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Matter of Justice and feeling of Tragedy in Leo Tolstoy's "Three Questions",

"The Bird" and "God Sees the Truth, but Waits"

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Letter of Recommendation

Deepa Bhandari has completed her thesis on ““Matter of Justice and Feeling of Tragedy in Leo Tolstoy’s “Three Questions”, “The Bird” and “God Sees the Truth, but Waits”” under my supervision. She carried out this research paper from November 2016 to February 2017. I hereby recommend her thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This Thesis entitled ““Matter of Justice and Feeling of Tragedy in Leo Tolstoy’s
“Three Questions”, “The Bird” and “God Sees the Truth, but Waits”” submitted to
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Abstract

The research work based on Leo Tolstoy's three stories "Three Questions", "The Bird" and "God Sees the Truth, but Waits" explore the issues of matter of justice, tragedy and suffering. Justice is a relative term not absolute because it depends upon the type of fairness that one feels or in which culture one is born or grown up. It is a spiritual feeling in terms of tragedy that one experiences. Therefore, it is incomplete to define justice alone. Similarly, tragedy and suffering have negative connotations that are not desired by anyone as they provide tortures to human beings. However, justice cannot be measured if there were no tragedy and suffering. The story of "Three Questions" directly or indirectly deals with tragedy, justice and suffering. The king does not understand the importance of work or human value until he experiences himself. He realizes that the suffering that he got after helping the sage and tragedy of about to be killed by the visitor provides him to have right justice. "The Bird" gives similar relation of justice, tragedy and suffering. The boy does not understand the value of justice that his mother reminds until the bird dies because of suffering caused by the boy. The last story "God Sees the Truth, but Waits" brings the same theme of justice, tragedy and suffering. Tragedy occurs to Ivan when he is blamed of murdering a merchant, he undergoes suffering by being imprisoned for twenty-seven years and he gets justice when the real murderer confesses at last. Therefore, they always come together in the society whether people realize or not.

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Chapter I Tragedy as Justice in “Three Questions”, “The Bird” and “God Sees the Truth, but Waits”

Leo Tolstoy, Russian author, essayist and philosopher has enriched the literature with enormous astounding genuine literary works. The suffering and inconstancy of Tolstoy's life has left a great impact on his style of writing, theme of his writing and morality he has given to the then society. Approximately most of his works are meant to be didactic, in which he arouses controversial topics and tackles them. His three short stories “Three Questions”, “The Bird” and “God Sees the Truth, but Waits” are considered best from every aspect of life. They were published in the decade of the 1870s which reflect Tolstoy's life in one or another.

In these short stories, Tolstoy instigates many questions in readers' mind about truth, injustice and fate as he resides his readers between spiritual and materialistic worlds. These stories exemplify allegory through which readers can get moral lesson despite realities involved. The researcher would like to find some aspects that deal with justice and tragedy move parallel.

Justice is a philosophical and legal term that is used to make fairness. Justice denotes positive aspects in human beings. Moreover, it differs from one culture to another because many cultures believe that justice is made by god. The texts so far written in many languages around the world bring the sense of justice in one way or another. David Johnston talking about justice asserts that it is not a new term or concept but it has been used since Greek period. There are many types of justice established around the world. Johnston presents one example how hierarchical justice functions:

The hierarchical conception of justice that runs throughout this collection of laws can be observed, among other places, in its provisions for punishment. . . . If a man has put out the eye of a free man, they shall put out his eye. If he breaks the bone of a [free] man, they shall break his bone. If he puts out the eye of a serf or breaks the bone of a serf, he shall pay one mina of silver. (17)

This is an example of hierarchical justice expressed by Johnston who asserts that in ancient time there was justice based on various principles. It can be interpreted that no one can imagine the world without proper justice.

Johnson gives the example of Homer's *Iliad* and that at that time justice was associated with revenge. He claims "Justice is associated with revenge throughout the entire *Iliad*. In a battle scene depicted later in the work, one of the Trojan enemies is taken captive and appeals to Menelaos, Agamemnon's brother, to spare his life" (20). Thus, justice for them is taken as revenge when they gave same torture to their enemy.

Aristotle defines justice in different way. Justice is applicable when men are relatives and they are free. They should also be equal in their status. Otherwise, according to him, there cannot be justice. Johnson presents the evidence: "Aristotle's writings repeatedly confirm that, in his view, the concept of justice applies primarily to relations among men who are free and relatively equal to each other. He contrasts these relations sharply and consistently with those that obtain among categorical unequal" (83).

Likewise, tragedy is an event that causes great suffering, destruction, and distress, such as a serious accident, crime, or natural catastrophe. This is destructive mishaps happened in one's lives. Generally, tragedy refers to human tragedy. The

word tragedy is related to justice because tragedy leads to justice either legally or philosophically. Rebecca Bushnell argues that tragedy has been defined and criticized differently such as by Plato and Aristotle. Plato claims that tragedy disrespects gods while Aristotle mainly focuses on tragedy that is important for bringing catharsis.

According to Rebecca Bushnell:

Plato believed that tragedy would undermine the city-state by inciting passion and disrespect for the gods. Aristotle responded by redeeming tragedy's emotional effect through catharsis, pulling tragedy back from the city into the mind and heart of the individual spectator. The English Renaissance poet Sir Philip Sidney reinserted tragedy into the political realm, when he asserted that the sweet violence of tragedy could make kings fear to be tyrants and tyrants abandon their cruelties. (2)

Therefore, tragedy is different to different philosopher. It is also a philosophical idea in which many people argue in their own ways. In fact, tragedy is a part of literature in which writers incorporate directly or indirectly to bring catharsis or interest in readers.

Nietzsche argues that tragedy is a part of human life. It is also a testing instrument which proves human beings as capable and fully efficient. In his idea tragedy is, "The challenge of this conception was that to be incapable of tragedy was to be incapable of being fully human. Tragedy was not simply permitted again: it was imperative, to be ignored at one's peril" (69). Thus, tragedy is necessary for human beings to know themselves how capable they are to tolerate it.

