

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Transmutation of Determinism into Poetic Affirmation of Life Force in  
Eugene O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed***

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**Abstract**

Eugene O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed* is somewhat distinct poetic drama, which belongs to its own category. Because this play is drastically different from earlier plays of O'Neill, it has brought unique cachet to the dramatist's experimental dramaturgy and classical dramatic theme challenging the shortcomings and limitations of the philosophy of determinism. *Lazarus Laughed* attempts to renew the Christian message of transcending life from worldly sufferings and temptations. The play strongly insists on overcoming the fascination and fear of death. By so doing it endeavors to propagate the philosophy of life affirmation as the ultimate gateway of transcendence.

**Table of Content**

Letter of Approval	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
I: Introduction	1
II: Determinism and Variations in it	12
Analysis of the Language of the Text	19
III: Poetic Affirmation of Laughter	23
Analysis of Language of the Text	37
IV: Conclusion	40
Works Cited	

## **I: Determinism and its Transmutation: An Introduction**

This research work will basically attempt to show the transmutation of determinism into the affirmation of life force. O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed* is an illustration of how determinism underwent transmutation, and took finally the form of the affirmation of life. Eugene O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed* concentrates upon the life of a biblical character Lazarus who was resurrected by Christ.

Lazarus is resurrected from the tomb after four days of his death by the mercy of Jesus Christ. After the resurrection he begins to laugh softly like a man in love with god. He declares death is dead. People are surprised with his saying. They disbelieve him and want him to prove it. His family members are killed to show there is death. His wife is also killed by giving poisoned fruit. Lazarus is also burnt into a stake. Although he is burned to ashes, he continues to persist that there is no death only life. He views that death is not an end but merging of one- self into eternal laughter. This moment of Lazarus affirmation transmutes the philosophy of determinism.

This dissertation will focus on the gradual transformation of determinism into a poetic affirmation of life. Despite Lazarus' repeated declaration that death is dead, other characters express their doubt over this declaration of Lazarus. They practiced several tricks to test newly realized stand. They poisoned Lazarus' wife, Miriam and pushed to death. But Lazarus continued to assert his belief that death is dead. They forced Lazarus to admit the existence of death by creating a situation in which his family members along with his wife are killed. But Lazarus remains loyal to his affirming conviction. Finally he is burned to death. Even at the time of being burned physically, Lazarus continues to smile upon the beauty of life, joy of living and bliss of smiling. He said that although his personal laughter is going to end, it is not actually end, it is going to merge with eternal laughter. Having hearing this

unwavering stand point of Lazarus, Pompeia, Tiberius and other characters, disbeliever in life force, accepted the eternally free- flowing life force. This assertion of laughter even in the end of life marks the collapse of determinism. When determinism faced its limitation, it underwent transmutation and become a poetic affirmation of life force.

O'Neill is a dramatist whose earlier plays project the philosophy of determinism. By the term determinism O'Neill means a view point to consider human beings as a product of heredity, environment and biological drives. Later on, as his play- writing career turned full-fledged, he gradually renounced his adherence to the philosophy of determinism. He pointed out in most of his later plays the possibility of going beyond the bound of determinism. He upholds the conviction that in human life there is something which continues to persist after death. He believes that there is something precious in life which death cannot destroy. In his play *Lazarus Laughed* O'Neill detached himself from the deterministic philosophy, and put forward the Christian notion of life as a transcendence.

In *Lazarus Laughed* the central character frequently believes in the existence of eternal laughter. To the resurrected figure Lazarus death is dead. By making Lazarus declare that 'death is dead', O'Neill actually intended to imply the death of determinism. The recurrent remark death is dead exposes the inherent limitations and shortcomings of the philosophy of determinism. The smiling face of Lazarus, when he is burnt in fire, suggests that perpetual smile and laughter is beyond the destructive power of death. O'Neill does not only dramatize the limitations of determinism but transmutes it into somewhat distinct form. In this play, he displays Lazarus' personal laughter merging with the eternal laughter. This merging of personal laughter into the eternal laughter illustrates the situation in which the philosophy of determinism takes

a twisted form of transcendence. This transformation of deterministic philosophy into the form of eternal transcendence is called transmutation. In *Lazarus Laughed* this deterministic philosophy has been shown as the changed version of life not as a deterministic product of bio-drives, heredity and environment, but as a form of transcendence in which equal life force continued to assert its role.

Eugene O'Neill's father was an Irish – born stage actor named James O'Neill who had grown up in impoverished circumstances. He became famous for playing the title role in a stage version of *The Count of Monte Cristo*. His mother, Ella Quinlan O'Neill, was the emotionally fragile daughter of wealthy father who died when she was seventeen.

Eugene O'Neill was born in the Barrette House, corner of the Forty Third Street and broad way. O'Neill drew much more inspiration from the profession of his father. Right from his childhood he developed a keen sense of intimacy with the dramatic bent of creative mind.

Because of the profession of his father O'Neill was sent to a catholic boarding school where he found his only solace in books. After being suspended from Princeton University, he spent several years at sea, during which he suffered from depression and alcoholism. O'Neill parents and older brother Jamie died within three years of one another. Because of their death, O'Neill turned to writing as a form of escape. Despite his depression he had a deep love for the sea and it became a prominent theme in most of his plays.

He developed his dramatic career along with "little theatres" movement, which was established as the first independent theatre in Boston by William Dean Howells and Hamlin Garland. They were realist novelist theatre. Its purpose was to encourage truth and progress in American Dramatic Art.

The "Little Theatre" movement began around 1912. It was a revolt against the big theatres such as those on Broadway in New York City, whose main interest was making money. The "Little Theatre" was an art theatre. Between 1912 and 1929, there were over a thousand "Little Theatres" across the country. The first among these were the Washington Square Players in New York City's Greenwich Village and the province town players in Massachusetts. These two theaters are important in literary history of drama because they introduced the world to Eugene O'Neill, the real inaugurator of modern American drama.

With O'Neill, American drama developed into a literature. He freed it from the character type of melodrama. Through his plays, he brought a wide range of new themes and style to the stage. Each play is an exploration of the human condition. The theme of each of O'Neill's play goes beyond the surface of life to study the "Force behind Life".

In all of O'Neill's work, fate is one of these forces. In *Anna Christie* (1920) and many other plays, fate is symbolized by "Dat ole devil sea". He was one of the first playwrights to study the struggle inside a character's mind between conscious motives and unconscious needs. While most of his plays are realistic in form, he experimented with anti-realistic techniques. He sometimes distorted reality in order to express the inner meaning or problems in a play. He enticed his dramas with new and renewed techniques called expressionism. O'Casey believes he had "a compulsion to express deeper than surface reality (9)". *The Emperor Jones* (1920) and *The Hairy Ape* (1922) are important examples of this expressionism. The form of each O'Neill play is based upon the special dramatic needs of the play. In *Strange Interlude* (1928), the play's most important action happens inside the mind of the main character. O'Neill takes the stream of consciousness technique from the novel and dramatizes it. The

characters allow the audience to gear their inner thoughts. Although the experiment is successful, we find no echo of it in the author's later works.

