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*The Tragic in Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) and
Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886)*

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Dedications

To

The memory of my beloved mother

My dear father

My dear sisters and brothers

My dear mate Karima

Hayet.

To

My dear beloved parents

My dear sisters and brothers

My dear mate Hayet

Karima.

To

All our classmates

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Abstract

*This research paper is a comparative study between the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe **The Sorrows of Young Werther** (1774) and the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy **The Death of Ivan Ilych** (1886). Our main objective is to highlight the issue of modern tragic hero in the selected novels in relation to Strindberg and Arthur Miller's theories. Throughout our investigation, we have attained our objective by depicting the tragic fate of the common man as an outcome to a harsh struggle in modern society. Our discussion has explored the notion of modern tragedy by shedding light on the suitability of ordinary man to be a tragic hero. To emphasize our ideas in this dissertation, we have depicted the impact of aristocratic values on the personality of both heroes, and the struggle for personal dignity which led to their downfall. The work is divided into two major chapters. In the first chapter, we have applied Strindberg's theory and in the second Miller's one, though in each the target has been to demonstrate the tragic and its modern aesthetic orientations in Goethe's and Tolstoy's designated texts.*

I. Introduction

This master dissertation aims to highlight the notion of tragedy in modern world. Tragedy exists since the ancient times and it has marked a great flourishing mainly by the Greeks. But our focus will be on modern tragedy in modern literature. This tragedy represents the experiences of ordinary men in their real lives and demonstrates the influence of society on them. Our work will be analyzed by relying on Arthur Miller's and August Strindberg's theories on modern tragedy in order to display the tragic issue in both novels Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) and Leo Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886).

In his essay *The Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949), Arthur Miller depicts the general rules of tragedy which can be appropriate to represent modern society by using common man as a tragic hero. This later takes the risk to defend his rights in the societal environment. In addition to Miller, Strindberg demonstrates his new vision about tragedy in his famous play *Miss Julie* (1889) in which he concentrates on characterization and the protagonist's environment; and rejects the ancient elements of tragedy introduced by Aristotle.

Both Goethe's and Tolstoy's novels show the tragic ending of two modern men after a terrible experience in their lives. Our choice of these two authors is due to the various elements of modern tragedy which exist in their selected works. Moreover, both of Goethe's and Tolstoy's novels depict the reality of modern society, and show the role of different aristocratic values and obstacles which prevent the ordinary men from having a peaceful life.

a. Literature Review:

The notion of modern tragedy has received many critics about the possibility to produce different works in modern times as the classical tragedies were.

One of the critics about Tolstoy's work is made by Andrew Kaufman in his book "Understanding Tolstoy" (2011)¹. Kaufman argues that in *The Death of Ivan Ilych*, Tolstoy has investigated the growing character's fascination with death. He emphasized the spiritual instability caused by approaching death. Kaufman adds that modern tragedy differs from the classical one in many aspects. The inner self consciousness becomes the central focus. The tragic hero is from common class and has no faith in God or religion.

Another critic is introduced in *Arthur Miller's Tragedy as Reflected in the Crucible* (2013)² where Basaad Maher Mhayyel states that Miller believes that tragedy may be dealt with ordinary people, belonging to middle class. His aim is to dramatize man as a part of his family and society. In *The Crucible* (1953), Miller chooses Proctor to be his tragic hero. Proctor represents one of the few heroes of modern drama.³ he preserves his name and honor, however; this desire makes him an enemy of society.⁴

Another critical attention to modern tragedy is given by Raymond Williams in his essay on *Tragedy and Contemporary Ideas* (2018)⁵. He argues that tragedy has been discussed, refined, and renewed throughout the ages⁶. In his essay, Williams describes the contemporary ideas about modern tragedy rejecting the conventional ones⁷. According to him, the world is in a perpetual change and that is the case with tragedy which should be changed. He highlights the concept of common man in modern tragedy. Williams says: "in modern world, ranks have no value at all".⁸ For Bourgeois society, "everyone has become an entity and thus has his own importance; therefore, whether a prince dies or a common man expires, both events are mournful and equally tragic".⁹

The idea of pessimism is also studied in modern tragedy by John Von Szeliski. He claims that modern tragedy lacks the dramatic struggle of the characters¹⁰. Modern tragedy simply does not display in its characters a strong will for life¹¹. Generally, the hero prefers to end his own life rather than struggle and fight to save himself from the troubles. The concept of pessimism or hopelessness is very common in modern tragedy among the characters; mainly the hero. In fact, the concept of heroism in modern tragedy has been discussed by Szeliski and he argues that the term “heroic” centers on bravery, great actions taken against the different obstacles and difficulties.¹²

Russell Amos Kirl in his book *Tragedy and The Moderns* (1940) says: “in the modern period ,men no longer believe in elemental forces ,virtues and vices, as such ;we have given them other names .We call them “social forces”, “psychological forces” ,and “moral forces.”¹³ Modern tragedy; according to many critics; is based on societal elements and the different experiences in life. Since modern man lost the belief in religion and ancient abstract powers, he fights against societal powers to maintain his position and takes the challenge which led to his defeat.

b. Issue and Working Hypothesis:

From the above literature review, it becomes clear that huge bulk of criticism has been published concerning modern tragedy. However, little attention is given to study the tragic hero in Goethe’s *the Sorrow of Young Werther* (1774) and Tolstoy’s *the Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886). Our main concern in this research paper is to compare and analyze the two selected novels in terms of how common man can be a tragic hero in modern literature. To accomplish our task, we will try to study Ivan Ilych and Werther in different aspects including the effect of society, personal dignity and final fall. To confirm our

hypothesis we will refer to Strindberg's and Miller's theories of modern tragedy in modern literature.

The first attempt of our dissertation is to depict how the aristocratic values or rules can affect both heroes Werther and Ivan Ilych. Also, we will show the different social classes which exist in both novels. Then, we will explain how Werther and Ivan Ilych have participated in their downfall

The second attempt is to display the past mistake and how it contributes in the selected heroes' fall. In fact, both of Ivan and Werther do not accept their mistake which led to their downfall. In addition to this, struggle for dignity is the best way to improve Ivan Ilych and Werther's place in society.