Bushnell comments that Nietzsche is courageous person to define and talk about human nature. He expresses that Nietzsche does not fear of bitter critiques. He believes that critiques help people to be much stronger and more courageous to go

ahead. Bushnell claims:

At the same time, Nietzsche is unafraid to be contaminated by the objects of his critique. As a result, Nietzsche is a most unreliable witness to his own purported meanings. His interest is first and foremost in the staging of meaning and its perplexities. As a rule, his writings provide a sampling, and a hyperbolizing, of culturally available assumptions and counter-assumptions, at times extrapolated into mind-spinning hypotheticals intended to make vivid the psychology, and above all the frequent illogic, of everyday belief. (83)

Therefore, for Nietzsche tragedy is important for everyone. Because of tragedy one can understand the power he/she possesses to solve problems.

Nietzsche compares Apollonian and Dionysian to comic and tragic situation respectively. Apollonian is based on rationalism while the latter is impulsive. Dionysian can expose all types of characters of human being. From the reveling throng, people can express their views in full fledge.

At its peak, the Dionysian nearly gains the upper hand and obliges the Apollonian to speak its own truths. As from behind a screen, another reality is revealed to the aesthetic spectator, who is henceforth the privileged focus of artistic effect, but no longer its perceived cause. The culmination of this process is the rapid flowering of Greek tragedy, first with Aeschylus and then Sophocles, in which music and dance, song and speech, and spectacle are magnificently coordinated in a first anticipation of the Wagnerian total work of art. (72)

Nietzsche brings the idea of Greek tragedy in which music and dance, song and speech and spectacle are coordinated and they express the art wholeheartedly. But if

people are guided by Apollonian traits, they have to be rational and controlling so that they cannot express their full nature. Thus, for him tragedy is not bad but integral part of human beings.

As god is dead, there is nobody to govern an individual rather he is the master of himself. This view of Nietzsche has become clear in the given abstract:

Objective man is not a model, either, he walks neither before nor behind anyone ... he is an instrument, a piece of slave ... As a mirror, he is a work of art to be handled carefully and honored. But, he is not an aim, not a way out nor a way up, not a complimentary human being through whom the rest of the existence is not a conclusion ... he is nothing solid, nothing powerful, nothing self-reliant seeking to become master. (Ellmann and Fiedelson 817)

Nietzsche supports individuality and subjectivity of truth. An objective man is nothing more than a slave who is very much submissive. People should be active and subjective for the sake of his individuality. A man is master of himself. Thus, he should exercise his individual power. In his views, moral values are not objective and universal.

Nietzsche takes every individual as a free thinker. One individual has his own right to think in his own perspective and to make decisions in his own favor. He clearly expresses:

I say especially that they shall free, very free thinkers, these philosophers of the time? It is certain, however, that they will not be merely thinkers but something more, something superior, greater and thoroughly different, something that does not want to be misjudged or mistaken for something else. (Ellmann and Fiedelson 815)

In this way, he provokes the idea of existence of human being and individual freedom. For human individual is greater and more powerful than society.

Justice and tragedy go parallelly because they are related to each other. Leo Tolstoy's stories revolve around justice and human tragedy in his stories and novels. In his writing, the main focus is on how people suffer in spite of being innocent. Tolstoy asks questions whether they get justice or not. Justice and tragedy are manifested in his stories "Three Questions", "The Bird" and "God Sees the Truth but Waits". In the first story, the king and the injured person get justice after they come close to tragedy directly or indirectly. "The Bird" focuses on the tragedy of a bird and lack of justice. The bird does not get its justice as it dies in the hand of a small boy. Similarly, the last story also deals with justice and tragedy but in different manners.

Suffering

Suffering is pain or unwanted feeling one has physical and psychological effect. Suffering is not absolute term but relative one. Elisabeth Eliot in her book *A Path through Suffering* explores that suffering does not go vain but it spurs new things. In her own words:

I know of no answer to give to anyone except the answer given to all the world in the cross. It was there that the great Grain of Wheat died- not that death should be the end of the story, but that it should be the beginning of the story, as it is in all the cycles of nature. The grain dies. The harvest results. The sun must die in the west if it is to rise in the east. The crimson touch must be found even in the fresh shoots of the baby oak-they are destined for death. (13)

Thus, according to her, to get new things one has to sacrifice as grain sacrifices for harvest and sun sacrifices to rise in the east. To cut long story short, to come out new

result, one thing has to undergo suffering.

Giving example of Jesus, Elisabeth has clearly explained the suffering. She highlights that suffering gives power to the people. He said to his disciple that suffering is a part of life of human beings. they can learn many precious things from suffering. When Jesus was about to say farewell to His disciples, He was straightforward with them about what they should expect when He was gone. She argues: “[Disciples] would face much suffering. They would be hated as He had been. They would be persecuted. People would follow their teaching as little as they had followed His. They would be banned from the synagogues and even killed by those who believed that killing them was a special service to God” (23). The suffering would give them power to understand the importance of suffering.

Likewise, Ken Plummer presents that the world is full of suffering and human misery. Most of the people in the world are in tragic sadness. The suffering teaches people to work more energetically and vigorously than before. In his own words:

The world is stuffed full of unbearable human misery. Every day billions of people in the world find themselves living in tragic desperation. What is to be done? How can a social science deal with this best? In this challenging, committed, and original study, Wilkinson and Kleinman provide a history and appreciation of the study of social suffering and urge us to place this at the heart of understanding society by putting compassion and practical care at its core. Critical of the formalism, distance, and coldness of both academic life and social science, the book creates new dialogues. It deserves to become a landmark in redirecting social science to work more passionately to make the world a kinder place. (1)

In this way, Plummer expresses that most of the people all over the world are suffering from any kind of problems. They are close to tragic feeling of desperation.

Similarly, suffering is also a part of tragedy because it gives experience to people who have undergone through it. According to Elizabeth Eliot:

We may take heart from the suffering of Job. Suffering was the necessary proof of the reality of his faith—to us, as to his contemporaries and his enemy Satan, his and ours. The suffering of our Savior proved the reality of His love for His Father. The world still needs to be shown that there are those who, no matter what the circumstances, will, for love of Him, do exactly what God commands. The end He has in view is a glorious one. We can fully count on that, as we can count on the naked wood's one day exploding into a glory of blossom. (35)

Suffering is a kind of ordeal to test oneself. It gives opportunity to prove one that how a person can prove to be strong enough to face with difficulty. She claims that if we take the examples of God or some brave people, all of them travelled through suffering and pain. It proves that suffering is not negative but the means of making people strong.

