

## **Chapter IV**

### **Of Life and Death**

Nikos Kazantzakis' mature novels are textualizations of the Nietzschean will to power and Deleuzian desire of the heroes who attempt to realize social or political cause, driven by their own intense urge to live life fully. Undaunted they move ahead even at the risk of losing their life as they are determined to usher in a paradigm shift in the society they live. They are confronted with challenges from the world outside and from their own self, as they pave the way for a radically new culture, morality, and above all a new humanity by overthrowing the prevailing social order.

The fictional characters of Kazantzakis are unassailably differentiated as they become enduring heroes. Martyrdom awaits them as their 'eschaton' and they, like the overman of Nietzsche, fear nothing since they are prepared to face the most daring of human experiences. The protagonists initiate the demolition of the established canons of truth and morality to usher in cultural shifts. They rise to the level of overman through their attempt to invent their own values and create their own sense of good and evil. This reformation is the outcome of their sacrifice which was necessitated by a passion for the freedom of their country or of their self. Will to power helps the characters to

discover themselves through an exploration of their potential to create a new world order.

In *Freedom and Death* and *Zorba the Greek* Kazantzakis presents heroes who achieve self actualization. The novel *Freedom and Death* delineates the transformation of an ordinary individual into an extraordinary hero with Captain Michales, the protagonist, epitomising the fictionalisation of political will to power. Alexis Zorba in *Zorba the Greek*, is motivated by the Dionysian will to power, with which he creates a world of his own termed as the 'Zorbatic'. Unlike Jesus in *The Last Temptation* and Manolios in *Christ Recrucified*, Zorba and Captain Michales are the personification of physical strength as they perform actions which differentiate themselves from the rest. In *Nikos Kazantzakis – Novelist*, Bien writes:

One of Kazantzakis' aims in this novel is to show the transformation of insignificant persons into heroes. For an author to do this effectively according to the conventions of psychological analysis, he must show in the pre-heroic person certain qualities that make the subsequent transformation believable. (52)

Zorba fictionalises the celebration of life as conceived by Kazantzakis who was inspired by the Nietzschean constructs of the Apollonian and the

Dionysian; where the Appolonian stands for order and beauty and the Dionysian for wisdom and revelry. Dionysian hero is one who is imbued with the Silenus wisdom that the best thing in the world is “not to be born, not to be, to be *nothing*. But the second best thing for you – is to die soon” (*The Birth of Tragedy* 22). Silenus was the oldest, the wisest and the most drunken of the followers of Dionysius. It was believed that when intoxicated, Silenus possessed special knowledge and the power of prophecy. The Greeks who felt the palpable fear of existence reversed the Silenus’ wisdom as “the worst thing of all for them would be to die soon, the second worst to die at all” (23). Zorba, the man with Dionysian will to power knows Silenus’ wisdom and opts for the reversal of it as did the Greeks in Homeric age.

Nietzsche emphasised the importance of pessimism along with the notion of tragic optimism, garnered through the attainment of the dire wisdom of the ontological nature as the individual goes through process of self actualization of the individual. By overcoming pessimism the Dionysian gets joy, strength, overflowing health and a sense of excessive abundance. Nietzsche says in *The Birth of Tragedy*:

Singing and dancing, man expresses himself as a member of a higher community: he has forgotten how to walk and talk, and is about to fly dancing into the heavens. His gestures express enchantment. Just as the animals now speak, and the earth

yields up milk and honey, he now gives voice to supernatural sounds: he feels like a god, he himself now walks about enraptured and elated as he saw the gods walk in dreams. (18)

Zorba's passion is music and dance through which he becomes the Dionysiac: "Now the slave is a freeman, now all the rigid and hostile boundaries that distress, despotism or 'impudent fashion' erected between man and man break down" (17). Zorba overcomes himself and finds his own ways to perform deeds of superhuman calibre as he feels inspired by music and is liberated through his dance. In *Nikos Kazantzakis: Novelist* Bien clarifies: "Yet, once we become aware of Nietzsche's concept of the Dionysiac, we realise that Zorba's characterisation is based primarily on this. Kazantzakis has created a character who is meant to project the mentality that Nietzsche identifies with Dionysus" (17). Apollo, the opposite of Dionysus is identified with moderation, sobriety, prudence, reasonableness and spiritual calm. Zorba, like Dionysus, is a representative of madness and adventure.

If Zorba nurtures a passion for music and dance, Captain Michales maintains the urge to engage in relentless fight against the Turks who rule over Crete and the novel encapsulates the unyielding resistance of the Cretans against the Turks who are seemingly invincible. Under the leadership of Captain Michales Cretans come together to inflict substantial damage on the Turkish bastion. He overwhelms the reader with his will to sacrifice his life for

his country and thus becomes a hero holding aloft the banner 'freedom or death'. Will to power motivates his passionate resistance and leads him to his martyrdom as he is transformed into a superman. Bien comments on Nietzsche's will to power and the superman in *Kazantzakis' Nietzscheanism*:

Life is an intense desire to surpass itself, and this is mirrored in every individual organism and species. If an organism is healthy, it will seek to fulfil its appointed role in life by imposing itself upon the surrounding organisms. Man's greatest need, together with eternal unrest, is expansion. His purpose is to conquer other organisms by asserting his superiority and ultimately by striving to such a degree that he surpasses himself, producing a new species more in accord with the basic natural law of motion and self overcoming. The foundation of Nietzsche's new table of values, therefore, is the will to power and superiority. (261)

The author meets Zorba at the Greek port waiting for his ship bound for Crete and takes him as a foreman at his lignite mine as he feels Zorba has something magical about him. Zorba's Dionysian nature is revealed when he plays his santuri, a stringed instrument, which he loves madly as his "big fingers caressed it, slowly, passionately, all over, as if caressing a woman" (15). He addresses the author 'boss' and when the boss invites him for a cup of

coffee, he consumes rum to disclose the real self of a sensualist with “eager gaze, his eyes, ironical and full of fire” (10). The boss regards Zorba as different and bizarre because he had once chopped off his finger which got stuck in the potter’s wheel, he had fought in the Cretan revolution in 1896, had killed scores of Turks and had slept with widows free of cost. Zorba’s justification for his wild nature is that, “A man’s a savage beast when he’s young; yes, boss, a savage, man- eating beast” (23) and it serves to amaze the boss. The fact that he lives as if he is going to die the next moment captures the imagination of the boss who spares time to listen to Zorba after the day’s work. Zorba appears to have explored the wide earth and the deep human soul. When he speaks Macedonia is spread before boss’ eyes so vividly and charmingly that its mountains, forests, torrents and hard working men and women become animated. His conversation covers the vast geopolitical expanse of Greece and Bulgaria and the city of Constantinople.