*Desire Under the Elms* (1924) is somewhat realistic drama set in nineteenth century New England. It has the theme of sexual desire and the desire for land. The structure of this tragedy is like that of bible story. He also borrowed themes and techniques from Greek tragedy in such plays as the *Great God Brown* (1926) and *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931). In his last years, the plays became increasingly autobiographical. *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (1952) explores the spiritual problems of the American family, probably O'Neill's own.

*Long Days Journey into Night* (1956) is considered by many critics as a triumph of realistic drama and O'Neill's finest play. In it O'Neill performs dramatic auto - surgery on himself and an autopsy of his family. In writing this play, O'Neill has attempted to exorcise from his soul the bitterness, anger and hatred he felt for his family. It is a play about human responsibility and love - hate relationship within the family.

*The Long Voyage Home* (1917) tells the tragic and ironic story of sailor who decides to give up the sea and return to his native Sweden, only to be dragged in London dive and shanghaied on a windjammer going round the Horn.

### **Review of Literature**

Unlike other plays of Eugene O'Neill *Lazarus Laughed* is particularly different. In this play O'Neill has completely broken his tie with the philosophy of determinism. Besides this *Lazarus Laughed* has also witnessed a new kind of dramaturgy, which suits the philosophy of life as a transcendence of death. Grafting Nietzschean philosophy of life affirmation with the deathless view of life as a

transcendence O'Neill has achieved a highly remarkable thematic uniqueness and originality.

Although O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed* has obtained an iconic status in the canon of the 20<sup>th</sup> century drama, it has not received wider critical acclaim. Even amidst critics of O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed* there are lots of disputes and dissensions. Commenting upon the divine aspect of a resurrected man Lazarus's recurrent declaration of philosophy of life affirmation, Travis Bograd has said:

Lazarus Laughed is a play which answers in all particulars to this faith. It attempts to visualize with intensity a religious spirit that O'Neill had perceived dimly all his life. Lazarus, characterized early in the play as a man who in life was nothing but a bungling farmer, is reminiscent of Robert Mayo, but now transformed and exalted by his journey beyond the farthest horizon. Caligula, deformed, ape-like in his antics, is a distillation of other spiritually deformed characters with whom O'Neill has been concerned- the Hairy Ape, Marco, with his spiritual hump, the capering Billy Brown. Tiberius Caesar, Pompeia and Miriam also bring into sharp focus in a specifically religious context human characteristics in which, earlier, O'Neill has sensed a "faint indication" of spirit.

Bograd appears to have presented O'Neill as a dramatist conscious of a faint religious spirit throughout his life. The crux of Bogard's criticism concerning to *Lazarus laughed* is that it is a poetically dramatic expression of this realization of this spiritual faith. In short Bogard's conviction is that the renewed faith in eternal life in No can redeem mankind from evils and temptations of life.

Commenting on the absence of the practical theatricality of the play, James A. Robinson says:

Eugene O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed* is play for an Imaginative Theatre. In a series of picturesque and dramatic episodes this modern writer portrays the new attitudes of the resurrected Lazarus and his reception by various types of people in the Jewish, Grecian, and Roman world of his day. In the first scene the neighbors are celebrating the resurrection and gossiping about the miracle and about the sad, disappointed Lazarus that they had known and the new man that they are finding in his place. Then, according to the stage directions, He begins to laugh, softly at first-a laugh so full of a complete acceptance of life a profound assertion of joy in living, so devoid of all self-consciousness or fear, that it is like a great bird song triumphant in depths of sky, proud and powerful, infectious with love, casting on the listener and entralling spell. (36-35)

According to Robinson, main claim of Lazarus is that this influence which lives on, through merging with the universal, ceases to be selfishly personal. Only by a joyous acceptance of all that life implies, including death, can any person attain to fearlessness and freedom, the glorious attitude symbolized by the laughter of Lazarus.

Focusing upon the life force and prophetic philosophy of idealism Barrett H. Clark, a critic who has studied O'Neill's dramas in relation to Aeschylus, has commented in the following way:

In *Lazarus Laughed*, however, we have a positive and joyous assertion of the will to live, a proclamation made by an idealistic prophet who is tortured by no doubts, a man so sure of his message that he has

actually banished death from his world; but O'Neill took care to put this prophet into a world two thousand years younger than it is now. *Lazarus Laughed* is not life; it is the playwright's dream between an earlier and later hell on earth. (700)

Barrett has examined O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed* from the view point of profound assertion of joy in the art of living. Moreover he describes the play as the playwright's dream between an earlier and later hell on earth.

H.O. Stechan, a noted critic of O'Neill, examines *Lazarus Laughed* in relation to Greek tragedy. According to him: "in form *Lazarus Laughed* is a Greek tragedy, while the import is not unlike the mystery plays which used to be done during the middle ages. The story undertakes to reveal what O'Neill believes followed the raising of Lazarus from the dead by Jesus".

H.O Stephan intends to assert that *Lazarus Laughed* is a poetic dramatization of unflinching belief in the power of resurrection. By the same token he claims that there is a vestige of medieval mysticism in the play.

Alexander Doris comprehends *Lazarus Laughed* from the perspective of the impact of Buddhism in the life of Eugene O'Neill. According to Doris:

Eugene O'Neill was well acquainted with Buddhism at the time he began his writing of *Lazarus Laughed*. In 1929 he wrote: "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 of man." His study of Eastern religions, particularly of Taoism and Buddhism, is reflected in *Marco Millions*, written just before *Lazarus Laughed*. Since O'Neill was

convinced of the " essential identity of Buddhism and Christianity at the time he began *Lazarus Laughed*, it is not surprising that he enriched his interpretation of the Christian myth with ideas and symbols from Buddhism. (359)

Alexander Doris seeks to establish the relationship between Christianity and Buddhism. Against the backdrop of the relationship, he interprets the essential similarities between Buddhism and Christianity. In terms of the assertion of laughter both the prophet Buddha and Lazarus resemble each other.

Commentating on the focal point of the drama *Lazarus Laughed*, Arthur Quinn has uttered:

The fear of Death is the root of all evil, the cause of all man's blundering unhappiness. Lazarus Knows there is no death 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 triumphant yes to life in its entirety and its eternity. His laughter affirms God, it is too noble to desire personal life (patriotism carried to its logical ultimate). His laughter is the direct expression of joy in the Dionysian sense, the joy of celebrant who is at the same time a sacrifice in the eternal process of change and growth and transmutation which is life, of which his life is an insignificant manifestation, soon to be reabsorbed, and life itself is the self attraction joyous laughter of God. (250-253)

Arthur Quinn associates death as the main cause of suffering. He advises that proper understanding of death leads to victory over death and eternal assertion of life -force.