Similarly, suffering can have different categories such as individual and social. Social suffering is communal one which was felt in the eighteenth century during transitional period of agricultural and industrial life. According to Wilkinson et al, “The concept of social suffering originates in the late eighteenth century. It first features as a point of reference in poetry documenting the transformation of country life in the early period of the Industrial Revolution” (25).

Talking about social suffering, Wilkinson et al bring the reference of

Wordsworth's experience of social suffering and argue that whole human beings may face the same types of suffering such as politics. Therefore, political revolution takes place as they have the experience of social suffering. According to him:

In this instance, Wordsworth's encounter with social suffering draws him to reflect upon the stoic attitudes adopted by people struggling to survive in conditions of extreme adversity; and despite all he has seen, he draws hope for humanity and for himself from this. Commentators understand this poem to mark the early signs of a political awakening that led Wordsworth to an interest in the prospects for revolutionary social reform and also to the attempt to fashion his poetry as a means to raise the moral and material conditions of society as matters for public debate. (26)

Therefore, Wordsworth understands suffering from his own experience that it can be social suffering. Indirectly, he means to say that suffering teaches people to progress and learn from the problems they have. He implies that we have to take inspiration from the suffering.

Leo Tolstoy's three stories, "Three Questions", "The Bird" and "God Sees the Truth, but Waits" deal with justice, suffering and tragedy. Although they carry different themes they can be studied under these three theories. "Three Questions" raises the issue of justice and tragedy and justice is made after tragedy. "The Bird" talks about justice how correct it is after seeing the tragedy of the bird. Similarly, "God sees the Truth, but Waits" is apparently about tragedy only but deep meaning concerns with justice as well. The justice and tragedy go parallel in the stories because either from justice to tragedy or from tragedy to justice some lesson can be comprehended. The characters in the stories understand this as they experience justice

and tragedy closely.

In this way, justice, suffering and tragedy move together. They are related to each other. Their ultimate goal is to make people strong. In fact, they are integral parts of human beings. If they are not present in human lives, people cannot identify themselves who they are. Many people take it negatively but they are in fact guidance for human beings. This chapter gives overview of the suffering, justice and tragedy. The second chapter gives some more ideas about them followed by textual analysis from the three stories chosen by the researcher to prove how they come together.

Chapter II Matter of Justice and Feeling of Tragedy in Tolstoy's Selected Stories

The thesis explores the matter of justice and feeling of tragedy through the detail study of Tolstoy's three stories "Three Questions", "The Bird" and "God Sees the Truth, but Waits." These three stories carry different themes ranging from justice, suffering and tragedy. They also bring common themes that the life moves ahead through these three things which is a philosophy of life.

In the story "The Bird" a small boy does not realize the suffering of the bird. Seryozha, the small boy is obsessed with trapping a bird without realizing that the bird also has feeling and it does not want to be confined within the cage. In the name day, as he is gifted a trap for snaring birds, he is excited but his mother is sad. His mother does not like his behavior. It shows the contradiction between the mother and the son because they have different experience. The boy does not have experience that he should not torture other beings.

On the other hand, she knows that suffering is for everyone. She sees her soul in the bird but the son does not see such thing there. The text goes like this: "Seryozha's little mind was filled with happiness and he showed the gift to his mother. His mother was not happy to see it. She did not like the idea of keeping birds in a cage and torturing them. But Seryozha was bent on catching a bird and feeding it" (1). He does not understand the meaning of caging a bird she understands it very clearly. The mother is not only mother of her son but also other creatures big or small. She knows it because she is caged in her house to some extent. She may compare herself to the bird. She cannot see bird inside the cage. She is confined in the house. The mother is destined to serve others. Because of suffering she has feeling of tragedy and justice. As she realizes or thinks of caging the bird, she also thinks of providing it justice imagining tragedy.

Similarly, in “Three questions” we can find out suffering but in different context. The king who needs answers does not get simply. He has to get answers only with difficulty. If anyone gets anything easily, the importance of the answers may decrease. The king is determined to get the solution but he has to undergo a lot of suffering. He understands its importance after a bad experience. The experience teaches him good lesson. He comes to a hermit to get the answers of most important time, person and thing. As he arrives he shows his willingness to help the hermit and he helps him. He waits for appropriate time to have the answer but he does not get. The story goes like this:

The hermit lived in a wood which he never quitted, and he received none but common folk. So, the King put on simple clothes, and before reaching the hermit's cell dismounted from his horse, and, leaving his bodyguard behind, went on alone. When the King approached, the hermit was digging the ground in front of his hut. Seeing the King, he greeted him and went on digging. The hermit was frail and weak, and each time he stuck his spade into the ground and turned a little earth, he breathed heavily. (1)

From these lines, it is clear that the hermit gives the taste of suffering to the king right from the beginning. His motive is to teach lesson to him that unless he understands the importance of suffering, he cannot give justice to his people. Justice is a must for the nation. It is expected from the king. When there is suffering, there is justice. Tragedy also comes in between them. The king could understand the hermit's problem because he walked to the hermitage barefooted. Otherwise, he would not understand the hermit's plight.

Similarly, in the story “God Sees the Truth, but Waits” there is sense of

suffering to Ivan Dmitrich Aksionov when he makes journey for his trade, He is happy with his family and he always thinks positively to all people. His life starts being ruined when he is suspected for murder of a person on the way. Aksionov tries to defend him as he is being asked by a police officer: “Aksionov swore he had not done it; that he had not seen the merchant after they had had tea together; that he had no money except eight thousand rubles of his own, and that the knife was not his. But his voice was broken, his face pale, and he trembled with fear as though he went guilty” (3). This is the first time he has the experience of suffering. Suffering is not only people get physically but also mentally. Aksionov has not expected to occur in his life but suddenly he gets entangled by it.