Methodological Outline:

Our memoire follows the IMRAD system in its organization of ideas. It begins with an introduction that states the main points about modern tragedy and the two selected novels. It includes a literature review where we have cited the different critical attentions on the theme. In the issue and working hypothesis, we have depicted our main purpose by choosing this topic to be analyzed. The method and materials section deals with a short summary of our theory which is modern tragedy applied in the analysis. It also includes a summary of the two novels and short biographies of the authors. At the end of the introduction we will give our findings in a result section.

The discussion part will consist of two main chapters. In the first chapter, we will apply Strindberg's theory to compare the two novels in terms of rigidity of aristocratic values versus personal temperament of the hero, social class tensions and hero's final fall, then love and frustration. In the second chapter, we will discuss the clash between the hero

and his society by relying on Arthur Miller's theory of modern tragedy. The focus will be on the past mistake of the hero, the fanatic struggle toward dignity and the final fall.

Our dissertation will end with a general conclusion which aims to restate the key ideas developed through the research paper, and gives possible topics which can be explored by other students in the department.

Endnotes:

¹Andrew, K. "Understanding Tolstoy". (2011). The Ohio State University, p: 191. Accessed on May 13, 2019.

²Maher Mhayyal, B. (2013). *Arthur Miller's Tragedy as Reflected in The Crucible*. College of Educational Women. University of Baghdad, 24(3), p.917. Accessed on May 13, 2019.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵<https://fr.scribd.com/document/201727882/Tragedy-and-Contemporary-Ideas>. Accessed on May 13, 2019.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Szeliski, J. V (1964). "Pessimism and Modern tragedy". *Educational Theatre Journal*. The Johns Hockings University Press, p.16 (1), 40-46. Accessed on May13, 2019.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Kirl, R. A (1940). "Tragedy and the moderns. College English "National Council of Teachers of English." 1(4), pp. 344-353. Accessed on May 13, 2019.

II. Methods and Materials:

This section of our research paper aims at exploring the methodological elements and materials that will be applied in our study of both Goethe's and Tolstoy's tragedies. It includes a brief summary and explanation of the two theories that will be used in our analysis, the summary of the selected novels and biographies of the two authors.

1. Methods:

a. Summary of Strindberg's theory:

Tragedy exists since the ancient times. It is originally a Greek word which refers to one type of drama that presents the suffering of a character and has a sad ending¹⁴. However; many playwrights, dramatists, and writers like Henrick Ibsen and Anthon Chekov have contributed in changing this old tragedy and its concepts by creating a modern one.

One of the most recognizable and well-known playwright who has participated in this development is August Strindberg. His modern drama is well presented in *Miss Julie*. It is a naturalistic play written in 1889 which speaks about an unreached love between a young servant and a Count's daughter¹⁵. The play ends tragically when the protagonist Julie commits suicide which mirrors Strindberg's view of the new tragic hero. *Miss Julie* represents the good example of modern tragedy and it is a contribution in its development because it contains the new element which can be suitable to the standards given by modern authors and playwrights.

In the ancient times, the well made-play was the most prominent one. Therefore by the coming of Strindberg, he has rejected this type of plays and concentrated rather on characterization and influential environment.¹⁶ His characters are from ordinary people who face realistic and very complex problems. Strindberg ignores the classical plot and has

dealt with plays which contain real events faced by the ordinary man¹⁷. Additionally to what is mentioned earlier, Strindberg is also known for using new elements of writings like stream of consciousness, flashbacks, irony and sarcasm.¹⁸

b. Summary of Arthur Miller's Theory:

Tragedy and the Common Man (1949) is an essay written by the American playwright Arthur Miller. The essay consists of new forms of modern tragedy which contradict the traditional concepts of Aristotle and retains only the catastrophic ending. Miller starts his essay by pointing out to the theatre of the 20th century that the number of tragedies written is very few compared to the comedies¹⁹. According to Miller, this difference is a result of the skepticism or the doubtfulness of modern man mainly after the two Great Wars in the 20th century. People do not believe anymore in heroes since it is not relevant in modern world. For him, the tragic hero can be an ordinary man and does not matter what is his social position or background. Miller believes that common man is very suitable subject for tragedy as kings were in old drama²⁰. He presents the idea that a common man is also noble and the concept of tragedy is no longer limited to the old nobility. The modern world has plenty of heroes in form of ordinary persons and he is capable to exercise the tragedy just as kings were.

Arthur Miller sets the general rules for a tragic life. First, he argues that the hero is a person who lays down his life to secure his personal dignity²¹. Second, the modern tragic hero attempts to gain his rightful position in society because he is not satisfied or has given the rightful place which he deserves²². Moreover, common man is always scared to be displaced from his position and this fear makes him fight for his rights. The struggle for dignity and rightful place in society cause the loss of the hero's life. As believed by Miller, this can be useful for people to understand the unfairness of society and they may call for a

change in the social order. Miller also maintained that the hero's death bids optimism for his society.

Moreover, Miller argues that the tragic flaw of a hero is due to the ignorance of his mistakes during his lifetime. The hero in modern tragedy does not accept the social laws and choose to challenge them to defend his rights and preserve his personal dignity. His struggle makes him achieve the position of a king and differentiate him from other people in the modern world. Miller argues that other people generally do not act against the social orders. Instead, they accept the conventions of society out of fear, while the tragic hero takes actions that shake the basic foundations of society and from there comes the fall of the modern tragic hero²³.

2. Materials:

1. Biographies:

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe is a German writer and statesman. He is one of the most famous writers in World Literature. He was born in Frankfurt 1749, and a son of Johann Caspar Goethe and Catharina Elisabeth Goethe²⁴. He has spent three years in Leipzig to study law where he shows an immense dislike to the old judicial rules.

