the plot, don Carlos, the Spanish king. Hernani is a bandit full of honor; the profligate and selfish king becomes the philosophizing and magnanimous emperor; don Ruy Gomez although concerned with the conventional code of honor, commits an act of the meanest jealousy.

One night don Carlos forced his way into the room of doña Sol and hid in her closet to hear her conversation with Hernani. Doña Sol prepares to elope with Hernani, but don Carlos interferes. In the meantime, don Ruy Gomez arrives, and in all the confusion Hernani escapes. Hernani later comes back for doña Sol though unaware of the ambush awaiting him by don Carlos. However, don Carlos does not kill the presumed bandit because the code of honor prevents him from taking arms against an inferior. This infuriates Hernani because he had sworn to avenge his father. Don Carlos who is unaware of the true identity of his adversary had taken away Hernani's father's title and had caused him to lose everything—including his life. The monarch had unjustly executed him. Hernani once more escapes. Hernani returns once more disguised as a pilgrim. But don Ruy Gomez, obeying the chivalrous code of hospitality, takes him in because he doesn't recognize him. He hides the stranger from don Carlos, but don Carlos kidnaps doña Sol. This makes Hernani very angry. However, he is very grateful for don Ruy Gomez's protection. He, therefore, promises to give his life in repayment whenever the Duke wishes.

Hernani and other conspirators plan to kill don
Carlos. The attempted assassination fails, but don Carlos, the newly elected emperor, forgives the conspirators and gives his permission for Hernani to marry doña Sol. Don Ruy Gomez is insanely jealous. After Hernani and doña Sol are married, don Ruy Gomez tells Hernani that the time has come that he must keep his promise. Hernani knows he must die because he is a Spanish nobleman. He is given a bottle of poison to drink. But his bride drinks half of it first because if Hernani drinks first he won't leave any for her. Then Hernani drinks. They both die, and don Ruy Gomez stabs himself in grief. 33

Hernani is a man of fate. He is both fatal and fated. He is fated in what happens to him and fatal in what he causes to happen to others. (Doña Sol and don Ruy Gomez) This role as a man of fate springs from his hypersensibility as expressed in the social context. Hernani analyzes himself:

Je suis une force qui va!
Agent aveugle et sourd de mystères funèbres!
Une âme de malheur faite avec des ténèbres!
Où vais-je? je ne sais. Mais je me sens poussé
D'un souffle impétueux, d'un destin insensé
Je descends, je descends, et jamais ne m'arête.
Si parfois, haletant, j'ose tourner la tête,
Une voix me dit: Marche! et l'abîme est profond,
Et de flamme ou de sang je le vois rouge au fond!
Cependant, à l'entour de ma course farouche,
Tout se brise, tout meurt. Malheur à qui me touche!
Oh! fuis! détourne-toi de mon chemin fatal,
Hélas! sans le vouloir, je te ferai du mal! 34

33 Victor Hugo, Hernani, edited with intro. and notes by John E. Matzke.
34 Victor Hugo, Hernani, Drama IV, Oeuvres complètes, ed. Ollendorff, p. 76.
Hernani is blind action without thought—the incarnation of a romantic hypersensibility which veers out of control. He is fated by a consuming energy which he expresses blindly without respect to object.35

He is destroyed by events acting upon him. Ridge says that this is as a result of the peculiar social structure of the age.36 He is also a rebel. He asserts himself egotistically against society. Revenge motivates this assault on the ruling order, but he is aware of his character. His purpose is self-assertion. His fatality is related to his rebelliousness for it sets into motion a relentless chain of cause and effect in society. His rebelliousness is rooted in his egotism.37 Hernani lives at war with society. According to Brandes, Hernani reminds one of Hugo himself, who was a literary outlaw.38

All the way through the drama, Hernani blames Fate for what is happening. He refers to himself as fatal when he refers to his name: "...Avec ce nom fatal je n'en ai pas fini!"39 And again when he is alone, he feels that Fate is working against him: "Voici le doigt fatal qui luit sur la muraille! Oh! que la destinée amèrement me raille!"40

35Ridge, op. cit. p. 42.
36Ibid., p. 43.
37Ibid., pp. 98-99.
39Hugo, op. cit. p. 151.
40Ibid., p. 154.
In the last act, last scene of the play after both Hernani and dona Sol have taken the poison, don Ruy Gomez says: "La fatalité s'accomplit."\(^{41}\) In the end, don Ruy Gomez also feels condemned: "Mortel--Oh! je suis damné."\(^{42}\) One can see that the words of Hernani and don Ruy express the thoughts of the author. As has been said, not only did the hero not accept responsibility for the action of the drama, but the author did not imply responsibility either. No one accepts responsibility. But no matter how much Hernani put the blame on Fate, the choice was originally made by him. He did have a choice. His fatality was his egotism. His pride made him feel that he had to avenge his father's death by rebelling against the ruling order. He can blame no one but himself for this. But, he does not place the blame on himself. There is never any discovery in this drama. Hernani never discovers that he has done anything wrong. Therefore, there is no self-knowledge in this drama either. With no self-knowledge, no discovery, and no responsibility, this can not be a tragedy. It is drama, and it is all very unfortunate, but it cannot be called tragedy in the strictest sense of the word.