He is not only suffering from the false blame over him but also his wife and children. His wife is confused whether to believe him or not. She goes to see him but she cannot say whom to believe:

His wife was in despair, and did not know what to believe. Her children were all quite small; one was a baby at her breast. Taking them all with her, she went to the town where her husband was in jail. At first she was not allowed to see him; but after much begging, she obtained permission from the officials, and was taken to him. When she saw her husband in prison-dress and in chains, shut up with thieves and criminals, she fell down, and did not come to her senses for a long time. Then she drew her children to her, and sat down near him. She told him of things at home, and asked about what had happened to him. He told her all, and she asked, "What can we do now?" (3)

As she asks the question to him, it implies that she is herself confused. She cannot say clearly that he is not guilty. This adds much suffering to her husband. The suffering

teaches so much lesson to both of them. They realize that suffering is most painful situation in their life.

Aksionov's suffering gets heightened when he hears someone speaking about the murder. He has been tolerating as he was spending time in the prison. He was gradually realizing the philosophy of life that life is not straight line but crooked one. One cannot predict the future because future is uncertain. These lines make it clear: "Makar Semyonich laughed, and replied: 'It must have been him in whose bag the knife was found! If someone else hid the knife there, 'He's not a thief till he's caught,' as the saying is. How could anyone put a knife into your bag while it was under your head? It would surely have woke you up'" (6). Now Aksionov's mental suffering begins as he hears the words. He is shocked to hear and suspects about the murder that caused many years ago for which he has been imprisoned.

In this way, suffering is found in the stories of Leo Tolstoy. He vividly brings the issue of suffering emphatically in his writing. His characters learn many things as they experience. They change the life style after they have experience of suffering. Through such things, Tolstoy likes to improve the society.

Furthermore, the feeling of tragedy is found in the stories, though in different levels. In the first story, "The Bird", there is tragedy when the bird is dead. Seryosha likes the bird very much. Because of his extreme liking, he wants to keep in the cage so that he can see the bird every day. The boy shows the love towards the bird and feeds it with food and water. Moreover, he cleans the cage every day. As it is not regular work or he is not in the habit of keeping the bird in the cage, he forgets. The mother tells him to let the bird free, but the boy does not listen to the mother. He remembers next day and comes to feed the bird and clean the cage. He is so much hurried and forgets to close the door only to let the bird be injured. Let's consider the

following lines:

Seryozha thrust his hand into the cage and began to clean it. But the siskin was frightened and thrashed itself against the bars. After he cleaned the cage, he went off to get some water. His mother noticed that he had not closed the cage, so she called out to him. Immediately the siskin found the door and was extremely delighted at its newly found freedom. The bird spread its little wings and flew around the room towards the window. It did not see the glass. Its little body struck hard against the glass and it fell on the window sill. (2)

It is the tragedy of the bird. The bird is delighted thinking that it can go outside and move freely. But it does not know that it is confined with the glass everywhere. The bird gets badly injured in the process of being freed from the cage. Such tragedy invites readers sympathy over it. The tragedy is part of suffering which paves the way for justice.

Bushnell defines tragedy with the help of Hegel. Hegel argues that tragedy occurs when both of the parties fail to recognize the validity of the other position. Conflict can be resolved only with the fall of hero. He defines tragedy:

For Hegel tragedy is the conflict of two substantive positions, each of which is justified, yet each of which is wrong to the extent that it fails either to recognize the validity of the other position or to grant it its moment of truth; the conflict can be resolved only with the fall of the hero, such that unity is restored and the whole of ethical life is purged of its one-sidedness. (52)

In this way, tragedy is part of life and it occurs because of misunderstanding between two parties.

Bushnell further views that the tragic hero does not accept the position of other side. There is some problem that is irrecoverable in tragedy: “Not only does the tragic hero refuse to acknowledge the validity of the other position; the other position – or at least the sphere it represents – is also an aspect within the hero even as she denies it” (53). The tragic hero suffers and refuses the validity of other's position. So, to have tragedy, something goes wrong. If everything moves smoothly, the tragedy does not take place nicely. In the story, “The Bird” there is irrecoverable tragedy which occurs when the bird dies. The bird does not die automatically but because of the boy. Here, the boy is hero who plays crucial role in the story. Inwardly, he is not bad person but his education, environment, the tendency of humans towards birds are the factors to make him think of capturing the bird.

Undoubtedly, the boy is the cause of death of the bird. The tragedy occurs when his uncle gives him the bird capturing instrument. It is germinated in the mind of the boy and is determined to put the bird inside the cage. The tragedy has occurred but the boy realizes before and after its death. It is not possible to revive the bird but the boy has learned the lesson that he should not cause suffering to the helpless being. His realization is justified through the lines:

Seryozha stayed by the cage all day. At night, he went off to sleep. His sleep was disturbed. Each time he closed his eyes to sleep, he was awakened by the thought of the little bird fighting for its life. In the morning, he ran to the cage to find the siskin lying on its back. Its little body was stiff. Seryozha felt very sad and guilty as he felt responsible for the siskin's death. Seryosha learnt a good lesson from this incident. He never caught birds again. He realized that the freedom to live in the natural habitat should not be denied to any creature. (3)

Above statement is enough to understand that there is tragic flaw of the hero, the boy. Now he realizes that his mother's advice was important for him.

The boy's realization leads to justice whether the bird gets or not. The source of justice is, therefore, tragedy. Without tragic feeling justice, does not work effectively as much as it should. In the ancient time, many dramas were written focusing mainly on tragedy. For Aristotle, tragedy is an imitation of life. No one can imagine the life moving straight line. The comedy, for him is an artificial thing because in real life it does not occur. Aristotle defines tragedy:

A tragedy, then, is the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself, in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the arts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions. (15)

He argues that tragedy occurs in dramatic form not in narrative one. He further claims that it is also necessary to arouse pity and fear to accomplish catharsis or emotions in readers or spectators.

There is catharsis in Seryosha when he sees the bird dead. Although he cannot revive the bird, he is determined to do justice to other birds. The bird is a kind of sacrifice which teaches lesson to the boy and saves other birds. The bird also can be compared to Jesus Christ because Christ also put his life into death by resolving to save other people's lives. The narrator describes: "Seryosha learnt a good lesson from this incident. He never caught birds again. He realized that the freedom to live in the natural habitat should not be denied to any creature" (3). It is kind of catharsis the boy accomplishes. It is very effective as he experiences himself. If he had got the lesson by reading a story, it would not have been made such effective. As the readers, we are

pretty sure that he has realized the importance of justice.