Goethe came back to Frankfurt in 1768, and fell severely ill. After his recovery, he left Frankfurt to finish his studies in Strasbourg University. At that time, Goethe was interested on Homer's works, Shakespeare and the re-discovery of the ancient literature. In 1770, he published his first collection of poems "Annette" anonymously²⁵. Being graduated in August 1771, Goethe gained his respected place in literature's world. He tried to establish a new legal system by making it more human, but he failed because of his inexperience. Then, Goethe drew his attention to writing, he wrote "Gotz Von Berlichingen" where he expressed his hatred towards the established order²⁶. After the

success of his previous work, he wrote ‘‘*The Sorrows of Young Werther* ‘’. This work was very successful and made him a popular figure at the age of 25. Some of his other works are *Prometheus* (1773) ,*Stella* (1775) ,*Iphigenia auf Tauris* (1787) ,*Das Marchen* (1795) ,*Faust* (1808) ,*Gefunden* (1813). After a long period of moral and physical sufferings, Goethe died in March 22, 1832.²⁷

Leo Tolstoy:

Born in 1828, Leo Tolstoy is regarded as one of the greatest authors of all time. He came from an aristocratic Russian family²⁸. In his early life, Tolstoy struggled with his studies and decided to serve the Russian army²⁹. The raise of his profile as a leading Russian writer was due to Sevastopol Sketches where Tolstoy wrote his battlefield observation³⁰.

Tolstoy had a great interest on understanding life³¹. He travelled widely through Europe and discovered different personalities and classes. His hatred for materialism grew by interacting with the Bourgeoisie. As a result, he created good relationships with the poor and peasants.

His marriage with Sofia Andreyeva Behrs in (1862) led to the writing of two of his greatest works which are: *War and Peace* (1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1877)³². They are more realistic and historical. In addition to these two well-known novels, Tolstoy wrote also a dozen of short stories and several novellas including *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886) *Family Happiness* (1859) and *Hadji Murat* (1912.)³³. Tolstoy died in 1910 of Pneumonia and during his last days, he wrote and spoke about death in regard to his aristocratic lifestyle³⁴.

➤ **Synopsis of Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*:**

The novel speaks about the death of a mid-level bureaucrat in the Russian legal system named Ivan Ilych Golovin. It begins with a gathering of Ilych's co-workers in the private room of the Court House when Peter Ivanovich announces Ivan's death. The men are thinking about what promotions and transfers could gain after Ilych's death rather showing any sympathy. By evening, Peter Ivanovich goes to the funeral and speaks to the widow. She asks him about how maximizing her husband's government pensions.

The narrative shifts to the past and describes the protagonist's life. Ivan Ilych is the second child and a common person. Ilych's desire to become a lawyer allows him to continue his studies in the reformed judicial institution. By his marriage with Praskovya, everything goes good until she becomes pregnant. Her character changes completely and this affects their daily life negatively. In response, Ivan prefers to absorb himself in work as he expects to be awarded the post of a judge. When his expectations go worse he moves with his family to the countryside. Later on, Ivan learns that he is given a higher paying position in town. He goes there to buy a good and comfortable house for his family.

Ivan begins to feel discomfort in his left side and a bad mouth taste. This discomfort increases day by day and the doctors whom he visits say the same thing. One night, Ivan thinks of mortality and recognized that the matter is not health and sickness, but life and death. Praskovya does not understand her husband's pain and Ivan's hatred increases toward her. More doctors visit him, but they give a false hope to the dying man. One night, his family goes to the theater leaving him alone. When they return, Praskovya gives her husband some opium to decrease his suffering and pain. After taking the drug, Ivan makes a bad dream and cries to God in agony telling him why all these sufferings.

After twelve days, Ivan can no longer leave the sofa. The only person who helps him is his servant Gerasim who spends all nights with him. When looking to Gerasim's face, he doubts if he lived his life rightly. Before he dies, Ivan recognizes the emptiness of his life, the artificiality of his family and the desire to die. Despite their ignorance, Ivan feels sorry for his son and wife. Suddenly some force strikes him and pushes him through the bright light and dies.

➤ **Synopsis of Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*:**

The novel starts when Werther left his town in the rural area of the countryside because of his sad love story with a woman named Leonora. After leaving his village, Werther settles in a new place named Wahlheim where he enjoys nature and the simplicity of people in that small village. He forgets about his past life and does not express any regret about it. Werther is a passionate person, very sensitive and deeply romantic. During his walk in the new village, he meets a lot of people with whom he exchanges salutation, among them the beautiful woman Lotte (charlotte). Lotte lost her mother and was left alone to take care of her siblings. Werther falls in love with Lotte, the charming and a beautiful lady, very responsible, caring and a faithful one. Werther spends a lot of time with Lotte, he likes her so much, but the problem Lotte is engaged to be married with Albert. Despite this fact, his feelings towards Lotte increases more and more and he cannot prevent himself from seeing her.

The close relationship between Albert and Lotte hurts Werther. He spends a lot of time with her every day talking and laughing together, but he cannot win her heart and she remains faithful to her fiancé Albert. Werther then with a lot of pain decides to leave the village in order to forget Lotte and puts an end to his suffering and frustration He goes to Weimar to visit his friend. This new place seems to be strange for Werther, and completely opposite from Wahlheim. Things got worse for him and even his new job seems to be un-

enjoyable. He tries to adapt with the aristocratic environment but he cannot, mainly after the party organized by his friend.

All these circumstances forces Werther to go back to Wahlheim hoping that he can have a chance to win Lotte's heart. But sadly, he finds her married with Albert. Lotte tries to explain to Werther that she is a married woman and it is unrespectable to spend a lot of time together, so she orders him to minimize his visits. Werther accepts her wish and also she asks him to write a poem where he would express his deep feelings for her, they love each other but they know that they cannot be together. The sufferings of poor Werther increases and he thinks about a solution to put an end to his misery and pain. After a long time of thinking and reasoning, Werther finds that the best solution is death. He decides to kill himself and let the couple Lotte and Albert live in peace. He sends a letter to Albert asking for pistols telling that he needs them for a journey. The letter was received by Lotte, she knows that he will use them to shoot himself; however, she does nothing to stop him. Werther uses the pistols to commit suicide, he was found lying in his bed without a move and he died after 12 hours of agony.