Life is fresh and new to Zorba every day and he beholds all objects as if it is for the first time that he sees them. He adopts a tough attitude to the workers and enforces stringent laws which at times may seem cruel and barbaric. But this is imperative in the self overcoming which makes the individual the subject of his/her will to power and desire. Zorba repeats that man is a brute and respects and fears the one who is cruel to him but plucks the eyes of those who are kind to him. This philosophy guides him and it is put

to test as he leads the workers in the lignite mine and they respect and obey his authority. The boss recollects Zorba:

“Man is a brute”, he said, striking the pebbles with his stick.  
“A great brute. Your lordship doesn’t realise this. It seems everything’s been too easy for you, but you ask me! A brute, I tell you! If you are cruel to him, he respects and fears you. If you are kind to him, he plucks your eyes out.” (59)

As a Nietzschean overman Zorba is driven by a strong streak of egoism. He is an individual who believes in himself not because he is superior to others but because he knows himself better. When he dies everything will cease with him including what he calls the ‘Zorbatic’ world. His ‘Zorbatic’ world is based on the philosophy that sensuality is the key to heaven and those who do not enjoy the pleasures of life, carnal and sensuous, will not get there:

I don’t believe in anything or anyone; only in Zorba. Not because Zorba is better than the others; not at all, not a little bit! He’s a brute like the rest! But I believe in Zorba because he’s the only being I have in my power, the only one I know. All the rest are ghosts. I see with these eyes, I hear with these ears, I digest with these guts. All the rest are ghosts, I tell you. When I

die, everything'll die. The whole Zorbatic world will go to the bottom! (60).

This primal tenacity that possesses him helps him to engage in life endangering adventures. He is a savage in his instincts and is in constant touch with mother earth. He imbibes a world-weary-wisdom from his variegated experiences and draws his own philosophy about life unmindful of its incongruity. The author admires him for his strong decision making power even when the situation turns demanding and unpredictable. Zorba despises men for their fear and apprehensions and the slavish way they spend their life.

Like Zorba, Captain Michales in *Freedom and Death* differentiates himself from the multitude in his defiance and fighting spirit. The ultimate goal of his life is the freedom of Crete and the formation of a sovereign republic where all Cretan can live in the glory of self rule. The will that propels him to seek independence of his motherland in turn inspires his fellow countrymen, to take up arms and rise against the oppressors. Physically he is an awe inspiring presence with the features of a wild untamed animal in Megalokastro, his native place:

Captain Michales gnashed his teeth. He usually did so when wrath took charge of him. He thrust his right fang forward and let it flash through his black moustache. "Captain Wild boar"

was his apt nick name in Megalokastro. With his sudden rages, his deep, dark, round eyes, his short, stubborn neck and that jutting fang, the heavy, broad-boned man was really like a wild boar, rearing for the spring. (7)

He is driven by an intense passion to set his motherland Crete free from the four hundred year long Turkish rule: “Captain Michales’ heart swelled, it could bear the misery of Crete no longer” (66). He accuses God for not giving the Cretans bodies of steel to carry on the mission of freedom and fight for another hundred years until Crete is free. He is unperturbed about his personal appearance and is least bothered about how others regard him in his passionate quest to drive out the foreign power. His counterpart on the Turkish side, Nuri Bay, respects him and calls him a savage for his daredevilry even as he waits to kill the brother of Captain Michales, Nuri Bay’s father’s murderer. But he does not dare to carry it out, instead makes friends with him. Nuri Bay’s respect and fear of Captain Michales is palpable when he muses: “‘What a man!’ he thought, ‘what pride and courage! He never says a superfluous word, he never boasts. He does not quarrel with those beneath him. He knows no fraud. He has no respect even for death. Happy the man who has such an enemy.’” (27)

Nuri Bay has high regard for Captain Michales’ physical strength. His wife Emine worships Captain Michales after she sees him breaking a glass of

raki by thrusting his two fingers in. Captain Michales could sense the love and admiration of Emine but like Jesus in *The Last Temptation*, overcomes the temptation. His will regurgitates vociferously at the sight of the tree – a symbol of the terror of reign as many Cretan rebels were hanged on it. He rages at the tree: “As I’m a Christian, one night I’ll rise up, take an axe and cut you down. Curse you” (37).

All the Turks are his born enemies and Captain Polyxigis who visits Emine, Nuri Bey’s wife, secretly is also his rival. The Turks view him with an evil eye and his Christian friends avoid him because they feel that a dark power is assisting him enabling him to undertake impossible tasks. He sustains his fighting spirit by constantly looking at the pictures of the warriors who fought with valour in the war of 1821. Their weapons, hung on the four walls of his house, instil in him the strong urge to transform himself. The killing of his brother and two sons in an ambush by the Turks and the continuous torture of the Cretan Christians torment Captain Michalis and prompts him to demand the suzerainty of Crete. The injustice and violence meted out by the Turks – the burning of villages, destruction of olive-groves and vineyards and the massacres of innocent civilians – serve to shape his political will to power.

Zorba and Captain Michales are Nietzschean overmen who formulate their own values and follow them in pursuit of the actualization of their lives. It is through their will to power and desire that they identify their personal

God and devil. They pursue what they consider to be the right kind of action and evaluate it using their own yardsticks and are prepared to face the consequences. Nietzsche says in *Twilight of the Idols*: “A virtue has to be *our* invention, *our* most personal defence and necessity: in other sense it is merely a danger” (133). Captain Michales realizes that he cannot be free until his motherland is free:

When Crete is set free, he sometimes thought, my heart too will be free. When Crete is set free, I shall laugh. And yet, not long ago, he had had an extremely lifelike dream: because Crete was set free the bells were ringing, the streets were strewn with myrtle and laurel, a white warship had anchored in the harbour and the king’s son from Athens sprang on to the mole, bowed down and kissed the soil of Crete; and on the mole he himself, Captain Michales, was standing, holding the keys of Megalakastro on a silver platter, to hand them to the King’s son. (92)

Zorba invents his own interpretation of good and evil by reevaluating the values. He postulates that good things like pretty women, spring, roast suckling, and wine are fantastic creations of the devil which testifies to his Dionysian nature. Zorba surprises the boss with the blunt and blasphemous suggestion that he should go to the widow on Christmas Eve instead of the

church. His justification is that Christ will be conceived that night if the boss performs a miracle with the widow like what God did to Virgin Mary. Zorba says: “If God had followed the same path as you, boss, he’d never have gone to Mary’s and Christ would never have been born. If you asked me what path God follows, I’d say: the one leading to Mary’s. Mary is a widow” (125).

His first order paradise is the experience of freedom and for him man is both devil and God. The next one in the order is what he creates with everything he sees around – trees, sea and above all women – and he has a feeling that “They grow wings and I have to chase them” (37). Zorba lives life every moment to the full with the conviction that he might as well die the next minute and on the realization that life is very short and uncertain to be pessimistic about it. He leaps over the feeling of negativity with wings of optimism, knowing that what one enjoys at the given moment is the supreme experience of life, which is better than waiting for an unknown paradise.