Moreover, “God Sees the Truth, but Waits” begins with describing a young handsome merchant whose name is Ivan Dmitrich Aksionov who lives in Vladimir with his family. Ivan used to drink too much when he was young but after got married, he settled down. On a summer day, he plans to go to Nizhny fair and prepares himself; his wife pleads him not to go saying that she saw a bad dream about him that all his hair turned to grey after his return from the town in her dream. But Ivan laughs as if he does not care and goes on the fair. He meets another merchant on his way; they together continue their venture and stop in an inn for the night. While staying in the inn, they drink tea together then go for sleeping separately. Since Ivan is not used to sleep for long hours, he wakes in the early morning and decides to continue his journey without the other merchant. After traveling twenty-five miles, he stops to feed the horses and brings out his guitar and starts playing it. Suddenly a troika stops, an officer alights from it followed by two soldiers and starts to interrogate with Ivan asking about the merchant whom he met and stayed together in the inn, since he was found with his throat cut. They start to search among Ivan’s things and they find a blood-stained knife in his bag. Ivan swears that he has not done the crime but his face was down, pale and he was trembling with fear. The officer orders the soldiers to bind Ivan and take him to the cart since all evidences points out Ivan to be guilty. After Ivan’s trial takes place, he becomes accused of killing the merchant and stealing twenty thousand of rubles. His wife becomes despaired and pays a visit to Ivan in the prison with her children and a one on her breast, but after much begging, they let her to see him. She tells Ivan they must petition to Czar, and they try but it was not accepted by Czar. Then she remembers her dream and tells Ivan it was not for nothing she had that dream. She asks Ivan about what happened, he

tells her everything in details, but she reassures again by asking him to tell the truth whether he made the crime or no? Here Ivan becomes even sadder when hears this from her. The officer comes and asks his wife to leave, and Ivan says good-bye to them for the last time. After they are gone, he recalls what has been said and even his wife now suspects him He thinks that only God knows the truth and He is the only one who he should appeal and ask mercy from. Ivan gives up all the hope and stops writing petition. He only prays for God. Later on, Ivan is sent to Siberia.

Thus, Ivan Dmitrich Aksionov is punished for the crime which he never committed. He is unlucky hero who is imprisoned despite his innocence. He undergoes a lot of suffering during his time in the jail. He wonders why he is punished and who can be the real culprit. He has the feeling of tragedy in the jail. His tragedy starts when the police officer orders his soldiers to arrest him. The narrator describes: "The police-officer ordered the soldiers to bind Aksionov and to put him in the cart. As they tied his feet together and flung him into the cart, Aksionov crossed himself and wept. His money and goods were taken from him, and he was sent to the nearest town and imprisoned there. Enquiries as to his character were made in Vladimir" (3). This is the beginning of his tragedy of his life. Before this he did not have any tragic feeling. He weeps as the expression of his tragedy. He has become penniless as his money is taken away by police. Another unbearable thing he has is that his character is in question. This tragedy is real tragedy.

Tolstoy has presented this story to teach people the moral lesson that anything may occurs in one's life. Many unexpected thing may happen in one's life. This is an example of tragedy. Through the merchant, he says that we should not lose our life whatever occurs in one's life. It may be rare case for human beings. This tragedy has opened eyes for many people across the world. Therefore, all countries in all types of

justice, it is said that nine criminals may escape it does not matter but even one innocent must not be punished.

This story is principle for all human beings. Aksionov is only one instance of millions. Such things may have occurred or may be occurring in the world. Through the tragedy, many people become aware to save the life of innocent people. when one goes to jail, his/her physical body is ruined, it can be recovered. But how about mental or psychological state? Can they be recovered? It is quite difficult to get answer satisfactorily.

Talking about tragedy, Peter J. Ahrens Dorf argues that justice and injustice come together in tragedy. There are many perspectives of looking at tragedy. For the same incidence one says it is justice while other says it is injustice. Therefore, they are all two sides of the same coin. About Oedipus by Sophocles, he gives clear picture of positive and negative interpretation. He presents:

On the very surface, Oedipus the Tyrant appears to be a story of the triumph of justice over injustice. As the title of the play emphasizes, most unmistakably to its democratic Athenian audience, Oedipus is a tyrant – a man who ascends to power and rules outside the limits imposed by human and divine law. He violates the most sacred of laws – the laws that protect the family – and commits the most atrocious and monstrous of crimes by killing his father and sleeping with his mother. (9)

He talks about apparent and deep meaning: the former says that he is bad character because he killed his father and slept with mother. He is called monster.

On the other hand, Ahrens Dorf throws light on the real hero who saves the people of Thebes when the Thebans were being killed by a monster. He analyses:

Yet a more careful reading of Oedipus the Tyrant calls into question this initial impression of the play as a simple condemnation of Oedipus. For Oedipus seems to be a truly great ruler, one who combines what no other Sophoclean hero combines: genuine wisdom with a genuinely noble devotion to others. When a cruel monster, the Sphinx, threatened Thebes with destruction unless someone could solve her riddle, it was Oedipus alone who had the wisdom to solve a riddle that even the soothsayers could not solve (390–400). But by saving Thebes, Oedipus displayed not only his wisdom but also his nobility. (10)

Therefore, there are two sides of explanation. If one focuses on only one side another is in injustice and vice versa. It means many things occur which are very far from truth. Nothing is absolute wrong or absolute truth. Reality is far from human understanding according to him.