Despite his misery and pain, he did not forget to leave a note for Lotte in which he expresses his conviction that they were meant to be together, and they have to meet each other one day in Heaven. Werther was buried under a tree which is mentioned in his letters. He died alone and buried alone, no one has attended his funeral, neither Lotte nor Albert.

Endnotes:

¹⁴Harmon, William, & Holman, H. (2006). "Definition of Tragedy". *A Handbook to Literature*, 126 (10), Accessed on: May 15, 2019.

¹⁵ Strindberg, A. (2014). Strindberg's Miss Julie as "A Naturalistic Tragedy". *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities*, June, 2(2), pp. 413-420. Accessed on: May 15, 2019.

¹⁶Egil, T., and Birgitta, S.(2007). *Strindberg on Drama and Theatre*. Amsterdam University Press. P: 7. <https://www.oapen.org/download?type=documentdocid=340053> Accessed on May 15, 2019.

¹⁷Micheal, S. (2017). *The Difference between a Classical and a Modern Tragedy in Literature*. <https://penandthepad.com/difference-between-classical-modern-tragedy-literature-3710.html> . Accessed on May 15, 2019.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Arthur Miller, *Tragedy and the Common Man*. 01

²⁰Ibid, 01

²¹Ibid, 01

²²Ibid, 01

²³Arthur Miller, *Tragedy and the Common Man*. 02

²⁴<https://www.iep.utm.edu/Goethe/> Accessed on May 15, 2019.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/f/faust-parts-1-and-2/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe-biography>. Accessed on May 16, 2019.

²⁷<https://www.poemhunter.com/johann-wolfgang-von-goethe/biography/> Accessed on May 16, 2019.

²⁸<https://www.biography.com/scholar/leo-tolstoy> Accessed on May 16, 2019.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰<https://adebiportal.kz/en/authors/view/3392>. Accessed on May 16, 2019.

³¹<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/culture/philosophy/thinkers/tolstoy-and-the-search-the-meaning-life>. Accessed on May 16, 2019.

³²<https://www.famousauthors.org/leo-tolstoy>. Accessed on May, 16.

³³Ibid.

³⁴<https://biography.yourdictionary.com/articles/how-leo-tolstoy-die.html>. Accessed on May 16, 2019.

III. Results:

This part of our research is concerned with the major findings reached throughout our comparative study on the issue of modern tragedy. Our research paper focused on discussing the issue of common man in both novels: Goethe's *Sorrows of the Young Werther* (1774) and Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886) by relying on Strindberg and Miller's theories.

In the first section of our analysis, we come to conclude that both Goethe and Tolstoy's works reflect the elements of modern tragic hero. Our analysis begins by highlighting the hierarchy of aristocratic values on Werther and Ivan Ilych. In fact, both heroes have interacted with upper class people by making friendly relationships. However, contrary to Werther who realizes the hypocrisy and self-interest of those people, Ivan Ilych tries his best to become one of them. Werther has realized that those people cannot have durable connections with common men because of their belief on superiority. Additionally, we have noticed that Tolstoy and Goethe have used social class in their novels. Indeed, the lives of both Werther and Ivan end tragically, which gives us evidence of encountering Strindberg's definition of the modern tragic hero.

In the second section of our research, we have depicted the clash between the hero and his society. Our chapter begins with discussing the past flaws of the heroes in their past life. Both of them are common men and experienced their life differently, but they share the similarity to be tragic heroes. Due to their struggle against society and its different laws to secure the dignity and self-esteem, Ivan and Werther lost their lives at the end of the novels. Ivan struggles to reach a high position in society and ignores his conscience and Werther follows his uncontrollable passion and rejects anything related to logic.

Both of Tolstoy and Goethe introduce the modern society through the two heroes Ivan and Werther in both form and content. The two tragedies show the suffering and the different obstacles that prevent modern men to attain his real position in modern society.

IV. Discussion:

Our intention in the following chapter is to compare Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* and Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* including different aspects by using Strindberg's modern tragedy. At first, we will speak about the rigidity of Aristocratic values and their influence on the heroes' personal temperaments. We will also discuss the social class tensions and final fall of the two heroes. Finally, we are going to depict the different interpretations of romance, love, and frustration in both novels.

Chapter One: Old Aristocratic World versus Rising Modern One

A. Rigidity of Aristocratic Values versus Personal Temperament of the Heroes:

In ancient Greece, tragedy was defined by Aristotle as “a representation of an action that is serious and also as having magnitude, complete in itself.”³⁵ He limited the tragic hero to someone who belongs to the high rank. In *Poetics*, Aristotle cites:

Tragedy then is a process of imitating an action which has serious implication. It is complete and possesses magnitude. The tragic playwright must create a unified work, and the running time must be exact with no breaks or flashbacks. Most importantly, the action follows one inevitable course, and the tragic hero must be royal or highborn.³⁶

However, by the nineteenth century, the Swedish playwright August Strindberg and other writers have rejected the classical definition of tragedy and its elements by creating new ones. The most important change is in characterization. Since he deals with ordinary people and middle class, Strindberg tries to create simple characters that face complex struggles. Unlike Aristotle who has defined the tragic hero as “a person who must evoke a sense of pity and fear in the audience. He is a man of misfortune that comes to him through error of judgment”³⁷, Strindberg has made his characters simple, experiencing problems which may

happen to anyone of us. Therefore, in order to discuss this point, we will focus on the study of Werther's and Ivan Ilych's lives.

Both *The Sorrows of Young Werther* and *The Death of Ivan Ilych* depict the lives of two ordinary people. Yet, both characters are surrounded by some members of aristocratic class with whom they have intimate and friendly relationships. However, each character has been influenced by those relations differently from the other.