This, as illustrated in *Hernani*, is what is meant by the boomerang idea of hero responsibility, which was mentioned briefly in the section on Neo-classic tragedy. The

\(^{41}\)Ibid., p. 165 \(^{42}\)Ibid., p. 167.
moral responsibility of the romantic hero is as about as far from the Greek tragic hero as an idea can be. In the former the hero accepts absolutely no responsibility, whereas the complete acceptance of responsibility is an integral part of Greek tragedy. The boomerang has flown from complete responsibility to none. But like a boomerang, this responsibility will make a turn and begin to come back to its origin. In the modern drama the problem of responsibility is revived, although it assumes varying degrees and forms. It will be more fully discussed in that section.

The next romantic dramatist to be considered is Alfred de Vigny. According to Dargan: "His constant themes are the injustice of life and the indifference of nature. . ."43 He also wrote about the suffering poet. This idea of the suffering artist was an ever-present idea at that period.44 Vigny felt that the hero's task as a thinker was to show man how he can effect an ideal possibility by using his divine reason. Vigny felt this because he relies on human reason.45 But Vigny was a pessimist: "...le poète exprime par ses drames son âme pessimiste, solennelle, noble."46 According to Vigny, even though a man is fated and

44 Brandes, op. cit., p. 386.
45 Ridge, op. cit., p. 25.
46 Clouard, Henri et Robert Leggwie, Anthologie de la littérature française, Tome II, Dix-neuvième et Vingtième Siècles, p. 44.
can not win the ultimate battle and must someday die, he can at least choose to die like a hero and have the satisfaction of having fought well against an unjust adversary. 47 "It is the duty of the poet, who knows that the hero is a fated man, to write of man's nobility as he is vanquished." 48 There is no question of responsibility in such an attitude. Vigny is indignant in his proclamation that society persecutes the poet. To try to correct society of its errors in its treatment of individual genius is perhaps Vigny's most noble obsession. 49 Because the poet is envied and destroyed by society and the gods, he turns against society or himself and suffers in solitude. Then according to Ridge's defined roles of the romantic hero, the poet is a man of fate. The poet turns against society in a context where nature is a great operative power. He distrusts nature because he feels that it is indifferent and cruel. 50

The play that best illustrates all the ideas of Vigny's that have been put forth, is Chatterton. According to West Vigny felt that poets were social outcasts and that to possess genius was to inherit the curse of Cain. Therefore, it was typical of him to chose as his exemplar of genius, Thomas Chatterton. Chatterton was a composer of light verse

48 Ibid., p. 49.
50 Ridge, op. cit., p. 48.
without any inventive gift who committed suicide before the age of eighteen. He took his life after he had been exposed as the author of poems by a fictitious fifteenth century poet. It is also significant to note that Vigny pointed to neglect and indifference as the danger to the poet. Vigny regarded Chatterton as a superior being, the noblest of all beings. He felt compassion for the young poet and his fate who found no help at all when he most needed it. He felt that Chatterton had been given a very cruel treatment. He was foreordained to his tragic end. He couldn't even escape the pressure of society in the Bell home. He had to suffer because of what he was. Vigny felt that the state should be responsible for poets. He argued that the poet-prophet was responsible to himself for using his genius. Society, then, should take care of his personal welfare.

In order to clear things up, a little more should be told of the story. Essentially it is the same story of the English versifier, Thomas Chatterton. He is a pale, young man of almost eighteen years. He is a poet who is seeking refuge in the house of John Bell. John is a man of forty-five or fifty years who has a young wife, Kitty, who is only twenty-two. M. Bell is a brusque, vigorous man who is very

52 Brandes, op. cit., p. 349.
53 Ridge, op. cit., p. 79.
54 Ibid., p. 80.
jealous of his wife. He is a very domineering man. Kitty is very gracious and elegant, and very much afraid of her husband. The Bells have two small children. The little girl, Rachel, likes Chatterton. Kitty feels sorry for him. The Quaker is a man who is forty-eight years old. He sees the vices of the existing society, and he is very sympathetic about the plight of Chatterton. One can see that the Quaker is expressing the view of the author. Perhaps Vigny means for the Quaker to be his spokesman. Lord Beckford, a friend of John Bell, can be seen to represent the forces of the society that work against Chatterton. He esteems riches and scorns poverty. As the play progresses, Kitty's sympathy and admiration soon turn into love. When they have discovered that they love each other, Chatterton feels he must die. This hopeless situation is attributed to the forces of fate or society or anything else which he can think of to blame it on. It is not only his love for Kitty, but the fact that society has not provided for him. He has failed in his duty to impart his genius to society. Therefore, he poisoned himself. Kitty poisoned herself too. The poet has walked the road of fatality to its natural end. He is destroyed by his fatal conflict with society.55 Before his death, however, he characterizes himself in the following words:

55Alfred de Vigny, Chatterton, Oeuvres Complètes, ed. par F. Baldensperger,
Je n'en sais rien, mais jamais je ne pus enchainer dans des canaux étroits et réguliers les débordements tumultueux de mon esprit qui toujour inondait ses rives malgré moi. J'étais incapable de suivre les lentes opérations des calculs journaliers, j'y renoncerai le premier. J'avouai mon esprit yaincu par le chiffre, et j'eus besoin d'exploiter mon corps. 56