In “The God sees, but Waits” it is quite difficult to find what is wrong and what is right. There are many interpretations. There is no justice to the merchant who is spending time unnecessarily in the jail. Even his wife does not believe him when he is found guilty of killing another merchant. For long period of time she is with her husband and she knows very well about him. However, when her real help is required she retreats. If she argues strongly and hires a very good lawyer, it is possible that they would probe in to the case further and the real culprit can be imprisoned. But she shows her unwillingness, either directly or indirectly, to prove her husband innocent. The narrator describes:

His wife was in despair, and did not know what to believe. Her children were all quite small; one was a baby at her breast. Taking them all with her, she went to the town where her husband was in jail. At first she was not allowed to see him; but after much begging, she obtained permission from the officials, and was taken to him. When she saw her husband in prison-dress and in chains, shut up with thieves and criminals, she fell down, and did not come to her senses for a long time. Then she drew her children to her, and sat down near him. She told him of things at home, and asked about what had happened to him. He told her all, and she asked, 'What can we do now?' (3)

The last question signifies that she is not willing to help him. She shows her sympathy towards her but inwardly she doubts over his action. In this way, real tragedy comes when someone's own people show unwillingness to believe.

Tolstoy is a philosopher who presents situation in such a way that it has happened to a person in reality. Such kind of misunderstandings may occur in one's life at any time. The tragedy may occur anyone in any circumstances. We as human beings should have power to fight against any tragedy in our lives.

Sophocles's drama is similar to Tolstoy's story to some extent. There is misjudge in both of the texts. Without looking at all perspectives, it is difficult to give justice. This is the real picture of societies either ancient or modern. Similarly, justice and tragedy are intertwined. Same thing can be called justice or tragedy depending upon the situation. Let's look at the lines commented by Ahrens Dorf:

How, then, can such a wise and noble ruler and human being deserve to suffer the terrible fate of discovering that he has committed patricide and incest; of losing his power, his city, and his beloved wife; and of

living the rest of his life as a blind wanderer? How can Oedipus be justly held responsible for crimes he committed against his will? It would seem that, insofar as Oedipus is wise, noble, and wholly undeserving of his downfall, Sophocles' play does indeed, as Nietzsche suggests, teach us that the world is cruelly indifferent to human beings and fundamentally incomprehensible to human reason. (14)

Ahrens Dorf questions all the people of the world that human beings are incomprehensible. No one can understand the reasons of any cause. People only interpret what they think to be right. To be close to the truth is almost impossible.

Tolstoy's story presents similar situation. The truth is one while interpretations are many. This is very good example of tragedy. The people in authorities know the truth but it is too late to save the life of the merchant. This is the tragedy of tragedy. This is injustice over injustice. The narrator tells the story: "Then his wife said, 'It was not for nothing I dreamt your hair had turned grey. You remember? You should not have started that day.' And passing her fingers through his hair, she said: 'Vanya dearest, tell your wife the truth; was it not you who did it?'" (3). What could worse than his own wife does not believe him. Her questionnaire indicates that she has some doubt over his action. He is the victim of injustice, he has been imprisoned for the crime that he did not commit. Moreover, his dearest wife does not have faith over him. This is the injustice of injustice.

Tolstoy indirectly leads the readers to infer the true value of faith and forgiveness and the importance of their outcomes by deducing that through Ivan's character. The fact which Tolstoy wants to teach the readers is that God is the only one who knows the complete truth about everything, including our realities. In other words, Tolstoy believes that if human cannot provide justice, then god can provide. If

one cannot get justice during life, after death the person can get justice. Ivan thinks in such way and decides to kill himself. Because of his spiritual power, he does not feel sadness to end his life. But He sometimes may lead us to discover our realities through some slight or even harsh trials. In the case of Ivan, at the beginning he is described to be full of fun and a heavy drinker also indirectly to be unaware of his reality. But after being convicted and suspected even by the closest person to him, his wife, he returns to God as he says “It seems that only God can know the truth, it is to Him alone we must appeal, and from Him alone expect mercy” (4). Thus, Tolstoy shows the readers the significance of the faith in our life, as in the story, Ivan believes that only God is capable of showing the truth. Yet, Ivan is exposed to face another trial to prove his real charity, when he encounters his enemy Makar, the readers may expect a destructive reaction from him towards Makar, but just the opposite happens and Ivan tells Makar “God will forgive you. Maybe I am a hundred times worse than you” (8). The two characters both come to the understanding that God’s forgiveness and mercy towards humans are incomprehensible. Therefore, here, readers realize that outcomes of faith are crucial to the life as it makes the whole person to change towards the best and to develop both spiritually and morally.

Moreover, justice is connected with many aspects. David Johnston brings the examples of ancient stories in which there was the relation between upper and lower class people. The rich and powerful people misused the power. They were not punished even if they made mistake but the poor people were liable to be punished in all kinds of crimes. Justice depends upon the people who are power holders or ruled. Johnston brings the context from ancient story and defines justice. He postulates:

In addition to assuming without objection the existence of the poor, the weak, and the otherwise vulnerable, the Hebrew scriptures, like nearly

all other writings of equal or greater antiquity that deal with legal and social relations, paint a sharply hierarchical picture of the relations between males and females. Patriarchal figures like Abraham and Isaac often take more than one wife, and the role of husbands in relation to their wives as limned in the scriptures often more nearly resembles that of a property owner than that of a partner. (25)

He gives the example of Hebrew scriptures in which there is mention of Abraham and Isaac. There is different rule for common people and kings. In fact, there is no rule for kings. They could marry several while common people were deprived of doing so. Not only this, there is disparity between men and women. Women are relatively weaker than men.

In the story “The Bird”, we can find the similar situation. The lad does not listen to his mother who advises him not to hurt bird by keeping it inside cage. The lad’s uncle gave him as a gift. He uses it but he ignores to his mother’s words. From another perspective, we can think that if it was his father he would not ignore like this. Psychologically, the boy thinks that his mother cannot punish anyway. He seems to listen to her does not follow. As a result, he loses the bird. He thinks it is justice to provide the bird shelter by feeding it with various food. But in reality, from the perspective of bird, it is injustice. The narrator tells the story: “No, it is a siskin, said his mother, ‘Seryosha, please don’t torture the bird. Let it go. ‘I want to keep it. I promise you I will give food and water to it,’ said Seryosha” (2). We can ask the question what would happen if this instruction was given to the boy by his father. Of course, he would follow either because of fear or respecting him. Here there is not justice given to the woman. She is not only mother but also a woman whom her own son does not give justice. There is injustice to her feeling. She may not realize that it

is her son's word. If we look into it broadly, she is after all a woman. He assimilates that he is not compelled to follow her how he is forced to follow his father.