Though Zorba is married, which he considers a folly, he has slept with thousands of women and to keep a record of them he has made a pillow with their hairs, taking one strand from each woman. He considers a woman as a fresh spring from which one should drink to one’s maximum capacity. Wherever he goes in search of work, he finds a suitable woman for his need because he believes that god gave him hands to take a woman. His opinion is that man should open his ears, eyes, and arms to embrace everything – the

stones, rain, flowers – so as to make him feel fresh and joyous. A man can enter paradise only with a woman and need not go to a priest to learn about it. Man and woman are insects living only for a few paltry seconds beneath the sun and die. A wasted life is a curse upon oneself if one dies without enjoying the paradise on earth to which one is entitled during the short course of life. For Zorba, “If a woman sleeps all alone, it’s the fault of us men” (116). He transvalues the traditional concepts of sin to construct his own paradise and hell ruled by a God who is synonymous with forgiveness. When the soul reaches God he just washes it and takes it to the paradise least bothered about the story of sins it has committed. Zorba justifies his view on God: “Because God, you know, is a great lord, and that’s what being a lord means: to forgive!”(115).

He finds his own deliverance by the revaluation of power centres like the state, church and capital. The universal vision of life, that every man is unique but shares common needs and desires with others, enables him to adopt varied approaches to experience life in real terms, which forces the boss to say:

I was envious of the man. He had lived with his flesh and blood – fighting, killing, kissing – all that I had tried to learn through pen and ink alone. All that problems I was trying to solve point

by point in my solitude and glued to my chair, this man had solved up in the pure air of the mountains with his blood. (245)

The call of the political will to power is so strong for Captain Michales that he is called a wild beast with no feeling for others: “He is a wild beast, he is, a wild beast. He has no feelings” (134). Even when he drinks in company he does not get inebriated and remains unshaken. People regard him as one of the pillars of Christendom in Megalokastro and believe that if he falls, the land will remain defeated forever. The audacity he shows is a matter of concern for others who know that he is not afraid of God or devil because he does not dread death at all. His role in the Cretan fight for freedom is highlighted in the words of Captain Polyxigis: “In Christ’s name, brother,” he said, “don’t throw away that strength of yours. You’re a pillar of Christendom. Crete needs you. Your life doesn’t belong to you, it belongs to Crete. She may soon want to use you” (136).

Life in the servile Crete becomes unbearable for Captain Michales and his unquenchable thirst to end the Turkish rule makes him dare God for Crete, for Crete is his life and blood: “Always when he thought of Crete, abandoned by all, he disputed with God. A violent blasphemy pressed forward to the tip of his tongue. He did not lament before God, he was angry with Him. He asked for no sympathy, he asked for justice” (147). His emotional preponderance had not been shaped by the sympathy for his motherland alone

but had been nurtured through the history of Cretan uprisings. The forced division of the land by the Turks which awarded the arid portion to the Greeks and set apart the fertile region with vineyards and olive orchards for the Turks forms the seeds of the land's violent history. There was a series of uprisings against the Turks but the Christians who staged them were brutally suppressed each time and the Turks went on enjoying themselves.

Zorba and Captain Michales possess great physical strength. Zorba surprises with a brave attempt to save the widow, held responsible for the drowning of a boy, in the churchyard. Alone and unarmed he engages the father and uncle of the boy who try to kill the widow in front of the parishioners and attempts to save her: "Zorba was standing before him, swinging his arm with rage" (264). Insulted they swear to take revenge on Zorba but he remains intrepid but later there is a truce between him and the enemies.

Zorba's strength is revealed when the gallery in the mine collapses. He saves all the workers risking his own life with a strange foreknowledge of the impending doom. The gratitude of the workers is shown in the words of Michelis, the eldest of them, "If you hadn't been there, good master Alexis, our children would be orphans by this time" (122). His body carries the imprint of his fight for his motherland in the form of inerasable scars from the wounds he suffered. His bravery in killing a Bulgarian *comitadji* who was a

priest, is unforgettable. Zorba narrates: “Towards nightfall the priest came into the stable to feed the animals. I threw myself on him and cut his throat like a sheep. I lopped off his ears and stuck them in my pocket” (242). His strength of will helps him to escape the enemies, and to destroy the Bulgarian village in fire the next day to surprise everyone with his daring.

Captain Michales displays awesome physical strength and courage synergised by his rebellious temper. The incident at the Turkish coffee house when he drinks coffee alone after driving off all Turks is a remarkable example of his will to power which the Turks fear. He orders Nuri Bay to vacate the coffee house so that he can have his coffee alone, underscoring his contempt for foreign rule. His command, “I want to drink my coffee alone. I want no company. Clear the coffee house” (151), epitomises his fighting spirit. Bien comments on the character of Captain Michales in *Politics of the Spirit*: “Kapetan Mihalis is not only overly intense, exaggeratedly morose, obsessively pure, and fanatically single minded , all of which may be attested in the real story of Crete; he is an independent soul refusing to comply with the decisions of the revolutionary leadership” (2: 384).

Ladies and children seek the protection of Captain Michales who keeps his daggers and gun ready for any eventuality as the tension mounts between the Turks and Cretans. The situation escalates to the extent that each side expects their foes to pounce upon them and leave a heap of corpse in the

streets but Captain Michales remains an unshakable force. He rescues the barber Signor Paraskevas who is beaten up brutally by a gang of rumbling Turks. The Turks are terrified by his aggressive stance:

He walked slowly and calmly forward, with a dispassionate face, showing neither anger nor fear.

When the Turks saw him coming they stood still. What did the giaour want? Had he no fear of them?

Captain Michales reached them and raised his hand to bid them let him through. They moved aside, amazed. What was he going to do? Even the roughest of them lowered their knives.

(276)

The murder of his brother Manusakas by Nuri Bey triggers his thirst for revenge and then on he seeks the destruction of the Turks. The insult and humiliation the Greeks suffer at the hands of Turks turn him violent: “Since the funeral of his brother he had spoken to no one. His blood was full of unrest. His mind was busy – devising a thousand arts of malice, turning over a thousand occasion by which he could catch Nuri and avenge the crime which had been committed” (216).

