respond to the native girls, even though once returned to the community they make the excuse that the girls are savages. The lure of the South Sea islands is inexplicable, but it is part of the lure of the old Gods of Nietzsche, the Dionysian power which still exists in unspoiled and natural habitats. It is a force as strong as the self-denial of Puritanism, and Emma's misguided view of Caleb as being immune to it brings about their disasters. The comparison with Mourning Becomes Electra is clear, but O'Neill also refers to the islands in Lazarus Laughed, where Lazarus is taken to the Romans and ultimately to his death. They arrive at Capri, at Tiberius's villa, far earlier than expected because, as Caligula relates:

Lazarus laughed and the galley slaves forgot their
fettters and made their oars fly as if they were bound
for the Blessed Isles of Liberty!

(Act Three Scene One)

This is ironic, since the rule of Tiberius is the complete antithesis of liberty, but it shows that Lazarus's life-affirming laughter is connected with the islands of freedom and peace. Later in the play, Caligula hysterically shouts his belief in Lazarus - a belief in eternal recurrence and joy in life - which is soon to be revealed as short-lived. However, he claims that when he is Caesar he will '... decree that there must be kindness and love' and promises 'I will make the Empire one great Blessed Isle!' (Act Four Scene One). In the original manuscript for Lazarus Laughed (22) this speech was 'I will make the Empire one great Blissful, Blessed Isle!' but O'Neill later deleted the word 'Blissful' - no doubt originally taken from the Tille translation. In Lazarus Laughed the islands are used in a less significant fashion than in Diff'rent or Mourning Becomes Electra in that they are forming a contrast with the decayed, corrupt tyrannous Roman Empire, but they have less overt symbolic significance than in the other plays. O'Neill does not develop their use and so they are little more than figures of speech taken from Nietzsche. O'Neill's note in the previously mentioned work diary, stating his proposed use of the island theme, is comprehensive. He intended to have the islands as a personal symbol for each of the characters in Mourning Becomes Electra and this is shown by the way in which Adam, Lavinia, Orin and Christine talk about them. O'Neill departs a little from the Nietzschean/Dionysian concept, in that he introduces Freudian interpretation of their function, such as his note of 'pre-natal non-competitive freedom' and the 'mother

(22) Lazarus Laughed ms. Act Four Scene One American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

symbol'. The return to the primitive here is not merely a return to a primitive unspoiled culture, but also a return to a primitive psychological state. The yearning of the characters to visit the islands is a mixture of the Freudian and Nietzschean, as O'Neill interprets them, but they are essentially a contrast to the rigidity of Puritanism and to the claustrophobia of the Mannon household.

Adam Brant is the first character to mention the islands to Lavinia, and he describes them as a 'garden of Paradise', implying a sense of sinlessness and naturalness. He claims that there one can forget 'all men's dirty dreams of greed and power' and this is what they might be said to represent for O'Neill; a returning to nature and a repudiation of the materialistic world in which he lived; a freedom from society. For Zarathustra, too, the islands are an escape from the world of the 'much-too-many', the 'lusts and vices' of home. Brant is taken with the native girls because, for them, love is not a sin, not an involvement with social and religious taboos. This, Lavinia claims, means that they have found the secret of happiness. Brant uses the identical description of the islands when he is depicting them to Christine as he had done to Lavinia; 'the barrier reef singing a croon in your ears like a lullaby' and the waves and coconut palms. For Adam and Christine they are a contrast to the deceit, sordidness and crime in which they have become involved. The islands are for them a symbol for the freedom to love, to be happy, to be away from the darkness of the Mannon mansion. As the Fortune-Teller in Thus Spake Zarathustra says:

Happiness - how could one find happiness among such
interred ones and hermits! Must I yet seek the last
happiness on blissful islands and far away among
forgotten seas!

(The Cry for Help)

For Lavinia the islands are a freeing influence. She tells Peter:

I loved those islands. They finished setting me free. There was something there mysterious and beautiful - a good spirit of love - coming out of the land and sea. It made me forget death. There was no hereafter. There was only this world - the warm earth in the moonlight - the trade wind in the cocoa palms - the surf on the reef - the fires at night and the drum throbbing in my heart - the natives dancing naked and innocent without knowledge of sin.

(The Haunted Act One Scene Two)

Lavinia responds to the beauty of the islands and she appears to have found life, to have shaken off the black and gloomy clothing of the Puritan Mannons for the vibrant, living colours of her mother. The pagan side of Lavinia has been released, just as earlier in the play she had been found gazing at the moon. Christine accuses her:

What are you moongazing at? Puritan maidens shouldn't peer too inquisitively into Spring?
Isn't beauty an abomination and love a vile thing?

(Homecoming Act Three Scene One)

However, Lavinia's freedom is an illusion. She is not free, she cannot escape the results of her murderous actions or forget the Mannon dead and so the islands have merely been an interlude for her, an escape and a taste of the pagan way of life which had previously been denied to her. Both Nietzsche and O'Neill believed that mankind was able to recognise and respond to a primitive urge, a natural instinct which underlies all sophistication. Like Caleb Williams, Lavinia felt 'diff'rent'. She tries to retain this feeling when she suggests to Peter that they marry and 'make an island for ourselves on land', where they can bring up their children to love life, innocent of the hate and death that she has experienced. Again O'Neill echoes Nietzsche; the future is to be found through the children, in their land:

In your children ye shall make amends for being your father's children. Thus ye shall redeem all that is past!

(Old and New Tables 12)

Lavinia's plan is another illusion. The island is a symbol for peace and security, which her murderous actions and deep-seated guilt will not allow her to have.

Like Lavinia, Orin is affected by the islands but he reacts in a very different way. He is not absorbed into the native way of life as his sister had been, he is contemptuous of her relationship with the native and cannot forget his own background. Earlier in the play he talks to Christine about Herman Melville's Typee and he sees the islands in this novel as a contrast to the war and death in which he is forced to participate because of the Mannon insistence on honour and duty. The natives of the valley of Typee are innocent and primitive, but they do have an underlying evil which threatens their captive. It is interesting that the two words which Tom teaches the natives in Typee are 'home' and 'mother' when one looks at O'Neill's use of the islands and what they represent for Orin. Orin thinks of them as being part of his mother; she had provided love and peace and security and he tells Christine that he thinks of her as one of the islands, without any of Melville's evil undertones:

I only felt you all around me. The breaking of the waves was your voice. The sky was the same colour as your eyes. The warm sand was like your skin. The whole island was you.

(The Haunted Act Two)

Like Juan in The Fountain, who sees Beatriz as part of the natural world and expresses his love for her in natural images, so Orin describes his love for his mother. He associates love with beauty, peace, security and, as O'Neill noted in his diary, 'mother symbol'. When Orin visits

the islands he realises that his dreams cannot be fulfilled. In his deranged state he reacts against the native life, for his dream, unlike Lavinia's, did not include the yearning for sexual freedom and love. He is disillusioned by his stay there and his dream of re-living the childhood comfort and love is not realised. Like James Tyrone in A Moon for the Misbegotten, escape is trying to run away from oneself either at the bottom of a bottle or on a South Sea island. Still, Tyrone says, 'we'd find our own ghosts there waiting to greet us' (Act Three). On his return Orin says 'I guess I'm too much of a Mannon after all, to turn into a pagan' (The Haunted Act One Scene Two). This is perhaps so, but Orin had viewed the islands as fulfilling a very different need from a return to Dionysus. His image of the islands does change, after his return, and in his confusion and guilt he begins to see them as precursors of death. Having not fulfilled his wish for peace, he begins to think that only death can bring a return to Christine and security. O'Neill shifts the symbolism of the islands to that of death:

It's the only way to peace - to find her again - my
lost island - Death is an island of peace too - Mother
will be wanting me there -

(The Haunted Act Three)

Orin's mental and emotional imbalance is given a Freudian interpretation by O'Neill. The connection of the islands with Christine and Orin's love for her is a very different concept from Nietzsche's return to Dionysus.

In the early part of the play Christine claims she has been tainted by the Mannons and the islands become an alluring prospect when suggested by Brant. Lavinia, too, claims that she wants to be different from the Mannons:

I love everything that grows simply - up toward the sun - everything that's straight and strong! I hate what's warped and twists and eats into itself and dies for a lifetime in shadow.

(The Haunted Act Three)

This view of the effect of the Mannons, warped and twisted by their Puritan heritage, shows in Christine. She still retains a little life, indicated by her colourful clothes and her outpourings of emotion, and her marriage to Ezra has not totally extinguished her vitality. Ezra's character is an indication of O'Neill's view of Puritanism as a repressor of emotions. On his return from the war Ezra confesses that he had always hidden his emotions, that he could never express what he felt, and in a voice with a 'hollowed, repressed quality' tells Christine of his love for her and his realisation that the Mannon's obsession with death as part of their religion had proved incongruous in the light of real death and slaughter. He had experienced this on the battlefield and come to terms with the futility of the Puritan hypocrisy and joylessness. Unfortunately it is too late, and a lifetime of iron control and will power comes to an end. As Orin says to his father's corpse, and later 'quotes' in a description of the Mannon portraits:

Death becomes the Mannons! You were always like the statue of an eminent dead man - sitting on a chair in a park or straddling a horse in a town square - looking over the head of life without a sign of recognition - cutting it dead for the impropriety of living!

(The Haunted Act Three)

This speech is an indication of O'Neill's view of Puritanism; it is dead, cold, lifeless and restricting, allowing no freedom or joy to bring happiness and an appreciation of life. Puritanism denies the expression of any real emotion and the characters in Mourning Becomes Electra show that this can have tragic consequences in that they do become 'savage' as Nietzsche had indicated. Orin sums up this suppression when he says

'The damned don't cry'. The Mannons are damned, but it is of their own doing. O'Neill does not show, as he stated, the active intervention of the Old Testament God, but he explores the tragic results of rigid Puritan beliefs. In his plays O'Neill shows that it is the interpretations put on God by His followers which cause tragedy. This is an essential part of Nietzsche's philosophy in that although he condemned the Christians, he did recognise the significance and importance of Christ. It is his continual argument that it is the followers of the religion who have killed and destroyed their God and this is the basis of his pronouncement that 'God is dead'.

In All God's Chillun Got Wings O'Neill again portrays the pagan, this time in the shape of an African mask, and he shows the Christian belief in Jim's fervent following of the teachings of a Biblical God. The mask, a wedding present from Jim's sister Hattie, is 'inspiring, obscure'. It can conjure 'dim connotations in one's mind, but beautifully done, conceived in a truly religious spirit!' (Act III Scene 1). In the course of the play, as Ella's mind deteriorates and Jim's bitterness and helplessness in the world of the white man intensifies, the mask grows in size as the rest of the room shrinks as though the mask dominates through an unseen, incomprehensible power which invades the life of the characters. Jim denies his true inheritance, his native fundamental beginnings, in an attempt to become 'white' and the manifestation of the white world is Christianity. By denying the truly religious quality expressed in the mask Jim experiences sorrow and tragedy and all he is left with is the God of the Christians who is supposed to have created all men equal. Nevertheless, Jim does believe in this God in spite of all he has had to endure. When he and Ella are leaving, moving through the crowds of

hostile people, he tells her to look up at the sky, to be hopeful:

All those blessings in the sky! What's it the Bible says? Falls on just and unjust alike? No, that's the sweet rain. Pshaw, what am I saying? All mixed up. There's no unjust about it. We're all the same - equally just - under the sky - under the sun - under God - sailing over the sea - to the other side of the world where Christ was born - the kind side that takes count of the soul - over the sea - the sea's blue ...

(Act I Scene 3)

Like Lavinia and Orin, Adam and Christine, Jim wants to sail away to find a new land where he and Ella can be at peace. This is not to be. God does not answer Jim's hopes and prayers and Ella's mind deteriorates to that of a child. She cannot cope with the social and psychological pressures of Jim's colour and reveals the conflict within her of superiority over Jim and reliance upon him. Jim rails against God for allowing this to happen:

Maybe He can forgive what you've done to me; and maybe He can forgive what I've done to you; but I don't see how He's going to forgive - Himself.

(Act II Scene 3)

Jim's task in life, by the end of the play, is not to prove himself in the white man's world, to become a successful professional man, but to look after and comfort his Ella become a child again. They return to the innocence of their childhood and Jim recognises that it is, after all, God's will:

Believe me God - and make me worthy! Now I see Your Light again! Now I hear Your Voice! (He begins to weep in an ecstasy of religious humility) Forgive me God for blaspheming You! Let this fire of burning suffering purify me of selfishness and make me worthy of the child You send me for the woman You take away!

(Act II Scene 3)

Jim's only hope is to believe in God, he has nothing else left. And O'Neill is perhaps following the teachings of Christ in St. Matthew:

Except ye be converted, and become as little children,
ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

even though that kingdom is one of a cruel and vengeful God. This God who is thought of as manipulating mankind and causing the tragedy of Jim and Ella is contrasted with the pagan one of the mask. Ella's destruction of the mask is the destruction of the spiritual strength of the negro, and in destroying it she also destroys Jim's strength to carry on. By being true to his origins Jim would not have been weakened, would have been able to draw on his natural strength allied to the natural world rather than compromise with the white world. Nietzsche's advocacy of preservation of the natural is apparently referred to here and if Nietzsche were being followed closely Jim would have been totally destroyed by his subjection to the harsh white world with its harsh white God. However, in spite of his bitterness at the rejection by the Bar, which he expresses in Biblical terms:

It's be against all natural laws, all human right and justice. It's be miraculous, there'd be earthquakes and catastrophes, the Seven Plagues'd come again and locusts'd devour all the money in the banks, the second Flood's come roaring and Noah'd fall overboard, the sun'd drop out of the sky like a ripe fig, and the Devil'd perform miracles, and God'd be tipped head first right out of the Judgement Seat!

(Act II Scene 3)

suggesting that the white God would be destroyed if the black man succeeded, Jim does find within his religion an experience which is truly comforting and exalting. O'Neill does depart from Nietzsche in this portrayal of an all-powerful deity who expects, and receives, worship and service in the face of all catastrophe, and the final lines of the play are an affirmation that the Christian God certainly can provide comfort and consolation as He does in Days Without End.

IMAGES OF GOD

A further portrayal of God in O'Neill's plays shows Him as some kind of practical joker, playing sick, cruel tricks on humanity. Not only is He a torturer, a revenger, a justice-dispenser, but also a 'mischief-loving' God as the Wizard had indicated in Thus Spake Zarathustra (23). In Strange Interlude Nina is confused about what God really is and she sees Him in different ways. One explanation of God, perhaps initially developed from the Nietzschean image of the laughing God, is that of a malevolent creature who mocks and scorns mankind. In contrast to the Wizard's picture of God as 'mischief-loving', laughter in Zarathustra is an affirmation of life, of saying an exultant 'Yes' to everything that life has to offer and an expression of the worship and joy of Dionysus. In Strange Interlude O'Neill takes this laughter and changes it to mockery and ridicule. In an early draft of the play (24) Nina makes a speech:

Yes, God the Father, I hear you laughing - you see the joke - (they killed a son of yours you sent to save them - it is your vengeance for his murder that laughs and laughs) I'm laughing too ...

In the final version of the play the words in parentheses have been deleted, but it does indicate that O'Neill had originally used the Nietzschean conviction that God had been killed by His followers, combined with the idea of a God who laughs in vengeance. After Professor Leeds' death, Marsden makes a comment on the nature of God:

... everything in life is so contemptuously accidental!
... God's sneer at our self-importance! ... (25)

In Days Without End O'Neill develops the concept of God as a joker, a malevolent trickster. Loving jeers at John when he prays for Elsa's recovery:

(23) Thus Spake Zarathustra 'The Wizard'

(24) Strange Interlude ms. Scene Nine American Literature Collection Beinecke Library, Yale University.

(25) ibid. Scene Two

Is it your old demon you are praying to for mercy.
Then I hope you hear his laughter!

(Act Three Scene Two)

He tries to claim that there is 'A demon who laughs' at the end of John's story, a demon god who is in control of events, and Loving associates the Christian God with hatred and laughter:

You forget I once prayed to your God and His answer was hatred and death - and a mocking laughter!

(Act Four Scene One)

Even in Ah, Wilderness! young Richard Miller refers to life as a joke and in Mourning Becomes Electra, too, God is portrayed as playing tricks on man when Orin talks about his experiences in the Civil War. He says to his father's corpse:

You and I have seen fields and hillsides sown with them (corpses) - and they meant nothing! - nothing but a dirty joke life plays on life!

(The Hunted Act Three)

and later, when looking at the murdered Brant:

It's queer! It's a rotten dirty joke on someone.

(The Hunted Act Four)

Orin's references have transferred the trickery of God to Life, as O'Neill did not wish to have God as an active agent in the play, but his meaning is essentially the same. Even as early as 1913, when he wrote Thirst, O'Neill refers to God as a joker:

God! God! what a joke to play on us!

cries the Gentleman as he produces the souvenir menu from his card case on the raft. By the end of the play God has turned to a God of vengeance as in the final stage direction O'Neill says 'The sun glares down like a great angry eye of God' on the deserted raft and the glittering diamond necklace. Even in this rather thin early play there is the indication

that O'Neill had absorbed Nietzsche's ideas about God and they do surface from time to time over the succeeding years. In The Great God Brown when Dion is forced to admit that he will join Brown in business, he makes an impassioned speech about his wasted life and his search for the true God. He says he had sought God through his painting, through his attempts to create, but had not succeeded. His attempt to find God 'with paint on my paws' had brought him to shame and so he now capers wildly behind his Dionysian mask and accuses God of being a joker:

But that Ancient Humorist had given me weak eyes, so now I'll have to forswear my quest for Him and go in for the Omnipresent Successful Serious One, the Great God Mr Brown, instead!

(Act One Scene Three)

He again makes reference to Brown as the new God of materialism and allies him with the Christian God in the Biblical image of God the Shepherd:

I am the shorn, bald, nude sheep! Lead on, Almighty Brown, thou Kindly Light!

(Act One Scene Three)

He calls Brown 'One of God's mud pies' (Act One Scene One) and throughout the play, when wearing his Dionysian mask, parodies the Bible and makes jokes about the same God to whom he so fervently prays at other times. When Brown has inherited the mask, he, too, makes out that God is a joker when he says, after tearing up the plans:

A little paste, gentlemen! And all will be well. Life is imperfect, Brothers! Men have their faults, Sister! But with a few drops of glue much may be done! ... This is Daddy's bed-time secret for today: Man is born broken. He lives by mending. The grace of God is glue!

(Act Four Scene One)

On his deathbed Brown finally prays to God in a fervent ecstasy and so the conceit of God the joker is finally superceded by that of the Christian God.

Nina Leeds' view of God the Father laughing in vengeance is closely connected with her concept of the Mother God in Strange Interlude. As opposed to the harsh God of vengeance and cruelty, she wants a female, compassionate understanding God - 'God the Mother'. Having failed to come to terms with the varying modern ideas of the science God and failing to find a satisfactory replacement, Nina finds a female God the answer, which is certainly O'Neill departing from Nietzsche. Nina's own nature, as a totally feminine creature exulting in all the roles of the female, thinks at one point in the play:

My three men! ... I feel their desires converge in me!
... to form one complete beautiful male desire which
I absorb ... and am whole ... they dissolve in me,
their life is my life ... I am pregnant with the
three! ... husband! ... lover! ... father! ... and
the fourth man! ... little man! ... little Gordon!
... he is mine too! ... that makes it perfect!

(Act Six)

This awareness of her centrality to the men in the play, the different role she plays for each one, all culminate in the total concept of woman and indicate her vision of God the Mother. Her earlier speech shows this when she says to Marsden:

The mistake began when God was created in a male image. Of course, women would see Him that way, but men should have been gentlemen enough, remembering their mothers, to make God a woman! But the God of Gods - the Boss - has always been a man. That makes life so perverted, and death so unnatural. We should have imagined life as created in the birth-pain of God the Mother. Then we would understand why we, Her children, have inherited pain, for we would know that our life's rhythm beats from Her great heart, torn with the agony of love and birth. And we would feel that death meant reunion with Her, a passing back into Her substance blood of Her blood again, peace of Her peace!

(Act Two)

This shows the recurrent view of life and death and creation that Nietzsche puts forward in the theory of Eternal Recurrence, linked to the Dionysian

fertility and regeneration. It is similar to Cybel's speech in The Great God Brown, although that is far more allied to mythological beliefs of the goddess of fertility, but O'Neill has combined the two concepts in Nina's view of the Biblical Gođ made into a woman. Nina's Mother God would be a comforter, not a punisher, and she says to Marsden:

Now wouldn't that be more logical and satisfying than having God a male whose chest thunders with egotism and is too hard for tired heads and thoroughly comfortless?

(Act Two)

Marsden with his passionate devotion to his own mother, appears to find it an attractive concept.

Nina's desperate desire to believe in some sort of a deity is realised when she does become pregnant with Darrell's child. Her love for Darrell, mixed with the calculating nature of their 'experiment' to give her a healthy child, results in her achieving happiness and contentment for the first time since Gordon Shaw's death, and her appreciation of the nature of creation:

There ... again ... his child! ... my child moving in my life ... my life moving in my child ... the world is whole and perfect ... all things are each other's ... life is ... and the is is beyond reason ... questions die in the silence of this peace ... I am living a dream within the great dream of the tide ... breathing in the tide I dream and breathe back my dream into the tide ... suspended in the movement of the tide, I feel life move in me, suspended in me ... no whys matter ... there is no why ... I am a mother ... God is a Mother ...