Johnston argues that modern and ancient writings suggest that justice is equal between people with equal power. There is exchange of power with the same power: "Both ancient and modern writings frequently suggest that justice for people who are equals requires that their exchanges with one another exhibit the characteristic of balanced reciprocity, at least over the long term" (30). Thus, justice exists in equal power.

We can raise many questions in Tolstoy's story "Three questions." The king is in search of answers for his three questions. Does he believe to the answers given by common people? Of course, there are many good reasons when common people give the answers of the questions. They rightly suggest him how to work, with whom to work and when to work. They are equally right. But he trusts only the persons whom many people respect, the sage. That means he is searching for the person whose rank or popularity is like him. He believes the saint who the king believes that he can answer satisfactorily.

Anyone can raise the questions that if the saint's answers are final answers. They are appropriate in one situation while in other they may not be. What would happen if the sage suggested the answers like the common people gave? Thus, the king does not believe the people whom he thinks that they are far too below him to provide him suggestions. The narrator poses:

And learned men came to the King, but they all answered his questions differently. In reply to the first question, some said that to know the right time for every action, one must draw up in advance, a table of days, months and years, and must live strictly according to it. Only

thus, said they, could everything be done at its proper time. Others declared that it was impossible to decide beforehand the right time for every action; but that, not letting oneself be absorbed in idle pastimes, one should always attend to all that was going on, and then do what was most needful. (1)

These answers are equally important as given by the saint but he focuses on the last one. This proves that there is injustice to the people who have ventured to give him suggestions.

George W. Harris argues that tragedy and justice go together. He begins his book with W. B. Yeats' quotation "We begin to live when we have conceived life as tragedy" (18). He means to say that tragedy is life. Without tragedy, life cannot be imagined. Many people think that tragedy is undesirable entity. But it is an integral part from which people can understand the real essence of human beings. Harris explores that human should understand the bitter truth that suffering, tragedy and justice come together. They should not be separated from each other. He postulates:

The truth, then, will not always set you free, regardless of what Jesus said. Nevertheless, we have an obligation to ourselves and others to get a better understanding of suffering and other, distinct forms of tragedy than we currently have. We need it in order to come to grips with the horrors of the century just passed and to prepare ourselves and our progeny for the horrors that might come. Perhaps by understanding how our values generate tragic conflicts we can manage to avoid some of those horrors, and those we cannot, perhaps we can better endure in ways that leave some room for joy. (19)

Thus, according to Harris, tragedy provides us some power to fight against adversity

in our life. It helps us to make our life meaningful by combing them.

In the story “The God Sees, but Waits” Ivan collects power to endure and tolerate. He does not do as Maker who ruined his life. Such power came to him when he stayed in the jail for twenty-six years. In one sense, staying and bearing punishment in such way is intolerable but from other perspective it is good because what Ivan understands life, nobody other can understand. It is his sublimity of understanding. His sacrifice cannot be compared from spiritualism point of view. Tolstoy writes:

Makar Semyonich stood as if he were quite unconcerned, looking at the Governor and not so much as glancing at Aksionov. Aksionov's lips and hands trembled, and for a long time he could not utter a word. He thought, ‘Why should I screen him who ruined my life? Let him pay for what I have suffered. But if I tell, they will probably flog the life out of him, and maybe I suspect him wrongly. And, after all, what good would it be to me?’ (7)

These words prove that Ivan has become god like person who can endure everything. He can be compared to god, say, Jesus Christ, who has saved Maker’s life by sacrificing his.

Another aspect of Tolstoy is to show redemption of people from the earthly world to spiritual world. He says that suffering and tragedy teaches people to get freedom from here so that people do not regret to leave the world. Moreover, they do not want to concentrate on helping others but themselves if they do not have experience of suffering and tragedy. In the same line Harris writes that based on religious traditions the world is not good place to live. It is the place of suffering, torture and tragedy. According to him though interpretations of the doctrine of the

Fall vary within these traditions, all assert that there was a great reversal of fortune, from bliss in the company of God to suffering and alienation from Him, brought about by human sin, that transformed a friendly paradise into an extremely unfriendly world. He further expresses:

This is clearly part of a doctrine asserting the tragic nature of the human condition. An additional feature of that condition, especially on Islamic and Christian interpretations, is that it is the ultimate fate of all who have come after the Fall to join either the saved or the damned. The suffering of the saved here on Earth may be tragic in the short term, but in the end their suffering will all be redeemed. That is what heaven is for, and it is by faith that they will be fully restored to God's presence that the saved, the faithful, find consolation in their earthly sufferings. For the saved, then, the message is clear that there will be a day in which there is no pointless suffering, and this is a message of great consolation. (20)

In this way, the Earth is now an unfriendly place, for the faithful the wider universe is not. There is consolation in the part of human beings when they face a lot of problems in their lives.

“Three Questions” raises the same issue of suffering, tragedy and justice. They are intertwined in the story. The hermit wants to give the sense of suffering to the king before teaching him good lesson. It means without undergoing a lot of suffering one cannot understand oneself and others. Suffering is the basic thing for everyone. To make it clear, our lives begin from suffering. Therefore, we all cry as soon as we get birth. Tolstoy writes:

The King went up to him and said: 'I have come to you, wise hermit, to ask you to answer three questions: How can I learn to do the right thing at the right time? Who are the people I most need, and to whom should I, therefore, pay more attention than to the rest? And, what affairs are the most important and need my first attention?' The hermit listened to the King, but answered nothing. He just spat on his hand and recommenced digging. (1)

Some more, the saint wants to teach the king that after all we are human beings. There is no difference among us regardless of our position. He implies that we can understand each other's problems when we suffer. Thus, he makes the king wait until time comes.

By expanding the meaning of tragedy Harris argues that ultimate destination of tragedy is not good but it is believing to be tragedy. Everything depends upon the concept and understanding according to him. In his own words:

The fact that there is no ultimate good is not the ultimate tragedy. Rather, the ultimate tragedy is believing that there is an ultimate good. This is the pernicious fantasy, the deadly opium. It is fantasy because it is false, and pernicious because belief in it leads us to live in ways that are even more tragic than they need to be. The problem of tragedy is coming to see in a very clear analytical way why we should quit thinking that there even could be something called the ultimate good that would make heaven, a place with no occasion for sorrow, or, at the very least, would reconcile all our values. (26)

Therefore, tragedy teaches many good lesson to human beings. Tragedy is not bad thing but it is a weapon to move one's life ahead successfully.