**Chatterton** is no more a tragedy than **Hernani** is. In **Chatterton** there is no discovery on the part of the hero. There is no self-knowledge at all. He never feels that he has done anything wrong. It is all the fault of society. Therefore, since there is no self-knowledge, there is no moral responsibility in **Chatterton**. In this drama, as in Hugo's drama, the author does not imply responsibility, as did Euripides. There is not even a feeling of guilt as in Racine. In a sort of preface called "Dernière nuit de travail" Vigny talks about poets and responsibility. However, he places the blame on everyone—on society—when he says: "Vous les tuez en leur refusant le pouvoir de vivre selon les conditions de leur nature." 57 Later in this preface, Vigny speaks of the despair of the poet who feels that he has been scorned by society:

Le Désespoir n'est pas une idée; c'est une chose, une chose qui torture, qui serre et qui broie le cœur d'un homme comme une tenaille, jusqu'à ce qu'il soit fou et se jette dans la mort comme dans les bras d'une mere.

Est-ce lui qui est coupable, dites-le-moi? ou bien

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56 Ridge, *op. cit.*, p. 79.
est-ce la société qui le traque ainsi jusqu'au bout?
Examinons ceci: on peut trouver que c'en est la peine.58

And again Vigny defends Chatterton: "Quand un homme meurt de cette maniere, est-il donc suicide? C'est la société qui le jette dans le brasier."59 Throughout the drama itself, the Quaker expresses these same ideas. Vigny is putting his beliefs into the drama in the mouth of the Quaker. How could an author who expresses the above ideas and many more that are identical accept responsibility for anything that his hero did? One certainly will not find hidden responsibility on the part of the author anywhere in the play. And responsibility will not come out of the mouth of Chatterton himself either. When talking with the Quaker about his misfortune he says: "Nommez-la comme vous voudrez: la Fortune, la Destinée; que sais-je, moi?"60 Again at the end of the drama when he is talking with Kitty, and he tells her he must die: "Il le faut, Kitty, je suis condamné."61

However, it is virtually impossible for one to sympathize with Chatterton. He did have a choice in the beginning. He does not want to work. He chooses rather to passively endure. He chooses to poison himself rather than accept a prosaic appointment which would bring him in a hundred a year. Since he chooses to do nothing, an audience cannot feel pity which is required of a classic tragedy. But the

58Ibid., p. 819. 59Ibid., p. 820. 60Ibid., p. 849.
61Ibid., p. 896.
most important idea to get across is the fact that he does not accept responsibility. He flatly says that it is not his fault. So far it seems to be sort of a trend or characteristic of the romantic authors and heroes not to accept moral responsibility for the unfortunate situation which they have caused.

Vigny and Hugo are not the only two romantic dramatists who seem to fit into the above-named type of trend. In the play Anthony by Alexandre Dumas père, one can find a man of fate in the hero, Anthony. He can't modify his destiny, but his hypersensitive response hastens his end.\(^62\) He is an illegitimate child and a foundling. As a lover he is a rebel against the law of society. He says; "I have received nothing but injustice, and I owe nothing but hatred."\(^63\) This hero does not accept responsibility either.

The next romantic dramatist to be considered is Alfred de Musset. In his life and poetry, he upholds the doctrine of "all for love" more than any other.\(^64\) But Musset does not hold strict adherence to the trend in romantic heroes. He believes that the hero wallows in emotion; he attacks the man of sensibility for wearing his heart on his sleeve. He says the romantic hero is in fact not very heroic.\(^65\)

\(^{62}\)Ridge, op. cit., p. 39.
\(^{63}\)Brandes, op. cit., p. 345.
\(^{64}\)Dargan, op. cit., p. 366.
Musset is moving away from the romantic spirit. Perhaps one could call him a rebel to the romantic spirit as was Euripides to the classic Greek spirit. He is moving into something else as the visionary moves into symbolism. The heroes of Musset fall into the sixth of the categories that Ridge defines—the anti-hero. As was stated above, Ridge defines five roles for the romantic hero. There is then another type of hero, and this is the anti-hero. However, he remains in the romantic tradition. And like the romantic hero, he is motivated by self-consciousness—awareness plus the romantic sensibility. The anti-hero does possess heroic potentiality. Although he still remains in the romantic tradition, he is struggling in and against the forces of tradition. The anti-hero "... always observes himself and wryly comments upon his own weakness. He withers under his own debilitating irony, turned within." Musset is fairly important in the creation of the anti-hero. Because he doesn't create a wallowing, romantic hero, he is helping the evolution of romantic drama into a little different type. Musset creates two anti-heroes in his play _Les Caprices de Marianne_. Célio and Octave are both anti-heroes. Célio is an anti-hero because he does not have enough courage to speak for himself by telling Marianne that he loves her. He wants Octave to tell her for him. Célio is not a romantic man of action or he would scale a castle.

66 Ibid., p. 128. 67 Ibid.
wall to steal away with her in the night. On the other hand Octave is an anti-hero, too. His simpering aspect is reflected as he learns of his best friend Célio's death. Rather than taking immediate revenge, as a romantic hero would, he mutters:

Célio m'aurait vengé, si j'étais mort pour lui comme il est mort pour moi. Son tombeau m'appartient; c'est moi qu'ils ont étendu dans cette sombre allée; c'est moi pour moi qu'ils avaient aiguisé leurs épées; c'est pour moi qu'ils ont tué! 