(Act Five)

Nina's dreaminess is very similar to that of Zarathustra when he lies down at noon-tide. He, too, experiences the oneness with creation and for him, too, the 'world is perfect', 'round and ripe', but his contentment is expressed in terms of the golden ring of the sun, and the hot noon-tide, rather than the tides of the sea. Nina also echoes the O'Neill concept

stated in Dynamo and The Great God Brown, of the life force being within the sea and so concludes that God must be a Mother to have experienced the joy of creation.

True happiness for Nina is her achievement of motherhood. Her deluded belief that she has re-created Gordon Shaw in her son is part of her happiness in feeling that she is ensured of the love of all her men, and she can be content. When Gordon grows up she feels that she has mellowed and can look at Darrell as part of her past, part of the account which she has settled with God the Father, and so she is confirmed in her belief in God the Mother. God the Mother has brought her happiness, but by contrast God the Father is out to destroy her happiness with His Laughter. When Darrell, in his exasperation and disillusionment with Nina on the boat, during the race, says that for him 'Life is something in one cell that doesn't need to think.' (Act Eight), Nina immediately replies that she can understand him. 'I know! God the Mother!' is how she replies indicating that she has a view of the creation of life, even unicellular life, as springing from a purely female source. During the boat race Nina again prays to God the Mother in her confusion of the old Gordon with her son:

I hear the Father Laughing! ... O Mother God, protect my son! ... let Gordon fly to you in heaven! ... quick, Gordon! ... love is the father's lightning! ... Madeline will bring you down in flames! ... I hear His screaming laughter! ... fly back to me! ...

(Act Eight)

Nina wants her son to be protected from harm - which she sees, in her jealousy, as the threat of Madeline's love for him - but the final outcome of Nina's belief and stated in the play's title is that '... our lives are merely strange dark interludes in the electrical display of God

the Father' (Act Nine). So O'Neill again concludes his play with the suggestion that there is a Father God, a Biblical God, who is in control, who has ultimate power.

Nina's apprehension of God and her happiness was achieved through her pregnancy and the relationship she has with the men in her life. O'Neill showed in other plays that a knowledge of God - at least a concept of a God other than the Christian one - could be striven for through marriage. Because marriage is essentially a Christian institution - at least as O'Neill perceived it - he sought to show how marriage could lead to a religious experience fundamentally based on the Christian ideal. In Welded O'Neill portrays the Capes' foundering marriage. Their opinion of their love and their striving towards perfection is similar to that considered in a section in The Joyful Wisdom where Nietzsche criticises such an aim (Book First 14). In the absence of true religious belief, once God and Christianity had failed mankind, Nietzsche puts forward the suggestion that those who look for replacements for the old religion find various ways of fulfilling their religious impulse. They desire to experience the feeling of belonging to something outside themselves, something greater than themselves. This idea is also used by O'Neill in Days Without End where, as in Welded, marriage is seen as closely related to religious experience, but in the case of the Lovings it becomes more of a substitute for a political or religious belief. In The Joyful Wisdom 'The things that people call love' is a section in which Nietzsche connects avarice and love, stating that they both spring from a desire for possession. This can be either a love for those for whom one has pity, a love for those that suffer, a love for a new acquisition, or the love for a sexual partner, but all are related.

The last, Nietzsche maintains, is a love for another person which is of an unconditional and sole possession, and, by definition, is totally self-absorbed and exclusive. This 'means nothing less than excluding the whole world from a precious good, from happiness and enjoyment' and the sacrifice of all other interests and occupations is evidence of possession and selfishness. He is amazed that the 'wild avarice and injustice of sexual love has been glorified and deified so much in all ages'. Such a love, Nietzsche states, leads to a craving for a higher state, one beyond earthly experience and he gives examples of such a desire. One is the Greek ideal of friendship, which he mentions in Thus Spake Zarathustra in the section 'Neighbour-Love' where he advocates it as an alternative to loving one's neighbour, and he claims that such a friendship is the way to bring about the ideal of the superman. This deification of a relationship can be seen as a craving for a religious experience, outside and above the two individuals involved. O'Neill interprets this, not in friendship but in marriage, as a search for a new God and a mystical experience - a new religion of love and marriage. Nietzsche states:

Here and there on earth we may encounter a kind of continuation of love in which this possessive craving of two people for each other gives way to a new desire and lust for possession - a shared higher thirst for an ideal above them.

(The Joyful Wisdom,
Book First, 14)

The higher thirst must be for idealised friendship and the superman in Nietzsche's case, but O'Neill chose to show the same 'thirst for an ideal' in his creation of the marriages of Michael and Eleanor Cape and John and Elsa Loving.

Nietzsche was very much opposed to marriage, for his own personal reasons of inadequacy with women, and his philosophy, particularly in Thus Spake Zarathustra, is condemnatory about marriage except in one instance. From

calling marriage 'that soul's poverty of two' and 'that soul's dirt of two' and 'that miserable ease of two' and claiming that the popular notion that marriages are made in heaven is a reflection of the stupidity of the Christian 'superfluous', he does say in the section 'Child and Marriage' that a true marriage, a marriage of higher individuals, must be striven for:

Marriage: this I call the will of the twain to create one that is more than those who created it. The reverence for one another, as those exercising such a will, call I marriage. Let this be the significance and the truth of thy marriage.

Nietzsche, through Zarathustra, may see marriage as the means for creating 'the one that is more than those who created it' and his intention is to achieve the superman. However, to do so one must possess the desire to strive for something above oneself, and he says:

Holy I call such a will, and such a marriage.

O'Neill interprets the 'holy' marriage in a different way. He sees it in Days With End and Welded as a substitute for religion, not as the creation of a new race of mankind.

In Days Without End John Loving is shown to have experienced many forms of religious and political fanaticism, but has ultimately found the one which most satisfies him, that of love and marriage. Father Baird says of the letter that had announced his marriage, that it

... was full of more ardent hymns of praise for a mere living woman than he's ever written before about any of his great spiritual discoveries.

(Act One)

and Baird believes that John is fixed 'in his last religion' of happy marriage. Baird wants John to return to the church, and he expresses the church's view of marriage when he says:

I am thinking that such love needs the hope and promise of eternity to fulfil itself - above all, to feel itself secure. Beyond the love for each other should be the love of God, in Whose Love yours may find the triumph over death.

(Act One)

For Baird, the goal of marriages should be the desire to be enveloped in the love of God, becoming an inextricable part of religious belief.

This love of God which surpasses and encompasses human love and which must be striven for, is analogous to Nietzsche's advocacy of the striving for a greater purpose than simply the love of the two individuals concerned.

When Elsa reveals the nature of her marriage to Lucy, O'Neill compares the two marriages in that he shows the disillusionment of Lucy, the 'miserable ease' or 'soul's poverty' as Nietzsche might have described it, and the happiness of Elsa. Elsa, too, reveals a poverty in her insistence on the Nietzschean idea of possession in marriage, when she recounts John's insistence on their marrying although she was initially against it:

It was what made me love him, more than anything else - the feeling that he would be mine, only mine, that I wouldn't have to share him with the past.

(Act Two)

John, Elsa claims, loathed the ordinary commonplace idea of marriage and said that 'the ideal in back of marriage was a beautiful one, and he knew we could realise that ideal'. Their marriage was to be different; it was to create and maintain an idealised love, far from the sordid fact of marriage they could see around them. It was to be John's 'creation' - an echo of Nietzsche's 'creator of new values'.

O'Neill goes on to equate marriage with religious experience by the use of religious expression in Elsa's speech:

He said that no matter if every other marriage on earth were rotten and a lie, our love could make ours into a true sacrament - sacrament was the word he used - a sacrament of faith in which each of us would find the completest self - expression in making our union a beautiful thing.

(Act Two)

The fact that the Lovings' marriage is shown to be built on a lie is immaterial at this point in the play, for O'Neill is showing the idealised view of the true 'religious' or 'holy' marriage with its emphasis on the sacramental qualities of the relationship. Both Lucy and Loving present the Nietzschean view of marriage, the cynical criticism of the 'soul's poverty of the two' and Loving scornfully accuses John of 'building a new superstition of love' around Elsa; a superstition like that of the Christian faith. By the end of the play the love of John and Elsa is saved through the all-powerful love of God, but O'Neill has shown a mixture of the Nietzschean 'holy' marriage and the Christian view of marriage as a sacrament of the church. This combination shows a striving to create a love which is greater and more mystical than the individuals concerned, a love which has its celebration in Elsa's recovery and is expressed in the final line of the play when John cries out 'Life laughs with God's love again! Life laughs with love!'. In Servitude O'Neill shows the same desire to create a greater love in a non-Christian way with the suggestion of 'Pan in Logos' which Royston comes to realise. He, too, resolves that his love will be a 'superlove worthy of the superman' and the exception to the ordinary fact of marriage. In Welded Michael Cape expresses equally religious views about his marriage, saying to Eleanor:

We swore to have a true sacrament - or nothing! Our marriage must be a consummation of demanding and combining the best in each of us! Hard, difficult, guarded from the commonplace, kept sacred as the outward form of our inner harmony!

(Act I)

This, like John and Elsa's view, is using religious experience and expression in its intention. The 'outward form of our inner harmony' emphasises the sacramental qualities of their relationship with its echoes of the Catechism: 'An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace'. The Cape's marriage, Michael believes, 'has a God in it' and so it is very different from the 'earthly loves of the world'. Elsa Loving has said that she had not had a God until she met John, so for both couples O'Neill is showing that their marriage contains a new god, not necessarily the love of the Christian God. However, the Cape's marriage is torn by professional and private jealousies, the desire for revenge and vindication and it is shown to be far from this idealised vision. What had begun as a 'miracle out of the sky' has deteriorated into possessiveness and incomprehension, but the main quality that is conveyed is their enduring vision of what they see as a great love, symbolised at the end of the play by O'Neill's stage direction that 'For a moment they form together one cross'. In spite of the over-emotional declamation in this play, the cross does convey the idea that, for the Cape's, marriage is of mystical significance; it has a quality far above the commonplace and in this it is a reflection of the Nietzschean desire for 'a shared higher thirst for an ideal' combined with an expression of the Catholic view of marriage as a sacrament.

A further aspect of God that O'Neill develops in his plays is through the image of the god of the sea. This is allied to the classical idea of the god Poseidon or Neptune, inhabiting the seas and controlling the destinies of men through manipulation of the elements and the hidden mysteries of the deep. Nietzsche uses the sea as a symbol throughout Thus Spake Zarathustra, usually in connection with freedom, future development of mankind, and, at one point, an allegory of Zarathustra himself. He does

refer to a god of the sea, but in connection with his criticism of poets, whom he despised as being upholders of old values. He likens them to the sea, 'the peacock of peacocks' in their vanity but suggests that they have nothing new to offer; they constantly hark back to the old gods:

Ah, I cast my net into their sea, and meant to catch good fish; but always did I draw up the head of some ancient God. Thus did the sea give a stone to the hungry one.

(Of Poets)

The gods of the sea giving up a stone echoes St. Matthew:

And what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread will he give him a stone?

and shows Nietzsche here mixing his knowledge of the pagan and the Christian as he does throughout his work. In connection with freedom, Zarathustra describes his soul as a 'golden bark' sailing over calm seas in search of a new land:

Now shall ye be unto me sailors, brave patient ones!
Walk upright in time, O my brethren, learn how to walk upright! The sea stormeth. Many wish to raise themselves with your help.
The sea stormeth. Everything is in the sea.
Thither striveth our rudder where our children's land is. Out thither, stormier than the sea, our great longing stormeth.

(Of Old and New Tables 28)

Zarathustra also looks at the sea as a representative of his fate. He stands on the mountain and recognises his destiny as a 'lonesome' one:

Oh, that black, sad, sea below me! Oh, that black nightlike peevishness! Oh, fate and sea! Now I have to step down unto you!

The sea sleeps and yet 'Drowsily and strangely doth its eye gaze upon me', says Zarathustra

But warm is its breath. I feel it. And I also feel that it dreameth. Dreamy it tosseth to and fro on its hard pillows. Hearken! Harken! How it groaneth with evil reminiscences! Or with evil expectations!
Oh, I am sad with thee, thou dark monster ...

(The Wanderer)

Elsewhere, in this section, he refers to the sea as a 'slumbering monster'; he says that the calm bottom of the sea 'hideth droll monsters'; 'it rolleth hither unto me, shaggily and fawningly, the old, faithful hundred-headed dog-monster that I love!'. So, there is an indication that not only is the sea the means by which the new 'higher men' will find their future, but it also is seen as a controlling agent, a monster that can guide Zarathustra's fate while he feels a kinship to it. The sea can bring peace for Zarathustra and he loves to be alone 'with the pure heaven and the open sea'.

For O'Neill the sea had significance both personally and in his plays. He either used it as a setting for the early plays, giving a realistic account of life at sea, or he invested it with a mystical significance such as Edmund expresses in Long Day's Journey into Night when he feels at one with the sea and the sky. The most prominent use of the sea as having some god-like power, of acting as a controlling fate, is in Anna Christie. Chris Christopherson curses the sea for the life he has led and for the tragedies he has had to endure, especially the loss of his seafaring family. He believes that the 'old devil' sea has a power which is impossible to resist and he has answered the call of the sea, neglecting his home and family. O'Neill, as in Beyond the Horizon, makes a distinction between the men who live on land and those who are at sea. Matt Burke, although a staunch, superstitious Roman Catholic and not a believer in the power of the sea 'devil' cannot live without the sea; he, too, acknowledges that there is something powerful in its call. Chris may vehemently deny that the sea does have power when Anna gives her opinion of his forebodings that something will happen. She says:

Then it'll be Gawd's will, like the preachers say -
what does happen.

He replies:

No! dat ole davel, sea, she ain't God!

(Act II)

which shows his guilt at thinking of the sea as a god or goddess. After this defiant denial, as if in answer to his protest, comes the shout from the sea announcing the arrival of the boat with Matt Burke and the other survivors. Anna's future, her happiness and salvation, comes out of the mist from the sea like the gift of God.

When Anna is first on the coal barge with her father, she expresses the feeling that everything within her has changed. She feels that the sea is in her blood and she feels cleansed, purified by it. She refers to this feeling as a kind of spiritual cleansing, a baptism, a new beginning:

And I seem to have forgot - everything that's happened - like it didn't matter no more. And I feel clean, like you feel yust after you've took a bath. And I feel happy for once - yes, honest! - happier than I've ever been anywhere before!

(Act II)

Later in the play she wants to tell Burke about her past, to confess to her life as a prostitute because she feels that she cannot lie to him. Being on the barge had made her feel differently about things, and she sees him as a different kind of man, 'a sea-man as different from the ones on land as water is from mud' and so the sea has not only purified her but brought her a further agent of change in the shape of the sea-man. She says to him that her love has made her clean, but this is because he has freedom and purity in a strange way that the land men lack. Anna does not see the sea as a monster, an evil power that can control their lives. For her it has the cleansing qualities of pure water, of the water of baptism and renewal of the spirit.

When Chris hears the tale of her past life he is distraught and in spite of his earlier protestation he curses the sea as if it were a goddess:

It's dat ole daval sea, do this to me!

It's her dirty tricks! It vas all right on barge with yust you and me. Den she bring dat Irish faller in fog, she makes you like him, she makes you fight with me all time!

(Act III)

He thinks the sea has power, she can control and confuse their lives. When Anna feels mixed up after the arguments and fights between Burke and herself she blames that on the sea - it is no longer a purifying agent. The final lines of the play emphasise the power of the sea; man cannot see where he is going, like a ship in the fog the future is obscured and only the sea knows what will happen. Like the will of God it is hidden from the eyes of men and all they can do is to wait for what the sea-god will bring:

Fog, fog, fog, all bloody time. You can't see where you vas going, no. Only dat ole daval, sea - she knows!

(Act IV)

In a letter to George Jean Nathan in 1921 O'Neill explained:

In short, that all of them at the end have a vague foreboding that although they have had their moment, the decision still rests with the sea which has achieved the conquest of Anna. (26)

Beyond the Horizon shows the conventional concept of God expressed by Mrs. Atkins who believes in a God of punishment and revenge. She sees Mayo's death as the result of God's will, a punishment for the 'blaspheming and denyin' of God he done all his sinful life'. She believes, like Ephraim Cabot in Desire Under the Elms, that everything happening in life is a result of God's will. The two brothers also call on God, but theirs

(26) Goldberg, Isaac The Theatre of George Jean Nathan Simon & Schuster (New York) 1926

is a more vague and less specific expression of belief. Robert Mayo questions the existence of a God after Mary's death and the ruin of the farm:

I could curse God, from the bottom of my soul - if
there was a God!

(Act Three Scene One)

His doubt about the existence of God is related to his own faith in the 'religion' of freedom, of life, of the natural world over the horizon symbolised by the sea - all of which he has denied himself by his foolish action of remaining at home to marry Ruth. Robert's cursing of God is similar to the quotation that O'Neill noted from 'Before Sunrise' 'And "he who cannot bless shall learn to curse! "'. This whole section in Zarathustra is dealing with the relationship of Zarathustra to the sun and heavens. The wanderer Zarathustra feels at one with the sun and sky and sea, very much as Robert Mayo feels when he climbs the hill to gaze into the distance. He feels the 'fairies' calling to him over the hills, to find where the sun was hiding, to wander among the hills to the sea. Zarathustra's 'Yea-saying' is an appreciation of the sun and light:

But I am one who blesseth and saith Yea, if thou
only art round me, thou pure! Thou bright! Thou
abyss of light!

(Before Sunrise)

Those that cannot feel this, who cannot 'bless', are those that learn to curse, and Robert Mayo has denied his own natural instincts and has had no experience of a conventional God. He has received no blessings, he can only curse God, fate, or himself.

Like his brother, Andrew denies his natural feelings when he leaves the land for the sea. His happiness is not lasting, he fails at his business ventures and ends up with nothing. When Robert is dying Andrew lifts his fists 'in an impotent rage against Fate' and curses God - the two concepts

of God and Fate being interlinked. In denying their true destinies the brothers have both gone against what was ordained for them and have come to disaster. Robert, like Michael Cape and John Loving, thinks that love can be a replacement for a truly mystical experience. However, Robert is shown to have been mistaken and he only finds his freedom and spiritual satisfaction at his death:

Don't you see I'm happy at last - because I'm making a start to the far-off places - free - free! - freed from the farm - free to wander on and on - eternally! Even the hills are powerless to shut me in now. (He raises himself on his elbow, his face radiant, and points to the horizon.) Look! Isn't it beautiful beyond the hills? I can hear the old voices calling me to come - (Exultantly) And this time I'm going - I'm free! It isn't the end. It's a free beginning - the start of my voyage!

(Act Three Scene Two)

Like Zarathustra's, Robert's freedom comes with the sunrise and his dying words are an expression of his absorption into the natural world, although his exclamation of 'The Sun!' is reminiscent of Oswald in Ibsen's Ghosts. Robert's death speech is a reflection of the view expressed by Nietzsche in The Joyful Wisdom, Section 343:

We free spirits feel the glory of a new dawn at the news of the death of the old God - the seas are open one more.

Robert's freedom comes at dawn, his seas are open and he is free to wander where he will in death.

O'Neill obviously considered Nietzsche's views on God and Christianity very seriously, linking them with his own rather traumatic and confusing experiences both in accordance with and in reaction to the Roman Catholic Church. O'Neill's doubts about the Nature of God - and whether, indeed, He did exist - manifest themselves in a wide variety of dramatic forms

from the overtly Christian ending of Days Without End, to the neurotic beliefs of Nina Leeds in Strange Interlude, to the apparently conventional Puritanism of the plays set in New England. In virtually every case O'Neill is reacting to Nietzsche's pronouncements on Christianity from both a personal and a dramatic viewpoint and the diversity of his characters and their beliefs indicate that the consideration of the religious instinct in mankind was a subject which absorbed O'Neill perhaps more than any other in Nietzsche's writings.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LIFE FORCE

.. I'm always trying to interpret Life in terms of lives, never just lives in terms of character. I'm always acutely conscious of the Force behind - Fate, God, our biological past creating our present, whatever one calls it Mystery certainly - and of the one eternal tragedy of Man in his glorious, self-destructive struggle to make the force express him instead of being, as an animal is, an infinitesimal incident in its expression.

This statement by O'Neill in a letter to Arthur Hobson Quinn (1) is an attempt to define his views of a causative force in the universe and man's reaction to it. In his plays the characters are often seen attempting to assert their individuality, their right to free will, in opposition to circumstances, to Fate or to God. Such characters are more than creations serving an immediate dramatic purpose but are channels through which O'Neill can attempt to show that there is a 'Mystery' working in men's lives which cannot be ignored or successfully counteracted. O'Neill's dream of recreating the Greek sense of tragedy in 'seemingly the most ignoble, debased lives' (2) is one that he constantly tries to realise in his work and he consequently uses the concept of a universal will or force in a variety of ways.