Werther is the main character of Goethe's novel. He is a noble man who admires art and nature but an unmotivated artist. He moves to a small town called Wahlheim in the countryside. Werther is a simple man who carries a small dream of winning Lotte's heart with whom he feels in love. On the other side, we find that the protagonist of Tolstoy's novel, Ivan Ilych is a dreamy person. He is not satisfied with his actual status and tries to have a better one. And in order to achieve his dreams, Ivan tries to create friendly relationships with members of high social standings.

In fact, the conflict between aristocrats and middle class people has taken place since the ancient times. Strindberg chooses this conflict to be one of the main themes in the majority of his works especially in *Miss Julie*. In relation to our work, we notice that Ivan Ilych and Jean in Strindberg's play *Miss Julie* have the same desires. Jean wants to transcend his real social position; so he makes his mistress believe that he loves her since childhood. He wants to have a better life and buy a hotel in Switzerland.

I dream that I am lying underneath a tall tree in a dark forest. I want to get up to the top and look around me across the bright landscape where the sun shines. I want to plunder the bird's nest up there with the golden eggs. I climb and climb but the trunk is so thick and slippery and it's so far to the first branch. I know that if I could only reach that first branch I could climb up to the top step by step. I haven't reached it yet but I will reach it, well, in my dreams.³⁸

Jean recounts a dream to Miss Julie where he shows his wish for being on top and trying the best to make it real. His desire to be a member of aristocracy is just like Ivan Ilych's one. The later is blindly adapted to the aristocratic class and its values, and considers

being an important member of society relies on having good relations with rich people. Jean also tries to learn many things from his surroundings and bourgeois life style which may help him latter on. He uses the French Language to mask his poverty and shows some of his literary background. In the other side, we find that Werther dislikes that type of people and mocks on their principles and lifestyle. He considers his dreams to be realized in a proper way not by relying on his relationships.

By reading *the Sorrows of Young Werther*, we notice the rejection of aristocratic values through many passages. The author considers that all those values are useless and can destroy the human relationships, and create barriers between members of the same society. Werther criticizes two most existing qualities in the noble class which are superficiality and future interest. He argues that rich people think only about future gain and do not enjoy their present time. He says: "I know very well that we are not all equal, nor can be so; but it is my opinion that he who avoids common people, in order not to lose their respect, is as much to blame as a coward who hides himself from his enemy because he fears defeat."³⁹

This citation clarifies that members of the upper class create a world specific to them. Also, rich people think that their higher position will be destroyed if they interact with common ones. This is due to the belief in superiority and uniqueness. Just like those people, we notice that Countess Julie; the protagonist of Strindberg's play; considers herself to be superior to her servants.

When Werther is given a job in the Royal Court, he makes friendly relationships with some aristocrats named Count C and Fraulein von B. The invitation of Count C makes him more tolerant about the aristocrats. At dinner, Werther criticizes people by describing their unsatisfied positions and searching for more future advances. He says: "people cooped up together here! And their greed for rank, the way they are forever watchful and alert for gain or procedure; the most wretched and abominable of passions."⁴⁰ After a while, Werther notices also that some guests like the two Ladies S and T, Colonel B and Baron F are offended by his

presence since he is a bourgeois: “I had forgotten this fact, and it also did not own to me that subordinate officials like me are not welcomed on such occasions.”⁴¹

Nonetheless, what irritates Werther most is the bad attitude of Fraulein B towards him. She is a charming, well-cultured, and a noble woman who befriends Werther. But in the party, Fraulein acts in a cold way toward her friend and ignores him. The day after, she explains to Werther that Count C cannot risk the displeasure of his aristocratic guests this is why he asked him to leave. This news brings Werther’s resignation and leaves the place. Unlike Fraulein, who is aware about her position and that she must keep her good image in society, we find that Miss Julie does not care about her social class and forgets it. She asks Jean, the palace’s valet, for a dance twice despite the social distance between them. Furthermore, Julie is not aware that ignoring her status will coast her life. As in the dream she counts to Jean:

“I’m on top of a pillar. I’m setting there, and I see no possible way of getting down. I feel dizzy when I look down but I know I must get down. I haven’t got the courage to throw myself [...] I won’t have any peace until I’m down, no rest until I’m down.”⁴²

In fact, Strindberg uses Miss Julie’s dream to make us guess her downfall. He also wants to describe the hierarchy of upper class. On another side, we find that Ivan Ilych differs from Werther. He is attracted by people of high status and tries to make friendship relations with them.

“At school he had done things which formerly seemed to him very horrid and made him disgusted. But later on, when he saw such actions were done by people of good positions, and they did not regard them wrong, he was not able to see them right but to forget about them entirely or not be at all troubled at making them.”⁴³

From this citation, it’s clear that Ivan has forgotten all his principles, and follows only those of aristocratic people. After his graduation, Ivan orders some expensive clothes at a fashionable tailor because he wants to appear a Gentleman like others. He performs the official duties as an Examining Magistrate as it should be, but at the same time amuses himself pleasantly. Sometimes, his job obliges him to cut down the old connections with people, but all this does not make any sense for Ivan Ilych since he desires wealth and power.

Ivan wants his life to be as the aristocrat's ones, even his house looks like their houses with sophisticated decoration and old objects.

Tolstoy uses words like 'pleasant, proper, decorous' which refer to the desire of encountering a life of an aristocrat. In *Miss Julie*, Strindberg also uses words to describe the scene in details: a large kitchen, copper kettles, iron casrols, tin pins and many other words that indicate the social status where the protagonist lives. Strindberg's intention by using such words is to make the reader remembers the aristocratic atmosphere of the play. Ivan believes that his life will find progress and fulfillment only by imitating aristocratic people, their conduct and lifestyle. However, he becomes intolerant of everything that threatens his comfort and well- being. For example, Ivan dislikes Praskovya's mood during her pregnancy and prefers to stay alone. "He had been successful in finding and buying cheaply antiques which gave a particularly aristocratic character to the whole place."⁴⁴ He sometimes organizes parties which resemble to those of high social standing people, and invited only Ladies and Gentlemen.