Another one of Musset's dramas in which one can find the anti-hero is On ne badine pas avec l'amour. Perdican is the sophisticated anti-hero who falls in love with Camille who is the romantic heroine. Perdican is the son of Le Baron, and Camille is the Baron's niece. Le Baron wishes that his son and his niece could get married. They grew up together and he sent them both away to school. When they return, Camille tells him that she wants to become a nun, and that she won't marry Perdican even though it is her uncle's wish. When Perdican learns that she plans to go back to the convent, he toys with the affection of little Rosette, "soeur de laïte de Camille..." He does this to make Camille think that he does not care one bit that she will not marry him. He wants to make Camille jealous. Perdican promised to marry Rosette. But he and Camille finally admit that they love each other. When Rosettle learns this she dies

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68 Ibid., pp. 120-121.
of a broken heart, and Camille leaves Perdican. 69

The relationship between Camille and Perdican had been doomed, however, from the very beginning because they had different ideas on love. She once asks:

Lève la tête, Perdican! quel est l'homme qui ne croit à rien?

Perdican: En voilà un; je ne crois pas à la vie immortelle. --Ma soeur chérie, les religieuses t'ont donné leur expérience; mais, crois-moi, ce n'est pas la tienne; tu ne mourras pas sans aimer. 70

Another difference on their ideas about love is that he thinks it is all right to have mistresses, and he has had them; but she thinks love is an undying passion. He justifies his idea by arguing:

Adieu, Camille, retourne à ton couvent, et lorsqu'on te fera de ces récits hideux qui t'ont empoisonnée, réponds ce que je vais te dire: Tous les hommes sont menteurs, inconstants, faux, bavards, hypocrites, orgueilleux ou lâches, méprisables et sensuels; toutes les femmes sont perfides, artificielles, vaniteuses, curieuses et dépravées; mais il y a au monde une chose sainte et sublime, c'est l'union de deux de ces êtres si imparfaits et si affreux. On est souvent trompé en amour, souvent blessé et souvent malheureux; mais on aime, et quand on est sur le bord de sa tombe, on se retourne pour regarder en arrière, et on se dit: J'ai souffert souvent, je me suis trompé quelquefois, mais j'ai aimé. C'est moi qui ai vécu, et non pas un être factice créé par mon orgueil et mon ennui. 71

This cynicism contrasts with what a romantic hero would

69 Alfred de Musset, On ne badine pas avec l'amour, French Romantic Plays, ed. W. W. Comfort.

70 Ridge, op. cit., p. 119.

71 Ibid., pp. 119-120.
typically say.

They never consummate their love, and their ultimate separation is of course inevitable. As a sophisticate Perdican can neither understand nor sympathize with the romantic Camille.72

Neither did he realize that he has done anything wrong in toy­ing with the affections of Rosette. There is no discovery in this drama. Since there is no discovery, there is no self-knowledge. And since there is no self-knowledge, there is no moral responsibility. Even the anti-hero shirks his responsibility! But the choice had been there. It was Per­dican who made the choice of using Rosette to try to make Camille jealous. It was he who caused Rosette to die of a broken heart. Nevertheless, he blames fate or destiny or anything else that is handy, instead of blaming himself. At the end, he pleads with God, not to let Rosette die, and not to make a murderer out of him. However, he doesn't stop to think that it wasn't God who made the original choice. Perdican pleads on the grounds of purity and innocence:

"...nous sommes deux enfants insensés, et nous avons joué avec la vie et a mort; mais notre coeur est pur;..."73

The last romantic to be considered will be Maurice Maeterlinck. He actually wrote during the literary period of Symbolism, but according to Barzun's four phases of

72Ibid., p. 120.

73Musset, op. cit., p. 616.
romanticism, Symbolism was only a branching out of romanticism. Some of his dramas were more purely symbolistic than others. His earlier dramas are different from his later ones because his philosophical and dramatic ideas have evolved. The first dramas are the creation of his youth, and they are much more romantic and improbable. The characters are often of childlike simplicity.\(^7\) Of his earlier dramas, several have much in common. The setting is often the same.

an ancient, gloomy castle of king or queen, situated in a dark forest of immense trees, and near the sea of which one catches glimpses now and then. And in the gloomy old castle are long, dark halls opening into silent rooms, and under it all are subterranean caverns filled with stagnant, ill-smelling water, and alive with loathsome creatures whose activity threatens even to undermine the castle walls; and into this abode of gloom comes a young person, a child or innocent woman, and meets death. And the approach of death is heralded by nature, --by rain and hail and lightning flashes, by strange comets and falling stars.\(^5\)

He wrote six dramas of this type and out of these six, \textit{Pelléas et Mélisande} is the only one that succeeded on the stage.\(^6\)

In the early part of his writing career, Maeterlinck thought that blind fate was the sole cause of an unfortunate situation. Maeterlinck said that the motif of his early dramas as described above was the fear of the unknown. There was faith in enormous, invisible and fatal powers, whose in-