In “Three Questions,” the injury of the revenger is a kind of tragedy for him. He is near his death because of his injury in his body. He is saved by the king and the hermit in this condition. He realizes his mistake after the tragedy. If he was not injured, he would not be able to realize the mistake. The tragedy teaches him that tragedy is a part of life which helps him to make his life happy and successful. At the same time, he is suffering due to injury in the beginning then mental injury after he recognizes the king. Real catharsis comes in his mind after the realization. Tolstoy writes:

‘You do not know me, but I know you. I am that enemy of yours who swore to revenge himself on you, because you executed his brother and seized his property. I knew you had gone alone to see the hermit, and I resolved to kill you on your way back. But the day passed and you did not return. So I came out from my ambush to find you, and I came upon your bodyguard, and they recognized me, and wounded me. I escaped from them, but should have bled to death had you not dressed my wound. I wished to kill you, and you have saved my life. Now, if I live, and if you wish it, I will serve you as your most faithful slave, and will bid my sons do the same. Forgive me!’ (2)

In this way, the bearded man, tells all the story behind coming there and the cause of being wounded. He asks for forgiveness. This feeling has come to his mind because of tragedy.

In conclusion, tragedy, suffering and justice come together in all three stories by Tolstoy. These three entities are not separate things but they are combined together. Apparently, they are different things but in deeper level they are similar. They teach good lesson to human beings. They represent whole human beings across the world. Through the stories, Tolstoy wishes to bring harmony in the world combining these three aspects of philosophy.

Chapter III Justice as an Output of Tragedy

The thesis revolves around Leo Tolstoy's three stories "Three Questions", "The Bird" and "God Sees the Truth, but Waits" that deal with justice, tragedy and suffering. By analyzing these three stories, the researcher came to the conclusion that justice, tragedy and suffering are inseparable entities. They are connected to each other. If one gets justice without feeling of tragedy and suffering, the value of justice may decrease. If tragedy and suffering do not get justice, then it is cruel or lack of happiness. If these three aspects come together, then whole philosophy of life is complete.

Leo Tolstoy presents somewhat reality of life that happened in Russia and then contemporary society including himself. The suffering and tragedy were his common friends in his life. He satirizes the shallow society and gives some hints of improving people from his stories. His works are meant to be didactic, in which he arouses controversial topics and tackles them. Through the three stories, Tolstoy asks many questions in readers' mind about truth, injustice and tragedy as he resides his readers between both spiritual and materialistic worlds. Based on the three features of the stories, the researcher found that justice, suffering and tragedy side by side. It is impossible to separated them from each other.

Justice is an ideal entity for human beings that give positive feelings in human beings. How justice functions or its value retains that depends upon the extent of suffering and tragedy. If the suffering and tragedy are very serious, the value of justice increased and vice versa. Main thrust of justice is the victim gets feeling of happiness when culprit gets punishment. Justice is socially constructed concept. Therefore, justice differs from one culture to another as well because the many cultures believe that justice is made by god.

Tragedy denotes negative aspect of human beings because it is undesirable. Tragedy causes great suffering, destruction, and distress, such as a serious accident, crime, or natural catastrophe. Some philosophers like Rebecca Bushnell believe that tragedy leads to justice either legally or philosophically. Tragedy is a part of human life. It is also a testing instrument which proves human beings as capable and fully efficient. Tragedy can be compared to Apollonian and Dionysian ideas by Nietzsche they are referred to rational and irrational behaviors respectively. In fact, tragedy is main essence of human life because nobody can understand the meaning of justice without understanding or going through tragedy.

Similarly, suffering is pain or unwanted feeling one has physical and psychological effect. Suffering is not absolute term but relative one. Suffering gives power to the people. Most of the people in the world are in tragic sadness. The suffering teaches people to work more energetically and vigorously than before. Suffering is also a part of tragedy because it gives experience to the people who have undergone through it.

Justice and tragedy go parallelly in Tolstoy's stories "Three Questions", "The Bird" and "God Sees the Truth but Waits". In the first story, the king and the injured person get justice after they come close to tragedy directly or indirectly. "The Bird" focuses on the tragedy of a bird and lack of justice. The bird does not get its justice as it dies in the hand of a small boy. Similarly, the last story also deals with justice and tragedy but in different manners. Although these three stories carry different themes they can be studied under these three theories. "Three Questions" raises the issue of justice and tragedy and justice is made after tragedy. "The Bird" talks about justice how correct it is after seeing the tragedy of the bird. Similarly, "God sees the Truth, but Waits" is apparently about tragedy only but deep meaning concerns with justice as

well. The justice and tragedy go parallel in the stories because either from justice to tragedy or from tragedy to justice some lesson can be comprehended.

In the story “The Bird” a small boy does not realize the suffering of the bird. Seryozha, the small boy is obsessed with trapping a bird without realizing that the bird also has feeling and it does not want to be confined within the cage. In the name day, as he is gifted a trap for snaring birds, he is excited but his mother is sad. His mother does not like his behavior. It shows the contradiction between the mother and the son because they have different experience. The boy does not have experience that he should not torture other beings.

In the story “The God Sees, but Waits” Ivan collects power to endure and tolerate. He does not do as Maker who ruined his life. Such power came to him when he stayed in the jail for twenty-six years. In one sense, staying and bearing punishment in such juncture balance human thoughts. Tolstoy’s main purpose of his writing is to show redemption of people from the earthly world to spiritual world. He argues that suffering and tragedy teach people to get freedom from here so that people do not regret to leave the world. Tragedy, suffering and justice are like body and soul of human lives. If one of them is weaker than another, there is imbalance among them. They are only examples of the combination of positive and negative aspects of human beings. Such relation applies in our life as well. Without having the experience of bad things, no one can understand the value of good things. Similarly, without understanding the problems of materialism, no one can understand the importance of spiritualism. Nowadays, tendency of people to be attracted to spiritualism because the world is degrading because of too much focus on materialism.

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