Critics are almost unanimous in hailing the indomitable free will of O'Neill's character. In this regard Van Yuck Brooks has added:

Elsewhere, far from being passive, his characters possessed an implied free will though they failed to use it and were given to weak surrenders while *Lazarus Laughed* in some way the most moving play he ever wrote, was a ringing affirmation of the will and the joy of living of these three positions, which stood for the essential Eugene O'Neill's, the play *Wright* who suggested often the man of genius, perhaps he seemed all the more the American of this latter end of the confident years because he was uncertain, temptations, Prussian and grouping. (553)

Van Yuck Brooks tends to analyze the characterization in *Lazarus Laughed*

.According to Brooks most of the leading characters in the play possess strong free will. Their will to truth and will to live is so strong that they appear to have possessed fierce will power. It is the possession of this fierce will power that motivated them to affirm life to the extent of eternal joy and happiness.

Throwing spotlight upon the religious nature of *Lazarus Laughed* Willard Tharp Says, "Lazarus Laughed is a religious play in which Lazarus, come back from the dead, opposes his ecstatic faith the hopelessness of those who fear life in fearing death," (106).

In an attempt to explore modern materialism William Rose Benet and Norplant Holmes Pearson have jointly given utterance to their voice in the following way:

The lucretian laughter of Lazarus is the triumphant yes! of modern materialism. But the significance of play doesn't lie entirely in its summation of post - war belief. For both in its rhythmical language and in its use of chorus it is an important milestone in determined effort to give life to poetical drama. (1631)

Benet and Pearson have expressed somewhat peculiar claim that in Lazarus' recurrent laughter there is an indirect yes to the emerging materialism. The poetic dialogue of the play, he rejoins, stands in support for the summation of post-war belief in the transforming power of materialism.

So far the researcher went through some critics' views on Eugene O'Neill's *Lazarus laughed*. All these critics examine *Lazarus Laughed* from different perspectives. But none of the critics has displayed their interest in the subtle way through which the philosophy of determinism undergoes transmutation. Hence the present researcher aims at foregrounding how the philosophy of determinism delves into the eternal existence of life unhindered and unhampered by death. Thus the play dramatically projects the spiritual outlook on the relationship between the immortality of life and the death of death.

## **II: Determinism and Variations in it**

The researcher takes determinism as a major theoretical tool. In this work, the philosophy of determinism has been forced to admit its limitation. It undergoes subtle transmutation in the drama *Lazarus Laughed*.

The term "determinism" has been defined by several critics in different way. E.A. Gellener, a leading critic of the philosophy of determinism, defines determinism as: "The term determinism denotes a doctrine which claims that all objects or events of same kind are determined, that is to say must be as they are and as they will be, in virtue of some laws of forces which necessitate their being so". (194)

According to this definition the existence of all objects or events are determined by some laws of forces, which necessitate their being.

In *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* the term determinism is defined as: "The belief that people are not free too choose what they are likely or how they behave because these things are decided by their surrounding and other things over which they have no control".(417)

The above mentioned oxford dictionary definition aims at presenting determinism as that belief which denies human beings their freewill.

In Emile Zola's view determinism is:" The cause which determines the appearance of these phenomena. This nearest cause, as it is called, is nothing more than the physical and material condition of the existence or manifestation of the phenomena" (645).

According to him, the existence of something is determined by the physical and material condition of the phenomena.

Another critic W.S. Sutton defines determinism as:

The concept of determinism in philosophy has in it the element of necessity: Things must be just as they are because of antecedent causes. This notion is central to science, which maintains that, were one to know all factors involved in some forthcoming event, one could predict it exactly; or conversely, if an event occurs, that it is inevitable. Every thing and event in creation is the result, and will always be the result, of natural laws that can be determined by means of the scientific method.

When it comes to human behavior, an interesting set of alternative positions has been established that has real relevance outside psychology as a science or profession and that relates to general human behavior and institutions, including the laws of society and the dogmas of religion. What has occurred is an interesting set of contradictions. As noted, scientists view life as determined and generally believe in the inevitability of behavior: Were one to know everything about an individual, one could predict his or her every movement. However, throughout the history of society the common sense view has been one of individual responsibility.

Indeterminism generally is taken to mean that the individual has freedom of choice that people can predict the consequences of their actions and can decide how to operate, for example, in terms of their own selfish gain versus the good of the community. The purest example of indeterminism is the belief in free will, which holds that responsible people decide all conscious behavior. The laws of most societies and the dogma of many religions, especially the Judaeo-

Christian ones, are based on the notion of individual responsibility:

The consequences of punishment— whether in this world or in the next—are justified in terms of a person's moral judgments and behavior.

The existence of every thing and event is the result of natural laws, which is determined by the antecedent cause.

The main thrust of this research work is to show the transmutation of determinism. Hence it is imperative to define the word 'transmutation' in a crystal clear way. The word transmutation is different from the word transformation. In the drama *Lazarus Laughed* the philosophy of determinism is not only transformed but transmuted also. In the process of transformation the transformed is awake to the very transformation itself. Transformation still retains some vestiges of the previous state of transformed. In the state of transformation there is no quantum leap in the structure of thing that gets transported. There is thin possibility of return to the prior state in the grand process of transformation.

In sharp contrast to transformation, the term transmutation implies somewhat different sense. The term transmutation refers to that elevated level of change in which the transmuted acquires lofty form and function.

In the drama *Lazarus Laughed*, the philosophy of determinism gives radical way to the poetic affirmation of life. Characters like Caligula, Crassus and Tiberius recurrently stress the fact that death is the end of life. They hold the deterministic view towards life. According to them, death marks the end of life. In their opinion there is no atom of life beyond the periphery of death. They subscribed to the conviction that death is the polar opposite of life. To them life is just the psychological and biological mechanism whose smooth functioning breaks finally.

This final stoppage in the biological mechanism of body is described by Caligula and Tiberius as death. Their collectively shared view is that death is a disastrous cataclysm which put a full stop to the creative chapter of life.

This sort of deterministic outlook of the characters on life came in encounter with the eternal view of Lazarus on life. The philosophy of determinism is transmuted in the Eugene O'Neill drama, *Lazarus Laughed*. Lazarus, the protagonist of the drama, preaches that death is dead after his resurrection. He views that there is no death but only eternal continuity of life. For him, there is only life and laughter. Laughter for Lazarus is life and life is laughter. Our laughter, after death, will merge into God's eternal laughter. So there is no death. This doctrine that there is only life is rejected by the Romans like Caligula, Pompeia, Tiberius etc. They are shocked with that view and want to prove it. So they give poisoned fruit to Miriam, Lazarus's wife, to show him there is death. Temporarily, Lazarus fails to abide by his declaration that there is no death and there is only laughter. They tell him to laugh, in despairing rage. In the dead expectant silence Miriam's body is seen to rise. She speaks in voice of unearthly sweetness, "Yes! There is only life (1431)." and falls down. Lazarus raises his head and kisses her. His face is radiant with new faith and joy. He smiles with happiness and speaks to himself with mocking affections. He begins to laugh, his laughter clear and ringing – the laughter of conqueror arrogant with happiness and the pride of new triumph.