B. Social Class Tensions and the Final Fall of the Hero:

Strindberg's works deal with social class like in his play *Miss Julie* where we find it the most prominent theme. Because he grew up in poverty, he tries to reflect his sufferings in his works. Strindberg also has created a modern drama about class tensions because the classical one is centered only on high placed people.⁴⁵ In his play *Miss Julie*, Strindberg always makes us remember the social class of both heroes.

Additionally to *Miss Julie*, we recognize that also *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) and *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886) display class tensions. Throughout the novels, we repeatedly read passages about two different classes which have different attitudes and standards. Goethe wrote his novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* in 1774, a year that marked the beginning of the Age of Revolution when people fought for equality. In Germany, the

middle, bourgeois, and aristocratic classes could not befriend each other freely.⁴⁶ Whereas, Leo Tolstoy mocks the nineteenth century middle class in his literary work *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886).

By reading different social criticism on Goethe's work, we find that *The Sorrows of Young Werther* is interpreted as a novel centered on class structure.⁴⁷ It deals with a middle class young man who escapes to the countryside leaving behind him all what is superficial in his society. Yet, Tolstoy chooses Ivan Ilych to depict the real hypocrisy, selfishness, and rigidity of the Russian middle class citizens. Comparing to Tolstoy's novel, Strindberg describes his characters as products of heredity, social conditions and environment.⁴⁸ This is the common thing shared by Miss Julie and Ivan Ilych. Both of them struggle for their desires leaving the conditions of society behind.

On the other side, we understand that Werther's place between the lower and higher class, makes it more difficult to find his position in the social status. In his letters written to Wilhelm, Werther speaks about many differences between two classes since he interferes with members from both.

The common people of the place know me already, and love me, particularly children. When at first I associated with them and inquired in a friendly tone about their various trifles, some fancied that I wished to ridicule them, and turned from me with an exceeding ill-humored.⁴⁹

Here, Werther argues that people from the lower class are afraid of interacting with him since he represents a bourgeois person. Despite the fact that he enjoys observing the farm workers, Werther is frustrated due to their inability of living freely. Similarly in *Miss Julie* where Christine; who works as a cook in Miss Julie's house; is not satisfied and dislikes people like Julie who do not respect themselves. This reveals Strindberg's idea that aristocrats lost all their principles, especially when Miss Julie seduced the valet Jean. It is viewed as something shameful especially in relation to her social standing. Additionally, Jean and Christine argue that Julie's false raising prevents her from encountering the basic expectations

of aristocracy.⁵⁰ in the contrary, middle class citizens are strongly attached to good moral behavior and respected hobbies like Christine who goes to the church every Sunday.

Werther enjoys his time in Wahlheim and forgets about reading and drawing, which are some hobbies specific to high class people. He answers Wilhelm: “You ask me if you should send my books! My dear friend! I am pleasing you for God’s sake do not bother me with them. No longer I wish to be guided, agitated, or stimulated. My own heart shows enough in itself.”⁵¹

By reading both *Miss Julie* and *the Sorrows of Young Werther*, we find that friendship can occur just between members of the same social class as Jean and Christine. Strindberg claims that Julie’s relationship with Jean is considered as immoral and a kind of sin. This is why she feels ashamed when he refuses to escape, and becomes afraid of her father’s reaction. Werther also fails in making durable relationships or having fun with upper-class citizens, and prefers to interact with simple and ordinary people.

It is good that my heart can feel the simple and innocent pleasure a man knows when the cabbage he eats at table is one he grew himself. The pleasure he takes only in eating the cabbage but in remembering all the good days, the fine mornings he planted it, the mellow evenings he watered it, and the delight he felt its daily growth.⁵²

On the other hand, Ivan Ilych represents the contrary of Werther since Tolstoy uses him to criticize the middle class of his society. Tolstoy considers this class to be selfish, hypocrite, and greedy. They care little for authentic human relations and favor materialism. This is shown at the beginning when people learn about Ivan Ilych’s death: “And so the first thought that occurred to each one of the gentlemen in this office, learning of Ivan Ilych’s death, was that effect it would have upon their own transfer and promotions.”⁵³ every member thinks about his own interest and attempt to obtain his goals at the expense of the so-called friend.

Ivan gets the job of an official in the sprawling faceless Court Bureaucracy of St-Petersburg. Like the other member of middle class we see in the novel, Ivan cares a lot about

stuff and money. He really enjoys buying things and especially expensive ones that can impress others.

In reality, it was just what is usually seen in the houses of people of moderate means who want to appear rich, and therefore he succeeded only in resembling others like themselves [...] his house was so like the others that it would never had been noticed, but to him it all seemed quite exceptional.⁵⁴

Ivan wants to be recognized and remarked by all his middle class friends so that he forgets about the real sense of life. He is interested on work, social life, and bridge which are very stereotypical for his class. Applying Strindberg's description of the "New Man"; who works hard to change his life for a better one, it is important to say that both Ivan Ilych and Jean deserve this name. Both of the heroes are stronger than other members of their society, because not all the characters want a change in their position. Tolstoy says:

The pleasure connected with his work was the pleasure of ambitions, his social pleasures were those of vanity, but Ivan Ilych's great pleasure was playing bridge. He acknowledges that whatever disagreeable incident happened in his life, the pleasure that beamed like a ray of light above everything else was to sit down to bridge with good players.⁵⁵

Many of Tolstoy's subordinate characters represent the contrary of Goethe's ones. For instance, "Peter Ivanovich, who is the closest friend of Ivan, functions as a representative of Ivan's social milieu."⁵⁶ By reading the novel, we understand that his relationships with others are based on self-interest. He also tries to keep himself from everything which seems unpleasant and live his life in peace and prosperity. When he learns about Ivan's death; the first reaction is to plan the transfer of his brother in law from Kaluga. Also in the funeral, Peter escapes outside because of his fear of death. He imagines what is happened to Ivan could happen with him too: "He felt a certain discomfort and so he hurriedly crossed himself once more and turned and went off the door. Too hurriedly and too regardless of propriety, as he himself was aware."⁵⁷ Whereas Wilhelm reports the best image of friendship with Werther. Though his responses are omitted, we can easily understand that Wilhelm is someone deeply

concerned for his friend's well-being. He supports Werther in every sadness or happy moment that occurs in his life.