His obsession with freedom is so deeply entrenched that he leaps over all impediments in the way to the goal. He keeps women at abeyance to

prevent him from the distractions of mind and body and hates women's gossips. He even neglects his wife and keeps his only daughter off his sight, to be fully engrossed in national struggle. He realises that all obstructions to the rebellion have to be eradicated for the noble cause of freedom. Nietzsche states his concept of freedom in *Twilight of the Idols*:

And the war is what teaches people to free. Because, what is freedom anyway? Having the will to be responsible for yourself. Maintaining the distance that divide us. Becoming indifferent to hardship, cruelty, deprivation, even to life. Being ready to sacrifice people for your cause, yourself included. Freedom means that the manly instincts which take pleasure in war and victory have gained control over other instincts, over instincts of 'happiness', for instance. (213)

Energised by the words and deeds of Captain Michales Crete musters the strength to rise against the enemies and the Turks are forced to exercise self control or else bear the brunt of the Captain's verbal and physical incursions. Antagonism to foreign rule produces in him an inimitable patriotic fervour and his deep love for his native land is reaffirmed in the passage:

He loved Crete like a living, warm creature with a speaking mouth and weeping eyes; a Crete that consisted not of rocks

and clods and roots, but of thousands of forefathers and foremothers, who never died and who gathered, every Sunday, in the churches. Again and again they were filled with, and in their graves they unfolded a proud banner and rushed with it into the mountains. And on the banner the undying Mother, bowed over it for years, had embroidered with their black and gray and snow-white hair the three undying words:

FREEDOM or DEATH

Captain Michales's eyes grew moist. When he was alone he was not ashamed of tears. (244)

Captain Michales stands out like an impenetrable fort protecting Crete and the Turks fear him. They know that if he is killed the Cretan uprising will peter out like an army without its captain on the battle field. Captain Michales exhorts his people to trust their own power when Moscow's promise of help to destroy Turkish force did not materialize. The moral power and integrity an individual exhibits are the products of his will to power. Asking for assistance is deemed a sign of the weak willed. Captain Michales decides to go ahead, reinvigorated and fearless and his character inspires others as well to rise against the Turks. His conversation with the Metropolitan reveals his grit: "Let's trust in small powers – in our own strength" (265).

Zorba's versatility is testified by the professions he took up. He was in turn a 'quarrier', miner, pedlar, potter, santuri player, hawker and a black smith. He was also a smuggler for which he was put in prison from where he escaped to Russia. He was a haberdasher in Macedonia, made good profit and slept with widows, but abandoned it to join the revolutionaries in Crete in 1896 and did daring actions in the battle field for the freedom of Crete from the Turks and slaughtered many of them. He is an admirer of freedom and, like a potter who makes pots of his own choice adhering to his own rules and desires, Zorba lives a bohemian life where he himself is his master. For him pleasure and pain are the results of his actions driven by a Dionysian will to power.

Zorba is a self made man with no formal education. He is well experienced in life and has deep knowledge of the world, which imparts to him a breadth of vision. He nurtures a primitive courage to take up challenging and dangerous enterprises. The energy he generates after food and drink is surprising and he is completely transformed: "The whole grinding, weary machine of his body came to life once more, got up speed and started to work again. His eyes lit up, he was brim full of memories, wings grew on his feet and he danced" (73). The food he takes is transubstantiated into energy and good humour instead of fat and manure.

Zorba dances like an angel, but his face looks defiant and rebellious as if he is daring God to kill him as he reaches high levels of physical endurance and courage. He wants to be a conqueror even at the face of defeat and destruction and is careful to maintain an undying spirit of joy and pride by transforming calamity into creativity. He believes in absolute freedom and enjoyment and is ready to break all the shackles with which man is bound. Zorba, as a true Greek, makes his body talk and lives life with a Dionysian passion to liberate himself and in the process create his own God. Maria Hnaraki comments: “Clearly, Nietzsche’s ‘process theology’ is expressed in Kazantzakis’s novel, ‘Zorba the Greek’. According to Nietzsche’s idea about source of religion, god is the result of whatever the most energetic and heroic people value and create” (26). Zorba dances when he feels choked with emotions, personal sorrows like his son’s death or stress from work, and through it he overcomes them. Kazantzakis describes his dance:

He threw himself into the dance, clapping his hands, leaping and pirouetting in the air, falling on to his knees, leaping again with his legs tucked up – it was as if he were made of rubber. He suddenly made tremendous bounds into the air, as if he wished to conquer the laws of nature and fly away. One felt that in this old body of his there was a soul struggling to carry

away this flesh and cast itself like a meteor into the darkness.

(76)

Zorba is dull and uninspiring before eating and drinking especially on his return from work. But the moment he has his fill, there is a total transformation in his character and body movements. He becomes vivacious with his eyes sparkling and appears to have grown wings on his feet to dance marvellously. He says, “What I eat turn into work and good humour” (73) and it saves his life from going to waste. The boss describes, “I was afraid that his body would not stand up to such violence and might be shattered into thousand pieces and scattered to the four winds of heaven” (77). The author knows that Zorba is flying like a bird into a boundless world and is destined to perform the savage and desperate dance to save him from becoming mad. For him dancing is the ideal way of communicating the indescribable experiences of his life; all those dubious professions he did, life in jail and his escapades. He brings in an orgiastic ecstasy with his music which draws the workers at the mine who gather in a circle and dance on the pebbled shore. His songs are centred on the theme of a relentless pursuit of happiness which liberates the body and mind. The boss is inspired to learn from Zorba how to fill his soul with flesh and flesh with soul; a synthesis of the two antinomies which are the two eternal enemies disturbing his life. He worships Zorba: “I envied him. It is he who discovered the truth, I thought. His is the right path” (82). Zorba like

God offers wisdom and truth even as he confesses that he is growing older and getting wilder. His ambition is to conquer the world and not to yield to any one till death.

His driving force is his Dionysian will to power craving for action and pleasure, be it tragic or ecstatic and his motto is “to eat and drink and get warmed up” (128). An outstanding feature of his character is his great adaptability; women, food, meat and wine are mere games in his hands to become a part of his flesh and finally become Zorba himself. As a true Dionysian he gets intoxicated with them to experience the abundance of joy and wild ecstasy. Sensuousness and sensuality are the two arterial roads, in his life, to reach spirituality which is diametrically opposite to the author’s vision. Life in Candia with a dance girl is paradise for Zorba who does not get troubled with the compunction of conscience because he is the master of his own morality and logic. He destroys social taboos and stigmas which he considers as constraints erected by weak men to safe guard the fragile social order. That there is only one life for everyman prompts him to select the Dionysian way of life inspired by his own inextinguishable will to power and desire.

He looks like an ogre and his tall, well built body dances violently and he jumps into the air shrieking as if to establish a link with the universal spirit. Even after the total fiasco in the lignite work Zorba does not feel defeated,

instead devours a roasted lamb and drinks a barrel of wine and takes up his santuri to sing and dance: “He put out his foot, touched the ground lightly with his toes, then pointed the other foot; the steps were mingled violently, joyously, the ground reverberated like a drum” (312).

Just as the overflow of Dionysian will to power triggers Zorba, Captain Michales motivated by his political will to power resolves to fight the Turks. The Turks feel intimidated by his appearance: “Captain Michales reached them and raised his hand to bid them let him through. They moved aside, amazed. What was he going to do? Even the roughest of them lowered their knives”(276). They clamour for his blood and force the ruler, the Pacha, to get help from the Sultan in Constantinople and kill Captain Michales. But the Pacha goes for reconciliation overlooking the insolence of Captain Michales and his open defiance of the Turkish law.