\(^5\)\textit{Tbid.}, p. 31. \(^6\)\textit{Tbid.}, p. 33.
tentions no one could guess. But the spirit of the drama was assumed to be malevolent, and hostile to laughter, life, peace, and love. These powers exercised justice in such an indirect manner that their punishment took the appearance of the inexplicable acts of destiny. This power usually took the shape of death. Death filled the whole work. This death was indifferent and inexorable, preferably carrying away the younger and less unhappy. These ideas about the setting and about the invisible power can be illustrated very well in Pelléas et Mélisande. It is the story of the piti- fulness of hearts that must be free and that are doomed. Also in this drama, "... il a su montrer que mystère profond enveloppe notre vie quotidienne." The story is about a young girl, Mélisande, who is found by the side of a fountain, crying, by Golaud. He is the grandson of Arkel, king of Germany. Golaud has a younger brother, Pelléas. Golaud feels sorry for the young girl, so he takes her home to his ancient, gloomy castle to marry him. He is much an older man than she is. He is about forty-five or fifty. She isn’t very happy in all that darkness, but one day Golaud’s younger brother Pelléas comes home. He falls in love with Mélisande. However, this love affair can never be consummated because it is doomed from the start.

77 Ibid., p. 32.
79 Clouard, (Tome II), op. cit., p. 13.
When Golaud finds out what is happening, he follows them into the garden one evening. He kills Pelléas and injures Méli-sande. However, Golaud refuses to take responsibility for what he has done. Even his grandfather tells him that it is not his fault: "C'est terrible, mais ce n'est pas votre faute." And Golaud himself says: "Ce n'est pas ma faute, ce n'est pas ma faute!" They blame fate for what has happened.

In this drama one sees the eternal conflict between frail, shivering human creatures and cruel Fate which lies in ambush to ensnare them and destroy them. It is the conflict between man and his antagonistic doom. Maeterlinck had become convinced that Fate was leading humanity to destruction and death. Therefore with an attitude like that how could anyone expect to find the slightest glimmer of responsibility in this drama. According to Maeterlinck, he (Golaud) did what he probably must have had to do. Although he did have the original choice, no responsibility.

In Maeterlinck's later dramas, he helped to prepare the way for the "return of the boomerang" and to prepare the way for Ibsen and the following modern dramatists. His

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80 Maeterlinck, op. cit., p. 72.
81 Ibid., p. 71.
82 S. A. Rhodes, op. cit., p. 61.
83 Ibid., p. 59.
later philosophy no longer permitted him a blind inexorable fate as the sole cause of an unfortunate action. He was still a symbolist and a mystic, but his gloomy fatalism had been succeeded by "...the cheerful self-confidence of one who believes that man may largely control destiny through the exercises of wisdom and love."\(^{85}\) In this shift of Maeterlinck's philosophy, one can see a possibility of responsibility coming back into drama. Self-knowledge and responsibility will play a larger part in the dramatists in the next section.

\(^{85}\)Hills, op. cit., p. 29.
MODERN TRAGEDY

Modern tragedy is very complex. It is the last of the four great periods of tragedy as outlined in the section on romantic drama. It makes a reverse turn from the direction of the romantic dramatists. It is because of this reversal of direction that it can be considered to be tragedy. As has been said, Maeterlinck can be called a precursor in his idea that fate is not the sole cause of tragedy. The idea of the boomerang of hero responsibility can be further extended and developed in this section. The boomerang reached the highest point of its trajectory with the romantics. With the moderns it begins to come back to its origin; however, it will still be far from the Greeks. In order to understand the modern drama, one must first understand a little bit about the period. Literature, as has been stated, reflects the temper and beliefs of the people. The modern literature is no exception. Since the modern period is complex, the influences on literature are complex.

The modern ego is the core of the modern times and the modern literature. This modern ego has been very well defined by Jacques Barzun. One of the striking traits of the modern ego is self-consciousness. The ego is more concerned with the way it appears in the eyes of others than
with fully learning about itself and admitting its troubles fearlessly. It is afraid of ridicule and afraid of being itself.¹ This is a very important idea in relation to the idea of self-knowledge and responsibility. The modern hero is able to and does realize that he is doing wrong and that he has made the wrong choice—self-knowledge—, but he will not admit responsibility for fear of what others will think of him. He will do what others want him to do, or he will do what is expedient, rather than do what he knows is right at the risk of losing all. He would rather do what he knows is wrong than do what he knows is right therefore being ridiculed by the people. This kind of attitude produces the modern tone of awkward shuffling.² Another way to summarize this lack of responsibility and fear of ridicule is to say that the modern ego has lost its faith, "... and with it the willingness to run risks."³

Another way to characterize the modern ego is its taste in art. There is a dislike and distrust of ideas, the substitution of sensation for strong emotion, "... and the taking refuge from esthetic understanding in the intricacies of technique."⁴ But these

1. Barzun, op. cit., p. 117.
2. Ibid. ³ Ibid., p. 128. ⁴ Ibid., p. 149.
in Greece or the Roman Empire.

However,

what is alarming about the modern ego is not that it wants to create order or adopt a discipline or accept talented rulers, but that it is walking forward with its head turned back in fear and longing.  

This can be called twentieth century anti-romanticism. Because of this anti-romanticism, there is a realistic creed in modern art.  

