

Chapter V

The Cross and the Crossroad

Will to power and desire act as forces of transformation of Jesus in *The Last Temptation* and Manolios in *Christ Recrucified* who typify the change over from man to overman and man to martyr. Despite the fact that they are born in ordinary working class family- Jesus as carpenter and Manolios as shepherd- they augment themselves by the exercise of their will to power and desire for their self actualisation. They become agents of change in their society by overturning the existing power relations. As textualization of new socio-political, moral and cultural values, Jesus and Manolios become overmen in the narrative to surprise the state and its power echelons.

In *The Last Temptation* Kazantzakis presents the evangelical Jesus under the guise of a poor cross maker and narrates how he lives in society controlled by an alien morality which ultimately becomes instrumental in his crucifixion. Kazantzakis makes a concentrated effort to rediscover the qualities of Primitive Christianity such as love, brotherhood, humility, and self renunciation. He points out that these qualities are apparently absent in contemporary church and he registers his protest by presenting a Jesus who lives outside preconceived notions of the ecclesiastical establishment about him. Kazantzakis remarks in the prologue of *The Last Temptation*:

This book was written because I wanted to offer a supreme model to the man who struggles; I wanted to show him that he must not fear pain, temptation or death - because all three can be conquered, all three have already been conquered. Christ suffered pain, and since then pain has been sanctified. Temptation fought until the very last moment to lead him astray, and Temptation was defeated. Christ died on the cross, and at that instant death was vanquished forever.

Every obstacle in his journey became a milestone, an occasion for further triumph. We have a model in front of us now, a model who blazes our trail and gives us strength.(xii)

Jesus and Manolios battle against alien rule and indigenous exploitation and create new political movements for the liberation of their countries. They are fictionalisation of will to power and desire which act as driving force in their enhancement as overman. Manolios protests against the injustice meted out by the local Cretans patronised by the church and the rich, on their fellow citizens who were rendered refugees by the Turkish invasion and who fights for the freedom of Crete from the colonial rule of Turkey. Jesus fights against the Romans who have been ruling Israel for centuries. He, like Manolios, encounters native resistance to his teaching of new values in his effort to end the colonial rule of Rome.

Jesus and Manolios endure continuous self-overcoming in their transformation from man to martyr and hero. Jesus forsakes worldliness for spirituality which solidifies his life with a political will to power to establish a New Jerusalem for the Jews. For Manolios, Christ is the symbol of ultimate sacrifice for the humanity and he attempts to pursue Christ through the trial of agony and renunciation which becomes a reality through his spiritual will to power. He abandons the material pleasures and sets out for spiritual happiness which is achievable only through the sacrifice of sensual life. Julian Young, Nietzschean scholar states in *Friedrich Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography*, “If you want to be happy, *Twilight* instructs, ‘Don’t be cowardly about your actions! Don’t abandon them afterwards! The pang [‘bite’ in German] of conscience is obscene” (501).

The Last Temptation carries strong sub-texts of political struggle and cannot be tied down to a singular religious narrative based on Christian mythology. A powerful undercurrent of the quest for freedom renders the novel socially oriented and politically motivated through the exercise of the will to power of the protagonist Jesus. The end result of the attempt of Jesus to fight against the Roman Empire will be his death by crucifixion but nothing can deter him from raising a voice of rebellion for independence which is the dream of the Jews who have been enslaved under different foreign rulers for

generations. The struggle of the Jews is conveyed through the rabbi who speaks:

My children, have faith in the people of Israel. Forward – all together. Do not be afraid. Rome is smoke. God will puff and blow her away! Remember the Maccabees, remember how they expelled the Greeks, the rulers of the world, how they put them to shame! In same way we shall expel the Romans, we shall put them to shame.(34)

Will to Power is the underlying force that provokes Jesus to realize his dream of setting the land free forever. The people of Israel have been waiting for their saviour to liberate them from the Roman rule which views Jews as insipid and disgusting. The Romans mercilessly crucified the Zealots for being the supporters of armed freedom struggle, to terrorise prospective rebels and it succeeds to a great extent in arresting the spreading waves of protest against the Roman Empire. Many youth lose their lives in the selfless service for their tribe, “One night Herod the aged king of Judea – a wicked damnable traitor – had smeared forty adolescents with tar and ignited them as torches because they pulled down the golden eagle he had fastened to the previously unsoiled lintel of the Temple” (35). Jesus too throws himself into the mission of leading the people in the pursuit of freedom. Morton P. Levitt comments in *The Modernist Kazantzakis and The Last Temptation of Christ*:

It is a dangerous book - dangerous to those accustomed to easy belief in a cardboard Messiah, dangerous to those who prefer disbelief. For Kazantzakis' heroes has all the life and conviction that we associate with great heroes of mythology, and -- like him or not, Christian or not -- we may find ourselves compelled to believe in a man who strives for godhead while remaining a man, a man whom any of us, even in this century, might emulate. (105)

Despite being beleaguered by uncompromising hostilities, Jesus and Manolios remain steadfast as they know that the change in the mindset of the people is possible through the supreme sacrifice a man can carry out -- the sacrifice of one's own life. They become heroes through their martyrdom which shakes the cultural and political ethos of the time.

Manolios fights against his own country men who are callous to the miseries of refugees of their own country. His assertion of equal rights and privileges to all individuals to live on the earth in peace and prosperity is based on his principle that God created all without discrimination. He possesses will to power and Desire to fulfil his task and relies on his spirituality to execute it. The spiritual will to power is the driving force behind Manolios' challenge to the prevailing religious diktats of the time and the constructs of culture and morality.

Jesus who is a carpenter by profession, makes wooden crosses for the Romans with which they crucify the Zealots who are the freedom fighters in Israel. A sense of guilt and the desire to liberate his country from tyranny transforms him and he resolves to quit his work and embrace the noble path of suffering and sacrifice. The Zealot with “his hair untouched by shears, his lips by wine his body by women”(35) inspires him: “This rebel would but toss his head, and men, slaves, horses, towers – all the accursed levels above him-would come tumbling down” (35). The life of a carpenter and a label of the cross maker stifle him and he follows the path of the Zealot. He discards his humble life for a life changing mission spurred by will to power. The freedom of Israel becomes his motivation like the Zealot who casts an invincible power on Jesus:

For years after that he roamed the mountains, fighting to liberate the holy soil which God had presented to Israel. “We have only one master – Adonai” he used to proclaim. Do not pay poll – tax to the earthly magistrates, do not suffer their eagle shaped idols to soil God’s Temple, do not slaughter oxen and sheep as sacrifices for the tyrant emperor! There is one God, our God; there is one people, the people of Israel; there is but one fruit on the entire tree of earth- the Messiah.” (36)

Jesus undergoes spiritual and political transformation through the monastic life in the desert and shows the strength of character to shatter the old laws and create new ones. The freedom Jesus promises could be regarded as more valuable than mere political independence. Being a benign prophet who is conspicuously different from wild and violent prophets of yore, Jesus appeals to the people as cheerful and friendly.

Jesus realises the predicament of his people under the Romans who destroy Jewish culture and civilization. “God of Israel, God of Israel, Adonai, how long?” (2) is the tormenting question which motivates his mind and body to renounce worldly life and to fight for the new Jerusalem. His interaction with Pilate justifies it:

Jesus raised his arm and took his leave. But as he was crossing the threshold, Pilate called him teasingly, “Hey, Messiah, what is this fearful news I hear you bring the world?”