Captain Michales believes that his salvation lies in the creation of an independent Crete where the Greeks can safeguard their cultural heritage. A life of submission and servitude makes him suffocated and he considers a valiant death in the battle field for the liberation of Crete to be the better option. In *The Will to Power* Nietzsche declares that will to power begets real happiness in life:

My theory would be that the will to power is the primitive form of affect, that all others are only developments of it; that it is notably enlightening to posit *power* in place of individual “happiness” (after which every living thing is supposed to be striving): “there is a striving for power, for an increase of power”; - pleasure is only a symptom of the feeling of power attained, a consciousness of a difference. (366)

When the Metropolitan and the Pacha, representing the Greeks and Turks respectively, broker a peace treaty the indication is that the Pacha is ready to forget the past, especially what Captain Michales has done to the Turkish Empire. The decision by the Pacha not to take revenge on the Cretans is a sign of the acceptance of Captain Michales’ unassailable strength in the battle. The decision to continue fight and the refusal to enter into peace talk is made clear in the conversation between Captain Michales and his son: “Thrasaki, the time for rising has come. Let the Pacha say what he will, he’s an Anatolian, and he understands nothing. Once Crete has got fire, it isn’t easily put out. Do you understand?” (291).

He knows he is mad with rage because he has lost his patience and can redeem his inner stability only with the freedom of Crete. He succeeds in communicating his dream to his people who whole heartedly approve his plan to continue the fight. They are enflamed by the memories of their forefathers

who sacrificed their lives for the same cause. The mobilization of the Greek force gets impetus from ladies and children who make and repair arms for the battle and are ready to suffer extreme difficulties. They hide in caves or starve to near death dreaming of the freedom of Crete under the brave leadership of Captain Michales. The men leave their quarters to battle for a better tomorrow disregarding their personal loss. The political will to power exhibited by Captain Michales spurs the mind of the Cretans with patriotic favour and, though uncertain about the outcome of the war, they are excited to fight shoulder to shoulder to see their enemies defeated. Captain Michales does not get perturbed at the prospect of going without any help from the Greek and French governments; it provokes him to unleash more terror on the Turks. He holds aloft the banner made of black cloth - 'freedom or death' written in red letters and settles in Mount Selena to continue to fight. He inspires his men:

“Brothers, captains, you know very well I can’t spin speeches. So I’ll speak bluntly, drily and soberly: forgive me. Once again the noose is tightening around Crete. Soldiers and dervishes have come by ships; the Turks are growing arrogant and are slaughtering our brothers in Megalokastro. We are no lambs. The blood of the killed is crying out. Arise, captains! Freedom or death!” (301).

Monasteries are transformed into armament factories where women, monks, and children join to manufacture arsenals and medicines and “Crete became a workshop of freedom, working day and night” (304). People come forward to sacrifice their lives for their nation and many are almost sure they will not be alive for the next Christmas or the harvest of grapes. They can foresee their death, but console themselves that all Cretans are born to die for Crete. They accept Captain Michales as their leader and protector and his presence strengthens their fighting spirit.

The preparation for the war also sees the invocation of the passion of the ancient Greek heroes. Tityros, the school master, is an example of the personal transformation that happened in the explosive atmosphere in Crete. The words of his father Captain Safakos, “Happy the man who lays down his life in the service of Crete” and “to be killed in her service than to live in her service” (313), revive Captain Michales and his followers to quicken their military mobilization even as he knows that the mighty Turks will retaliate and suppress the rebel forces.

The peace treaty agreed upon between the Metropolitan and the Pacha is not welcome to Captain Michales who considers the current preparation of war as the most fortuitous opportunity to overthrow the foreign rule and fears that yielding to further compromise will result in the permanent loss of their nationhood. Peace without freedom is unthinkable for him and being a

Nietzschean hero he should carry on the war till victory. Nietzsche in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* says:

I do not exhort you to work but to battle. I do not exhort you to peace, but to victory. May your work be a battle, may your peace be a victory!

One can be silent and sit still only when one has arrow and bow: otherwise one babbles and quarrels. May your peace be a victory.

You say it is the good cause that hallows even a war? I tell you: it is the good war that hallows every cause.

War and courage have done more great things than charity. Not your pity but your bravery has saved the unfortunate up to now. (74)

His decision to continue the war is convincing to his supporters and when he assumes a vital role in the war front it is a morale booster for the Cretan army. His temporary absence to save Emine, the wife of his former rival, who wishes to become a Christian and marry Captain Polyxigis, proves detrimental when the Turks attack the monastery of Christ the Lord and destroy it after capturing the abbot. His failure to protect the monastery shatters his mind and makes him seethe in rage against the Turks when he is

confronted with the question, “Where did you ride away in the night and leave the monastery in lurch? -- You don’t answer? Where did you go? Didn’t you know that the Turks were frightened of you and would attack as soon as they found out that you were leaving your post?”(337).

The Pacha is enraged because Captain Michales has breached the peace proposals and is left with no other option but to send the severed head of Captain Michales to the Sultan in Constantinople as a gift. Captain Michales declines to capitulate in spite of the reinforcement of the Turkish force and deprivation of the Cretans due to the prolonged war. He refuses to lay down his arms in fear or in conciliation but valiantly fortifies his force who are less in number compared to the Turkish army. But his political will to power spurs his spirit not to submit to the enemies but die on the march to freedom taking the motto ‘freedom or death’ in letter and spirit. He represents the overman as explicated by Nietzsche in *Beyond Good and Evil*:

Few are made for independence – it is a privilege of the strong.  
And he who attempts it, having the complete right to it but without being compelled to, thereby proves that he is probably not only strong but also daring to the point of recklessness. He ventures into a labyrinth; he multiplies by a thousand the dangers which life as such already brings with it. (60)

Nietzsche conceived god as amoral, indulging in reckless creation and destruction and rejoicing in whatever he does. Zorba comes close to this conception. Bien points out in *Nikos Kazantzakis: Novelist*: “Zorbas, then, is Nietzsche’s ‘union of god and goat, expressed in figure of a satyr. . . . the Dionysiac reveller – primary man’” (19). Zorba acts on his instinct and for him there is no difference between the possible and the impossible or the right and the wrong. Since he believes that man is a great beast and a great god; the line of demarcation between the human and the divine or the human and the animal becomes insignificant. Zorba does not stoop to the level of a devil and nor ascend to the heights of a saint, being a synthesis of both. Bien remarks, “Zorba fornicates like an animal in rut; he kills (although he is deeply compassionate at the same time); he takes what he wants when he wants it, whether this be food or a woman. But he is also a god - granted, an extremely pagan one” (18).