In the early plays O'Neill seems to be primarily concerned with showing that this force is an inexorably cruel and malevolent one, against which his characters are powerless. It is the factor which is instrumental in causing harm, despair and tragedy, and in the play The Web O'Neill refers to it as 'ironic'. He makes a very definite point that this force can crush and destroy the individual, in spite of any innate goodness, and he chooses to show this through the prostitute, Rose. It is typical of

(1) A letter to Arthur Hobson Quinn. A History of the American Drama Vol. II F. S. Croft & Co. (New York 1945)

(2) ibid.

O'Neill to choose such a character to express this; throughout his work he portrays prostitutes in a sympathetic way, usually overwhelmed by life and society with its condemnatory attitudes. After her wrongful arrest for killing the escaped criminal, Rose loses the one precious possession she has, and the one person who is important to her, when the police take custody of her daughter. Her sad and desperate life is highlighted in this play in the scene when she raises her eyes towards heaven and, as O'Neill states in the stage directions:

.. seems to be aware of something in the room which none of the others can see - perhaps the personification of the ironic life force that has crushed her.

O'Neill is indicating in this play, albeit in a rather melodramatic fashion, that he has in mind that he is trying to recreate the very stuff of tragedy - the involved workings of fate or destiny which bring about the downfall and despair of the individual. Obviously this intention could not be achieved in such an obscure form as a stage direction, and it is a great deal to expect a character to convey simply with one upward look, but it is a pointer to his later development. In his assessment of O'Neill's early plays, Travis Bogard (3) states that:

By 'ironic fate', O'Neill meant that the lives of the characters are controlled in spite of their wills, by a power of destiny that is inexorable, malevolent insofar as it can be said to have purpose, but in essence, meaningless.

Bogard's insistence on the meaningless quality of fate is not strictly correct. O'Neill does not believe, at least at this point in his play-writing career, that there is no meaning attached to it. Rather, he suggests that the force has a definite purpose, to bring about the downfall of man and that this is a matter of intention rather than accident. O'Neill attempts to show the force by the use of the sea and fog which

(3) Bogard op. cit. p. 17

are recurring, tangible symbols in his other early plays, rather than by making any particular reference or instruction as he did in the stage directions in The Web.

In Bound East for Cardiff the fog shrouds the ship until Yank dies and then it clears as though the force had done its work and then departed. Later, in Anna Christie the sea and fog are seen to be the agents of Anna's destiny as they bring Matt to her. In these plays the force is not meaningless but purposeful, although that purpose is not necessarily revealed either to the audience or to the characters involved. Bogard's statement that O'Neill's characters are controlled 'in spite of their wills' is true of the early plays. Later, O'Neill does adopt the Nietzschean notion of 'the will to power' of the individual and its chances of changing the human condition. This 'will to power' is perhaps the most important aspect of Nietzsche's writing but it is noteworthy that O'Neill does not make as much use of it as a central feature of the plays as he does other aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy. The instances of the individual will in conflict with the force of destiny are often seen as an integral, although not central, part of the late plays.

The most obvious dramatic use of the force and its effects on mankind is in the many references, particularly in the dialogue of the characters, which appear in O'Neill's plays. For many of the characters Life can either carry the individual along with it, making success and happiness, or it can leave him bereft, deserted and disillusioned as happens to Deborah Hartford in More Stately Mansions. O'Neill chooses to describe the force by the word 'Life' far more than he does using any other name. God is variously characterised in the plays and has a more specific identity than the intangible, invisible life force and O'Neill's interest

in 'man's biological past' is conceived in Nietzschean terms as eternal recurrence (4). O'Neill's statement at the beginning of this chapter of the names given to the force or universal will seems to be modified when it is actually used for dramatic purposes. In his adoption of the theory of eternal recurrence O'Neill chose to show the force in atomic terms, for instance, by having repetition of situations and an insistence on the characters' awareness of man's relationship with the natural world, much as Nietzsche had done, although differently portrayed in dramatic settings. However, he does indicate in a far less specific manner than in the definitions of electricity in Dynamo or the specifically Dionysian concept of recurrence in The Great God Brown, that there is an all-pervasive life force which cannot be readily defined but which one is aware of and at whose mercy mankind finds itself. This is related to O'Neill's statement that man strives to make the force express his desires rather than remain as a passive animal, an 'infinitesimal incident' in the force of destiny. Unlike an animal, man can reason, man can attempt to discover what he is fighting against and can, if only to satisfy himself, find a belief or an explanation for the events in which he finds himself participating, although he does not always attempt to master the force and control it.

O'Neill echoes Nietzsche very closely, however, in separating man and animal in terms of their reaction to this universal force. This distinction is like that made by Nietzsche in The Joyful Wisdom where he attempts to explain the difference between man and animal in man's desire to explain, rather than simply accept, the influence of a life force.

Nietzsche states:

Man has gradually become a visionary animal, who has to fulfil one more condition of existence than the

(4) See Chapter II

other animals: man must from time to time believe that he knows why he exists; his species cannot flourish without periodically confiding in life! Without the belief in reason in life!

(Book One, 1)

It is this desire to find an explanation which results in man's religious belief or his scientific appraisals and definitions. It is this attempt to come to terms with, and to assert himself against, the force which makes man experience the conflicts which O'Neill dramatises in many of the plays. However, O'Neill is not entirely consistent in that he does incorporate the idea of the universal chain of being when he is utilising the Dionysian concept, for example in Edmund's speech in Long Day's Journey into Night, or in Cybel's expression of the nature of spring in The Great God Brown where man is shown as an integral part of the natural world, fitting into a pre-ordained and unquestionable pattern.

Nietzsche's belief that man must assert his superiority, prove himself to those around him through his will power and ultimately achieve the state of superman, means that he did not look upon the life force as an entirely malevolent or actively harmful entity. On the contrary, in Zarathustra Life is seen as something beautiful and desirable which man has to relate to but which can eventually be overcome. In 'The Dance Song' Zarathustra goes into the forest and discovers the maidens dancing. He sings a song, a 'satire on the spirit of gravity' in which he recounts his meeting with Life. Life is portrayed as a maiden who laughs at Zarathustra's belief that she is unfathomable and mysterious. She is wild, changeable, and possessed of little virtue, but she claims that the characteristics of mystery and depth have been wished upon her by mankind:

Though I be called by you men the 'profound one' or the 'faithful one', 'the eternal one', 'the mysterious

one'. But ye men endow us always with your own virtues
- alas, ye virtuous ones!

Zarathustra goes on to sing of his talk with Wisdom, another beautiful female. Wisdom had accused him of loving Life above all:

Thou willest, thou cravest, thou lovest; on that account
alone dost thou praise Life!

Zarathustra explains what is the basis of his concept of 'Yea-saying':

'In my heart do I love only Life - and verily, most when I hate her!'.

This embracing of life in all its forms, no matter whether it brings joy or sorrow, is the crux of the Nietzschean concept. In 'The Dance Song' Life and Wisdom are vying for the favours of Zarathustra and this culminates in him sinking into the unfathomable deep from which Life, Cleopatra-like, had pulled him with her 'golden angle-rod'. This image of Life pulling men out of their despair, their incomprehension, and then luring them on further only to drop them once again, continues throughout 'The Dance Song'.

In 'The Second Dance Song' Nietzsche again describes Life. In this section she is seen among the dancing and singing Dionysian revels and when Zarathustra gazes into her eyes he sees a 'golden bark' gleam on darkened waters - a symbol used throughout this work for freedom, flight and future happiness. This sight of the bark inspires Zarathustra to dance and he becomes enticed and tantalised by Life who dances and waves her 'fleeing, flying tresses round'. His love for Life means that Zarathustra endures all her capriciousness, her 'crooked glances', her coldness and hatred, and he follows after her calling her, somewhat preposterously in the translation, 'bindress, inwindress, temptress, seekress, findress!'. He is compelled to follow her, hunting her through caves and thickets where she plays tricks upon him and Nietzsche makes a further Dionysian connection when he describes her as a sort of wood nymph or satyr:

Thou gnashest on me sweetly with little white teeth;
thine evil eyes shoot out upon me, the curly little
mane from underneath!

Zarathustra becomes weary of the chase and wants to walk quietly with Life, to carry her where the shepherd pipes play and the 'sunset stripes' show on the hills, but she twists away from him, a 'cursed, nimble, supple serpent and lurking-witch!'. He tries to master her, to oppose her as she will not allow him to be her shepherd, and he resorts to the only way he has of dealing with women, his whip. Like the advice Nietzsche gives in 'Old and Young Women', Zarathustra cries:

To the rhythm of my whip shalt thou dance and cry!
I forget not my whip? - Not I!

Here Nietzsche is again emphasising the idea that man must assert himself against Life, must through his own will and power subdue it and change it. Life's reply to Zarathustra's attempt to show his mastery is to beg him to be quiet. She says that both she and he are 'genuine ne'er-do-wells and ne'er-do-ills' who have found an island beyond the reaches of morality, of good and evil, so they must be compatible and love each other. Life may have shown jealousy towards Wisdom and claim that Zarathustra is thinking of leaving her, but like two lovers they weep and whisper together and all thoughts of leaving are gone. At that moment 'Life was dearer to me than all my Wisdom had ever been' says Zarathustra and the clock strikes midnight ringing the message of eternity with the tolling of the bell. Life and man are inextricably linked forever.

These two sections of Thus Spake Zarathustra are exceptionally vivid in their portrayal of Life as a wanton and irresistible woman and they show very clearly Nietzsche's attitude to the life force; it must be pursued, mastered, occasionally submitted to but above all totally accepted with all its vagaries. One must accept all that life has to offer and say a

resounding 'Yea' in acknowledgement of this acceptance. The individual is compelled to follow life, but the important factor is that he must ultimately wield the whip and prove his mastery. Zarathustra may affect to despise Life, to whip her into submission, but at the same time he is seduced by her in spite of himself.

Elsewhere in this work Nietzsche reveals differing attitudes to life through Zarathustra. In 'Old and New Tables' he refers to the noble individuals who want to experience life but feel that this experience must not simply be gratuitous. Life is given to them, but they must participate and consider 'what we can best give in return!'. O'Neill made a copy of this quotation (5), that these noble souls wish 'not to have anything for nothing, least of all, life' but he does not make use of it in the plays in the same way that he uses Nietzsche's portrayal of Life as Zarathustra's lover. O'Neill obviously noted that Nietzsche felt that man was not totally controlled by life; that there was, for those idealised higher men, a reciprocal agreement that there must be something in return that they can contribute, but they are not to be completely submissive. Man, at least Nietzsche's superior man, can bend life to his will, but the average, ordinary man is simply a victim of Life's capriciousness.

In the early use of life as an unfathomable force, a controlling power, O'Neill reflects the view expressed by Life herself in 'The Dance Song'. She claims that men call her mysterious and that is just what O'Neill seems to be doing. His characters such as Rose in The Web or the three on the raft in Thirst, or even the sailors in the sea plays, are all

(5) See Appendix

enthralled by something they cannot name but can only feel. They are caught, trapped in a mesh of circumstances thrown over them by life and they have no escape. The title of The Web suggests this, and it is used as an image in Welded by Darnton (Act II Scene 2) In Thus Spake Zarathustra Nietzsche also uses the image of the spider spinning his web around man. However, there is a somewhat different interpretation for Nietzsche shows that the web was not made up of the strands of fate but of the small, petty virtues and moralities of the rabble that entwine and wrap the individual and prevent his progress towards the superman. The superior man can resist and stand as tall as a tree, says Nietzsche, but the petty folk become wound round by a web of their own making. These lesser beings perish with their values and:

Also what ye omit weaveth at the web of all the human future; even your naught is a cobweb and a spider that liveth on the blood of the future.

(Of Virtue that Maketh Smaller)

Not only the despised rabble with their web of comfortableness, but also those who preach the Christian faith are accused of spinning a web to ensnare mankind. In 'Of Apostates' Zarathustra attacks the many aspects of Christianity and states that it is a religion involved in concealment and darkness, a ritual practised in closed communities that shun light and the preachers are insidious, like spiders who spin webs to engulf their followers:

.. look for long evenings at a crafty lurking cross-spider, that preacheth prudence to the spiders themselves, and teacheth that 'under crosses it is good for cobweb spinning!'

In 'Before Sunrise', when Zarathustra is asserting his belief in eternity, he looks to the heavens above him as a confirmation of the light and joy of 'Yea-Saying' and acceptance of life. The clear sky is in contrast to

the darkness and closeness of society and he says:

O heaven above me! Thou pure, thou lofty heaven!
This is now thy purity unto me, that there is no eternal
reason-spider and reason-cobweb ...

He is distinct from the beliefs of mankind, separated from their pettiness and he has no need for their confused thought and morality. Zarathustra delights in the heights he has achieved, he has security in 'freedom and celestial serenity'. Unlike the preachers of religion with their spidery ways, and the exponents of socialism to whom he has earlier referred as 'tarantulas' and 'poison-spiders', and the enmeshed rabble, Zarathustra is noble and free.

O'Neill applies the image of the spider's web differently from Nietzsche, not to suggest the man-made pettiness and entanglements of life despised by Zarathustra. Rather, he is closer to the classical concept of the three Moirae who weave the fates of men and hold the strands that guide and trap them. O'Neill would certainly have known this legend from his interest in mythology and from his knowledge of Greek drama. In Welded where Darnton is transfixed in the doorway after his scene with Eleanor by 'Invisible cobwebs - cast iron cobwebs', it is uncertain whether O'Neill is using the image of the cobweb to symbolise the still strong effect of the past relationship between Eleanor and himself, or the force of fate or destiny bringing sorrow and despair to him.

In the later plays O'Neill uses other images, particularly an apprehension of the force as 'Life', personified in much the same manner as Nietzsche shows in the two 'Dance Songs'. In his work diary O'Neill attempts to define fate in relation to his aims as a dramatist and these aims are close to those expressed by Kenneth Macgowan in his works on the theatre. Macgowan always had the classical view of drama at the heart of his

theories of theatre. O'Neill states:

Fate is what happens to human beings because of what they are, not what some God tells them to be, and it is the business of the tragic dramatist to show how human destiny reacts upon the individual, the family, the race. (6)

In The Theatre of Tomorrow (7) Macgowan states that what the new playwrights must strive for is a new concept of theatre in the twentieth century, allied to that of the Greeks, in which:

The drama must seek to make us recognise the things that, since Greek days, we have forgotten - the eternal identity of you and me with the vast and unmanageable forces which have played through every atom of life since the beginning.

He goes on to outline the theatre of the future, the theatre that he, O'Neill and Robert Edmund Jones attempted to create when they worked together:

. . . the grandeur of the play of the future must lie not in a superhuman figure, but in the vast and eternal forces of life which we are made to recognise as they play upon him.

The characters in such dramas must be subservient to the dramatic purpose which is the portrayal of the force; as O'Neill stated in his letter to Quinn: 'Life in terms of lives, never just lives in terms of character.'

It is a contrast to the Nietzschean idea of the all-powerful superman who is able to subject life to his will, and O'Neill does seem to show a variation in portraying life in his work, for although he appears to go along with Macgowan in his view of the new theatre being a development of the Greek interpretation of fate and tragedy, he does also show Life as Nietzsche described her.

The use of this image of Life is seen for the first time in The Great God Brown. Dion is shown to be experiencing the conflict between his Dionysian

(6) Work Diary Reprinted :Atkinson op.cit.

(7) Macgowan op. cit. p. 263

and Christian selves, exacerbated by the contact with the commercial world when he joins Brown's firm. He reacts against life which, until then had given him the opportunity to try and express himself through his painting. Now he looks upon himself as a total failure and he expresses this feeling in terms of having been abandoned by some uncaring creature:

I've loved, lusted, won and lost, sung and wept!
I've been life's lover! I've fulfilled her will!
and if she's through with me now it's only because I
was too weak to dominate her in turn. It isn't
enough to be her creature, you've got to create her
or she requests you to destroy yourself.

(Act Two Scene Three)

Dion has failed in his 'relationship' with life and here O'Neill is adapting Nietzsche's interpretation in the 'Second Dance Song'; man must follow Life's whims and allurements but at the same time attempt to wield the whip in self-assertion. The worst thing, as Dion continues to explain to Brown, is to be indifferent. One must live life to the full, participate in all that is offered and take the consequences, rather than try to disguise one's true feelings or compromise:

But to be neither creator nor creature! To exist only
in her indifference! To be unloved by life! To be
merely a successful freak, the result of some snide
neutralising of life forces - a spineless cactus - a
wild boar of the mountains altered into a packer's
hog eating to become food - a Don Juan inspired to
romance by a monkey's glands - and to have Life not
even think you funny enough to see!

(Act Two Scene Three)

This is the worst fate of all. Dion, in spite of the agony of his own life, his failure in the eyes of society and his own, feels he has experienced a true, 'real' life in contrast to the unnatural, over-fed, materially successful but inadequate Brown, who can only aspire to true experience through impersonating Dion and wearing his mask after his death.

The idea of life as a dominating, wayward lover has its most consistent expression in More Stately Mansions. In her fantasising in the garden Deborah sees herself as a desirable courtesan in the sumptuous French court, intriguing and influencing the king as his mistress. This day-dream is transferred to her comprehension of life, to her feeling that life is capable of loving and then deserting her like a monarch changing his favourites. She feels that she is getting old and losing her beauty; she says to Simon early in the play that life can be beautiful until it deserts the individual. She warns him that, in spite of his self-satisfaction, and success in business, this may be his future too:

While you are still beautiful and Life still woos you it is such a fine gesture of disdainful pride to jilt it. But when the change comes and an indifferent Life jilts you - Oh, I realize I am hardly as bad as that yet. But I will be, for I constantly sense in the seconds and minutes and hours flowing through me, the malignant hatred of life against those who have disdained it! But the body is the least important. It is the soul, staring into the mirror of itself, seeing the skull of Death leer over its shoulder in the glass!

(Act One Scene One)

Deborah's warning to Simon is reinforced by the revelation of her feelings, locked away as she is in her garden and in her mind:

But a time comes when suddenly discontent gnaws at your heart. While you cast longing eyes beyond the garden wall at Life which passes by so horribly unaware that you are still alive!

(Act One Scene One)

Unlike Deborah, Sara Hartford has the capacity to fight with, and for, life. She can exert her strength and power to make life do what she wants. Having overheard Deborah and Simon in the garden, Sara tells Deborah that she is weak and unable to battle with the strong and volatile nature of life:

You've the wish for life but you haven't the strength except to run and hide in fear. Sittin' lonely in your garden, hearin' age creep up on you and beyond the wall the steps of Life growin' fainter down the street ...

(Act One Scene One)

This is something which will never happen to Sara. She has already fought for what she wanted, and succeeded in having Simon marry her and give up his dreams in order to make money, and she will continue to fight against life until her end. Sara is the new woman, capable of all things, and like a Shaw heroine, capable of coping with all that modern life has brought in the way of ideas and behaviour. She tells Deborah:

Life is too strong for you! But it's not too strong for me! I'll take what I want from it and make it mine!

(Act One Scene One)

When Simon makes his proposal that Sara come into the business, to prostitute herself for him in order to earn the power and money of the Company for herself, he tells her:

I want the old Sara whose beautiful body was so greedily hungry for lust and possession, whose will was as devoid of scruple, as ruthlessly determined to devour and live as the spirit of life itself!

(Act Two Scene One)

Here he referring back to the events of A Touch of the Poet where Sara Melody was determined to have him and his wealth and position. She is ruthless, unscrupulous; she fits into the pattern of twentieth century society as O'Neill (and Shaw) saw it. She has will, she has the ability to fight for what she wants, and she can attempt to conquer the life force and bend it to her own desires, as Nietzsche advocates through Zarathustra. Sara is in many ways also a symbol of the new life in that she has the characteristics of Life in the 'Dance Songs' and she seems to personify both Life herself and the ability of the superman to bend Life to his will.

In Simon's disturbed mind he sees his mother and Sara united as a female force against him, each one representing an archetype of the female. He can only separate them by physically confining his mother to the garden with her poetic fancies, so satisfying the child-like, imaginative but frightened side of his personality, while Sara comes to the office to satisfy the hard, ruthless, business side of his nature linked to the need for sexual satisfaction. Simon tells Sara that she must use the same shamelessness and determination in business that she had used to snare him; it is the quality which is necessary to cope with existence:

You will have to learn to be shameless here. You will have to deal daily with the greedy fact of life as it really lives. You will have to strip life naked, and face it. And accept it as truth.

(Act Two Scene One)

Both Sara and the Company have much in common; they grasp and engulf in the same way and Sara's initial drive which created the Company through her pushing of Simon must be again harnessed to make the business even greater. Sara's greed and ambition forced Simon away from his writing and now she must take her part in what she has created. She is a true Nietzschean creator of new values. However, O'Neill makes more of an overt link with prostitution than Nietzsche had done in Zarathustra. In More Stately Mansions life is, as Deborah says, 'cheap and mean and sordid' (Act One Scene One). Nietzsche's lovely temptress becomes O'Neill's whore, shameless, greedy for money, and sordid, expressing his view of twentieth century capitalism.