“Fire,” Jesus replied, again tranquilly, “fire, to cleanse the earth.”

“Of Romans?”

“No, of unbelievers. Of the unjust, the dishonourable, the satiated.”

“And then.....?”

“And then on the scorched, purified earth, the new Jerusalem shall be built.”

“And who is going to build the new Jerusalem?”

“I am”. (444)

Manolios was an orphan brought up in monastery and George Patriarcheas adopted him as his own child and put him in charge of his sheep in the mountain. Pope Grigoris, the priest of the local church selected him to act as Christ in the passion play for the Easter celebrations. Manolios accepted his role and began preparing his mind and body to enact Christ. Manolios has an inclination to spirituality and a strong desire for martyrdom which he developed in his childhood by reading the lives of saints at the monastery where he grew up. While he has been in the monastery, his Superior Father Manasse told him about the legend of martyrs which inspired him to follow the martyrs and saints and enter paradise as a martyr with the crown of thorns, the cross and the five nails.

His selection to impersonate Christ for the Passion play rekindles his desire for spiritual sublimation. His mind and body are to follow Christ who is the symbol of love and sacrifice. Christ sacrificed his life for the mankind and brought a paradigm shift in human consciousness. He conceives Christ as a saviour and a leader who takes part in the struggle against oppression and sacrifice his life and his Christ is one who fights for the freedom of the poor.

Manolios creates his own concepts of life and afterlife. Frederick William Dillistone remarks:

A life here is intimately related to the natural order – to the plane- tree and the falling rain and the delicious lemon blossoms and the taste of coffee and the springing grass. Man must live with the earth, wait with it, die with it, rise again with it. There is no separation between natural and the spiritual, between the temporal and the eternal. All belong to the one living Divine organism which is indestructible. (76)

Manolios and Jesus relinquish worldly pleasures and women, children and family in their mission of self actualization. Manolios renounces his betrothed Lenio and family comforts besides the physical temptations of the widow Katrina. The change in him is so evident that his friend Michel comments: “I believe he is getting a swelled head because they’ve made him Christ” (32). The endless pain and selfless sacrifice which made Christ, seems inaccessible to Manolios initially, but he prepares for it by the exercise his supreme will to power.

Jesus denounces his desire for women and the pleasures of youth so that he can fulfil the task of freeing his motherland. His feeling that “It’s my fault if Israel still groans under the yoke” (11) reinforces his desire to raise an

army of people to fight the oppressive foreign rule and it also strengthens his will to sacrifice his own life to accomplish the mission he intends to undertake.

Jesus forgoes Mary Magdalene who had loved him and shared intimate moments with him. Though he finds it hard to dismiss the prospect of a happy married life with Mary Magdalene, he resolves to carry the cross of struggle for the deliverance of mankind. Domestic life will impede his mission. He does not believe that salvation comes through family life and that man is born to create the next generation. Bien in his translator's note in *The Last Temptation* comments on Kazantzakis' portrayal of Jesus:

He saw Jesus, like Odysseus, as engaged in this struggle, and as a prototype of the free man. In *The Last Temptation* Christ is a superman, one who by force of will achieve a victory over matter, or in other words, is able, because of his allegiance to the life force within him, to transmute matter into spirit. But this overall victory is really a succession of particular triumphs as he frees himself from various forms of bondage – family, bodily pleasure, the state, fear of death.(586)

Jesus, who is provoked by the indomitable desire to liberate Israel, knows that he is weak and easily tempted by worldly pleasures. His reflection

that “I can’t! I’m illiterate, an idler, afraid of everything. I love good food, wine, laughter. I want to marry, to have children. Leave me alone!” (26) discloses his initial reluctance to commence his political movement for liberation. His mother’s admonition to eat, work and get married disorients him, but he manages to overcome all hurdles to fulfil his destiny. His confession to the rabbi, his maternal uncle Simon, reveals his mind. In spite of being driven by the physical pleasures he experienced with Mary Magdalene, he is strongly attracted by the invisible political power vested with the king of the people and he is prepared to renounce all material comforts for the sake of becoming the king of the Jews. In his childhood he repeatedly cried to God to make him God, even as he felt it impudent. He speaks to the rabbi:

And one day I was holding a large bunch of grapes in my arms and a gipsy woman passed by. She came over to me, squatted, and took my hand. ‘Give me the grapes’, she said, ‘and I’ll tell you your fortune.’ I gave them to her. She bent over and looked at my palm. ‘O! O! She cried, ‘I see crosses – crosses and stars...’ Then she laughed. ‘You’ll become king of the Jews!’ she said, and went away. (162)

Jesus tells Uncle Simon that “ever since then, I haven’t been in my right mind (162)” and he feels his new found realisation taking absolute control of him. The rabbi encourages him to go ahead with his plan because

the old man recognises the agitation in the mind of the young man. He realises the greatness of Jesus, “You’re not the son of the Carpenter, you’re the son of King David! You are not a man, you are the Son of man whom Daniel prophesied. And still more: The Son of God! And still more: God” (165). Jesus abjures the common to achieve the most uncommon personal destiny as the saviour of the people of Israel. God has invested everything with levels of meaning, hidden and manifest. The individual through his/her will to power can alone comprehend the hidden meaning and thereby elevate oneself to an overman. Kazantzakis states in the prologue of *The Last Temptation*: “Every moment of Christ’s life is a conflict and victory. He conquered the invincible enchantment of simple human pleasures; he conquered temptation, continually transubstantiated flesh into spirit, and ascended. Reaching the summit of Golgotha, he mounted the Cross” (xi).

Like Jesus who is stirred by the misrule of the imperial Rome, Manolios tries to address the problem of the famished refugees in his village. He attempts to reinterpret Christian values and his insistence on helping them generates tension and disorder in the village. His proposal to support the refugees invites the wrath of pope Gregoris and other notables of the village who consider them as carriers of pestilence and misfortune. Manolios registers his protest and works against the establishment on the strength of his spiritual will and begins to read Gospels in the Bible. The impact of the reading can be

recounted: “The heart of Manolios was overflowing with love, tenderness, happiness. He could not endure it, he must share with others. In his impatient breast there arose a powerful longing to go and carry the good word to the stones, to the sheep, to men” (209).

As a Nietzschean overman Jesus considers all forms of lives as unique and divine and inculcates a warm feeling for all flora and fauna, despite his human shortcomings, making him able to converse with even a butterfly and address it as his sister. The butterfly which struggles to fly to its world of freedom reminds him of universal love, “But as he opened his mouth to cry out, his eye caught sight of the butterfly that was struggling to unfold its wings. He bent over, lifted it up gently and placed it high above the ground on a leaf of a fig tree, where the sun began to beat down upon it. ‘My sister, my sister’, he murmured, and he looked at it with compassion” (73).

Jesus, in his evolution as overman sets out for the monastery in the desert where he is taken by the abbot as someone with extraordinary power to perform miracles like a Messiah. Israel is involved in the great task of freeing itself from the foreign rule and Jesus takes it as his responsibility to carry on the struggle for freedom ever since the crucifixion of the Zealot on Mount Golgotha. He transforms himself into the overman after his return from the monastery in the desert.