The author who is afflicted by the tension between the flesh and the spirit gets the insight that pain is actually caused by abundance of health and that the world is a repertoire of goodness where sexuality has a central role to play. The path of folly also provides hilarious moments. Zorba goes dancing after the cable collapsed and the author derives an irrational pleasure at the catastrophic end to his timber business. Zorba reaffirms the triumph of

joy over pain as he transforms tragedy into real music and dance like Dionysus. Bien says:

Zorbas' 'weapons' are resilience, good humour, simplicity, humanness, fortitude, and love for both nature and human nature as given. In him Kazantzakis offers us a Greekness that is strong without being callous, self-assured without being aggressive. Zorbas' pride is not a disease nourished by an unsatisfied will to power; rather, it is a healthy indication of devotion to inner values" (26).

The will of Captain Michales sustains his fighting spirit even at the face of the impending debacle of his emaciated forces. His willingness to sacrifice his life is palpable in his dialogue with Captain Polyxigis:

"Since the hour when I lost all hope, Captain Polyxiges," Captain Michales went on, "I've had the feeling, by the soil on which we tread, that I'm immortal. Who can do anything to me now? What can death do against me? Even if all the Turks come storming at me, my ear-lobe won't twitch. I picture myself like Arkadi: my clothes, hair and gut are full of powder, and when I see that there's nothing else for it, I blow myself sky-high. Do you understand? (375)

He is driven by pride and defiance which makes him act like a demon or God. His decision to blow himself up like the abbot of the Arkadi monastery who set off the gun powder and killed the six hundred Cretans who had taken shelter to avoid the brutal massacre by the Turks, testifies to his inexorable spirit. His refusal to the ultimatum – leave the mountain with his fighters and avoid the battle – infuriates the Pacha. Instead of submitting, Captain Michales sends profane remarks about Prophet Muhammad: “As long as any breath comes out of my nose, I am not going. Let all the Crete submit if it wills, I am not submitting. I sh-- on the beard of your prophet!” (379).

His belief that no one dies in war without any purpose preserves the strength of his mind and he believes that his death will immortalize him and thereby make him a real Cretan. He knows that his redemption begins in hopelessness and this awareness generates a certitude which keeps him high spirited for the heroic battle. Though the outcome of the war will be disastrous to his side, with Turkish army outnumbering the Cretan army, his will to power assists him to maintain the optimism that their fight will free their land.

His father’s critical illness does not stop him from staying put at the battle front. The dying father deems it as an instance of prudence in his son to continue the fight. Hunger, misery and fear fail to impact Captain Michales who remains least bothered about his domestic and filial attachments. Bent on his decision to die on the battle ground, duty bound, and in selfless service, he

is on the way to be transformed into a hero or be haloed in martyrdom. The memories of the previous uprisings in the years 1821, '34, '41, '54, and '78 fortify his mind to pursue his mission relentlessly. He is so engrossed in the battle that his wife and children fail to deter him.

The peace treaty signed by the Pacha and Metropolitan to end the war which witnessed massacres and torching of houses of both Christians and Turks prompts many Greek fighters to renounce war but Captain Michales continues the battle. The Metropolitan remarks about Captain Michales' ferocity:

An unbridled, rebellious soul. A long time ago I sent him warning – he was to get out, with his weapons and flags. No one would hurt a hair of his head – the Pacha had sworn it. Do you know how he answered me? 'Do I meddle in your office My lord? Then don't you meddle in mine either. Never will I kneel before the Turks. I'll blow myself sky high'. (389)

Captain Polyxiges also returns to a peaceful normal life but feels sad that he cannot follow Captain Michales and his sense of guilt is revealed in his words: "Captain Michales, that wild boar, has done the right thing! I too ought to have stayed up there, to get killed. What good life is to me now? I 'd like to join him again" (441).

*Zorba the Greek* is a celebration of life saturated with wine, women, dance and music, and adventures which make the eponymous novel a textualization of Dionysian will to power. It is bright and optimistic though Kazantzakis was embroiled in political turmoil of the period caused by the Second World War and the subsequent famine which wiped out five lakh people. Zorba's resilience and perseverance at the time of extreme adversity and his capability to overcome it shows his strength of character. He is not affected by the second world war and the hunger, violence and chaos at its wake, but sends the author a telegram to disclose his success of having found a beautiful mine with an enticing woman, which he calls a green stone, a thousand miles away.

He represents materiality and overindulgence in the pleasures of life unmindful of financial or moral constraints because he is guided by his own perception of morality. Zorba excels over others with his expertise in mining lignite but transubstantiates his experiences into dance and music and makes himself and others happy. The influence that Zorba casts upon the boss is substantial and Bien says: "The Boss has been guided by Zorbas through sufficient exercises so that he can react with irrational joy to the defeat of materiality. Now, he too, like Zorbas, is free" (14).

Bien explains the Dionysiac as "the mentality that sees the world as governed by contradiction, pain and folly" (15). Kazantzakis attempts to make

the Dionysian insight concrete through Zorba, which renders him a marvellous piece of artistic creation. Bien's remark, "Zorba the Greek is an especially Greek novel because, like ancient Greek tragedy, it aspires to be an Apollonian parable of Dionysiac knowledge," (16) reiterates the fact that the Dionysian is the real force behind activities that shape the life and character of Zorba.

Zorba lives and dies for music, dance and wine and he is never deterred by personal sorrows and worldly woes. He is immersed in his Dionysian world with his santuri. He says: "When I'm feeling down, or when I'm broke, I play the santuri and it cheers me up. When I'm playing, you can talk to me, I hear nothing, and even if I hear, I can't speak. It's no good my trying. I can't!"(13). Music is passion for Zorba and he feels the meaning of life and truth of the universe through it. Linda L. Williams comments on the effect of music and dance on an individual: "The individual loses her or his sense of individuality, identity, and becomes an undifferentiated part of the whole. This loss of consciousness of the self is the criterion for being in Nietzsche's Dionysian state, which is described as 'ecstatic', 'primeval', and 'intoxicating' " (7).

To the boss Zorba is a "living heart, a large voracious mouth, a great brute soul, not yet severed from mother earth" (14). Zorba wrestles with death day and night, which could produce a dark and a pessimistic vision of life, but

he easily overcomes it with his Dionysian outlook to declare that he is a man and that he is free. He never evinces interest in modern contraptions like telegraphy and steam engines and is averse to morality and religion and hates to hear words like kings, democracy, plebiscite and deputies because he has created his own Zorbatic world and has a mind which progresses faster than the world outside. The boss illustrates:

“Zorba had got so far beyond contemporary events that they had already ceased to be anything but out- of- date rubbish. Certainly to him telegraphy, steam-ships and engines, current morality and religion must have appeared like rusty old rifles. His mind progressed much faster than the world” (18).