It is clear that O'Neill did change his image of life, from the early image of the web trapping the helpless individual, through the sea and the fog, to the portrayal of life as a grasping, greedy female capable of jilting man when her purpose was fulfilled. Deborah is frightened of

what will happen to her if she chooses to 'live in life again' and this is an echo of O'Neill's earlier idea of life being an all-pervading force which one must become part of. In Welded Michael Cape feels that life has the ability to move on and leave the individual behind, 'Fate lives - moves on!' (Act III); all that is left is a human shell deserted by the life force. Nietzsche makes a similar point in Zarathustra when the poet accuses life of creating a hell on earth:

Such accusers of life - them life overcometh with a glance of the eye. 'Thou lovest me?' saith the insolent one; 'wait a little, as yet I have no time for thee.'

(The Convalescent)

Nietzsche states that the life force can sweep by and ignore man, so whether man is willing to participate or not, he cannot escape the power of the universal will or force, even in its absence. Also influenced by Nietzsche, George Cram Cook was a believer in a universal will and this image does occur frequently in his work. Since he and O'Neill worked so closely together this, too, must have affected O'Neill's own use of the force or will in his plays. Cook states in the extracts from his work recorded in The Road to the Temple (8)

Through the veil of sun and moon and tree he saw the unseen Universal Will, the one which binds, includes, and is all things. Then, using the dream-born intensity of the hour the man - that finite speck of thinking dust - girded his mind and hurled his thoughts upon the mystery of infinite space.

Like Nietzsche, and O'Neill in Lazarus Laughed where man is an insignificant speck of dust hurled towards the infinite space of the sky, Cook is making the association between the insignificance of man compared with the immense power of the universe. Nietzsche, however, believed that there were men who could rise above this insignificance. For Cook there

(8) Glaspell op. cit. Ch. XX

is a natural and all-encompassing will which can be observed through the natural world. O'Neill had said to Quinn that there were 'impelling, inscrutable forces behind life which it is my ambition to at least faintly shadow at their work in my plays' (9) and this is very much in line with both Cook and Kenneth Macgowan.

In The Joyful Wisdom Nietzsche states that tragedians are, in the course of their writing, furthering a belief in life through the plays:

'It is worthwhile to live' each of them calls out -
'there is something of importance in this life; life
has something behind it and under it; take care!'

(Book One, 1)

It is this quality that O'Neill admired in Strindberg and wanted to show in his own plays. He said of a production of The Spook Sonata at the playhouse in 1924 (10) that it was 'One of the most difficult of Strindberg's 'behind-life' (if I may coin the term) plays to interpret with insight and distinction ...' Whether the coinage is O'Neill's or Nietzsche's it is the 'behind-life' aspect that O'Neill admired and wanted to convey in his own work, through the use of the personification of life and the reaction of the individual to the universal will.

WILL

O'Neill's dramatic interpretation of life and will are further modified by the use that he makes of the Nietzschean concept of the 'will to power'. Nietzsche was originally converted to the philosophy of Schopenhauer as a young man when, in 1865 he discovered The World as Will and Idea. Schopenhauer's theory that there was no God and no meaning in

(9) Clark op. cit. p. 80

(10) Eugene O'Neill 'Strindberg and Our Theatre' Playbill for The Spook Sonata at Provincetown Playhouse in 1924. Reprinted in Cargill p. 109

life deeply affected Nietzsche who had hitherto been a theological scholar. He became fascinated by Schopenhauer's stating that there was only the will to exist, a blind will which preserved existence no matter what suffering and sorrow was involved and it was this will for survival which kept mankind alive. It was not until later that Nietzsche began to revise his opinion of Schopenhauer with his essay Schopenhauer as Educator (1874) and to modify his theories. By then Nietzsche had begun to formulate his own idea that such a will was present but directed not towards a blind desire to survive, but towards a desire to accept life and conquer it, to overcome it and create a new breed of man with the ability to say 'Yea' to whatever life had to offer. O'Neill would have come across this in The Joyful Wisdom where Nietzsche attempts to express a considered theory of the will. He claims that man thinks that will is a 'magically operating force' which is a cause bringing about specific effects, observable by man and within which a man could attempt to enforce his own individual will. For the unthinking man such a force would be a satisfactory explanation for causes and effects that operate in the the conscious, physical world, but Nietzsche goes on to express a formulated argument against both Schopenhauer and the 'thoughtless man'.

Firstly, in order that Will may arise, an idea of pleasure and pain is necessary. Secondly, that a vigorous excitation may be felt as pleasure or pain, is the affair of the interpreting intellect, which, to be sure, operates thereby for the most part unconsciously to us, and one and the same excitation may be interpreted as pleasure or pain. Thirdly, it is only in an intellectual being that there is pleasure, displeasure, and Will; the immense majority of organisms have nothing of the kind.

(Book Third, 127)

So, man has the ability, if he has a sufficiently superior intellect, to experience the power of will and through this power separate himself

from the 'majority of organisms'. This is in contrast to Schopenhauer's blind animal will and it is the logical progression for Nietzsche to make given his desire to be separate from the 'herd' as he goes towards determining his theory of the superman. O'Neill reflects Schopenhauer's view in Days Without End through the character Loving who puts forward this argument against John's will to carry on with life:

Shorn of your boastful words, all it means is to go on
like an animal in dumb obedience to the law of the
blind stupidity of life that it must live at all costs!

(Act Four Scene One)

and it is interesting that O'Neill has chosen to dramatise the views of both Nietzsche and Schopenhauer in the form of a dramatic contest of will between the two 'personalities' of John Loving.

O'Neill certainly did seem to favour Nietzsche's development of the idea of Will: in The Joyful Wisdom there is a section (310) called 'Will and Wave' which undoubtedly would have appealed to him because of the imagery. It gives a powerful description of Nietzsche's concept of the process of Will. He likens man to a wave approaching the coast in haste, as if seeking something of importance or value. The wave retreats slowly 'quite white with excitement' either disappointed or satisfied with what has been reached, but immediately another wave comes

. . still more eager and wild than the first, and its
soul also seems to be full of secrets and of longing
for treasure seeking. Thus live the waves, - thus
live we who exercise will!

The waves are described as 'beautiful monsters' who sometimes obscure the sun leaving the world full of 'green twilight and green lightning-flashes' and then dive pouring their 'emeralds down into the depths' and casting their 'endless white tresses of foam and spray over them'. Nietzsche says that he and the waves are 'of one race' and they have one secret.

This striking passage shows Nietzsche's comprehension of the individual will constantly progressing and moving, continually striving to discover more within the vast sea of the universal will. This, of course, is echoed by O'Neill in Long Day's Journey into Night when Edmund reveals his feeling of oneness with the sea and the will of the universe in Act Four.

There are many references in Thus Spake Zarathustra to the 'Will to Power' and a number of these were copied down by O'Neill (see Appendix). One in particular refers to the wish of the individual to be unique and to have the power to will his life to be different from that of the rest of mankind:

To live, as I like, or to live not at all, thus I will,
thus even the holiest one willeth.

(The Shadow)

This speech by Zarathustra's Shadow is bewailing the fact that the Shadow had been linked to Zarathustra, had had to follow him eternally, learning new principles and pushing 'into all the forbidden, all the worst and the furthest'. The Shadow wishes to be a free individual, not linked to Zarathustra and subjected to his will and movements. O'Neill quotes 'The Shadow' in the early drafts of Days Without End (11) when Hardy, the scientist, reminds John Loving of Nietzsche's words:

You are Zarathustra's shadow gone finally mad, John.
Remember what Zarathustra warned him? 'To such unsettled
ones as thou, seemeth at last even a prisoner blessed.
Dost thou ever see how captured criminals sleep?
They sleep quietly, they enjoy their new security.
Beware lest in the end a narrow faith capture thee, a
hard rigorous delusion. For now everything that is
narrow and fixed seduceth and tempteth thee!'

He is accusing John of having given in to the comfort of Christianity and brotherly love, rather than exerting his will to cope with life and the

(11) Days Without End ms. 5th/6th Draft American Literature Collection,
Beinecke Library, Yale University

world in an individual and progressive way. Hardy later quotes Nietzsche again, this time the Shadow's speech which again O'Neill copied out. Hardy is stressing that the individual must have a sure goal, an aim to which he can direct his will to combat the malevolence of life. Characteristically, he sees this goal as a scientific one, and agrees with Loving that it lies

On to the constellation of Hercules! I think we may regard that as a fact. On to Hercules! An inspiring slogan for the young, eh? There's nothing like having a sure goal. Remember your Nietzsche? 'He only knoweth whither he saileth, knoweth what wind is good, and a fair wind for him.'

O'Neill considered calling this play 'On to Hercules!', perhaps inspired by Ibsen's Brand, where Brand considers his God to be a young god like Hercules, not an old grey dull God; and though it evolved finally as a religious rather than philosophical work, the early draft does indicate that the concept of will to power was in his mind, particularly in relation to John Loving's striving to find a personal solution to the problem of life. Nietzsche warns that one must be careful of sinking into comfortableness, careful not to give up the struggle, for giving in leads to a loss of will power, but he does recognise that it is useless to keep striving, to struggle to exist in the Schopenhauerian sense, if one does not have a clear aim. Zarathustra's Shadow has lost his goal and is a 'poor rover and rambler' who needs to rest in Zarathustra's cave with the other Higher Men. The important thing for Nietzsche, however, is to maintain one's complete individuality and strive for progress. It is not enough to participate in life, one must see a goal and strive for it and so achieve the superman. The section in Thus Spake Zarathustra 'Of Self-overcoming', outlines the process of achieving this Will to Power.

Nietzsche insists that man must relinquish his old ideas of good and evil, and this, of course, includes all values associated with Christianity. It is this argument that Hardy is putting forward in Days Without End. Zarathustra claims that all living things 'are obeying things', their nature is to be commanded, to submit their will to that of another. What, he asks, causes this? What persuades some individuals to command and others to obey? He comes to the conclusion that:

Wherever I found living matter I found will unto power;
and even in the will of the serving I found the will
to be master.

(Of Self-Overcoming)

O'Neill copied this, adding '(He) wisheth to be master over what is still weaker'. So, Nietzsche acknowledges that there is the will present in every individual which could be directed in such a way. Zarathustra claims that Life herself had told him this secret in a whisper:

'Behold,' it said, 'I am whatever must surpass itself. Life goes on to explain that it is the Will to Power that is all-important. Life would even sacrifice herself for power, but man must realise that in order to achieve this he must follow the 'crooked paths' and the struggles of life. In More Stately Mansions Deborah talks about will, and the exertion of the individual will:

One has only to concentrate one's mind enough, and
one's pride to choose of one's own free will, and one
can cheat life, and death, of oneself.

(Act One Scene Two)

So, here she is expressing the Nietzschean concept that will is all-powerful. It can even conquer the ultimate power of death.

Nietzsche makes a further reference to Schopenhauer in Thus Spake Zarathustra when he says:

He certainly did not hit the truth who shot at it the formula 'Will to existence': that will - doth not exist! . . . only where there is life, there is also will: not, however, Will to Life, but - so I teach thee - Will to Power!

(Of Self-Overcoming)

In order to achieve this Will to Power one must consider that good and evil do not exist. The temporal power that is possessed within the existing framework of values is not real power. Nietzsche, in the same section, maintains that the individual desires power above all things - the will to be master. He says it is 'your secret love, and the sparkling, trembling, and overflowing of your souls'. However, he continues to say that this desire for power must be used in the right way:

.. a stronger power groweth out of your values, and a new surpassing: by it breaketh egg and eggshell.

In order to experience this power the old order must be destroyed and the eggshell broken. New values are to be created, and good and evil swept away. O'Neill again copied a passage on the importance of the role of the creator:

And he who must be a creator in good and evil - verily he must first be a destroyer, and break values into pieces.

And the importance of these values:

Verily I tell you: good and evil, which would be imperishable - do not exist! Of themselves they must ever again surpass themselves.

The prime achievement of the Will to Power must be the breaking of the old values and O'Neill seemed to have absorbed Nietzsche's views on the re-valuation of good and evil, perhaps because of his rejection of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church with its emphasis on sin and absolution. O'Neill would most probably have agreed with Nietzsche's contention in The Joyful Wisdom that:

The Christian resolve to find the world ugly and bad
has made the world ugly and bad.

Nietzsche went as far as reversing the accepted concepts of good and evil
in Zarathustra:

Good men never speak the truth . .
All that is called evil by the good ones must come
together (in order) that one truth be born. O my
brethren, are ye evil enough for this truth?

(Of Old and New Tables, 7)

The apparent resignation and acceptance of the world shown by the Christ-
ians who were, in Nietzsche's eyes, above all concerned with being 'good',
militated against the force which the individual could experience and
harness for his own power. George Cram Cook also expressed such a belief
in the constricting effect of Christianity:

The morality of the world has put up queer little fences
between the fields of good and evil. The flood of
war sweeps these away. Evil is too real and glorious
with power - brilliant and beautiful, and all that
counts is the splendid fountain of the indomitable
will. (12)

The so-called 'evil' men are active, positive, and have the capacity to
act against accepted standards. They are the ones who have the 'fountain
of the indomitable will' and can progress towards the superman. They
can disregard the values imposed at an early age by a Christian society:

Almost in the cradle we are given heavy words and values.
'Good' and 'evil' that cradle-gift is called.

(Of the Spirit of Gravity, 2)

Both Cook and O'Neill, perhaps for different reasons, adopted Nietzsche's
evaluation of the morality of the world and felt that, as creators of
the new theatre, they had the potential to fight against these 'cradle-
gifts' and bring about a new sense of values. This attempt to present a

(12) Glaspell op. cit. Ch XX

new morality was something that O'Neill certainly achieved in the early part of his career, shown particularly by the hostile and shocked reception of such plays as All God's Chillun and Desire Under the Elms.

One thing that Nietzsche greatly despised was what he saw as pettiness: the submission and meekness of the Christian with his petty thoughts and petty morality went totally against Nietzsche's concept of the noble superman. Zarathustra comments that 'it is better to act wickedly than to think pettily' in the section 'The Pitiful'. Evil thoughts and deeds are likened to a boil that erupts - they openly show the disease and corruption within, but pettiness is likened to an infection which 'creepeth and hideth and wanteth to be nowhere'. The Will to Power must be experienced openly, there must be no hiding and compromise and infection with outdated moral concepts - the individual must erupt, open out and strive towards his goal. Zarathustra states in 'Before Sunrise':

For all things are baptised at the well of eternity,
and beyond good and evil. But good and evil themselves
are but intershadows and damp afflictions and wandering
clouds.

O'Neill openly criticises some concepts of good and evil in his play Abortion. Jack, the American college-boy hero who is the perfect example of all that is considered good and desirable in American society, attempts to excuse and rationalise his conduct in getting his girlfriend pregnant and then arranging her abortion. Even in dealing with such a subject O'Neill was departing from the accepted standards of what was suitable to be put on stage in 1914 (although the play itself was not performed until 1959). Jack's explanation to his father that the primitive side of his nature was responsible for his action brings out the response, which perhaps would have been shared by an audience, that he is giving 'radical arguments'. Perhaps O'Neill had intended that the play should

be radical; however, Jack's character is not sufficiently convincing to convey his arguments to a hostile audience with any great effect. Jack claims that restraint and control are impossible in the face of primitive impulses and that society's arguments are futile in explaining what the true conduct of the individual should be:

Is it not our ideals of conduct, of Right and Wrong,
our ethics, which are unnatural and monstrously
distorted? Is society not suffering from a case of
the evil eye which sees evil where there is none?
Isn't it our moral laws which force me into evasions
like the one which you have just found fault with?

In spite of his attempts to convince his father, and the audience, that society must revalue its standards of morality, Jack's own weakness and his disregard for the girl because she was of a lower social class than himself, his attempt to pay off her brother to keep quiet about her death, and his ultimate suicide, all weaken any argument that O'Neill might be trying to put forward for any social change. Jack's speech is out of character and sounds far more like O'Neill inserting a Nietzschean argument without it being supported by the action of the play.

In The First Man O'Neill criticises those who are considered, and who consider themselves, good and righteous. The Jayson family are totally concerned with behaving correctly in small town society, and O'Neill makes use of a passage from 'Return Homeward' where Zarathustra is complaining about his treatment while travelling through the world, to illustrate the pettiness and viciousness which is present. Zarathustra feels that he has been misjudged, and likens it to being 'Stung all over by poisonous flies'. This expression is used twice by Bigelow; he tells how he has been treated as an outcast and sinner by the rest of the town. He says to Martha:

A mosquito is a ridiculous amusing creature, seen under a microscope; but when a swarm has been stinging you all night ...

This, my native town, did me the honour of devoting its entire leisure attention for years stinging me to death.

(Act II)

The expression recurs when Curtis comments on the pettiness of the townspeople with their gossiping and condemnation of all those who do not conform to their own dubious standards. O'Neill has shown how the Jayson family are concerned, not with Curtis's feelings and sorrow on the death of his wife, but with the opinion of the town and the imagined scandal of Martha giving birth to Bigelow's child. Curtis loses all patience with them and shouts:

Why does a man have to be maddened by fools at such a time? (Raging) Leave me alone! You're like a swarm of poisonous flies.

(Act IV)

There is another direct reference to Zarathustra's attitude towards those that consider themselves to be good:

Especially did I find those who call themselves 'the good' I found to be the most poisonous flies. They sting in all innocence, they lie in all innocence. How could they be just unto me!

(Return Homeward)

The Jayson family are stinging in all their hypocritical innocence; they are shown, particularly by Lily's attack, to be calculating and obsessed with their own position. O'Neill has used the identical imagery to that used in Zarathustra in order to show a further example of the disparity between standards of good and evil.

In More Stately Mansions O'Neill makes a more dramatically valuable attempt to discuss the relationship between good and evil through the characters of Sara and Simon. He tries to show that the concepts of good and evil

which we consider fixed are in fact changed by time and the attitude of society towards them. When Sara has become the controller of the Company, there is a scene with Tenard, the man whose bank has been taken over. His bitterness and outrage is quashed by Sara, as is his criticism that she is ruthless and dishonest. Sara proclaims the new doctrine of strength, of disregard for the old concepts of morality, when she says:

You owned something I desired. I was strong enough to take it. I am good because I am strong. You are evil because you are weak.

(Act Three Scene One)

This 'infamous credo' as Tenard calls it, is in keeping with O'Neill's creation of Sara as the new, strong, independent individual in a capitalist society who has the power to alter and reassess accepted moral standards. Tenard accepts her explanation as a symptom of the changing times and finds himself manipulated and blackmailed into working for Sara and abiding by her conditions. In 'The Spirit of Gravity' Zarathustra talks about man and his self-deception regarding what is good:

Man is difficult to discover, and unto himself most difficult of all; often lieth the spirit concerning the soul. So causeth the spirit of gravity. He, however, hath discovered himself who saith: This is my good and evil: therewith hath he made mute the mole and the dwarf, who saith: 'Good for all, evil for all.'

This was Nietzsche's aim, for the individual to discover himself and be able to disregard all accepted standards, and this is what O'Neill shows Sara to be doing.

Later in the play when Deborah and Sara plan to unite against and control Simon after his attempt to confine them to their respective areas of the garden and the office, Deborah says that:

He has taught us that whatever is in oneself is good - that whatever one desires is good, that the one evil is to deny oneself. It is not us but what he has made us be!

(Act Three Scene Two)

Simon interrupts this explanation of his influence and argues that his theory is that good and evil are not hard, defined principles but merely inventions of Christianity, and here O'Neill is certainly reflecting Nietzsche:

I have merely insisted that you both be what you are - that what you are is good because it is fact and reality - What is evil is the stupid theory that man is naturally what we call virtuous and good - instead of being what he is, a hog. It is that idealistic fallacy which is responsible for all the confusion in our minds, the conflicts within the self and for all the confusion in our relationships with one another, within the family particularly, for the blundering of our desires which are disciplined to covet what they don't want and be afraid to crave what they wish for in truth. In a nutshell, all one needs to remember is that good is evil, and evil, good.

(Act Three Scene Two)

The Nietzschean argument is, obviously, tempered by O'Neill's attempt to introduce an element of psychoanalysis, especially in relation to family relationships, but the whole speech is an attempt to excuse and explain the actions of an individual who has disregarded the normal patterns of behaviour. Simon, in spite of his obviously disturbed mind and his attempt to regress to childhood through his mother's fairy tales and memories in her garden, does demonstrate his ability to disregard convention. It is this that makes him the 'Napoleon of finance' so admired by the family earlier in the play. It is interesting to note that Nietzsche, too, considered Napoleon to be an example of the new powerful man who could, and did, change accepted values. Zarathustra claims that 'no one yet knoweth what is good and bad: unless it be the creating one' (Of Old and New Tables, 2) and O'Neill's characterisation of Simon shows him to be not the creator of literature, but the creator of the new commercial world and, with Sara, representative of those who 'createth the fact that things are good and evil'.

So, for Nietzsche the Will to Power was embodied in the new man, the creator of new values, rather than the blind, meaningless will expressed by Schopenhauer. As Zarathustra says 'Willing delivereth! For Willing is creating!' (Of Old and New Tables, 16). Nietzsche advocates the importance of self and self-will and Zarathustra states in 'Of Virtue that Maketh Smaller':

And all those are my like who give themselves a will
of their own and renounce all submission.