The bad friendship relations which has encountered by Ivan Ilych during his life are disappeared when he becomes ill. All the people who Ivan invited, played with, and considered as being intimate friends are careless about him and his illness. No one pities him as he wishes except Grasin, who belongs to the lower class. Gerasim, a clear, fresh peasant, and cheerful person, plays a role of nurse during Ivan's illness. He is too similar to Christine in Strindberg's play. By reading *Miss Julie*, we become aware that Christine feels sad towards her mistress especially because of her behavior and immoral treatment. Gerasim also has some pitiful feeling for Ivan Ilych.

Ivan felt "the presence of Gerasim such a comfort that he wanted to keep him near all time".⁵⁸ By watching him; Ivan recognizes the right life and the true meaning of existence that he never felt. Also he sees in his nurse the strength which is absent now after his illness. In fact, the only character who is not afraid of death is Gerasim because he is correct and a self- sacrifice person.

Final Fall of Young Werther and Ivan Ilych:

In the modernist era, the picture of a tragic hero has changed. Miller for instance, rejects the condition of nobility and concentrates on individualism and self-centeredness.⁵⁹ in modern tragedy also; the hero must suffer without the ability of changing the events which were happened to him. Sigmund Freud claims: "The hero of the tragedy must suffer... to bear the burden of tragic guilt... [that] lay in rebellion against some deity or human authority."⁶⁰ Also, the society where he lives plays a great deal in his downfall. But, the hero never accepts that he has committed a mistake which brought his suffering at the end.

The Sorrows of Young Werther (1774) depicts the degradation from happiness to sadness in a young man's life. At the beginning of the novel, the narrator describes the happy journey Werther had in Wilhelm. Nature, peasants, and children make his days in the

countryside very joyful. Furthermore, Werther feels that his life becomes so blissful after meeting Lotte. Yet, falling in love with an engaged woman, brings Werther's downfall slowly.

Werther says:

Miserable me! I know only too well that the fault is with me alone, not a fault! Enough, the sorrows of all my misery is hidden in myself, as was formerly the source of all my happiness [...] and I know this heart is dead, and thrills of delight radiate from it no longer. My eyes are dry and my feelings no longer refreshed by the relief of my tears.⁶¹

Through the citation we may imagine Werther's depression and sadness due to his unfulfilled love. In fact, the depression raises more and more when Lotte refuses his love and marries Albert. She wants to keep their relation limited to friendship since she is very faithful to her husband. The editor says: "Depression and apathy had more and more rooted themselves in Werther's mind [...] the harmony of his spirit was totally destroyed, the anguish of his spirit was totally remaining powers, his vivacity and his bright intellect."⁶²

Comparing to *Miss Julie*, we notice that Julie becomes sad and feels ashamed only after Jean refusal to escape. She is afraid to be rejected by people when their secret is revealed. Strindberg thinks that the downfall of upper-class citizens is not surprising because of their superior feeling toward middle class employees. "He compares those people to a rotten tree which must be cut for the whole forest's health."⁶³

Werther's thoughts about suicide begin when he feels that he has destroyed the harmonious relationship between Lotte and her husband. He is disgusting with himself because he did not imagine that his love will make Lotte in a bad situation with Albert. Therefore, after a long period of thinking and hesitation, Werther decides to leave this world and sacrifices himself for Lotte's happiness. "And this is the end! My mind is in daze, for a week I have not been able to concentrate. I have no wish, and make no demand. It would be better for me to leave"⁶⁴ Werther finds suicide the exclusive way to end the extreme pain in his heart. He compares mental and emotional pain to physical illness, and the tragic thought

becomes more and more familiar with him. In a letter to Wilhelm, Werther asks forgiveness for all the troubles he gave to his relatives. He writes also a letter for his beloved Lotte and Albert where he announces his decision, but he expects no reaction from both of them.

It is decided, Lotte that I shall die... it has strengthened and confirmed my resolution: to die! Yesterday, when I tore myself away from you... a thousand hopes raged in my soul, but finally it was there, firmly, wholly, the one last thought: to die [...] one of us three must go, and I am to be that one!⁶⁵

Strindberg argues that a modern tragic hero has no acceptance of committing a sin or a mistake. This is the case with our heroes. Even in their last moments alive, Werther and Ivan Ilych do not accept the fact that their life will end so tragically.

And what does it mean that Albert is your husband? Husband! That may be in this world – and in this world it is sin that I love you that I should like to smutch you from his arms into mine, Sin? Very well, I am punishing myself for it, for this sin, which I have tasted in all its rapture, which gave me life and strength.⁶⁶

By the exclamation of sin, we understand Werther's refusal that his love is forbidden. Instead of trying to forget about his love for Lotte, Werther prefers to sacrifice his life. Also in *Miss Julie*, the protagonist Julie chooses to make an end for her life rather escaping to another country. Strindberg uses "different factors which cause the final fall of Julie including the mistaken upbringing and her mother's influence."⁶⁷ On the other hand; we find that also Ivan Ilych does not accept that he has committed any mistake in his pleasant life. "Maybe I did not live as I ought to have done! But how could that be when I did everything properly? ... But I am not guilty! What it is for?" thought Ivan Ilych during his illness."⁶⁸

Ivan's downfall begins when he slips while recharging the curtains. The pain increases more and more until it keeps him on the sofa all the time. Ivan feels a terrible loneliness because no one understands or cares about his sufferings. Everyone in the novel lives his life as he wishes without paying attention to Ivan or his degrading health.