But they want to test it in Lazarus life to prove his incredible claim and conviction. They burn Lazarus into the stake. Tiberius showing Lazarus says "Lazarus, you are dying 1442." But Lazarus rejects that idea and says Yes ' in a voice of triumphant assertion of the victory of life over pain and death. He laughs and says there is life, eternity, stars and dust and God's eternal laughter beyond the bound of

death. By his assertion of life and laughter changes the view of Tiberius, Pompeia and Caligula towards the life. They accept that there is only life; death is not the end but simply a change. after death, individual laughter merges into God eternal laughter. This acceptance of the life affirmatively is to go beyond the bound of the philosophy of determinism. Hence the philosophy of determinism transmutes in to the poetic affirmation of life force.

Eugene O'Neill began to write plays under the impact of Friedrich Nietzsche, who propounded the philosophy of affirmation. Nietzsche, *In his Selected Writings* says "right affirmation of death at a right time leads to the enhancement and enrichment of life (133)." According to Nietzsche death and life should not be taken as polar opposite entities. To him, life is a constant negation of the inherent impulse to die. He claims that there is something within us, which constantly hankers to die. We constantly negate that impulse. Life is the product of this negation. Nietzsche is that kind of philosopher who always says yes to any basic demands of life. He does not stand in favor for negating the ultimate aspirations of life. Instinct, intuition, impulses of emotional kinds, which Christianity condemned, is brought to the foreground of recognition by Nietzsche. In the history of western philosophy Nietzsche alone is that kind of philosopher who is courageous enough to say yes to the instinctive and animalistic impulses. He maintains that in life there is nothing to be left nothing to be renounced, nothing to be rejected. In this opinion life has to be accepted in totality without a grudge. It, he adds, has to be accepted as it is. He, by sabotaging the life rejecting view of Christianity, tends to affirm life. The philosophy Friedrich Nietzsche propounded is the philosophy of affirmation. By the philosophy of affirmation of life, the philosopher Nietzsche means that approach to life which never says no to life. The life affirming philosophy is the philosophy of uttering big Yes to life.

This Nietzschean philosophy of life affirmation is perfectly applicable in testing the recurrently repeated claim and conviction of Lazarus, the protagonist of Eugene O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed*. Lazarus, a resurrected Jew, started preaching that there is no death, that death is dead, that life is an eternal continuity unhindered by death. By the same token he added that life is an eternal flow into the cosmic life force, which always says eternal yes. Lazarus's doctrine that life is laughter and laughter is life was a kind of an affront to some of the Romans like Tiberius, Caligula, Pompeia etc. This doctrine of Lazarus was a kind of miracle. Those Romans did their best to test this extremely incredible claim of Lazarus. To a large extent, those Romans were biased to Lazarus on the ground of Lazarus's Semitic origin. They give poisoned fruit to Lazarus's wife, Miriam and pushed her to death to test the correctness of Lazarus claim that death is dead. Temporarily, Lazarus fails to abide by his declaration that death is dead. Later on his faith in life, joy and laughter increased excessively. Finally when he himself was burnt at the stake he was laughing smiling and expressing sincere thankfulness to the victory of life over death. The following citation illustrates the triumph of Lazarus's doctrine of deathless life over the philosophy of determinism upheld by the three Romans Tiberius, Caligula and Pompeia:

LAZARUS

[His voice speaking lovingly, with a surpassing clearness and exaltation]

Life! Eternity! Stars and dust! God's Eternal Laughter!

[His laughter bursts forth now in itchiest pitch of ecstatic summons to the feast and sacrifice of Life, the Eternal]

[The crowds laugh with him in a frenzied rhythmic chorus. Led by the CHORUS, they pour down from the banked walls of the amphitheatre and dance in the flaring reflection of the flames strange wild measures of liberated joy. TIBERIUS stands on the raised dais laughing great shouts of clear, fearless laughter]

CHORUS

[Chanting as they dance]

Laugh! Laugh!

We are stars!

We are dust!

We are gods!

We are laughter! 1444

The philosophy of life- affirmation came originally from Nietzsche. He is the first person in the history of western philosophy to introduce the life- enhancing and life- surpassing philosophy. Like Nietzsche's Persian prophet Zarathustra O'Neill's resurrected prophet Lazarus began to preach the gospel of laughter. According to Lazarus to laugh is to affirm life. Furthermore to laugh is to accept life in totality. If life is to be accepted in totality it should make allowance for laughter. So far as the tendency to laugh is concerned both Lazarus and Zarathustra belong to the same category of life - affirmation. But Zarathustra Does not declare the death of the dead. Rather he represents the death of God. To Lazarus life is godly. It, according to him reaches godly state by dint of faith. Have a faith in life Death disappears leaving no traces if life is accepted in entirety. Against the backdrop of life- affirmation of

Nietzsche, O'Neill has poetically drew on the eternal flow of life force unhindered by the existence of death.

The present researcher has employed Nietzschean philosophy of life-affirmation as a major theoretical tool. But the researcher is alert that Lazarus' concept of eternity of life is a modified version of Nietzschean concept of self - Surpassing Nietzsche believes in self – Surpassing as gateway of becoming superman. But O'Neill's Lazarus is a transformed version of transcending the barrier of death on the strength of depthless faith in the eternal nature of life.

#### Analysis of the Language of the Test

Apart from the theoretical technique of transmutation of determinism, the researcher adopts a method of analyzing the language of chosen text *Lazarus Laughed*. In order to transmute the philosophy of determinism, the language plays vital role. Thus Eugene O'Neill Wrote the drama in poetic language. He valorizes poetic expression over the philosophical expression in the drama *Lazarus laughed*. Poetic expression is manifestation of inner expression. It emerges from the unconscious. He prioritizes the unconscious act as it is motivated by in-depth will and faith. O'Neill's philosophy, in the drama, is guided by the faith .So he presents his philosophy in the language of poetry. This poetic style of presenting thought is sharply challenging to the philosophy of determinism.

The present researcher adopts language as the applicable tool for the analysis of the chosen text *Lazarus Laughed*. O'Neill presents his philosophy through the character Lazarus. The central character Lazarus challenges the philosophy of determinism. On challenging this philosophy he has given radical view that death is dead. He expresses his view in poetic language.

The researcher presents some of the brilliant expression from the text that illustrates poetic nature of drama:

Lazarus

[On a final note of compelling exultation]

Laugh! Laugh with me! Death is dead! Fear is no more! There is only life! There is only Laughter!

Chorus

[Chanting exultingly now]

Laugh! Laugh!

Laugh with Lazarus!

Fear is not more!

There is no death!

[They laugh in a rhythmic cadence dominated by the laughter of Lazarus] 1338

O'Neill's appreciation of life implies unconscious act. Any act induced from the unconscious is poetic. Lazarus accepts continuity of life force after death also. The poetic language shows a complete acceptance of life, a profound assertion of joy in the art of living.

Here the researchers could not help raising numerous questions as to why O'Neill valorizes` unconscious act over conscious act. He prioritizes the unconscious act because it is motivated by in-depth will, which punctuates from the corpus of the unconscious.