As the title of this section suggests, Nietzsche considered that goodness and virtue in the accepted sense did diminish the individual. Men must make the world subservient to themselves, even to the extent of explaining the events of the past by saying that they were the result of this new will-power:

To redeem what is past in man and to thus transvalue
every 'It was' until will saith 'Thus I willed' Thus
shall I will.

(Of Old and New Tables, 3)

This Zarathustra teaches as man's redemption, to negate the past and mould it into a tool to be used by the superman, but O'Neill does not seem to have pursued this aspect of the Will to Power in his plays although he did make a copy of the quotation (see Appendix).

FREEDOM

The ultimate aim for the individual, to achieve power over himself and others through his indomitable will, leads on to the freedom that he will experience. The freedom is that of being freed from the trammels of accepted morality, from the domination of others and from the teachings of a God. This freedom can only be achieved through will, and in The Joyful Wisdom Nietzsche explains the result of freeing oneself from the subservience of faith:

.... one could imagine a delight and a power of self-determining and a freedom of will whereby a spirit could bid farewell to every belief, to every wish for certainty, accustomed as it would be to support itself on slender cords and possibilities, and to dance even on the verge of abysses. Such a spirit would be the free spirit par excellence.

(Book Fifth, 347)

This ideal of freedom is stated in Thus Spake Zarathustra on many occasions, but one quotation that O'Neill copied from 'Of Famous and Wise Men' indicates an idea of freedom which is expressed in the plays:

Free from the happiness of slaves; saved from Gods and adorations; fearless and fear-inspiring; great and lonely; that is the will of the truthful one!

This emphasis on freedom is adapted in Days Without End when John states that a new society should be constructed in the Nietzschean manner:

Freedom demands initiative, courage, the need to decide what life must mean to oneself.

and if this is achieved:

A new discipline for life will spring into being, a new will and power to live, a new ideal to measure our lives by!

(Act Two Scene Two)

O'Neill is again concerned with freedom in All God's Chillun Got Wings; the title itself contains the implication that all individuals have the wings to enable them to fly to freedom. When Jim and Ella are married they are unhappy and Jim believes that they can achieve happiness through his success, both in his own estimation and that of the white folk. He tells Hattie that once he has passed his Bar exams they will win:

We're both free - by our fighting down our weaknesses!
We're both really, truly free! Then we can be happy
with ourselves here or anywhere.

(Act II Scene 2)

Of course neither Jim nor Ella do become free because they are so bound by the prejudices of both the black and white sections of society, and

having failed to make a successful career in the white world Jim falls back on what Nietzsche considered to be two of the worst impediments to freedom, the position of a slave and a faith in God. In Beyond the Horizon O'Neill shows that Robert only achieves freedom through death (13) but in More Stately Mansions Deborah tries to explain the power of the will and its relation to freedom. In attempting to take Simon back into the world of his childhood she says:

Yes! I believe now - believe that if the mind wills anything with enough intensity of love it can force life to its desire, create a heaven if need be, out of hell!

(Act Three Scene Two)

However, Deborah's will to 'create a heaven out of hell' does not free her, in fact it confines her more and more to her fantasies and ends with her withdrawal into her 'magic' summerhouse. She might have the freedom of the deranged mind to imagine all she wants, but she is physically imprisoned and essentially 'dead' to the rest of the world.

O'Neill may have absorbed Nietzsche's view of true freedom being achieved through the will, but in his plays the characters only appear to achieve this freedom through death, insanity or suicide. It is difficult to ascertain whether O'Neill fully agreed with Nietzsche, or whether he found it more dramatically satisfying and successful to convey the idea of freedom in such a dramatic context rather than develop a philosophical and morally convincing argument. Parritt in The Iceman Cometh finds freedom from guilt through suicide, but he has to be directed towards this by Larry; Yank's freedom to be an individual comes through death at the hands of the gorilla; and for Brown and Dion Anthony death brings freedom from their tortured lives. The only character who achieves true freedom in the Nietzschean sense, is Lazarus and this is because the play

(13) See Chapter VII

has built up to his death as a development of his advocacy of the other great Nietzschean doctrine of 'Yea-saying'. This latter concept permeates Nietzsche's work closely connected with the Will to Power and it is an aspect of Nietzsche's work that O'Neill did fully adopt in his plays.

In The Joyful Wisdom there is the first statement of the theme of Yea-saying which Nietzsche later developed in Thus Spake Zarathustra. The Fourth Book of The Joyful Wisdom is called 'Sanctus Januarius' and was written in Genoa in 1882. Nietzsche records his feelings and wishes for the New Year:

Today everyone takes the liberty of expressing his wish and his favourite thought: well, I also mean to tell what I have wished for myself today, and what thought first crossed my mind this year - a thought which ought to be the basis, the pledge and the sweetening of all my future life! I want more and more to perceive the necessary characters in things as the beautiful: - I shall thus be one of those who beautify things. Amor Fati: let that henceforth be my love! I do not want to wage war with the ugly. I do not want to accuse, I do not want even to accuse the accusers. Looking aside, let that be my sole negation! And all in all, to sum up: I wish to be at any time hereafter only a yea-sayer!

Nietzsche attempts to achieve this resolution through Zarathustra who becomes the great Yea-sayer and it is the character of Zarathustra that O'Neill uses as the model for Lazarus. However, it is not only in Lazarus Laughed that he makes use of Yea-saying, for in The First Man O'Neill shows Martha Jayson revealing similar feelings. She has been talking to Bigelow about her life roaming with her explorer husband after the death of their children, and her sadness that Curtis does not want them to have any more but go on yet another expedition is obvious. In spite of it all, she tells her husband:

Yes, it's been a wonderful glorious life. I'd live it all over again if I could, every single second of it - even the terrible suffering - the children.

(Act II)

This is a direct expression of Nietzsche's desire in The Joyful Wisdom. Martha has lived through tragedy and yet she can still rejoice in life. In 'The Drunken Song' Zarathustra says:

Said ye ever Yea to one joy? O my friends, then said ye Yea also unto all woe. All things are enlinked, enlaced, and enamoured ...

Nietzsche's concept of Yea-saying is far from the pessimism of which he is often accused, and O'Neill does try to show that life can be glorious, joyous and worthwhile if only one can be a Yea-sayer.

In More Stately Mansions Deborah indicates a desire of acceptance when she tells Sara that they could both achieve peace if they could come to terms with Simon:

... with the way clear before us, the meaning of life so happily implicit, the feeling of living life so deeply sure of itself, not needing thought beyond all torturing doubt, the passive 'yes' welcoming the peaceful procession of demanding days.

(Act Three Scene Two)

Deborah cannot achieve this, she cannot find her way to the peace required to say 'yes' until she turns her back on her son and retreats to the summerhouse, but O'Neill is again here attempting to present the Nietzschean idea.

In Welded the Prostitute tells Cape that the 'whole game' of life is important. You have to learn to laugh, you have to learn to like it, she says, and Cape is impressed. He, too, repeats the belief of the Yea-sayer:

Yes! That's it! That's exactly it! That goes deeper than wisdom. To learn to love the truth of life - to accept it and be exalted - that's the one faith left to us!
Goodbye, I've joined your church.

(Act II)

When he returns to Eleanor, in their newly accepted and realised love, he again expresses the same belief:

We'll have to strive for perfect union - fight each other - fail again - blame each other - fail and hate again - (he raises his voice in aggressive triumph) - but! fail and hate with pride - with joy!

(Act III)

Eleanor joins in his exaltation but here O'Neill has converted Nietzsche's idea to be used in a situation far from that originally conceived of by Nietzsche. His concept is of a solitary strength, a solitary vow to accept what life should offer and it is certainly not applicable in such a contrived relationship as that of the Capes, certainly one which Nietzsche would have claimed to find despicable.

The section called 'The Seven Seals' in Thus Spake Zarathustra is sub-titled the 'Yea and Amen Lay' and in the first part Zarathustra describes the moment of realisation of Yea-saying. As with the doctrine of the superman, he compares it to lightning, striking those that are unaware:

Ready for lightning in its dark bosom, and for the redeeming flash of light, charged with lightnings which say Yea! which laugh Yea! ready for divine flashes of lightning: Blessed is he who is thus charged!

One cannot ignore the resemblance of St. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, and Nietzsche obviously had such an experience in mind for those who are converted to Yea-saying. Zarathustra bestows blessings around him, on those who would be Higher Men. In 'Before Sunrise' he addresses the heavens in their purity and power and contrasts them with man creeping far below. Zarathustra is like the heavens:

I, however, am a blesser and a Yea-sayer, if thou be but around me, thou pure, thou luminous heaven! Thou abyss of light! - into all abysses do I then carry my beneficent Yea-saying. A blesser have I become and a Yea-sayer: and therefore strove I long and was a striver, that I might one day get my hands free for blessing.

This proclamation is rather different from the encounter with those that Zarathustra at first assumes to be the Higher Men. The ass is the one who repeatedly brays 'YEA' in the parody of the last supper, and later, when Zarathustra is rejoicing that he has conquered the old religious beliefs, the 'spirit of gravity', he hears the Higher Men laugh. He suddenly discovers that they are praying, they have become 'pious again' and in a distorted Litany the ass provides the responses by braying 'YEA' as the others worship him. The Yea-saying ass is not only a substitute for God, but also a substitute for Zarathustra who, by the end of the Ass Festival, shares in the joke that all former worship and religious observance have been turned around. The realisation that by going against all accepted beliefs they are true disciples of Zarathustra causes the Ugliest Man to say:

For the sake of this day, I am for the first time content to have lived the whole of life. It is worthwhile to live on earth. One day, one festival with Zarathustra taught me to love life. Hath that been life? I shall say unto death, Up! Once more!

(The Ugliest Man)

This avowal by the Ugliest Man is the sign that the transformation has taken place. His new vision, his ability to accept, is the indication to Zarathustra that there could be new and higher beings, men who are truly Yea-sayers. O'Neill tries to use this revelation, this joyous acceptance of life in Lazarus Laughed. In a letter to Arthur Hobson Quinn written in 1927 he clearly indicates the connection between Nietzsche and the basic idea behind Lazarus Laughed:

The fear of death is the root of all evil, the cause of all man's blundering unhappiness. Lazarus knows there is no death, there is only change. He is reborn without that fear. Therefore he is the first and only man who is able to laugh affirmatively. His laughter is a triumphant Yes to life in its entirety and its eternity. His laughter affirms God, it is too noble

to desire personal immortality, it wills its own extinction, it gives its life for the sake of Eternal Life (patriotism carried to its logical ultimate). (14)

Again O'Neill's departure from Nietzsche is that he wants Lazarus to laugh in affirmation of God, but the triumphant Yea-saying to life is there and O'Neill has extrapolated the argument to have Lazarus truly free to laugh because he has no fear of death.

When recounting his time in the grave in Act One of the play, Lazarus has the realisation that he must say Yes to eternal life and this is later echoed by Miriam when she, too, cries 'Yes! There is only life!' as she dies. The laughter of Lazarus is a true acceptance of Nietzsche's doctrine of Yea-saying in so far as it reflects a total acceptance of 'Amor Fati' but the proclamation made by Lazarus in Act One that he 'laughed in the laughter of God' is rather a departure from the true Yea-sayer. However, the idea of a laughing God is in itself a development of another Nietzschean idea and it is one that O'Neill adopts elsewhere in his plays (15).

In The Great God Brown Billy Brown learns to laugh with life but he does not have the true acceptance of a Yea-sayer. His is a hectic madness which ultimately leads to his death and his discovery of God - the 'Our Father who Art' (Act Two Scene Three). The laughing God who is revealed to both Dion and Billy at their deaths is a composite of the Christian God and the Dionysus. Like Zarathustra, Dion and Billy see revealed a God of laughter but although it is not the same individual the effect is similar:

No longer a shepherd, no longer a man - a changed one, one surrounded by light who laughed! Never on earth hath a man laughed as he did.

(14) Quinn op. cit. p. 520

(15) See Chapter VII

O my brethren, I heard a laughter that was no man's
Laughter. And now a thirst gnaweth at me, a longing
that is never stilled. My longing for that laughter
gnaweth at me.
But how can I endure still to live! And how can I
endure to die now!

(Of the Vision and the Riddle)

This is obviously what O'Neill had in mind when creating the character of Lazarus but in The Great God Brown there is the confusion of the Christian God and the Nietzschean/Dionysian one. It would appear that O'Neill wishes to stress the importance of the Dionysian aspect of belief as he gives Cybel her 'spring' speech as the last statement of the play and this supercedes the Christian vision which both Billy and Dion have on their death. However, O'Neill's Christian 'Our Father' is far more Nietzschean than Biblical, especially in the language that O'Neill chooses to express the two dying visions:

Blessed are they that weep for they shall laugh!

(Act Four Scene Two)

and:

May you design the Temple of Man's soul!
Blessed are the meek and poor in spirit!

(Act Two Scene Three)

These are far more like the pronouncements of Zarathustra than the Beatitudes in the Gospel of St. Matthew. O'Neill seems to have linked the Christian 'Our Father who Art' with a Zarathustra-like saviour on the one hand, and summed up with the Dionysian regeneration myth as the ultimate expression of belief on the other.

In a stage direction in Lazarus Laughed where Lazarus is laughing to his followers before their ecstatic suicide, O'Neill writes that the laughter becomes more and more intense 'finally ending up on a triumphant, blood-stirring call to that ultimate attainment in which all pre-possession with self is lost in an ecstatic affirmation of Life' (Act Two Scene Two).

The mass ecstasy, the mounting emotion are all in praise of eternal life, and it is this which is the 'message' of Lazarus Laughed. Different from Zarathustra whose rejoicing and Yea-saying was in a belief that one accepted all that life had to offer, Lazarus Laughed is in praise of a not too clearly defined laughing God and eternal life. O'Neill makes the premise that by affirming life one can conquer death, but conversely Lazarus has had to die in order to experience life. O'Neill's view of eternal life here is very different from Nietzsche's view of eternal recurrence which, although part of the Dionysian aspect of Lazarus's character, is far from the eternal life in God which Lazarus proclaims. In a statement he made after he had finished Welded, some two or three years before Lazarus Laughed was completed, O'Neill said:

... I feel that I am getting back, as far as it is possible in modern times to get back, to the religious in the theatre. The only way we can get religion back is through an exultance over the truth, through an exultant acceptance of life ... we must face life as it is, within ourselves, and do it with joy, and get enthusiasm from it. And it's a difficult thing to get exultance from modern life. (16)

With Lazarus Laughed O'Neill was obviously trying to 'get religion back' and it meant that he had to manipulate Nietzsche's Yea-sayer a great deal. Nevertheless, in terms of the laughter, the charisma and the worship of his followers, Zarathustra remains the basis for Lazarus. An indication of just how much O'Neill absorbed Nietzsche is shown as reported to Clark in 1932 (17) when he was writing yet another 'religious' play, Days Without End. O'Neill writes:

... there is in it a fresh vision, a new understanding, an inner Yea-saying, that is vastly intriguing and stimulating to me.

(16) Gelb op. cit. p. 520

(17) Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 402

It is unfortunate that the 'inner Yea-saying' did not come across in the finished version of the play, it might have made its reception less controversial. This letter, though, shows that O'Neill had adopted Nietzsche's terminology, if not his philosophy, accurately, and particularly in terms of Lazarus Laughed managed to use it to great dramatic effect.

CHAPTER IX

IMAGES OF LIFE AND DEATH

LIFE

Within Lazarus Laughed O'Neill is attempting to create on stage a convincing and dramatically powerful evocation of an 'exultant acceptance of life' but he also reveals his pre-occupation with the Protestant attitude to life and death. Through Lazarus he tries to convey that for many people life was 'a long dying'. This is clearly expressed by Lazarus when, in reply to Tiberius's belief that 'All laughter is malice, all gods are dead, and life is a sickness' he laughs pityingly:

So say the race of men, whose lives are long dyings!
They evade their fear of death by becoming so sick of
life that by the time death comes they are too lifeless
to fear it! Their disease triumphs over death - a
noble victory called resignation!

(Act Four Scene One)

Lazarus is here reflecting Nietzsche's view of the Christians who, he believed, lived their lives in submission and sadness rather than power and exultation. This is stated in The Joyful Wisdom when he warns:

Let us be on our guard against saying that death is
contrary to life. The living being is only a species
of dead being, and a very rare species.

(Book Third 109)

Nietzsche constantly repeats his view of the greyness and subservience of Christianity, its followers unable to fully appreciate and enjoy life because of their beliefs. Like the 'cradle gifts' of good and evil which are too heavy to bear, man has to carry an inheritance of heaviness and overpowering morality:

And we - we carry faithfully what we are given on hard
shoulders over rough mountains! And, when perspiring,
we are told: 'Yea, life is hard to bear!'
But man himself only is hard to bear! The reason is
that he carrieth too many strange things on his shoulders.
Too many strange, heavy words and values he taketh
upon his shoulders.

(Of the Spirit of Gravity 2)

O'Neill also made a copy of Nietzsche's further comment about life being hard to bear when Zarathustra says:

Life is hard to bear. But do not pretend to be so frail. We are all good he-asses and she-asses of burden.

(Of Reading and Writing)

Throughout Lazarus Laughed O'Neill counterbalances this attitude of burden and resignation with the joyous laughter and the acceptance of life and denial of death expressed by Lazarus himself. The choruses in this play echo his words, particularly after he recounts his experience of 'dying':

In the dark peace of the grave the man called Lazarus rested. He was still weak, as one who recovers from a long illness - for, living, he had believed his life a sad one! (He laughs softly, and softly they all echo his laughter). He lay dreaming to the croon of silence, feeling as the flow of blood in his own veins the past re-enter the heart of God to be renewed by faith into the future. He thought: 'Men call this death' - for he had been dead only a little while and he still remembered. Then, of a sudden, a strange gay laughter trembled from his heart, as though his life, so long repressed in him by fear, had found at last his voice and a song for singing. 'Men call this death', it sang. 'Men call life death and fear it. They hide from it in horror. Their lives are spent in hiding. Their fear becomes their living. They worship life as death!'

(Act Two Scene One)

This account of Lazarus's 'death' shows the contrast between him and the others, although of course in the play the inhabitants of Bethany are not Christians who are said to fear life. The Chorus immediately emphasises Lazarus's words when they chant:

Men call life death and fear it,
They hide from it in horror.
Their lives are spent in hiding.
Their fear becomes their living.
They worship life as death.

This chant is similar to the one when Lazarus is taken away by the centurions and he advises his Followers that they must not forget him and his laughter. He tells them that it is a test of faith, their love for

him and their laughter must remain as proof that there is no death, only joyous eternal life. On this occasion the Chorus affirm their faith but after Lazarus disappears they return to their old beliefs, as happens to Caligula at the end of the play. The finale of Act One is the Chorus joining together with the Old Men and proclaiming:

Life is a fearing
A long dying,
From birth to death!
God is a slayer!
Life is death!

The contrast between Lazarus's Yea-saying and the denial of the others is most clearly shown in the portrayal of Miriam, both in her dialogue and her visual appearance. She ages while Lazarus becomes rejuvenated; she is dressed in black, like a nun, while Lazarus is surrounded by a shining light; she is weary and tired of life while Lazarus exults in it. Through the Jewess, Miriam, O'Neill is indicating in a dramatic way the sorrow and submission that Nietzsche attributed to Christians. However, at her death, Miriam, too, proves Lazarus right by her proclamation about life.

At the beginning of the play the Followers of Lazarus wear masks which show 'fearless faith in life' and it is this fearlessness which Lazarus constantly reiterates throughout the play. The main impression conveyed by O'Neill in Lazarus Laughed is the need to face life, to be a Yea-sayer and forget the morbid, submissive attitudes of those who do not follow Lazarus and are not affected by his laughter. However, there are other images of 'life as death' expressed, as can be seen in Miriam, both in this play and others where O'Neill has chosen to use ideas from Nietzsche as well as his observation of a certain kind of American Puritanism.

One very striking image is that expressed by Lazarus to Caligula. The Roman society of which Caligula is a true representative, is a society

governed by fear and death. Each individual is fearful and suspicious of the next and it is this that keeps the Caesars in power. The crucified lion is a symbol of the cruelty of Caesar and it is shown to serve as a warning to Lazarus of what his fate is to be. Caligula cannot understand when Lazarus claims that there is no death, for it is the fear of death that enables him to control society. Caligula is afraid of men, of their poison and their swords and the 'cringing envy in their eyes that only yields to fear' (Act Two Scene One). Lazarus's reply, mocking Caligula, shows that the solution is to replace fear by laughter:

Tragic is the plight of the tragedian whose only audience is himself! Life is for each man a solitary cell whose walls are mirrors. Terrified is Caligula by the faces he makes! But I tell you to laugh in the mirror, that seeing your life gay, you may begin to live as a guest, and not as a condemned one!

(Act Two Scene One)

In the original notes for Lazarus Laughed (1) O'Neill stated:

This life is but a second in life and not an important second. Yet it must be lived as if it were a test of one's capacity for living.

and this belief that life is fleeting but important is again indicated in one of the revisions for Strange Interlude (2). Nina echoing the title of the play, says:

The only living life is in the past and future ...
the present is an interlude ... strange interlude
.... in which we call on the past and future to bear
witness we are living!

and in the first draft (3) of Marco Millions Chu Yin comments:

Life is perhaps most widely regarded as a bad dream
between two awakenings - and every day is a life in
miniature.