Captain Michales' recourse to the dangerous path is born of his philosophy of life which asserts that honour makes life valuable and it can be achieved only through the act of self sacrifice. The hero gets immortalized in martyrdom to show to the world that the force of will to power and desire for one's self actualization invokes a radical transmutation in the individual which in turn engenders grand battles and great sacrifices. The Pacha's repeated requests to Captain Michales to lay down arms on the condition of complete immunity are in recognition of his valour known even to the Sultan in Constantinople. His Will is manifest in his wish to change his motto to 'freedom and death' in place of 'freedom or death' because for the Cretans

freedom means death: “Freedom or death, he muttered, shaking his head fiercely. Freedom or death! O poor Cretans! Freedom *and* death – that is what I should have written on my banner. That is the true banner of every fighter: Freedom *and* death! Freedom *and* death!” (465). The change in the motto renders a palpable change in his temper:

You know what that dog announces to us. You are men, we’re struggling for freedom, speak out freely! We’ve no more powder and shot, no bread, no hope. The Turks are an army, we are a handful! Whoever of you wants to leave, let him go; by my sabre, which I shall give up only to god, it’s no dishonour! I’m not going. That’s what I have to say to you. (465)

It becomes evident that for Captain Michales surrender means dishonour. He justifies his mad behaviour by declaring that house holders cannot fight and Crete requires madmen who can fight even at the gateways to death. When the enemy surrounds him and closes in, he prepares himself for his death, fearlessly shouting the words ‘freedom and death’ but is shot dead before he could complete it. Captain Michales dies like a hero who regards honour as the great noble quotient of life and becomes a martyr in Cretan freedom struggle. Bien points out in *Politics of Spirit*:

When the Sultan offers to spare his life if he will surrender peacefully, he answers that he cannot because he must obey the great figures of Greek history who valued honour above life. This is what we see Kapetan Mihalis doing throughout the novel as he strives to fulfil the requirement placed upon him by traditions of Greek heroism that go back most recently to the heroic self sacrifice of Cretan soldiers and civilian at the Arkadi monastery during the rise of 1866 and from there to the Revolution of 1821, to Leonidas and his three hundred at Thermopylae, to Miltiades at Marathon, and ultimately to Homer's Achilles. (1:372)

*Freedom and Death* is a political novel which exemplifies the heroism demonstrated by the protagonist Captain Michales who is possessed by three dominant passions – pride, scorn of death and patriotism. His declaration that he is Crete is the evidence of his determination that he is willing to sacrifice his life for his motherland and it also testifies to his confidence that his death will be a turning point for the entire nation. He becomes a national hero through his supreme sacrifice which dramatically transforms the patriotic fervour of people of Crete into direct action, valorising it to maintain the tempo of the national movement.

Though his intention is to make the nation come together in freedom, Captain Michalis remains lonely as he foments his emotions to battle with the adversities. Bien observes: “What excites him is not that he is being drawn into closer ties with other human beings but precisely the opposite: the fact that he is entirely alone” (391). He upholds that the ultimate honour is to fight bravely without hope and the ultimate freedom is to be killed for the cause because the loss and devastation of war is part of the great sacrifice. Egoism, the hallmark of an individual with the Nietzschean will is apparent in Captain Michales who believes in the supreme individual autonomy. Bien remarks: “Like so many of Kazantzakis’s heroes he is obsessed with imposing his will upon outside reality to an absolute degree” (392). Captain Michales is an unrelenting nonconformist who listens only to himself and his martyrdom could be seen as an attempt to extricate his will from servitude.

Zorba celebrates the life with his Dionysian approach and conceives that God can be created only with wine, bread, and meat because the belly is the foundation of life. He becomes more active and vigorous exploring uncharted possibilities, as he grows older. He says: “When I was forty I began to feel really young and went off on the maddest escapades. And now I’m over sixty – sixty five, boss, but keep that dark – well, now I’m over sixty, how can I explain? Honestly, the world’s grown too small for me!”(139). It is manifest that he is born to lead a wild life with wine, food, women and dance.

There is a great harmony between his body and soul and women, bread, water, meat and sleep; they blend with his flesh and become part of Zorba himself. It creates an evincing impression that there is a hidden connection between the individual and all the elements in the universe. All objects in the universe, animate or inanimate are special in the eyes of Zorba and even a rolling stone is a miraculous spectacle being part of a new beginning erasing the tedium of life of those who are bereft of the thirst for life and are confined to conformity. Zorba is a spring of inspiration to humanity beleaguered with the morbid conflict between the soul and the flesh. Knowledge and wisdom which are unavailable in books but are born of experience help us overcome such conflicts and enable us to create a new world to maintain the warmth and freshness of life. Zorba's place in the universe is highlighted in the statement: "The universe for Zorba, as for the men on earth, was a weighty, intense vision; the stars glided over him, the sea broke against his temples. He lived the earth, the water, the animals and God, without the distorting intervention of reason" (148).

Paradise offers him no excitement and hell does not scare him because he has overcome the vanity of attachment to things. He will not rejoice over the good nor despise the bad; he considers the God and devil the same. What matters is whether he is alive or not. His Dionysian will to power neither accepts nor abjures the consequences of his actions. Zorba says: "Every man

has his folly, but the greatest folly of all, in my view, is not to have one” (160).

Zorba has a special charm which attracts women – be it Madame Hortense or the Candia girl, Lola. He creates his own paradise made up of a room which is perfumed and decorated and a woman of his choice lying on the bed. He is driven by an intense Deleuzian desire which carries him to the edge of the abyss and he knows it is a dangerous course but he justifies himself saying that man is a wild beast. At work he dedicates his mind and body so unsparingly that work turns into wine, women and song and the workers get intoxicated to feel the earth come alive synergised by his rhythm.

The transubstantiation of wine and meat into song and dance is what makes Zorba what he is. He considers that it is a sin to waste food when there is no celebration and thinks that God does not bother to take account of the people who break the laws to fornicate or to eat a mouthful of meat on Good Friday. He formulates his theory of God:

God enjoys himself, kills, commits injustice, makes love, works, likes impossible things, just the same as I do. He eats what he pleases; takes the woman he chooses. If you see a lovely going by, as fresh as clear water, your heart leaps at the sight. Suddenly the ground opens and she disappears. Where

does she go? Who takes her? If she's good woman, they say: "God has taken her". If she is a harlot, they say: "The devil's carried her off". But, boss, I've said so before, and I say it again, God and devil are one and the same thing! (253)

For Zorba God and devil are of least significance because he is obsessed with the ecstatic experiences of life and the adventures it offers.

The aim of his life is the exploration of emotional exhilaration, as life is evanescent, at the expense of reason and morality created by a society hostile to liberty. When Zorba speaks he utters words enriched with meaning and "warm earthy smell" (301), which come from the depth of the heart instead of the brain. Zorba exhibits his strength of character even at the collapse of the timber factory when people run helter-skelter to escape the pylons and cable which caved in with logs of wood. He relishes himself on wine and meat and cheers up the boss by dancing and teaching him to dance, attempting to create a world of joy in place of despair. The boss describes the joy he feels at the hands of Zorba:

We clinked the glass and tasted the wine, an exquisite Cretan wine, rich red colour, like hare's blood. When you drank it, you felt as if you were in communion with the blood of the earth itself and you became a sort of ogre. Your vein overflowed

with strength, your heart with goodness! If you were a lamb you turned into a lion. You forgot the pettiness of life, constraints all fell away. United to the man, beast and God, you felt that you were one with the universe. (311)

Zorba was the creator of his own world and has his own theoretical explanations for what he does. He is engaged in a continuous effort to overcome himself with the conviction that life is real and is made anew every moment. Zorba represents the spirit of the unbridled, spontaneous will to live. He calls the author a pen pusher immersed in dreams and illusions, an inexperienced person who struggle to reach a path for him to walk straight and strong. The boss is crushed by his metaphysical questions. He wants to learn from Zorba's school how to swim, to dance, to wrestle, to ride a horse and to fire a rifle.