When Miriam's, his wife, pushed to death, Lazarus accepted temporarily the deterministic view. He cannot laugh. At that moment his words are less poetic. Later on his faith in life, joy and laughter increases excessively. He then brings laughter in his face. As he becomes mature, in his spiritual conviction, language becomes more poetic.

At the end he burns into stake to show that there is death. But he continues his rigid view. He presents his clear and strong view that death is dead. His language becomes more poetic. For example the following lines serve as a story textual proof:

LAZARUS

[His voice speaking lovingly, with a surpassing clearness and exaltation]

Life! Eternity! Stars and dust! God's Eternal Laughter!

[His laughter bursts forth now in itchiest pitch of ecstatic summons to the feast and sacrifice of Life, the Eternal]

[The crowds laugh with him in a frenzied rhythmic chorus. Led by the CHORUS, they pour down from the banked walls of the amphitheatre and dance in the flaring reflection of the flames strange wild measures of liberated joy. TIBERIUS stands on the raised dais laughing great shouts of clear, fearless laughter]

CHORUS

[Chanting as they dance]

Laugh! Laugh!

We are stars!

We are dust!

We are gods!

We are laughter! 1444

CROWD

We are dust!

We are gods!

Laugh! Laugh!

To project the process of transmutation of determinism into the poetic affirmation of life-force, the philosophy of determinism, Nietzschean philosophy of life- affirmation and the analysis of the language of the text are employed by the researchers as applicable tool.

Hence the poetic language of the text is suggestive of affirmation of life force and the transmutation of the philosophy of determinism.

### III: Poetic Affirmation of Laughter

The influential American dramatist of twentieth century, Eugene O'Neill, wrote the play *Lazarus Laughed* in 1926. In this drama, he foregrounds the mystic nature of the relationship between life and death. Lazarus, the central character of *Lazarus Laughed* is an upholder of unwavering belief in the perpetually eternal continuity of life.

Once Lazarus, when he was of seventy, died a natural death. His dead body was kept in a cave. Some time after his death Jesus Christ came there and he called the dead Lazarus repeatedly. Soon life came back to Lazarus's dead body. Consequent upon the mercy of Christ, Lazarus was resurrected. After witnessing his own resurrection from death Lazarus became extremely thankful to Jesus. His experience of resurrection gave him ample ground to offer subjectively authentic experience on the existence of death. Lazarus has got a golden spiritual opportunity to go beyond death.

The major character Lazarus embodies philosophy of laughter. He affirms laughter and joy in each and every walk of life. He succeeded to reach in this spiritually elevated level of poetic affirmation following his profound understanding of death. The kind of spiritually elevated and awakened level of life – affirmation upheld by the resurrected figure Lazarus is the direct outcome of Lazarus's profound and in – depth understanding of death. Understanding of the phenomenon of death has enabled him to pose a big challenge to the deterministic conviction assumed by people at large.

His resurrection enabled him to transcend the barrier of death. After resurrection Lazarus began to preach the crowd that 'death is dead' (1338).following

his resurrection Lazarus says repeatedly that there is no death, there is only life (1338). In declarative sentences Lazarus gives vent to his utterance that there is only life, there is only laughter and joy. In this way, the resurrected Lazarus began to disseminate the fact that beyond death there is life. Lazarus, in this way, became affirmative in upholding the view that death is dead and there is only life.

When Lazarus spreads this sort of views and visions, numbers of his followers increased. Most of the people, whose faith in life was deep, were impressed by Lazarus's somewhat incredible conviction. Since Lazarus was a Jew capable of creating a great spiritual restlessness and awe inspiring atmosphere, the Roman rulers and power brokers were afraid of Lazarus's religion of "all – embracing love (1387)." Lazarus expounded the religion of laughter, love and perpetually life force. The following citation is illustrative of Lazarus's religion of the affirmation of life:

Lazarus

[Suddenly again – now in a voice of loving exalting]

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 lover of life cried 'yes' and I laughed in the laughter of God!

[He begins to laugh , softly at first –a laugh so full of a complete acceptance of life, a profound assertion of joy in living , so devoid of all self – consciousness or fear, that it is like a great bird song triumphant in depths of sky , proud and powerful, infectious with love, casting on the listener an enthralling spell. The crowd in the room is caught by it. Glancing sideways at one another, at first they hesitate, plainly holding themselves in for fear of what the next one will think]

Chorus

[In a chanting murmur]

Lazarus laughs!

Our hearts grow happy!

Laughter like music!

The wind laughs!

The sea laughs!

Spring laughs from the earth!

Summer laughs in the air!

Lazarus laughs! (1388)

The kind of gospel of laughter and joy Lazarus preached is sharply different from the orthodox doctrine of Christianity. Christianity too persuades people to believe in the eternal. But the Christian belief in the eternal is bound to reject the temporal world. The Christian life-view does not and can't accept the paradoxes and contradiction of life in totality hence the Christian gospel about the importance of laughter is biased towards life. Christianity is a religion of guilt and lamentation. But the kind of religion Lazarus preached is the religion of joy and laughter. He maintains that those who can laugh and dance can be able to say yes to life. Lazarus presumption is that human being should be able to say yes to those things which we generally say No. Death is our No to life. When death is accepted it no longer becomes death. On the contrary it becomes a precious part of life which does not hinder the eternal life. This is the religion of Lazarus the resurrected prophet of laughter and joy. Unlike the religion of Christianity Lazarus does not push people of the hollow dream of the heaven, the kingdom of God. Thence there is no trace of

Christian spirituality in the new religion of laughter. Regarding to this gospel of Lazarus it can be said that his is the gospel of transcendental spiritualism which exposes the limitations of the philosophy of determinism.

Lazarus is adamant in his realization that beyond death there is life, hence there is no death. To him, life is an eternal continuum of joy and laughter. As to the existence of death Lazarus expressed his views in a clear cut and straight forwards way. According to Lazarus, death exists so long as we are afraid to die. For Lazarus death is just a fiction .It is, in his own words, ‘men’s invention! (1397).’He saw no atom of death on the joyous panorama of life force. That is why his view of life became positive affirmative. When death gets no space in the grand castle of life; it would be relevant to declare that death is dead. Lazarus, thus, came to propound anti-deterministic view on life. The following cited extract is evocative of the anti – deterministic outlook of Lazarus on life:

Lazarus

[With a smile]

But all death is men’s invention, laugh! [He laughs and the centurion and soldiers laugh with him, half dancing clumsily now to the beat of the music]

Chorus of Lazarus’s followers

Laugh! Laugh!

Fear is no more!

There is no death!

There is only life!

There is only laughter!

Followers

[Dancing]

Laugh! Laugh!

Fear is no more!