It is the abbot of the monastery in desert who, on verge of his death, recognises Jesus as a liberator and the Son of Man. With his foreknowledge he makes it known to his disciples that they should believe in and trust the new liberator and follow him for the freedom of Israel. God has delivered his promise to send a deliverer and end their miseries. He says:

Yes, friars, the people of Israel! This is the great terrible moment which we are now passing through. The yearning for freedom has grown ferocious, the wings are beating wildly; the liberator is coming! Yes, friars, the liberator is coming, because . . . Wait – this angel of freedom: what do you think he’s made of? Of God’s condescension and charity? Of his love? his justice? No, this angel is made of patience, obstinacy and struggle of mankind! (115)

Jesus is misunderstood initially and his intentions appear mala fide due to his antecedents as cross maker who made crosses to crucify the Zealots. Renunciation of his hereditary profession and his political volte - face to move against the Roman Empire did not seem to be digestible to the people who know him. Judas who is a blacksmith by profession and has also devoted his life to the freedom of his motherland, tries to kill Jesus at the monastery for his seditious act of being a cross maker. The son of Mary is treated as a spy by the overzealous Jews who are reluctant to acknowledge the merit of Jesus and his

prophecy of liberation in the immediate future. But Judas is taken aback to see a halo of light around Jesus as he bows his head to be killed, and sees in Jesus a saviour who can raise the people from the slumber of subjugation. In his conversation with Philip, Judas discloses his mind:

Why didn't you open your mouth? Why are you afraid of him?
Can you still be afraid when you know what is happening, who
is coming, where are we headed? Or maybe you haven't got
wind of it yet. Well, poor devil, the time is near, the king of the
Jews is approaching in all his glory – and woe be to cowards!
(125)

John who becomes a disciple tells Mary, the mother of Jesus that “A holy glimmer runs around your son's entire face” (189). Jesus proves his will to power when he magisterially restrains Barabbas from killing Mary Magdalene, “Let him among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone” (198). Barabbas who slaps Jesus on his cheek is again surprised when Jesus shows him the other cheek and Judas is moved by the supreme gesture. Jesus proves that he is not an ordinary human being but an overman who can make wonders. Judas reacts to the incident: “But when he saw Jesus offer the other cheek, without anger and with a superb inhuman sweetness, he became frightened. ‘What is this man?’ he shouted to himself. This – this offering of the other cheek: only an angel could do that, only an angel – or a dog...” (200).

Jesus proves that he is more than an angel and not a submissive dog though he suffers torture because he is an overman: “When I say ‘I,’” Jesus answered, “I do not speak of this body – which is dust; I do not speak of the son of Mary – he too is dust, with just a tiny spark of fire. ‘I’ from my mouth, rabbi, means God” (423).

The aggressive revaluation of values occurs in his post- monastic life to enable him to carry out his principles and realise his purpose of life. His strategy of mobilising people by means of sermons studded with parables creates a new dimension to the fight for justice and freedom both political and spiritual. His notions of social order and religious morality are expressed in his interaction with the mass of people assembled to hear him:

While Jesus spoke, more and more of the soil- coloured people of the slums arrived. They had heard of the appearance of the new prophet for the poor and had run. It was said that in one hand he held heavenly fire to burn up the rich, and in the other a pair of scales for portioning out their goods to the poor. He was a new Moses, the bringer of a new, juster, Law. The people stood and listened to him enthralled. It had come, it had come! The kingdom of the poor had come!(356)

That Jesus and Manolios are driven by Deleuzian desire and Nietzschean will to power and is substantiated by their willingness to accept suffering and torture. The prospect of death does not deter the two heroes from carrying on with their goals. Jesus courts arrest and the subsequent trial is a solid manifestation of his resurgent spirit as he rejects to yield to the imperial Rome. Pilate requests him to return to Galilee and stop the war against the Roman Emperor. Jesus not only rejects it, but declares that life is a war and that he will continue it until he accomplishes his task of building the New Jerusalem. He desires for the crucifixion and as an overman prepares for it physically and mentally

Like Jesus who proves to be an overman, Manolios rises above the common people through his attempt to sacrifice his life to save the village from the wrath of the Agha, the Muslim governor of Turkey who declares capital punishment against the Greeks for the gruesome murder of his pet companion Youssafaki. Manolios' transformation from the status of simple shepherd to the saviour of the village amazes everyone. He is ecstatic: "The joy of getting up in the morning after taking a grave decision. Manolios went down the mountain lightly like an angel. He was not touching the ground; it was suddenly as if archangels deployed their wings and helped him to fly from rock to rock. He became a cloud, a light wind was driving him" (215).

Manolios resolution to plead guilty of the murder of Yussafaki to save his fellow Christians reveals his will to power to die for a noble cause. He feels the sense of jousaance triggered by pure desire as he takes responsibility of the murder of Yussafaki with the possibility of being hanged to death. His brave act obviously moves the society and the Agha is convinced that Manolios is innocent but he courts death as a martyr to save the Greek. The notables of the village shiver in fear and weep like children in their condemned cell, but Manolios overcomes the fear of pain and death like an overman. His sacrifice inspires the villagers and Michelis declares it:

Manolios, from today, from the moment I saw you come out through the Agha's doorway with your hands tied behind your back and walk calmly, serenely, out to be hanged to save the village, I felt there was about you a new air, a strange brightness; it was as if you'd grown taller, as if you'd got thinner, as if you'd become flame. From this instant I took a decision: wherever you go, I will follow you. Wherever you lead me, I will go. Whatever you tell me, I will do. (254)

His willingness to struggle and suffer alone is heroic because he is guided by his own principles. The argument that, "Every clod of earth is also a Holy Sepulchre" (255) and God has placed him in Lycovrissi and on the mountain where the refugees suffer to prolong their lives is a new

interpretation of God. He refuses to believe that God is with the rich and that poverty is a punishment from God. He reads the Bible with new vigour and gathers fresh meanings to strengthen his will. The impact of the re-reading of the Bible is amazing:

Each word seemed to him like a shell which he must crack to get the almond. But gradually with the aid of time, and above all of love, the shell of words became less hard, it slowly came upon under his burning breath. Suddenly all seemed clear to him; Christ became a warm and human body, coming down upon the earth for men of simple heart; and from now onwards Manolios followed Christ without any effort, step by step behind Him, from His birth all through His life. (266)

The Gospel is his constant companion and he forgets about others around him so as to have the feeling that Christ is his only source of strength. He endorses that one who is not afraid of death will have the power to encounter the dangers of life and will be ready to sacrifice his life. Pope Gregoris' statement: "Let him die to save us, afterwards we'll make an icon to him, we'll light a candle for him and discover that he's a saint (232)" reflects his approval of Manolios' strength of mind. The villagers, who remember how he dared to give his life to save them, regard him with honour and respect his devoutness. He presents Christ in human attributes:

But t'other day, sitting in front of my sheepfold at the hour when the sun sets, Christ came and sat beside me on the bench, simply and quietly, like a neighbour would. He was carrying an empty sack and, giving sigh, he let it fall to the ground. His feet were covered with dust. The four wounds the nail had made on Him were open; He was bleeding. (279)

Nietzschean overman is engaged in the revaluation of values and Jesus and Manolios create new values as they transcend the old ones. Both question the power centres who are the creators and guardian of culture and morality and they lead the people to break out of orthodoxy. They strive to establish their own vision and in due course of action, prove themselves worthy of the task of political and religious revolution. Nietzsche in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* defines the overman who is a creator:

Behold the good and the just! Whom do they hate most? Him who smashes their tables of values, the breaker, the law breaker – but he is the creator.