- (1) Lazarus Laughed ms. notes American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.
- (2) Strange Interlude Act VIII ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.
- (3) Marco Millions ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

In these examples, which were dropped from the plays, O'Neill is trying out a part of the Nietzschean idea that every moment of life is worthwhile and must be lived as such, but they are far less theatrically effective and less easy to grasp as a philosophical point in conveying O'Neill's intention than is the chanting in Lazarus Laughed about life being a joyous celebration, or, alternatively, a long dying as is also expressed by the Mannons in Mourning Becomes Electra. Certainly the image of life being a cell with mirrored walls is effective, particularly in showing how the fear induced by Roman society turns in on the individual.

For the Caesars pain is the strongest weapon. Caligula says to Lazarus:

Do not take pain away from us! It is our one truth!
Without pain there is nothing - a nothingness in which
even your laughter, Lazarus, is swallowed at one gulp
like a whining gnat by the cretin's silence of immensity!
Ha-ha! No, we must keep pain! Especially Caesars
must! Pain must twinkle like a mad mirth in a Caesar's
eyes - men's pain - or they would become dissatisfied
and disrespectful!

(Act Four Scene One)

In The Joyful Wisdom, section 318 is entitled 'Wisdom in Pain' and Nietzsche maintains:

In pain there is as much wisdom as in pleasure: like
the latter it is one of the best self-preservatives
of a species. Were it not so, pain would long ago
have been done away with; that it is hurtful is no
argument against it, for to be hurtful is its very
essence.

O'Neill has taken this and transferred it into the mad reasoning of Caligula and Tiberius but Lazarus's affirmation of life does overcome this obsession with pain and fear, if only temporarily. Even Caligula, who exults in having killed Tiberius, so making himself 'Caesar of Death' is overcome by remorse and begs Lazarus's forgiveness for his actions and his loss of faith.

O'Neill's portrayal of Roman society, and particularly Tiberius and Caligula, is not historically accurate. The decay and corruption of Rome is effectively conveyed, particularly in the stage directions and costuming; the 'stamp of effeminate corruption' in the masks; the helio-trope blotched colouring; the half-masks emphasising the distortion of natural character; the women's clothing and jewellery worn by the men and the masculinity of the women. They all have the effect of 'sex corrupted and warped, of invented lusts and artificial vices'. This kind of society is the ideal breeding ground for a Tiberius as he is portrayed by O'Neill and it is a remarkably theatrical and visual evocation of the kind of society which Nietzsche, too, saw as corrupted and decayed:

When the decay has reached its worst, and likewise the conflict of all sorts of tyrants, there always arises the Caesar, the final tyrant, who puts an end to the exhausted struggle for sovereignty, by making the exhaustedness work for him ... the men of the highest culture love to flatter their Caesar by pretending that they are his creation. (4)

Although O'Neill attempted to recreate such a society on stage he does depart from historical fact regarding Caligula and Tiberius. In Lazarus Laughed Caligula strangles Tiberius, choking him on his throne while Lazarus is burning, whereas he was in fact smothered by a pillow. Nietzsche makes reference to the death of Tiberius in The Joyful Wisdom and it is possible that O'Neill, although changing his death for dramatic purposes, did take some notice of Nietzsche's brief description of Tiberius:

But Tiberius died silently, that most tortured of all self-torturers - he was genuine and not a stage player! What may have passed through his head in the end! Perhaps this: 'Life that is a long death. I am a fool who shortened the lives of so many! Was I created for the purpose of being a benefactor? I should have given them eternal life: and I could have seen them dying eternally. I had such good eyes for that: quaiis spectator per!' When he seemed once more to

(4) The Joyful Wisdom Book First 'The Characteristics of Corruption'
Section 23

regain his powers after a long death struggle, it was considered advisable to smother him with pillows - he died a double death.

(Book First, 36)

Part of this is echoed by O'Neill's Tiberius with his insistence on watching the eyes of those that die, although in attempting to watch death in Lazarus's eyes while he burns, Tiberius is overcome when he sees Lazarus is actually dying. Tiberius wants to believe in eternal life for himself and he sees that Lazarus has some power over death. Tiberius's final words are a conversion:

I have lived long enough! I will die with Lazarus!
I no longer fear death! I laugh! I laugh at Caesar!
I advise you, my brothers, fear not Caesars! Seek
Man in the brotherhood of the dust! Caesar is your
fear of Man! I counsel you, laugh away your Caesars!

(Act Four Scene Two)

but his death is actually brought about by the hand of the rejected Caligula. Tiberius had been proud that men feared him, and thought Caligula a worthy heir to serve his spite on mankind, but although he is possessed of so much power he is terrified by the magic quality of Lazarus, as he sees in him his apparent youth with 'his figure radiant and unearthly in his own light'. Like Juan in The Fountain, Tiberius wants to know the secret of youth and whether Lazarus had really returned from the grave.

Caligula's manic ambition is to be Caesar, to be the perpetrator of death, to have a face 'bright with blood' and he gives the order to kill those that deny death. His laughter, unlike Lazarus's is a laughter of power, fear and death. He laughs, as he tells Lazarus, 'because men fear me' and he wants to be the personification of Death. This is because, for both Caligula and Tiberius, their power is based on their own fear of death - the terrified faces reflected in the 'cell whose walls are mirrors'.

In contrast to the life-affirming joyous laughter of Lazarus, O'Neill creates the death-obsessed Caligula who veers from being converted by his love for Lazarus to the tyrannical, blood-lusting beast that he really is. The imagery of this whole section of the play is bloodthirsty, savage and distorted. Caligula, for example, warning Lazarus about Tiberius's capriciousness, says '... tomorrow he will jeer while hyenas gnaw at your skull and lick your brain' (Act Four Scene One). In this play O'Neill manipulates the concept that fear of pain and fear of death are allied in a most dramatic way and they are clearly shown as agents to be used by the unscrupulous to enforce power. This concept is not used in any other play in the same way, and this is perhaps because there is the close connection between the reaction to pain and the ability to become a Yea-sayer; if one can accept and rejoice in whatever life offers, as Lazarus does, then there is no fear of pain or death. Lazarus had tried to explain this to Pompeia and Caligula - 'If you can answer Yes to pain, there is no pain!' (Act Four Scene One).

The Nietzschean influence seems to be running away with O'Neill in this play, not only in his main themes but also in other odd incidents. In 'The Conversation with the Kings' in Thus Spake Zarathustra Nietzsche shows the meeting with the disillusioned kings, 'bedecked with crowns and purple girdles and variegated like flamingoes', accompanied by the ass. They talk about society being 'gilded, false, over-rouged' where all is false and foul. They claim that they, as kings, have become 'false, draped and disguised with the faded pomp of our ancestors' and all they want to do is renounce their society in favour of simplicity among anchorites and goatherds. When Zarathustra shows his delight at this he sings a rhyme about the corruption in Roman society although

there is no previous indication that the kings have Rome as their background:

Once - in the year of the Lord one, I opine
The Sybil spake thus, she was drunk, without wine:
Alas! Now all goeth wrong on its way!
Ne'er so deep sank the world! Decay! Decay!
Rome grew a whore, a brothel she grew,
Rome's Caesar a beast, and God - a Jew!

Caligula breaks into song at intervals throughout the play singing 'an old camp song' about the Roman legions but O'Neill also makes use of the last line in Zarathustra's song, for the Greeks question that God should return as a Jew, although they admit it is a clever disguise. Later in the play Caligula is scornful that a Jew could become a God. The Senators, too, are disdainful of the Jew with the magic light and, later, Tiberius accuses Lazarus of being in league with Christ, 'the other Jew' who could not have possessed magic power for He died after Pilate had crucified Him.

It would appear that Nietzsche did much influence O'Neill in the writing of Lazarus Laughed, particularly in connection with the setting and the ideas behind it, particularly those of eternal life contrasted with pain and death. As is also shown in other plays such as Mourning Becomes Electra, Desire Under the Elms, The Rope O'Neill considered the Puritan ideas of death beginning at birth and this is considered in detail in Chapter VII. Life as a preparation for death, life as a manifestation of death itself, or life as a continual fear of death and pain are all themes which become interlinked in O'Neill's plays but there are also many characters who are obsessed with their own death or who finally commit suicide and these need to be considered in relation to the ideas of Nietzsche.

DEATH

The preoccupation with death in Lazarus Laughed is not unusual for O'Neill, except in its specific connection with pain. Perhaps the most significant character in the plays who is obsessed by death is Larry in The Iceman Cometh. He, and a number of other characters in the plays, reveal O'Neill's attempt to convey varying concepts of death and after-life and also O'Neill's obsession with suicide, both as a dramatic device and as a religious and philosophical problem.

Larry, the 'old foolosopher' is waiting for death to overtake him. He is sceptical about the other inhabitants of the saloon and their delusions about going back to respectability and their old lives, and he constantly states that he is waiting for death, the 'good old Long Sleep' as Hickey calls it. Hickey has rightly perceived that Larry is a faker, he is terrified about the future and his only defence is to pretend that he has opted out of life altogether. Cora teases him about not having died and Larry joins in the game, 'It's damn tiring, this waiting for the end' he says, but Hickey is the only character who actually realises that Larry is truly frightened. So, 'Old Cemetery' is unmasked by Hickey. He is told:

You'll say to yourself, I'm just an old man who is scared of life, but even more scared of dying. So I'm keeping drunk and hanging on to life at any price, and what of it? Then you'll know what real peace means, Larry, because you won't be scared of either life or death any more.

(Act Two)

Larry is angered at this, but Hickey is obviously stating the truth. Parritt, too, realises part of what is wrong with Larry as they are both having to come to terms with living or dying. Larry's strongest outburst against life comes when Parritt is questioning him:

All I know is I'm sick of life! I'm through! I've forgotten myself! I'm drowned and contented on the bottom of a bottle. Honor or dishonor, faith or treachery are nothing to me but the opposites of the same stupidity which is ruler and king of life, and in the end they rot into dust in the same grave. All things are the one meaningless joke to me, for they grin at me from the one skull of death.

(Act Two)

Larry locks his door to keep Hickey out, but throughout the play, from Hickey's arrival, we see the gradual realisation on Larry's part that his is as big a pipedream as those of any of the other characters.

Larry says suicide is 'a coward's quitting' but it is obvious that he is too much of a coward to do it. He is the one who introduces Hickey as the 'Iceman of Death' and he tells the others that Hickey has brought death with him, but it is Larry's views on life and death that are more important than the pipedreams of the others in terms of O'Neill's working out the serious thought behind this play.

Larry attempts to convince Hickey, to explain to him, but it is clear that he is also trying to convince himself when he says:

So I sit here with my pride drowned on the bottom of a bottle, keeping drunk so I won't see myself shaking in my britches with fright, or hear myself whining and praying: Beloved Christ, let me live a little longer at any price! If it's only for a few days more, or a few hours even, have mercy Almighty God, and let me still clutch greedily to my yellow heart this sweet treasure this jewel beyond price, the dirty stinking bit of withered old flesh which is my beautiful little life!

(Act Three)

The self-loathing and contempt is revealed and Hickey has succeeded in his mission of making Larry confess his fear of dying and his desire to live in spite of his professed loathing of life. Parritt finally forces Larry into acting as executioner after his final confession that he had betrayed his mother. There is a dramatically gripping tension built up

after Parritt leaves the bar. While the others are noisily attempting to return to normality with their pretended belief that Hickey was crazy, Larry waits and listens. When he finally hears Parritt fall from the fire escape Larry's true feelings are expressed. He inadvertently mumbles a blessing for Parritt and then finally acknowledges his own feelings:

Ah, the damned pity - the wrong kind, as Hickey said!
Be God, there's no hope! I'll never be a success in
the grandstand - or anywhere else! Life is too much
for me! I'll be a weak fool looking with pity at the
two sides of everything till the day I die! May that
day come soon!

(Act Four)

Larry's inability either to commit suicide or to rejoice in living is in contrast to Parritt's gratitude when Larry tells him to go and kill himself. It is the only way that Parritt can come to terms with life, the only way to freedom, as Hickey had maintained for Evelyn. Her death was a freeing from the trials of life with Hickey, an act of mercy. In More Stately Mansions Simon expresses a similar view when he says:

Regarded sensibly, we should all have clauses in our
wills expressing gratitude to, and suitably rewarding,
anyone who should murder us. The murderer possesses
the true-quality of mercy.

(Act Three Scene Two)

Parritt's suicide, his 'death at the right time' brings up the similarity between Nietzsche and O'Neill and their attitudes towards suicide. In the section 'On Voluntary Death' in Thus Spake Zarathustra, Nietzsche advocates that man must not wait for death to steal 'like a thief' but he should freely and voluntarily seek death. The section 'Of the Preachers of Death' in the same work is an account of those priests who make life a burden, who are full of doctrinaire notions of 'lassitude and renunciation'. Nietzsche sees them as perpetrators of Christian belief but also catering for the despised masses. The following two quotations O'Neill

copied from Zarathustra and they are related to the portrayal of suicide in the plays:

Full is the earth of superfluous ones, spoiled in life by the much-too-many. Would they could be tempted away from this life by 'eternal life'.

(Of the Preachers of Death)

and

Much-too-many live and much too long they stick onto their branches. Would that storm came to shake from the tree all that is putrid and gnawed by worms. Would that the preachers of swift death come!

(Of Free Death)

For O'Neill Hickey is, indeed, a 'preacher of swift death' and Simon, too, is expressing the view that death should happen at the right time, either by murder or suicide. Nietzsche appears to be in favour of the death-preaching priests if they succeed in ridding the world of the much-too-many, but his other views on suicide are more significant.

'Let this be thy virtue', Zarathustra says, 'Thou shalt kill thyself! Thou shalt steal thyself away!' (Of the Preachers of Death). Nietzsche mocks at those who cling to life, who, like Larry in The Iceman Cometh, 'cling to the straw of their life and mock because they are hanging on a straw' (Of the Preachers of Death). Nietzsche's view that suicide should be a useful and desirable act is stated throughout the section 'On Voluntary Death', translated by Tille as 'Of Free Death'. It is significant that there are these two rather different titles for this section for they both imply the fundamental reasoning in Nietzsche's mind. To commit suicide is to free oneself from the miserable and useless life that Nietzsche sees the average man leading, but such a suicide must be chosen, made at the right time and in the right frame of mind. In so dying, a man would be acting on Nietzsche's view that it should be a triumph, an action which is a conscious willing by the individual. The whole emphasis

of the section is that one must go 'at the right time', not remaining like a shrivelled, useless fruit. O'Neill copied the following from 'On Free Death' (see Appendix):

Unto many life is a failure, a poisonous worm eating thro'(sic) unto their heart. These aught to see that they succeed better in dying.

A successful death should be a compensation for a failed life, it should be an act of assertion. Even Zarathustra's Shadow is determined 'To live as I like or to live not at all' (The Shadow). In order to achieve Nietzsche's wish man must free himself from religious and social convention and be able to participate in 'free death'. This itself is allied to Yea-saying when Zarathustra says:

Free for death, and free in death! a holy Nay-sayer when there is no longer time for Yea: thus understandeth he about life and death.

(Of Free Death)

O'Neill certainly takes up this idea in Lazarus Laughed, particularly with the action of the followers of Lazarus in Rome when it has been commanded that they should be killed. Crassus gives report of the behaviour of the followers and is astonished at what has occurred. He hails Lazarus as 'the Great Laughter' and then recounts:

They did not wait for our attack. They charged upon us, laughing! They tore our swords away from us, laughing and we laughed with them! They stabbed themselves, dancing as though it were a festival! They died, laughing, in one another's arms.

(Act Two Scene Two)

The followers have chosen to die, they have answered Lazarus's laughter, his call as he awakens 'my beloved ones that their passing may be a symbol to the world that there is no death'. Here O'Neill is using the Nietzschean idea of free and voluntary death, but it is mixed with the statement in 'Of the Preachers of Death' that they are tempted away from

this life by promises of eternal life. O'Neill, too, takes the Nietzschean premise that Jesus was also seized with a longing for death although, in Zarathustra's opinion, He died too early. Had He lived longer He would, as Lazarus says, have learned to live and love the earth and laughter also. The laughter permeating both Zarathustra and Lazarus is not only the laughter which proclaims a Yea-saying and banishes death, but it also makes suicide a glorious act:

We will to die! We will to change! Laughing we lived with our gift, now with laughter give we back that gift to become again the Essence of the Giver! Dying we laugh with the Infinite! We are the Giver and the Gift! Laughing we will our own annihilation! Laughing, we give our lives for life's sake - ! This man must will as his end and his new beginning! He must conceive and desire his own passing as a mood of eternal laughter and cry with pride, 'Take back O God, and accept in turn a gift from me, my grateful blessing for Your gift - and see, O God, now I am laughing with You! I am Your laughter and You are mine!

(Act Two Scene Two)

This most consistently Nietzschean concept of death in O'Neill's plays is, of course, modified by Lazarus's own Christ-like emphasis on eternal life. It is the function and significance of the laughter which here has been changed by O'Neill. He actually presents joy arising out of suicide, death and laughter as an inextricable experience, while Nietzsche's emphasis is that of a colder and more calculated decision, with the choice of the right time to die as an exercise of determination and will power. In the preliminary notes for Lazarus Laughed (5) O'Neill writes:

Only those who wish for Death shall die. Those who in this life will themselves beyond life, live not for their own but for life's sake, for God's sake, shall retain their individuality.

But although he stresses the will here, on stage the wish for death and the will to die become an overwhelming emotional experience rather than a calculated decision.

(5) Lazarus Laughed ms. notes, American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

The inclusion of God as a motive for living and dying is a departure from Nietzsche, but at the same time in advocating suicide and presenting it as an act which is virtuous and desirable O'Neill is going against the teachings of the Christian church. There is, once more, this confusion in O'Neill's mind which results in inconsistencies in Lazarus Laughed as to whether Lazarus is a Christ figure or a Zarathustra. To claim that eternal life can be achieved, through the laughter and suicide, is deeply anti-Christian but neither does O'Neill explain through Lazarus what Nietzsche's views really are.

In the early plays, Before Breakfast and Diff'rent O'Neill contrives his endings in suicide but these are essentially melodramatic rather than significant in Nietzschean terms. So also are the suicides of the radio operator in In the Zone and Jack in Abortion. In these cases suicide provides a convenient, and unconvincing, ending to the plays. In Mourning Becomes Electra Christine's suicide is occasioned by her grief for Adam Brant, not a deliberate choice of death but rather a failure to cope with life. Vinnie explains it as insane grief over her husband, but there is the necessary element of justice which O'Neill had to incorporate in his version of the Orestiea - the death of Christine for the death of Ezra. Orin is accused of being too cowardly to kill himself, but he is driven to it by Vinnie and his warped delusion that she is speaking to him as his mother. His desire for death is motivated by the wish to have the peace he knew as a child, to return to the 'Island of Peace' where he thinks Christine will be waiting. These suicides are neither melodramatic, convenient nor Nietzschean, but a working out of O'Neill's adaptation of his source. In More Stately Mansions Simon says to Sara that he has thought of suicide:

Don't you think I know how that impulse fascinates you to make an end of suspense and gain forgetfulness and peace at any cost - to destroy oneself and be free!

(Act Three Scene One)

and this indicates a more realistic portrayal of thoughts about suicide and freedom. In Welded Cape is tempted by suicide when he turns to the prostitute in his revenge on Eleanor. His love for his wife cannot be quenched or destroyed, 'There is no death for it', he says and this leads him on to contemplate the only way to be free of it:

There is no freedom while I live. (Struck by a sudden thought) Then why - ? (A pause) An end of loathing - in a second, peace no wounds, no memories - sleep!

He shakes this idea away but then carries on:

A great temptation, isn't it? I suppose you've known it. But also the great evasion. Too simple for the complicated - too weak for the strong, too strong for the weak. One must go on, eh? even wounded on one's knees - if only out of curiosity to see what will happen - to oneself.

(Act II Scene 2)

In not resorting to suicide Cape is expressing similar emotions to those of John Loving, and later, to Larry; carrying on in spite of the disillusionment of life, seeing both sides, too weak to implement death. For both Cape and Loving O'Neill contrives a more hopeful, if less dramatically satisfying, future than that which exists for Larry.

In expressing death as an end, a sleep with no memories, Cape is stating a very different view from that of the eternal life of Lazarus Laughed. For Nietzsche death does not bring the glorious after-life but Eternal Recurrence. However, he does claim that man has '... at bottom a longing for Nothingness, for the end, for rest' (6). This Hamlet-like desire for sleep untroubled by dream or conscience is expressed in Days Without End by Loving who insists that his god of nothingness is what man must

(6) The Birth of Tragedy, 5

believe in. If John loses Elsa it is no use, Loving tells him, to go on living bravely in the hope that they will meet again in another existence. Life is pointless, 'a childish nose-thumbing at Nothingness at which Something laughs with a weary scorn!' and he tries to convince him that death is to be sought as an end in itself:

x

Death is not the dying. Dying is life, its last revenge itself. But death is what the dead know, the warm dark womb of Nothingness - the Dream in which you and Elsa may sleep as one forever, beyond fear of separation.