In spite of the fact that the modern period is beginning to turn back to the Greek classic idea of tragedy, and in spite of the fact that the heroes are beginning to accept more responsibility, there is still a modern lack of tragedy. This lack may be partially accounted for "...by the turn which modern literature has taken toward the purely psychiatric view of life, or the purely sociological." Yet one cannot lay the blame in a tragedy on society alone. The hero has to take responsibility. If society alone is blamed for cramping one's life, "...then the protagonist must needs be so pure and faultless as to force us to deny his validity as a character." And if he has no flaw, there can

5Ibid., p. 131.
7Miller, op. cit., p. 229.
8Ibid.
be no tragedy.

In the tragic view the need of man to wholly realize himself is the only fixed star, and whatever it is that hedges his nature and lowers it is ripe for attack and examination.9

It is only through tragedy that man can prove his dignity. It is through his search of truth and goodness. And only through the tragedies that have been revered century after century can man find the belief in the perfectibility of man.10

As has been followed, the best way to illustrate an idea is to consider individual authors and individual works. Henry Montherlant and Jean Anouilh have been chosen to exemplify the above ideas. First of all Henry Millon de Montherlant will be considered.

Le théâtre de Montherland—. . .—est avant tout psychologique.

. . .L'intensité de ses drames ne leur vient que de la vie profonde des personnages, du mouvement tout intérieur de leurs passions, des nuances changeantes que revêtent ces passions: en cela, Montherland est non seulement l'héritier du théâtre grec, mais encore l'héritier de Racine.11

His universe is not that of the modern world. He sees contemporary society as mediocre and without dignity or grandeur. He has an attitude of scorn before his contempor-

9Ibid. 10Ibid., p. 230.
11Montherlant, Theatre, préface de J. De Laprade, p. xxi.
aries. He is on the side of an "...essentialistic universe in which courage, pride, forthrightness, and generosity have a fixed and stable value."\(^\text{13}\) He chose to strive for classic universality in his theater. He feels the modern man in general no longer understands and appreciates the "...spontaneous and vigorous purity of the classics."\(^\text{14}\)

One difference, however, between Montherlant and the classic Greeks is the fact that Montherlant bases his idea of drama on character rather than action. But he does uphold the classic heroic idealism of past periods when man lived closer to absolute truth. He opposes this idea to the philosophy of expediency among his contemporaries.\(^\text{15}\) Both his language and his themes remind one of the classical tradition. The dominant passion of his characters remind one of Racine, and the high station of his characters and their moral superiority to the fate that crushes them remind one of the classical theater. Montherlant is convinced that the only sin mediocrity.\(^\text{16}\) This idea plays an important part in his drama, La Reine Morte.

La Reine Morte tells the story of Terrante, King of Portugal. The play opens with the Infanta of Navarre talking to Ferrante. He had invited her there in view of the possible marriage with the King's son Pedro. The King wants

\(^{12}\)Oreste F. Pucciani, The French Theater Since 1930, p. 203.  
\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 204.  
\(^{14}\)Ibid., p. 206.  
\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 208.  
\(^{16}\)Ibid., p. 213.
this marriage very much for political reasons. The union would be a great asset to him. She tells Ferrante that Pedro has told her that he loves another woman, Inês de Castro, and can not marry her. This insult makes the Infanta very angry. She doesn't care that much about marrying Pedro, but she feels a blow to her pride. Then the King calls his son in to tell him that he must marry the Infanta, but he can keep Inês as his mistress. Pedro is too much of a coward to tell his father that he has already married Inês de Castro and that she is going to have a child. Pedro then goes to talk to his wife, and she realizes that it will have to be she who defends their love. She soon has the opportunity, for Ferrante summons her to come to the palace. She tells Ferrante everything about herself and Pedro. Then the King has his son put in prison. The Infanta tries to convince Inês to come to Navarre with her where she will be safe. But Inês refuses saying that she must stay with Pedro. The Counsellors of the King try to convince him that he must kill Inês. But Ferrante refuses to give in to them. Finally he gives in and has her killed. Shortly after, he himself dies.17

Ferrante knows he is weak, but he does not want his Counsellors to know it. When he can't make up his mind about killing Inês, he realizes that he is vacillating, and he must rush into action in order not to be mediocre or

17Henry Montherlant, La Reine Morte, Théâtre de Montherlant, préface de J. De Laprade.
weak.\textsuperscript{18} The reader feels that he is disintegrating morally. He is an example of broken idealism. Life for him has become an essential contradiction, ". . . in which duty is the necessity to impose an arbitrary and ideal order. He is convinced that his decisions alone cannot be wrong."\textsuperscript{19} He feels that he had to kill Inès to prove to his Counsellors that he is not weak.\textsuperscript{20} He justifies his decision by this argument:

Je l'ai fait exécuter pour préserver la pureté de la succession au trône, et pour supprimer le trouble et le scandale qu'elle causait dans mon État.\textsuperscript{21}

Yet as he is dying he realizes that he was mistaken about the motives for his acts.\textsuperscript{22} He says: "J'ai fini de mentir!" . . . What was his lie? . . . "It was that within himself he knew that these reasons were his true ones, and that they were insufficient."\textsuperscript{23} He also says: "Mais ma volonté m'aspire, et je commets la faute, sachant que c'en est une."\textsuperscript{24}