Behold the faithful of all faiths! Whom do they hate the most? Him who smashes their tables of values, the breaker, the law breaker – but he is the creator. (51-52)

Jesus creates new a consciousness among the common men through his parables to make them digest his fresh ideology built on revaluation of values to guide them towards the struggle for freedom. He reveals a new construct of God different from the traditional:

“Love one another! Love one another!” he repeated in a persistent, imploring voice. “God is love! I too used to think him savage, I too used to think that at his touch mountain fumed, men died. I hid in the monastery to escape; I fell on my face and waited. Now he will come, I said to myself, now he’ll fall on me like a thunderbolt. And one morning he did come, he blew over me like a cool breeze and said: ‘arise my child’... and I arose, I came: here I am.” (210)

The change brought about by Jesus is such that “the people listened to him, and the clay within them, turned to wings” (220) and they follow his teaching that the heaven and earth are one. His version of life after death through the story of the rich man and Lazarus – the rich burning forever in eternal fire in hell while the poor enjoying themselves in heaven with God – deconstructs the values established by the dominant section of the society. That the freedom of land is possible through the deliverance of the soul of the people becomes his logic and to carry it out he touches their heart with words and deeds of a man riding on his will to power. Jesus defies the law which he

feels is draconian and anachronistic and is warned by the village chief, Nathanael: “‘You are going contrary to the Law, son of Mary,’ he screeched. /‘The Law goes contrary to my heart,’ Jesus calmly replied” (247).

The exchange shows the political nature of the confrontation he develops with the state. His construct of the Messiah is entirely his own vis-a-vis the socio political zeitgeist, but is indigestible to state hegemony which keeps the mass under its subjugation. His dialogue with Judas clarifies his notion of the Messiah:

“The Messiah is coming”, Jesus said in a deep voice. “You know very well Judas, my brother, whether or not we are going in the right direction to find him. If we do a good or a noble deed, if we pronounce a kind word, the Messiah quickens his pace and approaches. If we are dishonest, evil, afraid of everything, the Messiah turns his back on us and moves further away. The Messiah is a Jerusalem in motion, brothers. Jerusalem is in a hurry, and so are we. Let’s move fast and find her! Have faith in God and in the immortal spirit of man”. (258)

Jesus concludes that the Messiah means the entire mass of people and not one individual as prophesied by the prophets. The deliverance of the land depends on people themselves who should take up arms for freedom. He

exhorts his disciples to be courageous to wage a war for the deliverance of all and reminds them that the way ahead is very difficult. The disciples, who are illiterate day labourers, are scared but repose their trust on their teacher who can lead them to their final destination and glory, mount their ancestral throne at Jerusalem and govern themselves where they can create a new earth and a new sky free from the shackles of Roman rule.

Manolios redefines Christ to justify his path of self sacrifice which is identical to the act of the revaluation of values in the creation of the overman. He defies the idea that morality is obedience to customs and sets up his own sense of morality. Since revaluation of values is the manifestation of will to power, he distances himself from the textual explication of Christ which is pedestrian and hence fit for the ordinary folks. Julian Young in *Friedrich Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography* explicates revaluation of values:

Moreover, since values are just the ‘voice of [either an individual’s or] a people’s will to power’ – less poetically, ‘the condition of preservation and growth with respect to complex structures of relative permanence of life within becoming – it follows that morals are just, as it were, an instruction manual for the ‘preservation and growth’ of either individual or a community. The new understanding of what world is, the new

ontology, thus provides a new meaning of life and demands of us a new morality; a 'revaluation of all values.' (539)

Manolios describes his views on Christ:

Christ is everywhere, He wanders round our village, knocks at our door, stops in front of our heart to ask for alms. He is poor, famished, roofless, Christ is in front of this village where people like the Agha, Ladas, pope Gregoris live and prosper. He is poor and he has children who are hungry. He begs, He knocks at the door, He knocks at hearts and He is chased away from door to door, from heart to heart. (254)

Manolios as Nietzschean overman subverts the prevailing construct of heaven and hell and postulates that the God is among the people who are in misery. Such subversion of the table of values shatters the established dichotomy of good and evil, right and wrong and God and devil. Manolios defines God as one who prefers actions and hates those who remain quiet by weeping and reading stories of crucifixion before going to bed. It is not love of God but a shame. True love of God is to rise up and save the hungry and the poor. Christ walks barefoot in the world among the downtrodden in search of charity and the true Christians should emulate Christ through charity and mercy. But people follow Christ in search of the other world to enjoy their life

further. Manolios invites the reprisal of the notables who cannot adjust to the revolutionary ideology of God's love.

He conceives Christ as different from the carved figure in wood, but merciful to be a resolute warrior. His God will not like men who remain idle to see people fall and die of hunger and Christ will lead the struggle to end poverty and bring prosperity. Manolios is accused of being an Antichrist for interpreting Christ as symbolizing love and charity. Questioning of ethics and morality is dangerous in orthodox society and whoever dares to upset the table of values will be labelled as social rebel. Pope Gregoris who is the spiritual leader of the people denounces Manolios:

This man is dangerous. It is essential you should drive him out, he should be driven out of the village, to stop him contaminating us! It's he who's turned your son's head. With his intrigues he's managing to appear important, and he'll have the lot of us. Let him get out! That's no shepherd, that's no sheep, that's a wolf! (305)

The refugees under the leadership of Manolios fight for their food and shelter and take possession of the farms and houses lawfully obtained. Like Christ the leader, Manolios leads the fight against pope Gregoris who acts like a devil to mislead the people against their fellow countrymen. Manolios

defeats the enemies and Pope Gregoris' accusation that Manolios is a Bolshevik frightens the Agha who sends for him. The dialogue between Manolios and Panayotaros, Agha's messenger ratifies Manolios' political and spiritual will to power:

I'm going to see the Agha, my poor Panayotaros; don't get exited; I heard he was looking for me, I'm going to give myself up."

Panayotaros stared at him, open-mouthed.

"Are n't you afraid? Are n't you afraid of the Agha, of pope Grigoris , of the village? Might you be devil in person?

"The man who's not afraid of death isn't afraid of anyone, Panayotaros ; there's my secret. let's go!"(455).

His desire for death is made obvious in his argument with the Agha who knows that Manolios is altruistic and not a self serving warlord. Manolios' political will to power gets all the more strong when he declares revolution against tyranny. Universal love and brotherhood is his motto and in their pursuit he is fearless and unconquerable. He knows that the means to his end is perilous and his life will be endangered, but his argument is convincing: "I should like Agha, to proclaim revolution over the whole earth. To rouse all men, white, black, yellow; to form an immense all-powerful army and enter

into the great rotten towns, into the shameless palaces, into the mosques of Constantinople, and set fire to them!”(460).

His urge to fight will end in either liberty or his death, but without the war, the rights of man cannot be established and a new state cannot emerge. Manolios proves himself to be a hero fighting for freedom and equality. His murder by his own countrymen makes him all the more heroic since he is terribly misunderstood even as he is fighting for the freedom of his country from the Turkish oppressors. Like Captain Michales in *Freedom and Death* Manolios’ life is a struggle for freedom or death and a means of self actualization.

Manolios strives to attain the goal of his life through an affirmation of life and he feels light and gay when he meets the barrage of threats on his life. His passion for love and care of the poor attracts large groups of people who are transformed to get involved in the great mission of socio-political reformation. Pope Gregoris vows to kill Manolios for turning the people against the established social norms. His remark, “The Agha didn’t hang him; I shall. He plays the saint, martyr and hero before us and he’s sold himself to the Muscovite, - the traitor, the renegade, and the Bolshevik”(369) exposes the strategy of the enemies of love and brotherhood. The death looming large over him gives ‘the superhuman joy’ (378) he is eagerly waiting for because he

tells pope Fotis, “I seek Him in violent death; you make me see Him in the humble struggle of everyday”(381).