(Act Four Scene One)

This is in contrast to Father Baird's belief in the love of John and Elsa transcending the everyday reality through the love of God and a belief in eternal life. Loving makes many references to his god of nothingness:

There is nothing - nothing to hope for, nothing to fear - neither devils nor gods - nothing at all!

(Act One)

and of God's love triumphing over fear:

Old superstition, born of fear! Beyond death there is nothing. That, at least, is certain - a certainty we should be thankful for.

(Act One)

He indicates that one's sins are not remitted by entering the kingdom of Heaven but by death:

But there is always death to wash one's sins away - sleep, untroubled by Love's betraying dream!

(Act Two)

In an early draft of the play (7) Loving states in church:

There is no God! There is only death!
There is no pity! There is only scorn!

which is the Nietzschean concept relating God and pity. Loving's god in the final draft of the play is one of annihilation, of nothingness, of finality at death which is certainly not the Nietzschean view of eternal

(7) Days Without End ms. American Literature Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

recurrence after death. Tiberius, too, claims that beyond death there is nothing. He wants it to be 'eternal sleep' but he fears that 'one remembers there as here and cannot sleep, that the mind goes on eternally the same'. Lazarus states that one achieves peace in death, and at the feast at the beginning of the play the Fourth Guest quotes him as saying:

I have known my fill of life and the sorrow of living.
Soon I shall know peace.

(Act One Scene One)

This was before Lazarus 'died' and it would appear that he did achieve this peace but through the laughter of God and not an eternal sleep. O'Neill does depart from Nietzsche in his considerations of suicide and death. His own suicide attempt in 1912 shows what an important and real consideration suicide was in his life, and although he later tended to embellish his account of this attempt with farcical details, he felt strongly enough to write about it in Exorcism in 1919, a play which he subsequently destroyed after its initial performance. Whether his dissatisfaction was based on dramatic or personal considerations is not clear. In Days Without End the division of the two aspects of John Loving's character enables O'Neill to show the two views on suicide of the Church and of Nietzsche, but it would seem that he is, to a certain extent, dramatising his own confusions and desires and doubts about suicide, and his uncertainty about whether there really is an eternal life after death.

One of the most significant sections of Thus Spake Zarathustra is the vividly described account of Zarathustra's dream and its interpretation by one of his 'disciples'. Zarathustra tells that he had dreamt that he had renounced life and had become a nightwatchman in the 'lonely castle of death' in the mountain. He guarded the coffins of glass from which

'overcome life' stared at him. It was dark, lonely, and, like St. Peter, he held the bunch of keys with which to open the creaking doors. He heard a thundering at the door and when he attempted to open it:

Then an impetuous wind tore its two halves apart. Whistling whizzing and buzzing it threw a black coffin at me. And amidst the roaring and whistling and whizzing the coffin brake and spat out a thousand fold laughter. And out of a thousand caricatures of children, angels, owls, fools and butterflies as big as children, something laughed and mocked and roared at me. It made me sore afraid, it threw me down. And with terror I yelled, as never I yelled before.

(The Fortune Teller)

The disciple 'whom he loved most' says that this dream is a symbol of Zarathustra's purpose in life:

Art thou not thyself the wind with whizzing whistling, that openeth the doors of the castles of death? Art thou not thyself the coffin of many-coloured wickednesses and caricatures of the angels of life? Verily, like a thousandfold laughter of children Zarathustra entereth all chambers of the dead, laughing at those nightwatchmen and grave watchmen, and whoever else rattleth with gloomy keys. Thou wilt terrify and subvert them with thy laughter. Impotence and awakening will be proved by thy power over them. And even when the long dawn cometh, and the weariness of death, thou wilt not set in our sky, thou advocate of life.

He goes on to say that instead of death the laughter of children 'will spring forth from coffins' and so there is an explicit reference made to the connection between laughter and death, rather than, as elsewhere in Zarathustra laughter and Yea-saying. Zarathustra here is described as using the laughter to have power over those that fear death and over death itself, and this is significant in relation to O'Neill's use of death and laughter in Lazarus Laughed. This passage is Nietzsche's most lengthy reference to death and is important in that his particular concern in Zarathustra was with eternal recurrence rather than physical death and a concept of an after-life or eternal life in any Christian sense.

O'Neill uses many images of death in the plays, perhaps the earliest being that in Bound East for Cardiff when Yank sees 'A pretty lady dressed in black' as death comes to him amid the fog. Later, in The Fountain, when O'Neill is more obviously using Nietzschean ideas, Juan sees a figure appearing at the edge of the clearing:

... a tall woman's figure, like a piece of ancient sculpture, shrouded in long draperies of a blue that is almost black. The face is a pale mask with features indistinguishable save for the eyes that stare straight ahead with a stony penetration that sees through and beyond things.

(Scene Ten)

Juan is convinced that he is dying and is at first scornful of the figure thinking it to be an angel:

Or are you Death? Why, then, I have often laughed in your eyes! (Tauntingly) Off with your mask, coward! (Mockingly but uneasy) Delightful Lady, you are enigmatic. One must embrace you with bold arms, tear off your masquerade.

This is the Nietzschean acceptance of it being the right time to die but the figure then becomes transformed into Beatriz with her message of youth and life and so O'Neill is again trying to show that death does not exist. This play, the first of the specifically Nietzschean plays of the nineteen twenties, shows the first sign of a Nietzschean concept of life and death as the change from death to life is a continuing process; as Beatriz says in her final message, death is a mist veiling sunrise. Throughout Zarathustra, too, the sunrise is the symbol of the beginning of a new order and the Fourth Book ends with Zarathustra leaving his cave 'glowing and strong, like a morning sun coming out of the gloomy mountains'. In The Great God Brown, when Billy dies, Cybel tells him that when he wakes up the sun will be rising again and in Beyond the Horizon Andrew's death is at sunrise. He looks out over the hills and his freedom from life comes with the exclamation 'The Sun!'. This may sound more like an

echo of Oswald's cry at the end of Ibsen's Ghosts than Nietzsche's ending for Zarathustra, but it has some significance. The final scene of Days Without End takes place at dawn, with the light streaming through the stained glass in a 'brilliant intensity of crimson, green and gold as if the sun had risen'. The final lines of the play proclaim that 'Death is dead!' and so, like Lazarus, and Billy in Brown, death has become life and laughter. It would appear, then, that in the earlier plays than The Fountain O'Neill was using Nietzschean imagery for death without the imagery having significance as part of a philosophical argument, but by the twenties he had developed the Nietzschean concepts and used them variously in order to convey on stage, particularly in Lazarus Laughed, a number of Nietzsche's philosophical arguments and ideas.

More Stately Mansions, written much later, gives another image of death when Deborah tells Gadsby, the lawyer, about her feelings after the death of her husband. He, she says, had seemed impatient to die 'as though he had an important appointment with God to discuss terms for the export of his soul, and life was needlessly detaining him'. Then, she goes on, there was nothing:

Did I think death would be something in itself - a beginning, not just the end of life? Did I expect Death to open the door and enter the room, visible to me, the good King of Life come at last to escort one into his palace of peace, a lover keeping a life-promised tryst? If life had meaning, then we might properly expect its end to have as much significance as the period at the close of a simple sentence, say. But it has no meaning, and death is no more than a muddy well into which I and a dead cat are cast aside indifferently.

(Act One Scene Two)

Deborah's picture of death as a king and lover is in keeping with her earlier delusions about being a courtesan in the French court, but her disillusionment and apparent indifference to death are unique in O'Neill's

plays, for even Larry's feigned indifference proves to be false whereas Deborah's twisted views of life and death are carried through to the end of the play when she locks herself away in the summerhouse.

If, indeed, life has little significance and it is a process of long dyings, as both O'Neill and Nietzsche seem to indicate, are there no redeeming features? For Nietzsche the triumph of the superman seems a way in which the insignificance of man's understanding of life can be overcome, but O'Neill has other solutions. He seems to think that, given the miseries of life which man has to endure, the possible answer to making life bearable is to strive for happiness, and this happiness is again related to a Nietzschean viewpoint. O'Neill's intention is particularly expressed in an interview given to Malcolm Mollan, his former city editor on the New London Telegraph. In his article in 1922 'Making Plays with a Tragic End' (8), Mollan records O'Neill saying that he would:

... write about happiness if I ever happened to meet up with that luxury, and find it sufficiently dramatic and in harmony with any deep rhythm of life. But happiness is a word! What does it mean? Exaltation; an intensified feeling of the significant worth of man's being and becoming? Well, if it means that - and not a mere smirking contentment with one's lot - then I know there is more of it in one real tragedy than in all the happy-ending plays ever written. It is a sheer present-day judgement to think of tragedy as unhappy! The Greeks and Elizabethans knew better. They felt a tremendous lift to it. It roused them spiritually to a deeper understanding of life. Through it they found a release from the petty considerations of everyday existence. They saw their lives ennobled by it.

This view of tragedy and its relation to man's experience of happiness is related to that expressed by Nietzsche in The Birth of Tragedy, as well as to the accepted opinion of both Classical and Shakespearian scholars.

(8) Shaeffer Son and Artist p. 72

The optimistic nature of tragedy, the establishment of a new order out of seemingly dire events, the fundamental understanding of the tragic hero are all considered by Nietzsche. In his explanation of the change and development of Greek tragedy Nietzsche felt that true tragedy had 'died by suicide' with the innovations of Euripides, and this, bizarre in expression though it may be, is similar to O'Neill's interview with Mollan. The death of the Dionysian and Apollonian conflict in tragedy led towards a new kind of hero who ran the risk 'of forfeiting our tragic pity' by his logic and argument and explanation of his actions. This, for Nietzsche, was the ousting of the spontaneous Dionysian spirit which had given birth to drama and it was the beginning of drama's own move to self-destruction 'even to the death-leap into the bourgeois drama'. Once man had made the move away from a mystical, mythical apprehension of drama then the tragic hero simply became an expositor of optimism unrelated to true tragedy. This debasement of drama is expressed in Nietzsche's view of the 'bourgeois' requirements for happiness:

The passing moment, wit, levity, and caprice, are its highest deities; the fifth class, that of the slaves, now attains to power, at least in sentiment: and if we can still speak at all of 'Greek cheerfulness' it is the cheerfulness of the slave who has nothing of consequence to answer for, nothing great to strive for, and cannot value anything of the past or future higher than the present.

(The Birth of Tragedy 11)

O'Neill's own antipathy to the 'Broadway show-shop' and his strong anger towards critics who felt that he had written a 'happy ending' play in Anna Christie is obviously part of his view of the nature of true drama; very different from the 'smirking contentment' that an average audience requires. What O'Neill wanted to achieve in his dramas of life and death was a true understanding on the part of his audience of the true meaning of life, not merely an audience entertained for the evening.

Nevertheless, in his plays O'Neill does make references to happiness and what it means and these are not always in keeping with his high dramatic ideals. Real happiness may be that which Nietzsche's 'slaves' cannot experience, but it does provide an impetus for some of O'Neill's characters.

In Strange Interlude Mrs Evans states that without a belief in God:

Being happy, that's the nearest we can ever come to
knowing what's good! Being happy! That's good! The
rest is just talk!

(Act Three)

It is this advice which Nina follows and which leads her into the destruction of Sam's child and her affair with Darrell. She wanted true happiness in her relationship with her son but she never achieves it so the search for happiness is not fulfilled in this play. Tiberius, too, wants to know happiness - 'How must we live? Wherein lies happiness?' (Act Four Scene Two) and this time the answer is to be found in Lazarus's affirmation of life. He calls to Tiberius as he is burning: 'Life! Eternity! Stars and dust! God's Eternal Laughter!'. True happiness here is to become a Yea-sayer and a believer and this is perhaps closer to Nietzsche's idea of what constitutes the truly tragic.

In Thus Spake Zarathustra, however, Nietzsche also indicates that happiness can also be inspired by little things:

Just what is least, gentlest, lightest, the rustling
of a lizard, a breath, a moment, a twinkling of the
eye, - little maketh the quality of the best happiness.

(At Noon)

To appreciate the significance of such moments one must have the right attitude to happiness and that is expressed in The Joyful Wisdom. Nietzsche shows that to achieve it one must be prepared to come to terms with life and be a Yea-sayer:

To have fine senses and a fine taste! to be accustomed to the select and the intellectually best as our proper and readiest fare; to be blessed with a strong, bold, and daring soul; to go through life with a quiet eye and a firm step, ever ready for the worst as for a festival, and full of longing for undiscovered worlds and seas, men and Gods; to listen to all joyous music, as if there, perhaps, brave men, soldiers and sea-farers, took a brief repose and enjoyment, and in the profoundest pleasure of the moment were overcome with tears and the whole purple melancholy of happiness: who would not like all this to be his possession, his condition!

(Book Fourth 302)

But, he says, if one has this happiness 'one is more liable to suffering than any other creature under the sun!'. Happiness is only to be purchased at the price of suffering, and this, surely, is what O'Neill is attempting to convey in the plays and convey to the audience.

Simon Hartford makes one of the most consistently Nietzschean speeches in O'Neill's work when he is speculating about ways to get rid of Sara. His calculating certainty horrifies Deborah but his lucid explanation is in many ways a summing up of some of O'Neill's attitudes to life and death as he tries to express them in the plays, although it does deny the hope and happiness that he tries to convey in Lazarus Laughed. Simon says:

I am alive to life as it is behind our hypocritical pretences and our weak sentimental moral evasions of our natural selves. I am not frightened by the bad names we have called certain acts, which in themselves are perfectly logical - the killing of one's enemies, for example. Our whole cowardly moral code about murder is but another example of the stupid insane compulsion of man's petty vanity to believe human lives are valuable, and related to some God-inspired meaning. But the obvious fact is that their lives are without any meaning whatever - that human life is a silly disappointment, a liar's promise, a perpetual in-bankruptcy for debts we never contracted, a daily appointment with peace and happiness in which we wait day after day, hoping against hope, and when finally the bride or the bridegroom cometh, we discover we are kissing Death.

(Act Three Scene Two)

This may be a truly Nietzschean view of life, but O'Neill has shown in his plays that the lives of individuals do have value and meaning and that such immensities as life and death are not only subject to Nietzsche's philosophy. True happiness can be experienced through a deeper understanding of life, and it can be conveyed and experienced through dramatic form. In spite of Barrett Clark's comment (9), O'Neill's plays are an attempt to return to the 'optimism' of Greek tragedy, particularly in Lazarus Laughed, where O'Neill is attempting to offer to the theatre what Nietzsche had hoped Wagner would achieve - a new 'tragic age' where the 'highest art in the Yea-saying to life, tragedy, will be born anew' (10). This, however, is not achieved in that O'Neill tends to blur the Nietzschean purity of argument when he incorporates the idea of a Christian God, no matter how ill-defined, particularly in his thoughts about eternal life. Perhaps O'Neill might have come closer to his desired new age in drama if he had made a consistent exposition of a particular philosophical idea, whether it be his own or Nietzsche's, rather than an amalgam of many ideas, but such a consistency would not have been so dramatically effective or so fascinating in its variety as that which O'Neill managed to achieve. By representing differences as well as similarities in his transfer of Nietzsche's concepts of life and death to the stage, O'Neill created a number of plays whose characters can truly be said to have experienced 'Life' and who present the audience with highly emotive and intellectually stimulating propositions about what 'Death' really might mean.

(9) Clark op. cit. p. 113

(10) The Birth of Tragedy Appendix 4

APPENDIX

Transcription of O'Neill's Notes

'Life is hard to bear.' But do not pretend to be so frail! We are all good he-asses and she-asses of burden.

(Of Reading and Writing)

Alas, I have known noble ones who lost their highest hope, and then they slandered all high hopes.

Then they lived insolently in brief pleasure, and scarcely made any of their goals beyond the day.

'Spirit is voluptuousness also' - said they. Then they broke the wings of their spirit: now it creepeth about and soileth whilst it gnaweth.

Once they thought of becoming heroes: men of pleasure they are now. A hero is a grief and a horror for them.

But my love and hope I conjure thee: throw not away the hero in thy soul! Keep holy the highest hope!

(Of The Tree at the Hill)

Full is earth of superfluous ones, spoiled is life by the much-too-many. Would they could be tempted away from this life by 'eternal life'.

(Of the Preachers of Death)

Let your love unto life be love unto your highest hope: and your highest hope the highest thought of your life.

(Of War and Warriors)

The State - the idol of the superfluous.

(Of the New Idol)

The folk little understand what is great - what createth ... the world revolveth round the inventors of new values - invisibly it revolveth. But the folk and glory revolve round actors - such is life.

(Of the Flies of the Market)

- as aimiable. But that hath ever been the prudence of cowards. Ay, cowards are prudent.

They think much about thee with their narrow souls, thou art ever suspected of them. Whatever is much reflected upon, becometh suspected.

They feel themselves to be small before thee, and their lowness glimmereth and gloweth in invisible revenge against thee.

... for they are unworthy of thee. That is why they hate thee and would fain suck thy blood.

Thy neighbours will always be poisonous flies. That which is great in thee - that itself must make them still more poisonous and ever more like flies.

Fly, my friend, into thy loneliness and where the rough strong wind bloweth. It is not thy lot to be a fly brush.'

(Of the Flies of the Market)

Not when truth is dirty, but, when it is shallow, doth he who perceiveth dislike to step into its water.

(Of Chastity)

Unable to endure yourselves and not loving yourselves enough: you seek to wheedle your neighbour into loving you and thus to gild you with his error.

Ye invite a witness, if ye wish to speak well of yourselves, and having wheedled him into thinking well of you, ye thing well of yourselves also. Your bad love for yourselves make for yourselves a prison out of solitude.

(Of Love for One's Neighbour)

Canst thou give thyself thine evil and thy good, hanging thy will above thee as a law? Canst thou be thine own judge and the avenger of thine own law?

'How could ye be just unto me' thou hast to say (to the 'good' people) 'I choose your injustice as my portion.

Beware of the good and just! They would fain crucify those who invent their own standard of virtue, - they hate the lonely one.

O lonely one, thou goest the way of the creator: thou wilt create for thyself a God out of thy seven devils.

(Of the Way of a Creator)

Say where is justice to be found which is love with seeing eyes? Arise!
invest that justice which acquitteth all except the judge.

(Of the Bite of the Adder)

'Give me, woman, thy little truth' I said, and thus spake the little old
woman: 'Thou goest to women? Remember thy whip!'

(Of Little Women Old and Young)

Marriage: thus I call the will of two to create that which is more than
they who created it. I call marriage reverence unto each other as unto
those who will such a will.

Let this be the significance and the truth of thy marriage. But that
which the much-too-many call marriage, those superfluous - alas, what
call I that?

Alas! that soul's poverty of two! Alas! that soul's dirt of two! Alas!
that miserable ease of two!

Marriage they call that; and they say marriage is made in heaven.

Well I like it not, that heaven of the superfluous! Nay, I like them not,
those animals caught in heavenly nets.

Far from me also be the God who cometh halting to bless what he did not
join together.

Laugh not at such marriages! What child hath not reason to weep over its
parents!

Yea, I wish the earth would tremble with convulsions whenever a saint and
a goose couple.

This one went out for truths like a hero and at last he secured a little
dressed-up lie. He calleth it his marriage.

Many short follies - that is what ye call love. And your marriage maketh
an end of many short follies - being one long stupidity. Child and
Marriage - Zarathustra

(Of Child and Marriage)

I praise unto you my death, free death, which cometh because I will.
Unto many life is a failure, a poisonous worm eating thro' unto their
heart. These ought to see to it that they succeed better in dying.
Much-too-many live and much-too-long they stick unto their branches.
Would that storm came to shake from the tree all that is putrid and gnawed
by worms. Would that the preachers of swift death came! But I hear only
slow death preached and patience with all that is 'earthly'.

(Of Free Death)

Alas! ye preach patience with what is earthly? What is earthly hath too
much patience with you, ye revilers!

When Jesus the Hebrew knew only the tears and melancholy of the Hebrew,
together with hatred for the 'good and just', - then a longing for death
surprised him ... Perhaps he would have learnt how to live and love the
earth - and laugh besides.

Believe me, my brethren, he died too early. He himself would have revoked
his doctrine. Noble enough to revoke he was.

(Of Free Death)

Thus I would die myself, that ye friends for my sake may love the earth more than before; and I would become dust again, in order to have rest in earth which gave me birth.

(Of Free Death)

Let your spirit and your virtue serve the significance of earth; and let the value of all things be fixed anew by yourselves.

(Of Giving Virtue)

God is a supposition; but I would have your supposing reach no further than your creative will.
Could ye create a God? Then be silent concerning all Gods! But we could very well create beyond-man.
Not yourselves perhaps, my brethren! But ye could create yourselves into fathers and forefathers of beyond-man: and let this be your best creating.
God is a supposition; but I would have your supposition limited by conceivableness.
Could ye conceive a God? - But let this be for you will unto truth, that all be turned into something conceivable, visible, tangible for men!
And what ye called world hath still to be created by you; it shall become your reason, your image, your will, your love itself.

(On the Blissful Islands)

Creating - that is the great salvation from suffering, and an alleviation of life. But for the existence of the creator pain and much transformation are necessary.

(On the Blissful Islands)

Since man came into existence he hath had too little joy. That alone, my brethren, is our original sin.
- remorse of conscience teacheth to bite.
But the worst are petty thoughts. Verily it is still better to act wickedly than to think pettily.
It is difficult to live with men, because silence is so difficult.