Death is dead! (1397)

Lazarus is opposed to the deterministic outlook on life. Unlike this view on life Lazarus's view on life is far more spiritual. If others see death as an inevitable part of life, Lazarus sees no death in life. He, rather, sees life flowing continuously without being hindered by any other temporal-spatial obstacle. In Lazarus's claim there is not only death; there is no existence of death. To him life is a fact life is an eternally unfolding phenomenon which is going to merge in the cosmic life-force. He, furthermore, argues that death is a fiction. It has no existence at all. It is simply man's invention. Since it is man's invention, it can't endure forever, only life exists for ever. By saying that death is man's invention Lazarus is actually telling that the philosophy of determinism is simply a creation, a false concoction. Since death is an invention what is invented by man puts limitations and restraints on life. Once these limitations and restraints are avoided through understanding the mysterious nature of death, the unhindered life force gains momentum perpetually.

This view of Lazarus regarding to death poses a big challenge to the Roman people who used to believe that death is the end of life. Since Lazarus's standpoint on the relation between life and death runs counter to that of the three Romans, his standpoint is doubtless anti-deterministic. This anti-death attitude of Lazarus makes an appeal to avoid believing in death as a full stop to life.

This anti-standpoint of Lazarus posed a grave threat to Tiberius, the Roman ruler who is an epitome of hatred against humanity. Tiberius felt that Lazarus's untested claim that death is dead is a source of challenge to him. Unlike

Lazarus, Tiberius believes in fear, death, decay, retaliation and vengeance. He was intoxicated by his political power. Lazarus's recurrent declaration that death is dead was a kind of affront to him. There was another political power broker Caligula. Caligula had been afflicted with morbid political lust to kill. He was extreme in his morbidity towards destruction. To some extent the behavioral pattern of Caligula was tainted by insanities and oddities. He too was glued to the conviction that death is the end of life. There is another character named Pompeia in the play. She was too insulted with the poetic declaration of life. More than this, Pompeia was a woman who was caught in a loveless quandary. She was terribly disappointed with her loneliness of life. Having seen Lazarus and Miriam full of love, Pompeia grew jealous. Out of her mounting jealousy Pompeia sought to kill Miriam, then make Lazarus lonely, and finally woo his lonely heart.

Tiberius and Caligula were eager to test the accuracy of Lazarus's theory of life as laughter. Thus Caligula, Pompeia and Tiberius all felt threatened by the power of Lazarus' conviction and laughter. They, at first, did not believe in what Lazarus said and how he said it. So they decided to test accuracy of Lazarus's claim. To make an acid test of Lazarus's claim Tiberius, Caligula and Pompeia hatched a conspiracy. Pompeia fed Miriam a poisoned fruit. Due to the effect of poisoned fruit which Miriam had to eat, she breathed her last. When Lazarus, who preached the gospel of deathlessness, witnessed the demise of his wife Miriam he could not laugh. On the contrary, Lazarus was saddened and disappointed by the death of Miriam. Rather Lazarus, instead of laughing, began to shed tears. When those three Romans – Tiberius, Caligula, and Pompeia- found Lazarus being affected by the death of his wife, they called him fraud and charlatan. The following textual extract illustrates three Romans' reaction to the temporary failure of Lazarus.

Caligula

[In a frenzy of despairing rage, hopping up and down]

Liar! Charlatan! Weakling! How you have cheated Caligula! [He suddenly slaps Lazarus viciously across the face] There is death!

Laugh, if you dare! Tiberius

[Standing – in a sinister cold rage, the crueler because his dream of a cure for death is baffled, yet feeling his power as Caesar triumphant nevertheless] And I thought you might be a daemon. I thought you might have a magic cure-[with revengeful fury]

But death is, and death is mine! I shall make you pray for death! And I shall make death laugh at you! Ha- ha – ha –ha....1431

The researcher has already presented that the three Romans represent deterministic outlook on life. For all of them, death is the end of life. They equated life with a psychological mechanism. It is, according to them, a product of environment, heredity, biological urges and impulses. Since they were loyal adherents to the mechanical view, their outlooks on life were fairly mechanical. They upheld that life is just a machine; and death is the final failure of this machine. When those three Romans caught Lazarus in sad mood, following his wife's death their deterministic attitude to life gained a ground and became prominent. Unlike those Romans Lazarus had upheld eternal view on life' death is dead' is Lazarus's favorite motto. It is a proven fact that Lazarus's attitude to life and death is absolutely different from that of man. He propounds the eternal theory of life. Lazarus has proposed the contention that there is no death; there is no fear in life; beyond death there is life. When Lazarus had to encounter with the loneliness resulting from his wife's death; he could not

laugh because of sadness and loneliness. This short period of his loneliness gave those three Romans convicting ground to call Lazarus liar, charlatan and fraud.

Lazarus stands for the anti-deterministic forces. He maintains that life is a deathless continuum. To him, life is laughter, and laughter is life. When he failed to laugh at the moment of Miriam's death; his enemies got a golden chance to make a mockery of him. At this moment, the researcher has observed the violent confrontation between the philosophy of determinism and the philosophy of life-affirmation. Tiberius says that empire is possible so long as hatred reigns over love. Caligula holds views that fear and urge to kill are the twin basis for the territorial expansion of empire. Similarly Pompeia views life from the problem and perspective of envy and jealousy. According to those three Romans death exists so long as there is life, love and laughter. In sharp contrast to these three Romans' view there is another brand of thought upheld particularly by Lazarus, Prophet of laughter. Lazarus represents purely different school of thought. This view on life and death sounds absolutely anti-deterministic. To him in life can waver in the wake of life any kind of disaster. But the wavering faith has to be consolidated by cultivating the virtue of patience and strong sense of endurance. When Miriam was poisoned to death Lazarus failed to laugh profoundly. Rather he became terribly lonely and lonesome. Miriam's death saddened him to the extent of his failure. Following Miriam's death Lazarus's faith in life and laughter declined. He suited to abide by his own spiritual conviction that there is no death, only life. In the untimely absence of Miriam Lazarus felt lonely, he failed to laugh to the depth of his heart. As a result he included the notoriety of being dubbed as fraud, liar and charlatan. Despite that notoriety and loneliness Lazarus deepened his faith in the eternal existence of life. Gradually his declining faith in life regained its redemptive strength and stamina. The following citation is

suggestive of the gradual renitence of his lost strength of faith in the timeless existence of death:

LAZARUS

[Bending down--supplicatingly]

Miriam! Call back to me! Laugh!

[He pauses. A second of dead silence then, with a sound that is very like a sob, he kisses her on the lips]

I am lonely!

Right from the start of Lazarus's preaching of the gospel of laughter, the three Romans, Pompeia, Tiberius and Caligula were, to some extent, influenced by the preaching of the deathless life. But their hearts were so frozen with the philosophy of determinism that they were not ready to accept Lazarus's preaching without taking a litmus test. Their very tendency to accept any belief-oriented thing itself illustrates their deterministic belief system. Before accepting truth of a deathless life they sought to test Lazarus in a severely fatal way. Pompeia poisoned Miriam to death. They were eager to see how Lazarus reacts to his wife's death. Had Lazarus laughed at the demise of his wife his philosophy would have been successful and correct. But contrary to his own conviction he was saddened by his wife's death. To our utter dismay he felt lonely and gloomy. The loneliness of Lazarus marks the failure of his philosophy.