Christ Recrucified is a political novel which deals with perennial human problem of poverty and exploitation in the name of God, morality and socio-economic differences. Manolios is convinced that there is no resurrection without crucifixion because taking away is a necessary prerequisite to the act of giving. The novel is more political than metaphysical as it posits that submission and resignation are not the only noble virtues, but fighting for one’s own right too should be regarded as one. To the orthodox readers, who cannot digest that Christ is a warrior fighting for charity and love the novel could be blasphemous but the rebel Christ invokes the radical demand of social equity and human dignity. Manolios is a metaphor of social resurgence and political reformation. Bien notes in *Politics of Spirit*:

Manolios, although illustrating a certain side of Kazantzakis’s metaphysical, religious, and political views, is at the same time a convincing person in his own right, exemplifying the ordinary Greek peasant thrust by circumstances into greatness, like so many of his kind during the period 1940- 1948. In him, Kazantzakis is particularly successful in fusing the personal and the communal. Manolios works out his own salvation, yet his action and death affect the entire community. (2: 304)

Christ Recrucified deals with the Greek civil war of 1948 which was a political act. Manolios spells out the panacea for social evils through a reevaluation of the existing socio-political and religious values like worship of God, respect for family, obedience to the law, love of fatherland and respect for private property. The political will to power that triggers Manolios to transform his society is the outcome of his desire for self actualization which constitutes the essence of his life.

Manolios represents the political vision of the author which is presented through a religious interpretation of the life of Christ; the biblical setting being a facade to present a critique of the social undercurrents of the time. For Manolios saving God means saving the fellow beings and he believes that God lives in everybody and the deliverance of God depends on the deliverance of man himself. The liberation of humanity in turn is dependent on political reorientation where individual voices are made free and social disparity rooted out. Manolios is a freedom fighter in a country ruined by unrest and instability because of the prolonged civil war and foreign invasion. Bien states in *Politics of Spirit*:

Christ Recrucified is of course set further south, in Anatolia, but the dates of the real and fictive events are, I believe, identical, as I shall attempt to demonstrate later. Although Kazantzakis had no personal experience of the persecutions in

Anatolia, we can conjecture that, during the time he was preparing for and then executing the Caucasus repatriation, he was particularly attentive to what was happening around Smyrna and was able, in 1948, to transfer his actual experience of the Caucasus, and of the refugees' settlement in Macedonia and Thrace, to the other location, choosing a historical period, issues, and human problems that had been particularly meaningful in his own life.(2:306)

Manolios personifies a remedy for a decadent age based on moral, physical and spiritual vigour. The political emancipation is born of the confluence of these three factors and political will to power is the catalyst to realise the god. Manolios as a responsible individual possesses the will to power to hasten the transition to a new stage of civilization. He maintains his patriotic fervour with a dignified acceptance of suffering and his interaction with the Agha exemplifies his idea of nationalism and patriotism. The foreign rule is the cause of social inequity and unrest and the hapless refugees are people displaced by foreign invasions. He fights for the freedom of Greece from Turkey and the reinstatement of self-government where all citizens will live in freedom and happiness. Self sacrifice and death are expected in the war and Manolios anticipates his death. Morton P. Levitt notes: "From the beginning, even before he is cast as Christ, Manolios has a feeling for

martyrdom. When he is named for the role, ‘his throat was tight, he could not speak. The thing to which he had aspired from his tenderest childhood... behold, now God was granting it to him.’”(40)

The Last Temptation projects the theme of freedom as the most essential aspect of human life without which there is no emancipation of the soul. Judas’ words, “What is the life of man? What is it worth? Nothing, if it is n’t free. We’re fighting for freedom, I tell you. Join us,” (127) demonstrate the importance of freedom in human life. Jesus transforms himself into the torch bearer of the much awaited self determination to the people of Israel. Jesus’ comprehension that the only way to become great is to work for a great purpose with a readiness to sacrifice life is to be understood alongside with his understanding that a humble birth does not affect one’s resolve to achieve a noble cause.

Jesus as a political leader starts his movement by attracting disciples from among the fishermen, shepherds, peasants, vendors and labourers. Jacob’s remarks that “Jesus’ face shines like prophet’s Elijah’s” (131) reaffirms the faith of common folks in Jesus’ leadership to guide them to the heaven of freedom.

The law enforcers are infuriated by the mass mobilisation under Jesus who instructs the people to prepare themselves for the war: “The son of the

carpenter has come to put his ideas into the heads of the poor, to turn the established order of the world upside – down. Didn't he say he was bringing a new Law? Death ! Death!"(357). The allegation that he has become an enemy of the state, does not deter him, instead it strengthens his soul and body for the rebellion. He forsakes his familial feelings and considers himself the Son of Man and not the Son of Mary, once his mind has been obsessed with salvation through political action.

Rufus, the Roman Centurion warns Jesus, citing the crucifixion of the Zealots, and advises him to stop mobilising the Jews to fight against Rome. For Rufus, Jesus is still the son of a carpenter who makes cross for crucifixion of the Zealots and not the one capable of deposing an imperial state: "Son of the Carpenter," he said, "you have helped crucify others, take care you don't get crucified yourself. Do not touch the people, do not put ideas into their heads. My hand is heavy and Rome is immortal" (370). But the reaction from Jesus exudes confidence. "Jesus smiled. He knew very well that Rome was not immortal, but he did not speak" (370).

Jesus promises to the people that he will build a New Jerusalem for the downtrodden and "Once more today he had spoken and waved the flames over the heads of the people"(410). His war cry "Gird yourself well, comrade. Say good-bye to bread, joy and security. We are going to war" (418) propels the

mass who declare their allegiance to Jesus unmindful of the impending punishment by Rome.

The new nation building is to commence from the Temple of Jerusalem and Jesus visits it every day and stands on the blood sprinkled pavements to conceive the strategy to execute his plan:

It was two months since Jesus' arrival from Capernaum. Each day he went and stood in front of the Temple and looked at it; each day he seemed to see it for the first time. It was as though each morning he expected to find it crumbled to the ground and to be able to trample over it from end to end. He had no desire to see it any longer, nor did he fear it. In his heart it had already been destroyed. (422)

The destruction of the Jerusalem Temple is unavoidable for the creation of new religious order and the New Jerusalem. He maintains that creation involves destruction and destruction engenders creation and hence the present world should be destroyed so that a new world can be built. His brooding aside: "The old Law must be torn down, and it is I who shall tear it down. A new Law must be engraved on the tables of the heart, and it is I who shall engrave it. I shall widen the Law to make it contain friends and enemies, Jews and idolaters: the Ten Commandments will burst into bloom! That is

why I have come here to Jerusalem (424)” reaffirms his political will to power to create a new world order.

Struggle against natural order and social order may seem futile, but man must continue to fight. Manolios knows that the struggle humanises man and raises him above his own limitations where the will to power acts as a catalyst. Though a humble shepherd, he sets out for a revolution to change the rotten system. His intention is not just reformation but abolition of the corrupt social order altogether. Levitt mentions the character of Manolios: “Surely, he agrees, the system is rotten, a self perpetuating cause of injustice, divider of men into classes and betrayer of human potential. It cannot be reformed; it must be destroyed. So he calls for a Biblical fire to burn out the roots of the old and make possible a new start for men” (54).