(Of the Pitiful)

Alas! where in the world have greater follies happened than with the pitiful? And what in the world hath done more harm than the follies of the pitiful?
Thus the devil once said unto me: 'Even God hath his own hell: that is his love unto men'.
And recently I heard the word said: 'God is dead; he hath died of his pity for men.'
But remember this also: All great love is lifted above all pity; for it seeketh to create what it loveth!
Myself I sacrifice unto my love, and my neighbour as myself.' thus runneth the speech of all creators.
But all creators are hard.

(Of the Pitiful)

... Prisoners they are for me, and branded ones. He whom they call Saviour put them into fetters.
Into the fetters of false values and illusory words! O that someone would save them from their saviour!
False values and illusory words: these are the worst monsters for mortals - in them doom slumbereth and waiteth long.
Oh, look at the tabernacles made by these priests! Churches they call their sweetly smelling dens.
Oh, that falsified air, that heavy air! This place where the soul is - not allowed to fly upwards unto its height!
Who created for himself such dens and stairs of penitence? Was it not such as sought to hide themselves and were ashamed of the clear sky? And not until the clear sky shall look again thro' broken ceilings and down on grass and red poppy growing by broken walls - shall I again turn my heart unto the places of their God.
And they did not know how to love their God otherwise than by fixing man unto the cross.
And he who liveth nigh unto them, liveth nigh unto the black ponds from which the toad singeth its song in sweet melancholy.
In order that I might learn to believe in their Saviour they ought to sing better songs, and his disciples ought to look saved-like.
The mind of these saviours consisted of voids, but into every void they had put their illusion, their stop-gap whom they called God. In their pity their mind was drowned, and when they swelled over from pity, at the surface there always swam a great folly.
Eagerly and with much crying they drove their flock over their wooden bridge, as if there were only a single bridge into the future! Verily those herdsmen also were of the sheep!

(Of Priests)

Ye wish to be paid in addition, ye virtuous! Ye wish reward for virtue, heaven for earths, and eternity for your today.
And now ye are angry at my teaching that there is no reward and pay-master.
And there are others who are wound up like watches; they go on ticking and wish that ticking to be called virtue.

(Of the Virtuous)

But that ye, my friends, may become weary of the old words which ye have learnt from fools and liars.
Weary of the words 'reward' 'punishment' 'revenge in justice'.
Weary of saying: 'That an action is good, springeth from its being unselfish'.
Alas, my friends! That your self be in your action as a mother is in the child, that shall be for me your word of virtue!

(Of the Virtuous)

And many a one who turned away from life only turned away from the rabble; he cared not to share with them well and fire and fruit.

(Of the Rabble)

Revenge will we take, and aspersion will we cast on all who are not like us' - this the Tarantulae-hearts pledge unto themselves. And 'will unto equality' - that itself shall in the future become the name of virtue; and we will raise our clamour against everything that hath power.'

Ye preachers of equality, the tyrant-insanity of impotency thus crieth out of yourselves for 'equality'.

And if they call themselves 'the good and just' forget not that to be Pharisees they lack nothing but - power!

For within me justice saith: 'Men are not equal! Neither shall they become so!'

(Of Tarantulae)

Free from the happiness of slaves; saved from Gods and adorations; fearless and fear-inspiring; great and lonely; this is the will of the truthful one.

(Of the Famous Wise Men)

Thou willest, thou desirest, thou lovest; therefore only thou praisest life.

(The Dance-Song)

What is believed by the folk as good and evil betrayeth unto me an old will unto power.

(Of Self-Overcoming)

But where I found living things, there also I heard the speech of obedience.

All living things are things that obey.

And this is the second: He is commanded who cannot obey his own self.

This is the way of living things.

Wherever I found living matter I found will unto power; and even in the will of the serving, I found the will to be the master.

He wisheth to be master over what is still weaker.

(Of Self-Overcoming)

And this secret did life itself utter unto me: 'Behold', it said, 'I am whatever must surpass itself'.

(Of Self-Overcoming)

Verily, I tell you: good and evil, which would be imperishable, - do not exist! Of themselves they must ever again surpass themselves. And he who would be a creator in good and evil - Verily he must first be a destroyer, and break values into pieces.

(Of Self-Overcoming)

Unto my children shall I make amends for being the child of my fathers;
and unto all the future shall I make amends for this present.

(Of the Country of Culture)

Oh, ye sentimental dissemblers, ye lascivious! Ye lack innocence in
desire, and therefore ye backbite desire.
Verily, not as creators, procreators, happy in becoming, ye love earth!
Where is beauty? ... where I must love and perish in order that an image
may not remain an image only.

(Of Immaculate Perception)

Dare first to believe yourselves - yourselves and your intestines! He who
doth not believe himself lieth ever.

(Of Immaculate Perception)

Verily, like the sun I love life and all deep seas.
And this is called perception by myself: all that is deep shall be raised
upwards - unto my height.

(Of Immaculate Perception)

(Of Scholars) Like such as stand in the street and gaze at the folk
passing - thus they tarry and gaze at the thoughts thought by others.

(Of Scholars)

And when I lived among them I lived above them. Therefore they became
angry at me.

(Of Scholars)

I am of today and of the past; but something is within me of tomorrow
and the day after tomorrow and the far future.

(Of Poets)

The world doth not revolve round the inventors of new noise, but round
the inventors of new values; inaudibly it turneth.
The state is a hypocritical dog like thyself; like thyself it liketh to
speak with smoke and roaring, - in order to make believe, like thee, that
it speaketh out of the womb of things.

(Of Great Events)

I am favorable and sympathetic towards him (the Conceited One) because
of his modesty.
From you he wishes to learn his belief in himself; he feedeth from your
glances, he eateth praise off your hands.
He even believeth your lies when ye lie well about him. For in its depths
his heart sigheth: 'What am I!'

(Of Manly Prudence)

'I am a wanderer and a mountain climber' said he unto his heart. 'I like not the plains, and it seemeth I cannot long sit still'. And whatever may become my fate and experience, - a wandering and a mountain-climbing will be part of it. In the end one experienceth nothing but oneself.

(The Wanderer)

And where there is no great love unto oneself, it is a sign of child-bearing.

(Of Involuntary Bliss)

'Happiness runneth after me. That resulteth from my not running after women. Happiness is a woman.'

(Of Involuntary Bliss)

And among men also I hate most all eaves-droppers and half-and-half ones and doubting, tardy, wandering clouds.
And he who cannot bless shall learn how to curse.

(Before Sunrise)

For all things are baptised at the well of eternity, and beyond good and evil. But good and evil themselves are but inter-shadows and damp afflictions and wandering clouds.

In all things one thing is impossible - reasonableness!

A litte of wisdom is well possible. But this blissful security I found in all things: they rather like to dance with chance's feet.

(Before Sunrise)

Everywhere I see lower doorways. He who is of my kin, can still pass through them, but he must stoop!

I pass through these folk and keep mine eyes open. The folk do not forgive me for not being envious of their virtues.

They bite at me because I say unto them: 'For small folk virtues are requisite' and because it is hard for me to understand that small folk are requisite!

Unto small virtue they would fain allure me and draw me by praising. To share the tickling of their small happiness, they would fain persuade my foot.

I walk through these folk and keep mine eyes open. They have become smaller and are becoming ever smaller. And the reason of that is their doctrine of happiness and virtue.

They are desirous of ease. But with ease only modest virtue is compatible. Some of them will, but the most are willed merely. Some are genuine but most are bad actors.

There are unconscious actors among them, and involuntary actors. The genuine are always rare.

And this hypocrisy I found to be worst among them, that even those who command feign the virtues of those who serve.

'I serve, thou servest, we serve' Thus the hypocrisy of the rulers prayeth. And, alas, if the highest lord be merely the highest servant! For them virtue is what maketh modest and tame. Thereby they have made man himself man's best domestic animal.

... Among them there were wiselings enough, whose voices grate mine ear like slate-pencils.

And when I cry: 'Curse all cowardly devils within yourselves who would fain whine and fold their hands and adore,' they cry: 'Zarathustra is ungodly.'

And so chiefly their teachers of submission cry. But into their ears I rejoice to cry: 'Yea! I am Zarathustra the ungodly.'

These teachers of submission! Like lice they creep wherever things are small and sick and scabbed.

And all those are my like who give themselves a will of their own and renounce all submission.

First of all be such as love themselves with great love, with great contempt.

(Of Virtue that Maketh Smaller)

Spit on this town of shopkeepers and turn round!

Here the blood floweth rotten and lukewarm and with a scum thro' (through) all veins. Spit at the great city, which is the great rubbish heap where all the scum simmereth together.

Spit at this town of the pressed-in souls and the narrow breasts, the pointed eyes and sticky fingers -

At this town of obtruders, impudent ones, writers and bawlers, where all is tainted and feigned and over mellow.

Spit at the great city and turn round. The raging fool in (Of Passing)

Where one can love no longer one shall - pass!

(Of Passing)

But it is a shame to pray! Not for all, but for thee and me and him who hath his conscience in his head. For thee it is a shame to pray!

Thou knowest it well: thy cowardly devil within thee who would fain fold his hands and lay them in his lap and have things made easier - this cowardly devil persuadeth thee 'there is a God'.

(Of Apostates)

Verily it will one day be my death that I choke with laughter, when seeing asses drunken, and hearing night watchmen argue about God.

Hath not the time passed long since for all such doubts? Who may at this time of day awaken such old things which have fallen asleep and shunned the light?

For the old Gods came to an end long ago.

They died of laughter when a God himself said the most ungodly words ever uttered: 'There is one God. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'

An old grim beard of a God, a jealous one, forgot himself thus.

(Of Apostates)

Especially those who call themselves 'the good' I found to be the most poisonous flies. They sting in all innocence, they lie in all innocence. How could they be just unto me!
For the stupidity of the good is unfathomable.

(Return Homeward)

He who taught to bless, taught also to curse. Which are the 3 best cursed things in the world?

'Voluptuousness' - 'thirst for power' - 'selfishness'

'Voluptuousness' - unto all despisers of body who wear penance shirts, a sting and stake, and cursed as a 'world' by all back-worlds-men. For it mocketh at, and maketh fools of, all teachers of confusion and heresy. For the rabble the slow fire on which they are burnt. For free hearts innocent and free, the garden-joy of earth, the overflowing of all the future towards the present.

'Thirst of power' - the terrible teacher of the great contempt which preacheth: 'Away with thee' in the very face of cities and empires, until a cry cometh out of themselves: 'Away with me'

'Selfishness' - whether one be servile before Gods and divine kicks; whether he be so before men and silly human opinions - at all the slave tribe it spitteth, that blessed selfishness.

(Of the Three Evil Ones)

One must learn to love one's self - thus I teach - with a whole and healthy love, that one may find life with one's self enduring, and not go gadding about.

Such a gadding about baptizeth itself 'love unto one's neighbour'

To learn to love one's self is the finest, cunningest, last and most patient of arts.

(Of the Spirit of Gravity)

Almost in the cradle we are given heavy words and values. 'Good' and 'Evil' that cradle-gift is called.

And we - we carry faithfully what we are given, on hard shoulders over rough mountains! And when perspiring we are told, 'Yea, life is hard to bear'.

But man himself only is hard to bear! The reason is that he carrieth too many strange things on his shoulders. Too many strange heavy words and values he taketh upon his shoulders.

But he hath discovered himself who saith: 'This is my good and evil.' Thereby he hath made mute the mole and the dwarf who saith: 'Good for all, evil for all'.

Verily neither like I the all-contented. All-contentedness that knoweth how to taste everything that is not the best taste.

To chew and digest everything - that is the proper way of swine.

To say always Hee-haw - that hath been learnt by the ass alone and creatures of his kidney.

To sit on high masts of perception seemeth unto me no small bliss.

'This - is my way - where is yours?' I answered those who asked me 'for the way' - 'For the way - existeth not.'

(Of the Spirit of Gravity)

When I came unto men, I found them sitting on an old conceit. All of them thought they had long known what was good and evil. It is the creator who createth the fact that things are good and evil.

(Of Old and New Tables)

To redeem what is past in man and to transvalue every 'It was' until will saith 'Thus I willed. Thus shall I will.'

(Of Old and New Tables)

Thus my great love unto the most remote commandeth: 'Spare not thy neighbour! Man is a something that must be surpassed.'
Thus willeth the tribe of noble souls: they wish not to have anything for nothing, least of all, life.

(Of Old and New Tables)

'Good' men never speak the truth. All that is called evil by the 'good' must come together in order that one truth be born. O my brethren, are ye evil for this truth?

(Of Old and New Tables)

They mistrusted all fortune-tellers and astrologers, and therefore they believed: 'All is freedom. Thou canst; for thou wilt.'

(Of Old and New Tables)

For one day it might come to pass that the mob would become master, and all time be drowned in shallow waters.
Therefore, O my brethren, a new nobility is requisite which is opposed unto all mob and all that is tyrannic and writeth on new tables the word 'noble'.

For many noble ones are requisite, and noble ones of many kinds, in order that there be nobility. Or as I said once in a figure: 'That exactly is godliness, that there are Gods but no God'.

(Of Old and New Tables)

O my brethren, not backward shall your nobility gaze, but forward. Expelled ye shall be from all fathers and forefathers lands. Your children's land ye shall love, (be this love your new nobility) the land undiscovered, in the remotest sea. For it I bid your sails seek and seek.

In your children ye shall make amends for being your fathers' children. Thus ye shall redeem all that is past.

(Of Old and New Tables)

It is wisdom that much in the world smelleth ill. Loathing itself createth wings.

(Of Old and New Tables)

Unto their ears (the weary of the world) it soundeth lovely when there
is preached: 'Nothing is worthwhile. Ye shall not will'
But there is a sermon unto slavery.
Willing delivereth! For willing is creating.

(Of Old and New Tables)

O my brethren, say, am I cruel? But I say: 'What is falling already shall
be struck down'
The All of today - it falleth, it decayeth. Who would keep it?
But I - I will strike it down besides.
And him whom ye do not teach to fly, teach - how to fall quicker!

(Of Old and New Tables)

The 'good' must crucify him who inventeth his own virtue! That is the
truth. The creator they hate most - him who breaketh tables and old
values, the breaker. They call him a criminal.
For the good cannot create. They are always the beginning of the end.
They crucify him who writeth new values on new tables. They sacrifice
unto themselves the future: they crucify the whole human future.

(Of Old and New Tables)

Now I die and vanish and in a moment I shall be nothing. Souls are as
mortal as bodies.
But the knot of causes recurrereth in which I am twined. It will create me
again. I myself belong unto the causes of eternal recurrence.
I come back not for a new life, or a better life, or an eternal life, but
back eternally unto this one and the same life, in the greatest and the
smallest things.

(The Convalescent One)

There is no harder lot in all human fate, that when the powerful of the
earth are not at the same time the first men. There everything becometh
false and warped and monstrous. The price of the mob riseth and riseth
and at last the virtue of the mob saith: 'I alone am virtue'.

(Conversation with the Kings)

Heed not, call me as thou chooseth, I am he that I must be. But I call
myself Zarathustra.

(The Leech)

Myself, it is true. I have not yet seen a great man. What is great, for
that today the eye of the finest is crude. It is the kingdom of the mob.
Many a one I have found who strained himself and puffed himself up. And
the folk cried 'Behold a great man.' But of what good are any bellows?
At last the wind escapeth from them.
Today is of the mob.

(The Wizard)

- another necromancer is fated to cross my path, some sorcerer with laying on of hands; an obscure wonderworker by the grace of God, an anointed calumniator of the world whom the devil seize!
But the devil is never on the spot proper for him. He always cometh too late that cursed dwarf and club-foot!

(Off Duty)

'What knowth all the world today? asked Z 'Is it that the old God liveth no more, in whom all the world once believed?' 'Thou sayest it' answered the old pope sadly 'And I served this old God until his last hour.
- Thou knowest how he died? Is it true what folk say, that he was suffocated by pity? Thus he saw how man hung on the cross and could not endure that his love unto man should become his hell and at last his death. He was a hidden God, full of secrecy. Verily, even his son he begat not otherwise than by a secret way. At the door of belief in him standeth adultery.

Whoever praiseth him as a God of love, thinketh not highly enough of love itself. Did that God not also wish to be a judge? But the loving one loveth beyond reward and retaliation.

When he was young, that God from the East, he was hard and revengeful, and built up his hell for the delight of those he loved best. But at last he grew old and soft and mellow, weary of the world, weary of will, and one day suffocated by his all-too-great pity.

(Off Duty)

I love everything that gazeth brightly and speaketh honestly. But he - thou knowest well, thou old priest, there was something of thy tribe in him, of the priestly tribe. He had many meanings. Besides, he was indistinct. How angry he was with us because he thought we understood him ill. But why did he not speak more clearly?

(Off Duty)

And if the fault was of our ears, why did he give us ears that heard badly? And if there was mud in our ears, go to! who had put it there? In too many things he failed, this potter who had not served his apprenticeship! But in taking revenge on his pots and creations, for having turned out ill, he committed a sin against good taste.

There is good taste in piety also. And at last that good taste said: 'Away with such a God! Rather have no God, rather be a fate for one's self, rather be a fool, rather be God one's self!'

But the old God liveth no more. He is quite dead.' Zarathustra to the Last Pope. 'Off Duty'

(Off Duty)

Be it a God's, be it men's pity: pity is contrartry to shame. And not to will to help may be nobler than that virtue which readily giveth assistance. But that is today called virtue indeed by all petty folks: (viz.) pity. They feel no reverence for great misfortunes, for great ugliness, for great failure.

Over all these I gaze into the distance, as a dog gazeth over the backs of dense flocks of sheep.

They are petty folk with good work and good will.
As a heron gazeth scornfully over shallow ponds, with its head laid back,
thus I gaze on the dense crowd of gray small waves and wills and souls.

(The Ugliest Man)

Too long have they been admitted to the right, these petty folk. Thus at last they have also been given power. Now they teach: 'Good is only what the petty folk approve.'

And it is today called truth what that preacher hath said, who sprung from themselves, that strange saint and advocate of the petty folk who proclaimed of himself: 'I, I am the truth.'

(The Ugliest Man)

If anything in me is virtue, it is that I had no fear in the presence of any prohibition. I unlearned the belief in words and values and great names.

(The Shadow)

'To live as I like, or to live not at all' thus I will, thus even the holiest one willeth.

Only he who knoweth whither he saileth, knoweth also what wind is good and what is his fair wind.

What is left unto me? A heart weary and insolent; an unstable will, fluttering wings, a broken back-bone.

(Z says to him) Thou hast lost thy goal. Alas how wilt thou bear and brook that loss? By it thou has also lost the way.

(The Shadow)

Just what is least, gentlest, lightest, the rustling of a lizard, a breath, a moment, a twinkling of the eye - little maketh the quality of the best happiness

(At Noon)

'O sky above me! Thou gazest at me! Thou hearkenest unto my strange soul? When drinkest thou this drop of dew that hath fallen down all all things earthly? When drinkest thou this strange soul? When, well of eternity? Thou gay, shuddering abyss of noon! When drinkest thou my soul back into thyself?

(At Noon)

But with the new morning a new truth came unto me. Then I learned to say: 'What matter for me market and mob, and mob's noise and the mob's long ears?'

'Ye higher men' - thus the mob blink - there are no higher men; we are all equal; man is man; in the presence of God we are all equal!

(Of Higher Man)

For today the petty folk have become master. They all preach submission and resignation and policy and diligence and regard and the long etcetera of petty virtues.

Surpass, ye higher men, the petty virtues, the petty policies, the grains-of-sand-regards, the swarming of ants, the miserable ease, the 'happiness of the greatest number'. And rather despair than give in!
In the market place one convinceth by gestures. But reasons make the mob mistrustful.

(Of Higher Man)

Be not virtuous beyond your ability! And demand nothing of [from] yourselves contrary unto probability!
In loneliness groweth whatever is brought by one into it, including the inter beast also. On account of that, many are counselled against loneliness!
And if ye have failed in great things are ye, for that reason, yourselves a failure?
The higher its kin is, the seldomer doth a thing succeed. Be of good cheer! What matter? How many things are still possible! Learn to laugh at yourselves as one must laugh!

(Of Higher Man)

The desert groweth. Woe unto him who containeth deserts!

(Among Daughters of the Desert)

Hath he not created the world after his own image - as stupid as possible?

(The Awakening)

True, if you become not like the little children, ye will not go into that kingdom of heaven.' (And Zarathustra pointed upward with his hands.)
But we do not want to go into that kingdom of heaven! We have become men.
Thus we will the kingdom of earth.

(The Ass Festival)

For the sake of this day, I am for the first time content to have lived the whole of life. It is worthwhile to live on earth. One day, one festival with Z. taught me to love earth. 'Hath that been life?' I shall say unto death 'Up! Once More!'

(The Drunken Song)

If ye ever wanted to have one time twice, if ye ever said 'Thou pleasest me, O Happiness, O instant, O moment!' ye wished everything to come back. Everything anew, everything eternal, everything chained, knotted, in love. Oh! thus ye loved the world!
Ye eternal ones, ye love it eternally and for all time.
And even unto woe ye say: 'Pass, go, but return! For eternity's sought by all delight.

(The Drunken Song)

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FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

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