Captain Michales' death is the final act in the celebration of his life born of his will to power. The extraordinary way he ends his life makes him the overman bringing new hope to the Cretans to in their struggle for freedom. In *Thus Spake Zarathustra* Nietzsche says:

I shall show you the consummating death, which shall  
be a spur and a promise to the living

The man consummating his life dies his death triumphantly, surrounded by men filled with hope and making solemn vows.

Thus one should learn to die; and there should be no festivals at which such a dying man does not consecrate the oaths of the living!

To die thus is the best death ; but the second best is : to die in battle and to squander a great soul. (97)

Kazantzakis translates the spirit of Cretan struggle and patriotic fervour of the common people of Crete into the novel *Freedom and Death*. Crete witnessed uprisings from the year 1212, and there were ten rebellions in the Turkish period between 1770 and 1897. Morton P. Levitt states:

The history of Crete is unlike that any other western nation, a long and virtually unbroken succession of foreign domination and unsuccessful revolts. It is said that from the early thirteenth century, when the island became part of Venice's commercial empire, to the end of the nineteenth , when her Turkish successors were finally driven out, each generation of Cretan men married, raised a son to continue the line and went off to the mountains to fight the invaders.( 165)

The Cretans retain the ancient tradition of a life of hardship, unrelenting zest for freedom, and a proud sense of nationality. Captain Michales is a representative of the rich tradition of relentless war heroes who foresees death arriving at any time. Levitt substantiates:

The mythopoeic quality of Cretan folk art resounds throughout Kazantzakis' art: his view of man is at once naturalistic and heroic: his heroes are many – faceted, capable of great cruelty and injustice as well as great flights of spirit; but there are no relatives and neighbours to betray them, no blood feud or jealousies to divide their followers, no Cretan converts to Islam to outdo their Turkish oppressors. (172)

Captain Michales remains undefeated in heroic martyrdom. The strong undercurrent of will shapes his life and destiny and through self actualization he is liberated. Giles Deleuze explains in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*: “The philosophy of the will as he conceives it has two principles which together form the glad tidings: ‘willing = creating’ and ‘will = joy’, ‘my willing always comes to me as my liberator and bringer of joy. Willing liberates: that is true doctrine of will and freedom- thus Zarathustra teaches you” (78).

Will to power and Deleuzian desire encourage an individual to accept pain as source of pleasure and wisdom. Captain Michales persists in his fight

though embattled with problems like the death of his father and the deprivation of the people due to prolonged war and the desertion of his fighters. The memory of the fighters who sacrificed their lives for freedom preserves his will to fight even in total despair: “For thousands of years they have struggled in this wilderness of rocks, with hunger, thirst, discord and death. And they don’t bow down. They don’t even complain. In the deepest hopelessness the Cretan finds freedom” (416). His resolve to fight even in the face of hopelessness makes him the overman. In *The Gay Science* Nietzsche states:

True there are people who hear precisely the opposite command when great pain approaches: their expression is never prouder, more warlike, and happier than it is when a storm comes up; indeed, the pain itself gives them their greatest moments. This is the heroic type, the great *pain bringers* of humanity, those few or rare human beings who need the very same apology that pain itself needs – and truly, one should not deny it to them. (253)

Captain Michales creates his own values and is not afraid of death. He becomes the manifestation of individual defiance in the face of destiny and the epitome of supreme joy in overcoming human bondage in the battle for self-actualization.

Zorba can celebrate life, overcoming the tragedies both individual and social, with his primal instinct and indestructible will while ordinary people end their life in famine or fight. His madness is creative and inspiring and it enables him to understand life beyond the spiritual, the philosophical and the metaphysical domains and to redeem himself from existential angst. The boss who is ruled by reason is advised to go a little mad and achieve salvation through despair and dejection. Zorba is extraordinary and discovers that the most beautiful part of life on earth in eternal bliss amidst the encircling gloom of life. The boss concludes his study on Zorba: “Spiritual heights, which took us years of painful effort to attain, were attained by Zorba in one bound. And we said: ‘Zorba is a great soul!’ Or else he leapt beyond those heights, and then we said: ‘Zorba is mad!’” (330).

Andreas K. Poulakidas remarks: “It was George Zorba who unknowingly converted Nietzsche’s impressionistic art and expressionistic philosophy into flesh and blood, into a living reality, and not merely into a verbalization of incongruous utterances” (235). He continues:

For Zorba there is no right time for death, and when he was dying, he felt that ‘men like me ought to live a thousand years.’ Zorba’s fervour for life exceeds the zest for life of his Boss who has only second or third- hand knowledge of life and who

lives vicariously by reading about Dante's *Inferno* instead of going through hell himself. (238)

Zorba's actions have a direct link with Nietzschean ideals which form the root of his affirmation of life in the face of emptiness and his contempt for those systems based on empty hope and unfulfilled desires. Reed B. Merrill notes: "He is the natural born Overman who knows that there is then no true rational, orderly, permanent, or benign universe for us" (104). Driven by passion, Zorba plunges into the world of sensuality but his sensualism is the outcome of an ontology of senses beyond herd morality and is not degenerative in nature as it lies beyond good and evil. Merrill concludes his article: "Zorba's elevation, or madness, is the vision of Overman. His last letter to the philosopher is Zorba's final act; he dies in an obscure village in Serbia, and his final words are the words of Overman: "Men like me ought to live a thousand years"(113).

Peter Bien in his article *Zorba the Greek, Nietzsche, and the Perennial Greek Predicament* evaluates the character of Zorba:

Passionate irrational Zorba thinks only in terms of the present moment; he acts on instinct, not because he is an untamed savage, but because he possesses what Nietzsche terms "sheer exuberance, reckless health and power". Nor is his instinctive

frenzy a symptom of decay, disorder, over ripeness. On the contrary Zorba's impulsive excesses are meant to illustrate the Nietzschean dictum that in all truly productive men instinct is the strong affirmative force and reason, the dissuader and critic.

(156)

Zorba becomes the actualization of Dionysian will to power. He stands as an affirmation of life and views the world as endless source of wonder and pleasure. For Zorba earth is not the centre of the universe, but a small insignificant heavenly body indifferently tossed into the Milky Way. Man is a brief sojourner on this planet where it is meaningless to mourn but is wise to celebrate life in the Dionysian style.