Manolios reflects the Cretan glorification of man and his distrust of a system that acts to restrain individual impulse. He shows men the courage to fight injustice, religious and social, irrespective of birth and social position. The political will to power motivated by pure desire is the driving force in every individual to struggle but it will have tremendous impact if it motivates the mass to continue fight for freedom. Levitt states:

Manolios’ sacrifice has no practical effect – it does not save the refugees, and it may even help to defeat them – but it makes

possible, nonetheless his own salvation. He is saved not in the traditional Christian sense of eternal reward, but in the more immediate sense of his personal freedom, because he has achieved at last the awareness of his own identity. In following the path of Christ, the shepherd has for the first time lived truly close to nature; he has learned not to scorn his body but to honour his soul; he has been moved by injustice, and he moved to correct it. His act may be futile, even egocentric, but it is the act of a freeman, asserting his will for the time in his life. (55)

The Last Temptation projects the Nietzschean philosophy that the struggle for freedom shall be fruitful provided it is fought without fear and hope. The life of a rebel who fights against the state will be rife with pain and suffering, and will have a gruesome death at the end which will be a deterrent for prospective fighters. Jesus knows that the road he has taken is a perilous one but ascends to the stature of an overman in his self actualisation. His is a heroic struggle in that his struggle does not end with an immediate triumph, but continues to inspire humanity down the ages

The struggle between the have and have not, between the honest and dishonest, between Christ and Anti-Christ is universal. In the conflict between good and evil, Christ the virtuous is destined to die and Manolios has the prognosis that he will be killed. Death does not scare him but inspires him to

continue his life for the glorious future of the mankind. Like the Nietzschean overman he creates a new civilization through his attempt to dismantle the corrupt and biased social order for a better world. Dillistone substantiates: “Yet in the story Manolios takes upon himself the burden of the starving followers of pope Fotis and proposes a definite programme of social revolution to his own compatriots of Lycovrissi. It is this which arouses the implacable hatred of pope Grigoris and the village elders and leads finally to death”(86).

Manolios epitomizes the Nietzschean philosophy of the overman and echoes his strong anti-church pronouncements. The corruption of values of the early Christianity by the organised church in the modern age is brought out through the words and acts of Manolios. His criticism of Christ and the church is constructive and to gauge it, one must extricate oneself from the narrow confines of nationalism and religion. Manolios fights against the domineering church to introduce a new foundation of religion based on peace and love where Christ is reborn to preach a new gospel of love and peace through the revaluation of values. Kazantzakis portrays Manolios as driven by pure desire to overhaul the inhuman tradition and culture of the modern age. Lewis A. Richards remarks in *Christianity and Kazantzakis*:

It is against such domineering church and autocratic parental authority that Kazantzakis revolted. Tradition – public and

private – exercised by patriarchal and inflexible people, along with his own nature (the third “key” in understanding Kazantzakis’ works) moulded Kazantzakis’ character and led him to asceticism. The author’s mind, brilliant as it was, became excited, challenged, and alienated by the deleterious influence of dogmatism and brutal force. His nature became warped under stagnant and restrictive circumstances, to the extent that he had only to acquiesce to the friendly call of asceticism in order to refuse the pleasures which the flesh offered. (51)

The will to power of Manolios is spiritual initially but when he feels Christ is an armed warrior, he mobilizes the refugees to fight for their fundamental rights. The social reformation and the establishment of new society are materialised through his will to power and desire. Though the final victory is elusive for Manolios and his men, he is able to shock the representatives of institutional organized church. He succeeds in his effort to rediscover and reassert the all important qualities of the early Christianity such as love, brotherhood, humility, and self – renunciation. But he pays with his life to actualise his desires and becomes a hero and martyr through his will to power. Richards states:

Thus positive, constructive, and glorious is the end of most Kazantzakis heroes. Heroism demands a transcendence of our common place human thought and behaviour. Kazantzakis' heroes are not human but superhuman, yet they are not nihilistic. They possess most of the qualities of positive humanism. They are selfless, visionary, altruistic, humane and good. (55)

Kazantzakis represents Jesus as the icon of new values in an era marked by despair and conflicts and by disintegration in socio-political and religious spaces. The transformation of Jesus from the son of a carpenter to the Messiah of the people of Israel, inspires the masses to struggle for freedom, faith and political independence. Establishment of a new state is an arduous task, but with will to power it is achievable and Jesus remains one great example.

The narratives of *The Last Temptation* and *Christ Recrucified*, rich with the meta-communism that Kazantzakis believed, would alter society progressively. In *Creative Destruction* Lewis Owens remarks:

Following on from Bien's comments, but also developing them somewhat, I suggest that Kazantzakis' meta-communism desires the creation of a new inward, creative, authentic

spirituality that emerges from the ashes of the destructive fire of communism; it is thus a forward development issuing forth from the workings of a dialectic of destruction and creation.(16)

Creation of new world is the dominant motive of a man of will to power by ousting the prevailing hegemonic forces and other power centres. The battle that Jesus and Manolios wage, with the support of the downtrodden of the society against the oppressive forces, demands imperishable strength of character. Owens continues: “Kazantzakis’ Christ in *The Last Temptation* seeks “wholeness” or psychic totality by assimilating opposite forces such as light and darkness, male and female into a coincidence of opposites; only then he can assume the role of God” (45).

Jesus the Galilean is a metaphor of national pride, he is unyielding, independent and resentful of foreign domination and the violation of fundamental rights and it is least surprising that he is found in the forefront of the resistance movement against the Romans. Jesus is presented as a champion of national liberty. Levitt suggests:

Kazantzakis, like the authors of Ecclesiastes and Job, questions the orthodox concept of punishment and reward, of justice meted out almost by rote, of a God who has no more free will

than His people. So Jesus, like Job, rejects the narrow legalism of the Covenant and attempts to free both the Chosen People and their God. His life, like his parables, repudiates established views of man's place in the universe, of his role in society, even of individual worth; but his rebellion, too, grows from biblical roots, is itself an act of tradition.(67)

A man who fights for freedom will have to undergo unforeseen obstacles and challenges as he dismantles traditional. Jesus and Manolios attempt to unseat the orthodox values which serve the elite in the state and make the majority voiceless through the doctored interpretations of the good and evil. The transgression of the idea of good and evil is the primary step to achieve liberty from corruptive forces who make laws and rules to serve themselves. The political ramification of the crucifixion of Zealots is tangible in Israel and it motivates Jesus too to wage war against the Roman sovereignty. Jesus is the personification of the hope that a Davidic king will overrun the nation's enemies by military force and he translates that hope into a new agency of change.

The proud Israelites, who had been unsuccessfully striving for freedom, wait for the Messiah to deliver them from poverty and slavery. Levitt clarifies on the significance of Messiah for the Jews: "And so the people await the Messiah. At weddings, the guests greet bride and groom "expressing the

wish that they might give birth to a son who would rescue Israel from its slavery” (69). It is proved through the birth of Jesus that he is the Messiah sent by God to deliver the people of Israel.