This drama of Montherlant illustrates the fact that the idea of Responsibility was coming back into tragedy.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18}Joseph Chiari, \textit{The Contemporary French Theatre}, p. 211.
\item \textsuperscript{19}Pucciani, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 209.
\item \textsuperscript{20}Frederick Lumley, \textit{Trends in 20th Century Drama}, p. 255.
\item \textsuperscript{22}Jacques Guicharnaud, \textit{Modern French Theatre}, p. 103.
\item \textsuperscript{24}Montherlant, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 230.
\end{itemize}
Ferrante made the choice to kill Inès, therefore, the responsibility lies upon him. He realizes that he has done wrong. Therefore, he has self-knowledge. He knows that his reasons for having her killed were insufficient. And in the end he admits that it was his fault. He therefore accepts the moral responsibility for the tragic action. It is not quite so clear-cut as in the Greeks, but the responsibility is there.

In Anouilh, theresponsibility is not so clear-cut as is was in Montherlant. Anouilh is one of the contemporaries of Montherlant whose heroes tended to do the expedient thing rather than what they knew was right. However, responsibility is definitely implied, and one is able to infer a feeling of responsibility while reading the drama, Antigone.

The development of Anouilh's themes made it possible for Pronko to divide Anouilh's plays into groups. The first group is man against his past. The second, in which Antigone falls, is the refusal of reality. There are also other groups. But the group into which Antigone falls represents the struggle between the inner world versus the entire outer world.\(^{25}\) The conflict in Antigone is between the heroine's aspirations and the world of compromise that she must face.\(^{26}\) A single point of reference common to all the characters of Anouilh is:

\[^{25}\text{Leonard Pronko, The World of Jean Anouilh, p. 21.}\]
\[^{26}\text{Ibid., p. 36.}\]
a rigorous ideal of purity in human relationships which Anouilh cannot himself betray, and with respect to which his characters stand in various gradations of shadow and light.27

Even though Creon never actually says that it was his fault, Anouilh implies it because of the above point of reference.

The story of Antigone is essentially the same story as that told by Euripides. Antigone is the heroine who feels she must bury her brother, Polynices, whom Creon has ordered to be left to rot. Creon is the uncle of Antigone. When Antigone is discovered throwing dirt over the body of the dead Polynices, she is taken to Creon. A furious argument ensues, with each one trying to justify his position. Creon tries to show Antigone that neither one of her brothers was worth anything, and she would be giving her life to a worthless cause. In his "ship of state" speech he tries to tell her why he must do the expedient thing. He must take the helm of the ship of state. He feels that there is no other man for the job. He must abide by man-made laws and do what the "mob" wants him to do. He also feels he must appease them with the death of Antigone. But Antigone refuses to compromise with her uncle. She refuses to forget her plan and say no more about it. She feels that there are higher laws than man-made laws, and that she must do what she feels is right. She must not compromise with Creon, and she must bury her brother. The ending of this tragedy is the

27Puccioni, op. cit., p. 146.
same as the ending of Sophocles' Antigone. Antigone kills herself. Haemon kills himself. And Eurydice kills herself. Creon is left alone. But there is one important difference. That is that Creon does not outwardly admit responsibility in Anouilh's drama, but Sophocles' Creon does admit moral responsibility.28

This is a tragedy of everyone. The theme according to Pucciani, is that life is a tragedy, and there is no sense of irrevocable fate in the drama.29 Creon and Antigone represent the conflict between idealism and realism. This drama is not created by the entrapment of human beings by the gods, but it is created instead by the inevitable betrayal of individuals. The tragedy is the tragedy of the human condition.30 In the end, Creon knows that he has done wrong. It is his fault because it was he who made the original choice. He has self-knowledge. He knows that he is not the master of his fate. He did what he felt was the expedient thing to do. In the end, he says to his page: "Il faudrait ne jamais devenir grand."31 In saying this, he means that one must sacrifice too much when one grows up. One must make decisions that are not right but are expedient. However, one feels a sense of moral responsibility in this tragedy. Anouilh implies responsibility by letting all these

28 Jean Anouilh, Antigone, Four French Plays of the Twentieth Century.
29 Pucciani, op. cit., p. 149.
30 Ibid., pp. 146-147.
31 Anouilh, op. cit., p. 317.
tragic things happen to Creon. Anouilh cannot betray his ideal of purity in human relationships by letting Creon "off the hook" for the tragic situation that he has caused. Creon has self-knowledge, and Anouilh implies responsibility, though it is not as clear as in Montherlant. The tragic flaw of Creon was his pride, and the fact that he allowed no room for higher laws. He compromised his beliefs with what he felt was the expedient thing to do. He felt that there were times when one must do the expedient thing in order to survive. He chose man's law over God's law in order to save his neck. Anouilh's Antigone is the same character as the one of Sophocles, but there are two Creons. Anouilh's Creon is the realist.