Finally Lazarus's faith in the eternal existence of life, love and laughter became stronger and stronger. The death of Miriam did not prevent him from affirming his belief in life. He continued to persist that so long as there is love and laughter there is life. Within a short time span Lazarus remained adamant in his

conviction. He expresses his doctrine that there is no loneliness but only god's eternal laughter.

Following Miriam's death Lazarus was impulsively forced to surrender to his humane attributes. In a fit of acutely painful sadness Lazarus was forced to sob and kiss his wife who was in the mouth of death. This act of sobbing by Lazarus reveals his own weakness. This exemplifies his failure to adhere to his own moral conviction. Actually it was a kind of stimulus for Lazarus to elevate his spiritual position but temporarily he interpreted it as a big blow to his conviction which leads to the temporary failure of Lazarus's theory of eternal laughter.

Although Lazarus remained sad over the death of his wife, smile and laughter gradually came over his face. Due to the sudden setback in the level of his understanding about death Lazarus had to relapse into reposeful state. Finally he came to know that so long as there is life, there is bound to love, joy and happiness. The following brief textual extract brings into foreground the gradual victory of Lazarus's gospel.

### LAZARUS

[Kisses MIRIAM again and raises his head. His face is radiant with new faith and joy. He smiles with happiness and speaks to himself with a mocking affection as if to an amusing child]

That much remained hidden in me of the sad old Lazarus who died self-pity—his loneliness! Lonely no more! Man's loneliness is but his fear of life! Lonely no more! Millions of laughing stars there are around me! And laughing dust, born once of woman on this earth, now freed to dance! the old, grown mellow with god, burst into flaming seed! The fields of infinite space are sown—and grass for sheep

springs up on the hills of earth! But there is no death, nor fear, nor loneliness! There is only god's Eternal Laughter! His Laughter flows into the lonely heart!

[He begins to laugh, his laughter clear and ringing—the laughter of a conqueror arrogant with happiness and the pride of new triumph. He bends and picks up the body of MIRIAM in his arms and, his head thrown back, laughing, he ascends the dais and places her on the table as on a bier. He touches one hand on her breast, as if he were taking an oath to life on her heart, looks upward and laughs, his voice ringing more and more with a terrible unbearable power and beauty that beats those in the room into an abject submissive panic]1431-1432

This strong adherence to his eternal faith in the timeless existence of life was thought by the three Romans as a painful insult to them. Thus they finally sought to test the ultimate correctness of Lazarus's Standpoint. So they burned Lazarus alive.

Without noticing the gradual resurgence of laughter in his face, the there Romans continued to assent that Lazarus is not a resurrected prophet. Rather he is a charlatan, fraud and a deceiver. This sort of blame did not disturb him. Rather he went through all those thick and thins. No notoriety disturbed him. Actually Lazarus had not failed in adhering to his spiritual attainment. Rather he was a bit slow to cultivate the sharpness to understanding. Temporarily he relapsed into ignorance. This relapse of Lazarus in to ignorance and loneliness gave the there Romans convincing ground to condemn Lazarus. This condemnation of Lazarus into ridicule resembles the condemnation of Christ by the Romans into crucification. But like Christ Lazarus remained non- reactive. To his enemies' utter shock he continued to affirm life. Determinism is a philosophy of life- rejection because it says yes to death. Thus prior

to the final test of Lazarus the confrontation between the deterministic philosophy and philosophy of affirmation has reached the climax. To add the relevant authenticity the researcher has introduced a pertinent element from the text.

At the moment of his being burned alive there is more smile on his face, laughter in his heart , joy in his plight and unwavering faith in the eternal existence of life . The following citation exemplifies the final triumph of Lazarus' theory of eternal life over the deterministic conviction upheld by the three Romans:

LAZARUS

[His voice speaking lovingly, with a surpassing clearness and exaltation]

Life! Eternity! Stars and dust! God's Eternal Laughter!

[His laughter bursts forth now in itchiest pitch of ecstatic summons to the feast and sacrifice of Life, the Eternal]

[The crowds laugh with him in a frenzied rhythmic chorus. Led by the CHORUS, they pour down from the banked walls of the amphitheatre and dance in the flaring reflection of the flames strange wild measures of liberated joy. TIBERIUS stands on the raised dais laughing great shouts of clear, fearless laughter]

CHORUS

[Chanting as they dance]

Laugh! Laugh!

We are stars!

We are dust!

We are gods!

We are laughter!

CROWD

We are dust!

We are gods!

Laugh! Laugh! 1444

Momentary pause in Lazarus's continued elevation from the lowly level had received plenty of criticism in the community of Roman people. Romans had biases of political and racial kind. On the basis of their Semitic bias they tried to ridicule him. But Lazarus was rapidly moving towards the path of spiritual perfection. His understanding of individual laughter was going to reach the high level of eternal laughter. He found every existing material entities surcharged with eternal laughter. Planets and dust also resembled as entities aerated with touches of eternality. The broadening cosmic awareness of Lazarus had materialized by the time the Romans were contemplating about the so-called failure of Lazarus' viewpoint on the relation between life and death.

To bring the truth in to the forefront of public recognition Lazarus was finally put into severe test. He was burned alive when Lazarus's living body was aflame with flame, there was strikingly bright smile, profound joy and intense laughter. Bright smile, profound joy and intense laughter. Of the three Romans Tiberius and Pompeia were changed. The change in their previous attitude to death brought them much closer to Lazarus although he was aflame Caligula, having seen Tiberius changed, laments about his own loneliness. This lamentation makes him pathetic figure Caligula's pathos and Tiberius unprecedented change foregrounds the final failure of

determinism. The following textual extract serves as a bold proof concerning the collapse of determinism:

CALIGULA

[With resentful jealousy and rage – in a voice rising to a scream]

What do I hear, Lazarus? You laugh with your murderer? You give him your laughter? You have forgotten me–my love– you make him love you– you make him laugh at Caesars –at me! [Suddenly springs on TRBRIUS in a fury and grabbing him by the throat chokes him, forcing him back on the throne – screaming] Die, Traitor! Die!

[TIBRERIUS' body relaxes in his hands, dead, and slips from the chair.

CALIGULA rushes madly down the stairs into the midst of the oblivious, laughing, dancing crowd, screaming] you have betrayed me, dog of a Jew! You have betrayed Caesars! (1444)

As Lazarus was being burned at stake those who used to take Lazarus skeptically they were forced to admit the limitations of their previously occupied ideological position the smiling and laughter filled faces of Lazarus at stake projects the absolutely sovereign supremacy of Lazarus's philosophy of life affirmation. The sovereign supremacy of Lazarus's belief in the eternal existence of life marks the explicitly obvious transmutation of determinism. The extract below justified the above mentioned conclusion:

LAZARUS

[His voice is heard in a gentle, expiring sigh of compassion, followed by faint dying note of laughter that rises and is lost in the sky like the flight of his soul back into the womb of infinity]

Fear not, Caligula! There is no death! 1446

Since the start of Lazarus's triumph those who believed in the power of the existence of death had to realize that they were defeated with their demission of defeat the philosophy of determinism gets transmuted Lazarus's practical success in life forced the there Romans to admit that forced the there Romans to admit that death can't put an end to life. The realization that death cannot put an end to life has exposed the serious limitations of the philosophy of determinism. The crucial triumph of Lazarus's philosophy marks the end of the universal implications of the philosophy universal implications of the philosophy of determinism. To cut the entire matter short at the heart of O'Neill's *Lazarus Laughed* the transmutation of the philosophy of determinism has regained sovereign.