In the novel will to power inspires Jesus from the moment he wishes to be God of his own destiny and life and to carry his cross to the mountain of Golgotha to be crucified and then be resurrected. It is by the exercise of will to power that Jesus saves Mary Magdalene from the inhuman assaulters and transforms a wretch Ananias to a human being besides performing innumerable wonders for the sick and the needy. His attempt to reorganise and reform the customs and practices of the state and the church is the outcome of the same. He resists all worldly temptations and strives ahead overcoming the call of his own body and the demands of the self. Lewitt remarks: “He resists the temptation of sex and power, of godhead too, and emerges from his ordeal in the desert weakened in body but confident in his true strength” (115). His resistance to the last temptation on the cross, a beautiful life with all carnal pleasures, testifies to an exercise of the essence of will to power. He escapes the last temptation and dies on the cross affirming the life he has chosen and rejecting the one he might have enjoyed.

Jesus establishes his own identity, defines his own destiny and takes it as his responsibility the redemption of the Jews and by extension both the earth and the people on it. He understands that all born in the world will have

a fair share of suffering which is unavoidable but turning the suffering into joy is possible only to overman. Levitt comments:

When Jesus determines to awake on the cross, when he wills the renewal of suffering, he is repudiating – like his predecessors—the fatalism of those who would accept a limited role for mankind and asserting his own worth and integrity. He moves at his death beyond even this, from the limited vision of his disciples and Paul to the peak of human needs and accomplishments, from local politics to universality. (124)

Jesus actualises the highest form of human existence through a continuous struggle which shapes the essence of his existence. Just as the essence of God is struggle, the purpose of man's life is relentless struggle for self actualisation. Man transforms himself into overman through the struggle which could end in death, but it gives real meaning to one's life. Richards comments in *Christianity in the Novels of Kazantzakis*: "Man can only think in human terms, yet he must struggle for struggle's sake; otherwise, life has no real purpose. As a consequence of this philosophy, the highest achievement of man is not that he may be free, but that he may be engaged in the fight for freedom" (55).

Manolios, like the other heroes of Kazantzakis, is involved in a continuous struggles for the accomplishment of the highest aim of his life. Man's life is great not when he is free from struggle but when he is persistently engaged in it. The character of Manolios is the fictionalisation of continuous conflict between man's will to freedom and the knowledge that total freedom is unrealizable. The desire for freedom leads to further desires hence desire remains unending which produces pain, but the pain is a motivation for more desires. John P. Anton observes: "Hence man is forced to consent to relative freedom while craving for the absolute persists without hope for relief" (62).

The death wish in Manolios is so strong that he wishes to die like Christ for the redemption of humanity. He accepts the swelling on his face as God's grace to prepare his body and soul for a spiritual life and the renunciation of earthly pleasures. He appears self-possessed at the prospect of being hanged to death and says that he is not scared of anything as he is not scared of death. The overman knows that death is not an end in itself but a road to eternal recurrence. Anton notes:

The essential condition of the tragic in Kazantzakis is the awareness of conflicts from which there can be no final scope. Once man is caught in the snares of cosmic tensions and is fully cognizant of his situation, he must reject both optimism and

pessimism, and then be ready to arm himself with defiance to face death itself. Like Captain Michalis who opts for “Freedom and Death”, Manolios in *Christ Recrucified* accepts death willingly – Manolios in the name of social ideal, Michalis while defending the fatherland. In both heroes we witness a meeting of freedom and death as the peak experience of human life.(62)

Manolios and Jesus turn their pain and suffering into an active and creative suffering; what Nietzsche calls great suffering. The great suffering is to be contrasted with the suffering of a passive creature who simply accepts and succumbs to it. They enjoy the great suffering as source of tragic pleasure which inspires them to undertake further sufferings like an overman. Will to power becomes a driving force for Jesus and Manolios because in them the creature and creator are united.

Kazantzakis shares the generic Greek urge to engage war and resistance to foreign incursions. His characters are moulded around the Greek legacy of the unconquerable will. Dillistone suggests:

Deep in the heart of Greek is the memory of his people’s constant struggle for freedom and it is not surprising that he should identify the Passion of his nation with the passion of

Christ. In so doing he reaches out towards the Christus – Victor theme which was exploited at so early a period by the Fathers of the Eastern Church. (89)

Jesus and Manolios embrace parallel deaths as both are killed for their political activities. They are tried by the imperial powers – Jesus by Romans and Manolios by the Turks – as the result of the demand from men who represent the state of terror. Jesus is crucified and Manolios is stabbed to death after brutal torture to silence the voice of freedom and fraternity. Indomitable will to power shape their identity and equip them for the martyrdom.

Jesus and Manolios are born in the lower strata of society and in conventional wisdom they are presumed to be incapable of becoming leaders. But they grow and establish their domain of power through deterritorialization and reterritorialization of their desire. Jesus deterritorializes to become Messiah so as to dismantle the socio-political order and he reterritorializes as a political force and ends as a martyr. Manolios generates the Deleuzian deterritorialization as he passes from the shepherd to the Christ figure physically and mentally. His transformation as the leader of the weak is the manifestation of his reterritorialization where he creates his identity as the defender of the neglected mass. The invention of new values and his struggle to materialise them are part of his reterritorialisation which culminates in his martyrdom.

Deterritorialization happens in Jesus when he abjures his carpentry and sets out for the monastery in the desert in search of self actualization. Monastic life transforms him into the Messiah as predicted by the abbot and he starts his actions with new assemblage of disciples and spreads his power over shepherds, peasants, fishermen and labourers who build up his new territory. People believe him as their Messiah and follow his words and deeds for a new life of freedom and salvation. He reinforces his spell over the mass through the wonders he performs, like the resurrection of Lazarus, curing the blind and the sick offering deliverance of their land from foreign rule and finally the salvation of the soul itself. He expounds a new interpretation for the Messiah asserting that the multitude itself is the Messiah and emphasizes that the exercise of physical force can lead them to the freedom. He reterritorializes himself when he carries the cross to the mountain of Golgotha for his crucifixion after a tenuous resistance to the temptations of mundane life.

Manolios deterritorializes his life with the arrival of the refugees in his village and his urge to support them creates a new philosophy which supplants the prevailing one. He becomes the enemy of the village elders and notables and he starts his reterritorialization with the invocation for a new state. It becomes tangible when Manolios announces that he murdered Yussafakki, the darling of the Agha to save his village and his espousal that every clod of earth

contains the Holy Sepulchre and God lives among the depraved and the destitute. The open declaration of pope Gregoris to hang him for his defiance of religious and social canons fixes his reterritorialisation. His fights to end the exploitative ecclesiasts to establish a new religious order of Christ who, for him, is a warrior for justice and equality. The orthodox church brands Manolios as an atheist and as a Bolshevik rabble-rouser and he is suspected to be a secret agent of communist controlled resistance movement. His martyrdom is the culmination of his reterritorialization and like Jesus he creates a new way of life on earth.

Jesus and Manolios transform their world as they inculcate immanent forces of social unconsciousness which act as reservoir of creative energy for political change. Their sacrifice becomes the ultimate act of their desire and will to power which serve as a model for humanity to emulate in the creation of an egalitarian society where human rights are upheld and honoured. Goodchild states:

Desire is the social unconsciousness, it constructs and conditions consciousness. Desire is concerned with the transformation of the society through the transformation of its social unconsciousness. Multiplicity, creation and desire are the principal elements of social unconsciousness. The forces of social unconsciousness do not have metaphysical pre- existence

and they remain as reservoir of potential energy to which one will gain access and get them multiplied, created and desired.(2)

Will to power and desire which act as a power house for social (re)formation are fictionalised in *The Last Temptation* and *Christ Recrucified* and in both the heroes are actualized through spiritual power. Goodchild argues: “Social formation is never physical as it comes and goes and it operates on the level of meaning such as values, ideals, traditions, cultures and institutions”(4). The two heroes know that changes in the world are not merely physical in nature but are spiritual as well. They transvaluate the values, ideals, traditions, cultures and institution to usher in new history replacing the degenerative forces of life.