But there is another important fact to consider in thinking about this tragedy, and that is the time in which it was written. It was written during the second World War. The Germans were occupying France at that time, and many people were collaborating with the Germans in order to make life easier for themselves. Thus the clash between "... the morality of protest and the morality of order had direct bearing on the condition of the audience." Many people in Paris felt that Anouilh wrote this play to show Creon as the collaborator--as the cold rational power. He created Antigone as the symbol of democratic defiance. The conflict is between the individual and society. Creon

32Steiner, op. cit., p. 330.

gives in because he feels he must. Antigone resists. Anouilh felt that Antigone was a heroine who could answer his summons of purity, who was born to say "no." 34 "Her final 'no' is less a refusal to collaborate with Creon's politics than a rejection of any collaboration with the conflict as a whole, that is, with life itself." 35

With the completion of the consideration of these two contemporary authors, one can see that the boomerang of hero responsibility has begun its sweep back to its origin. However, one can also see that the boomerang has quite a way to go before it completes its trajectory. The modern authors give their heroes self-knowledge, and they give their heroes the choice, but the responsibility is not always clearly there. The element of expediency enters in. However, the idea of responsibility is a long way from the complete lack of responsibility in the romantics. The evolution of hero responsibility has travelled a long distance from the Greeks to the Neo-classics to the Romantics and finally to the Moderns. And this responsibility has taken many shapes and forms.

34 Lumley, op. cit., p. 185.
35 Guicharnaud, op. cit., p. 123.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The question now is what can one conclude from the above ideas? The most important conclusion one can make concerns the idea of hero responsibility. This idea has evolved a great deal from the ancient Greeks. The trajectory of this idea has been like a boomerang. However, this boomerang of responsibility has not gone completely back to its origin yet.

The original idea of hero responsibility came from Aristotle. When he defined the laws of tragedy, he dealt in universals. He based his laws on universal, ethical truths. Therefore, nothing new has been added to these laws. The ancient tragedians left to the moderns only the task of refinement. This refinement has depended on the time in which each particular dramatist did his creating. The details have depended on the people and their way of life. Beginning with the Greeks, their tragedy was modelled on the Aristotelian laws of tragedy. Their drama implies divine law and order. The people lived according to the belief that one acted and made decisions based on reason. Therefore, there is complete responsibility in the tragedy of the classic Greeks. The tragic hero makes the original choice that causes the tragedy to commence. The Greeks
had a whole realm of mythological gods on which they could blame mystical happenings that they did not understand. And this force or fate may have carried through once the choice had been made by the tragic hero. But fate took over only to bring moral justice back to order. This unknown force is the stabilizing agent. However, in Greek tragedy, the hero realizes through a discovery that it was his original choice and not the gods that caused the tragedy to happen. When he has realized that it was his fault alone, he accepts the moral responsibility. He makes no excuses to make it easier on himself. He has self-knowledge of what he has done, and he fully accepts the responsibility.

The next period of tragedy which was considered was the French neo-classic tragedy during the seventeenth century—with particular emphasis on Racine. In this period of tragedy, there was a change in the idea of responsibility. There is no longer a flat statement of acceptance. One could see this change evolving in the drama of Euripides. However, the type of responsibility is different in Racine from the type in Euripides, even though they both employed a more subtle acceptance of responsibility. Racine was deeply affected by the Jansenist tradition. And his morality was a Jansenist morality. In Racine's tragedies, the heroes are colored by that morality. It may thus be seen that his tragedies are a reflection of his times. However, his heroes do have the original choice. There is
self-knowledge through a discovery when the hero realizes that he has been wrong. But the feeling of responsibility is more through a feeling of shame. The confession of guilt is brought about in an effort to be saved by the grace of God. Nevertheless, responsibility is still there even though the boomerang idea of responsibility has evolved into a different form.

The third period considered was the romantic era. The drama written in this period is not considered to be tragedy. Very unfortunate things happen, yet it is not tragic. The romantic hero, like the rest, made the original decision, yet he feels that it was fate or destiny that caused the unfortunate situation. It was because of fate that he did what he did. He feels that he did what he had to do. This drama, too, is very much a reflection of the period. The heroes were more passionate and individualistic. However, there is no discovery in the romantic hero. Since there is no discovery, there can be no self-knowledge and no responsibility. In this era of drama, there is absolutely no acceptance of responsibility at all. With this drama, the boomerang of responsibility has reached its furthest point in its trajectory before it turns to begin its evolution back to its origin.

The idea of responsibility gradually travelled back into the tragedy of the moderns. Yet it takes on still another shape. It still has not reached its origin. The modern drama is also an instrument of its time. It re-
Reflects all the complex influences that affect the people of the contemporary society. The original choice is still made by the tragic hero. It is his decision that causes the tragedy. And, once again, there is a discovery. The hero does realize that he has done wrong. But he does not make a flat statement of responsibility. To the modern hero, self-knowledge and responsibility do not necessarily go hand in hand as they did with the Greeks. Rather, the modern hero chooses to do the expedient thing. Even though he knows he is doing wrong, he would often rather save his neck by doing what is expedient rather than dying for what he believes. Responsibility has come back with the moderns because it can be subtly inferred by reading the drama. The author intends to imply it by the fact that the hero ends tragically. However, expediency is an important aspect.

Today, the boomerang of hero responsibility has not yet reached its origin. There tends to be a lack of tragedy and a lack of implicit responsibility. But the trajectory of responsibility has made a wide swing through many shapes and forms. No one can foresee what lies ahead for this boomerang.
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