Analysis of language of the Text:

The enlighten character Lazarus speaks in the language of poetry. His speech in poetic language aims at transmuting the philosophy of determinism into poetic affirmation of life force. Poetry is spontaneous mode of expressing elevated thought, which arises form the deeper understanding of life force. Not only Lazarus but the three Romans also began to speak in the language of poetry. Right from the start of the drama those three Romans were the devout disciples of the philosophy of determinism. So long as they were the followers of determinism they used to speak in the language of prose. The moment they were moved to believe in the fearless human life their language turned out to be poetical. After they saw smile on the face of Lazarus they became guilty. They knew about the profound truth. This movement from the language of prose to the language of poetry is suggestive of a movement from the philosophy of determinism to the philosophy of life – affirmation.

The language of the major character Lazarus is poetical. He expresses his philosophy in language of poetry as it comes out form his inner heart. The following

extract reveals the poetic nature of the language: "[His voice thrilling with exultance] Omen, fear not life! You die- but there is no death for Man! [He begins to laugh, and at the sound of his laughter, a great spell of silence settles upon all his hearers then as his laughter arisen, they begin to laugh with him]. (1443).

The researcher seeks to explore transmutation of the philosophy of determinism in poetic affirmation of life by examining the poetic nature of language of the text. The above citation gives the evidence of the poetic nature of the text.

Likewise, as other characters of the drama follow the philosophy of Lazarus, they use the language of the poetry. Their poetic language is suggestive of the crossing the boundary of the philosophy of determinism. The researcher presents some of the brilliant poetic expression form the text:

TIBERIUS

[Has been speaking his words are now heard as the tumult momentarily dies down] I have lived long enough! I will die with Lazarus I no longer fear death! I laugh! I Laugh at Caesar! Seek man in the brotherhood of the dust! Caesars is you fear of Man! I counsel you, laugh away your Caesars.1444

The above – cited dialogic part of Lazarus *Laughed* illustrates the gradual awareness of Tiberius towards the fearless nature of his life. The more he turns away from the persistent stress of Lazarus' philosophy the more troubled and tremulous his conviction became. So he finally found himself caught in the language of poetic affirmation.

Caligula is an obstinate disciple of determinism. He was more afraid of Lazarus' ringing philosophy of life – affirmation. According to Caligula Lazarus is a

fraud. In his view Lazarus was afraid of shouldering the burden of life. When Lazarus was burned alive Caligula expressed himself in the following way:

CALIGULA

[Lifts his head at the first sound and rises with the laughter to his feet, until, as it is finally lost, he is on tip-toes, his arms straining upward to the sky, a tender, childish laughter of love on his lips] I laugh, Lazarus! I laugh with you [Then grief-stricken] Lazarus! [He hides his face in his hands, weeping] No more! [Then beats his head with his fists] I will remember! I will! [Then suddenly, with a return to grotesqueness-harshly] All the same, I killed him and I proved there is death! [Immediately overcome by remorse, groveling and beating himself] Fool! Madman! Forgive me, Lazarus! Men forget! 1446

The above – cited dialogic portion illustrates the change in the nature of language. At first, Caligula used to give vent to his hatred and anger in the language of prose. But after seeing the successful transmutation of determinism in Lazarus's life Caligula too changed his former standpoint. Thereupon he began to hint at his empathetic concern with Lazarus' cause in the language of remarkable poetry.

The authentic survey of the language of the text concludes that the more close characters go to the philosophy of life- affirmation the more poetical their languages have become. To cut the story short the movement of the language of dramatic dialogue from prose to poetry is tantamount to the movement of philosophy from determinism to life- affirmation.

#### **IV: Conclusion**

This research work concludes how the philosophy of determinism is transmuted into poetic affirmation of life. The resurrected man Lazarus emphasizes eternal flow of life by declaring that death is dead.

This view is an affront to Romans like Tiberius, Caligula, Pompeia etc. They discarded Lazarus' doctrine. So they tested incredibility of his declaration by giving poisoned fruit to Miriam. She accepts the poisoned fruit and bites that fruit. After taking bites, she lies down. Showing Miriam's body they tell Lazarus to laugh at her. But temporal sadness is seen in the face of Lazarus. He is not able to create laughter. This act strengthens the Romans' view that there is death. They call him liar, charlatan and cheater. In the dead silence, Miriam's body raises from there. She accepts the continuity of life by saying "Yes! There is only life! Lazarus, be not lonely!"(1431). Then after he begins to laugh.

Still they are in confusion and want to test it with his own life. They burn Lazarus into the stake. He continues ever to laugh, even to the end when Emperor Tiberius has burned him in the stake. He asks him what is beyond there. Lazarus speaks with a surpassing clearness and exaltation, "Life! Eternity! Stars and dust! God's Eternal Laughter! (1411)". His rigid acceptance of the continuity of life even at the end of life convinces them. Now these Romans are convinced and believe in Lazarus' doctrine that there is only life. This acceptance of continuity of life is the end of their deterministic view.

Lazarus philosophy of the affirmation of life force resembles the Nietzschean philosophy of life affirmation. But in Lazarus's affirmation there is sense of transcending the limitations of death. Setting aside Nietzschean touch of nihilism

from the philosophy of affirmation, O'Neill has grafted the philosophy of affirmation into the Christian concept of resurrection of life.

Nietzsche's Philosophy of affirmation of life force is useful tool to analyze the text .He affirms the life force. According to him, there is something inside us which always hankers to die. But we negate that force. Negation of that force that hankers to die is life.

To reinforce the nature of the transmutation of determinism into the poetic affirmation of life force the language of the text is brought in to the focus of the textual analysis. Language is another applicable tool for the analysis of the text. The things that comes from inner sight is written in poetically. This philosophy guided by faith and comes out from the depth of heart is expressed in the in the language of poetry. The philosophy of Lazarus is also guided by faith. It comes from the inner heart of Lazarus, the prophet of Eugene O'Neill. So O'Neill expresses this view in the language of poetry. This poetic language helps to transmute the philosophy of determinism.

At last, Romans' come to realize the limitation and short comings of the philosophy of determinism. They finally accept the continuity of life force beyond the bound of death. This acceptance of continuity of life force is the transmutation of their deterministic view. So, at the end, drama, *Lazarus Laughed* is characterized by the transmutation of determinism into a poetic affirmation of life.

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