Jesus and Manolios consider that the world itself is the original monastery and the true monk is the one who lives with men and works with God in contact with the soil recognizing that God does not sit on the throne above the clouds and that true prayer is noble action. Their basic concerns are God and salvation and the creative aspect of their personality is reflected in their urge for self actualization and in the conceptualisation of God as the dark force who kills, gives birth, and kills again.

Jesus and Manolios's conception of God is centred on the tension between the binary of the divine nature; permanence and change, being and becoming and the abstract and the concrete. God is not an already preconceived goal towards which men strive for, but a spirituality progressively created by nature as it evolves toward a loftier refinement. They are mystics in the light of their argument of the immediate experience of an immanent God in the act of transubstantiation. For them the essence of divinity is the struggle, the suffering, joy and hope found in everyday life and paradise is reached when the matter is burned into spirit by an inner fire in every individual. God is to be found in action and they refuse the theological view of "the God dressed in cassock, fingering the rosary, unwashed, unmarried, indolent" (*Report to Greco 77*).

Jesus and Manolios underpin that God is neither omnipotent nor omnibenevolent in the traditional sense and is as great or as good as possible at any particular time, but new moments bring with it new possibilities for divine struggle and accomplishment. God is not idiosyncratic and anthropocentric but an indestructible rhythm which strives for freedom. The duty of a man is to identify and ally himself with the new God-rhythm of his time which would lead the transition of the world because rhythm in itself is action. God is too big to have a name where name is a prison from which God should be free. Dombrowski explicates in *Kazantzakis and God*:

Other Kazantzakian names for God include “Deathless Abyss”, “Mystery”, “Absolute Darkness”, “Absolute Light”, and “Spirit”. Clearly God is transcendent in some sense for Kazantzakis as well as immanent. The fact that his God does not entirely fit under the old features (as before, Kazantzakis’s God is not omnipotent) does not necessarily mean that his God is totally of anthropological origin. Just as each one of us constantly changes yet retains some sort of identity through these changes (my life is still mine and not yours), so also there is a sense in which God is “always the same” for Kazantzakis.

(85)

Jesus and Manolios invented their own God as an explosive and inflammable power that burns and breaks out in every particle of matter which means that even birds and manure have the potential to be transubstantiated. The God with its presence of lightning and rain makes possible the transubstantiation of mud into sap and then into the blossoms of a tree. God is rooted in earth, water, stone and fire. He huddles in every cell of flesh where it struggles for light. Their vision of God is summed up in the famous lines in *Report to Greco*: “I said to the almond tree, /’Sister, speak to me of God.’/And the almond tree blossomed.” (234)

Jesus and Manolios consider that man is a grub on the leaf of a big luxuriant tree where the leaf stands for the earth. The brave man will go to the edge and see the abyss and overcome the oppressiveness of the chaos with the true recognition of fate, mortality, misfortunes of life, and the intimacy of death. This is possible only through a confrontation with the abyss and not by submitting to it which in consequence bring struggle, suffering and rebellion. In short it requires a great resolution. James F. Lea says:

The resolution requires an act, an acceptance, and avowal of life. It demands a confrontation with morality. It demands an act of will to life, to life's reality. It demands a facing of the truth that there is no eternity, no resurrection, no afterlife, none of the dogmas with which socio-religious innovators have filled the void and no earthly salvation to be found in political ideologies – no unity gained through enforced conformity. (28)

Their avowed interpretation of the relation between man and God clarifies their spiritual transformation. An individual as microcosm contains god in himself/herself and he/she has infinite potential to achieve the goal of unity with the eternal. Each individual should act as a channel for the divine spirit for his/her self actualization by becoming creative and thereby transubstantiating the matter into spirit. The individual should neither despair nor avoid experiences in life to remain pure, but involve in the world and

affirm life to the utmost. Life is envisioned as an ascending bittersweet journey of self styled pilgrimage. One must become crucified to be resurrected in this life because cosmic creative evolution takes place only through destruction. They tell the world that there is an immense chance of self actualization through wisdom, courage, selflessness, and nobility for an individual to complete his/her journey. Freedom is the essence of strife which will liberate civilization from the enslaving morality and history.

The orthodox conceptualisation of God is replaced by personal experiences which determine the being of God, akin to mystic visions of God. Lewis Owens remarks: “Words serve to imprison and immobilize that which is named and thus, for Kazantzakis, any description of God is only partial and provisional” (35). This authenticates the ontological approach to God in Kazantzakis’ heroes. The intuitive mysticism as is found in henology, the philosophical discourse on ‘the One’, is another dimension of his vision of the Supreme which argues for the union of individual soul with ‘the One’ which is outside the dialectic of transcendence and immanence. ‘The One’ is the true source and homeland of the individual soul and is to be reached by sloughing off the material world and by obtaining unity with it through abstraction and contemplation. The spirit requires a body to act, shine and transmute as the invisible requires the visible as a medium for manifestation.

God's self-manifestation is seen in terms of a spiritual corporeality that is necessary for perfection.

For Jesus and Manolios, the principal anguish is the incessant battle between the spirit and flesh. The dark and primordial forces of evil and the luminous forces of God are tormenting their soul and they fight to reconcile with the two forces which are antagonistic to each other but are creative. The fact that those two forces are not enemies but fellow workers and their harmony bring peace and joy to man sustains their life. They believe that everyone is half God and half man and so he/she is both spirit and flesh. The conflict between God and man is there in everyone together with the longing for reconciliation. In the weak soul it is short-lived because it does not have the power to resist the flesh for long whereas the strong stay concentrated on the supreme soul to continue the struggle between flesh and spirit until death. God likes the strong ones because they will withstand the wrestle between spirit and flesh.

Jesus and Manolios construct a system in which a person should create his/her own fate and the fate of God by saving God because God lives in every cell of the flesh. The world is not the vestment of God but God himself and actualization of good is the duty of man and the right way to save God is through firm adherence to the political goodness in the world.

Kazantzakis clarifies that the predominant theme in his works is the struggle of man with God. Kazantzakis places man at the centre of the universe and provides him with individual and universal significance capable of realizing his potentials and overcoming indolence to enable himself to exert his vitality. He can thus save God and spread the evolution in this world – an act of individual voluntarism for trans-individualistic ends. Lea observes:

For Kazantzakis the forward push of evolution by man for the transindividualistic ends can come only through one system – submission to a new harmonious and visionary ideal that “summons and commands all our forces: viz., we must follow a rhythm that is higher than ourselves. Only in this way can man’s existence become noble and integrated. Only thus can his energy transcend the stifling limits of the individual” (Spain, 62). Kazantzakis believes that only those who find and obey such a rhythm attain true consciousness. (109)

Kazantzakis struggles with the traditional view and formulates his own of view of God who is neither omnipotent nor omniscient because God with these characteristics will be at odds with the presence of evil in world and with the presence of human freedom. He follows Bergson to reach the divine reality with the help of intuition and argues the importance of intuition when he says that it vitalizes the intellect. Dombrowski remarks: “Both instinct and

intelligence are means whereby raw matter is turned into its finished, spiritual state, with instinct around the fringes of intelligence and gleams of intelligence in the depth of instinct. The two activities, each retain something of the other in them” (13).