Ivan wishes to understand the purpose of his sufferings. So, he is always questioning the rightfulness of his life, but all his questions remains without answers. "Why hast Thou

done all this? Why hast Thou brought me here? Why, why hast Thou tormented me so terribly?”⁶⁹ Ivan’s life is definitely unhappy because he thinks that he did not leave according to God’s instructions. Also, the ignorance of Praskovya, his two children, and his best friend Peter Ivanovich most irritates Ivan. He remarks that no one feels sorry for him because no one wishes to take his position.

Both Werther and Ivan consider death to be the dignity of human being, but both of them do not understand its meaning or what will happen after they die. Werther is convinced that the only solution to all his sorrows is death. But, he really does not understand what death means. He says: “To die! What does that mean? Look, we are dreaming when we speak of death [...] I have seen many people die, but so limited is the human mind that it has no clear conception of the begging and the end of our existence.”⁷⁰

At the end of the novel, Werther wants to be killed by his beloved Lotte, but this is not possible since she cannot do that. However, he is happy that she has touched the bullet given by Albert.

It is not a question of appendix! Kidney! He said. But, of life and...death. Yes, life was there and now it is going. And I cannot stop it. Yes, why deceive myself? Isn't it obvious to everyone but me that I 'am dying, and that it's only a question of weeks, days... it may happen this moment... I was here now I'm doing there! Where? [...] no, I don't want to.⁷¹

It is obvious that Ivan cannot grasp the idea that he is dying. Instead, he tries to replace the morbid thoughts by healthier and proper ones. “And none of them wish to know about it, and they have no pity for me. No, they are playing.”⁷² By the end of the novel, Ivan frees himself from the falseness that characterizes his life. He finds redemption in death when the society left him alone.

The acceptance of death; however, and recognition of the true nature of life allows for confidence and peace at the moment of death.⁷³ this is what happens to Ivan when he comes to realize that his illness is fatal. After Ivan’s communion with the priest and his spiritual

rebirth, he feels sorry for his son and wife. This reflects Tolstoy's religious idea of living an authentic life. By the end, everything seems clear to his eyes and experience the true joy of authentic human relations. So, we come to understand that which missed in Ivan Ilych's life is compassion.

C. Love and Frustration:

While reading both novels, we deduce that the theme of love is more present in Goethe's novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) rather than Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886). Goethe wrote his novel in a period called "The Enlightenment", which gave rise to a new movement in arts called "Romanticism". The later gives importance to feelings, love and art. So we notice that it is the most prominent theme in his novel. On the other side, the period when Tolstoy wrote *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886), Russia was expressing much turbulence socially and politically⁷⁴. As a result, Tolstoy preferred to depict the real situation in which his society was.

Romanticism is a period which began as a reaction to the Enlightenment's rationality, and it favors emotions and nature. According to Professor Corbally, in lecture 3 of Romanticism:

It's a perfect book of adolescent emotions, and the book was the product of the sort of love lost, hopelessness, melodrama that sends many teens into bouts of depression knowing that *they alone* have experienced the tragedy of love lost so very deeply.⁷⁵

The citation makes clear that Goethe's novel is an early example of romantic literature, and his main character carries romantic characteristics. In fact, Goethe accepts that mind and heart are distinct entities in the human body so he has gathered the intellectual thinking with emotion in his novel. As a result, he has chosen the protagonist Werther to make his point of view more understandable by the readers.

Strindberg describes "love and emotions as being a flourishing flower with good smell, but quickly withers."⁷⁶ This is what happens to Werther during his lifetime in Wahlheim. At

the beginning, Werther feels urgent emotions toward Lotte. He cannot stay far from her, and considers his love to be the most beautiful and devoted one: “Sometimes, I cannot understand how another can, or dares love her, since I alone love her completely and devotedly, knowing only her, and having nothing in the world but her.”⁷⁷ Also Werther does not understand other’s rational reasoning. “People have often reproached me for my irrational way of associating things. A way which, they say often verges on absurdity.”⁷⁸ He considers love as one of the most beautiful feeling someone can acquire in his heart.

Furthermore, Werther rejects every negative approach or advice concerning his love for Lotte. Despite his companion’s advice of being careful of befriending the charming women there, Werther immediately falls in love when he saw her. Through his emotional description, we definitely believe that Werther loves every single part in Lotte. He is fully devoted to her and forgets about the outer world.

I paid her an insignificant compliment while my soul was taking in her whole appearances [...] how delighted I was to look into her dark eyes while she spoke. How my whole soul was fascinated by her warm lips and her glowing cheeks! I was so deeply lost in the excellence of her conversation, that I have often did not catch the very world.⁷⁹

Werther’s love grows so quickly and increasingly that it prevents him from thinking in a logical way, or using the real sense of mind. His life is centered on Lotte and wants to be almost all time in her company, and his whole being is focused only on her. Even the hobbies and activities Werther had, now are less important comparing to the importance of his love.

Strindberg’s play *Miss Julie* deals with a psychological, social and intellectual conflict between man and women.⁸⁰ this is due to Miss Julie’s desire for dominance and power. Her state of mind is mainly due to Julie’s influence of her mother. She is grown by the ideology that women and men are equals. However, this belief will bring her downfall at the end of the play. Just like Werther, we find that Miss Julie is a sensitive girl who wants love because her mother fails in giving her such important feeling.

Werther knows very well that Albert loves Lotte, and that he makes her happy. But, he thinks that his love is more powerful than Albert's. He also doubts that the husband gives her the time and respect which she deserves. "Between ourselves, I wait for the time when Albert is busy, then Zut! I am there and I am always happy when I find her alone."⁸¹ From this citation, we apprehend that in the bottom of his heart, Werther knows that Albert's work serves him a lot in meeting his beloved.

In the novel, Werther treats art and emotion in the same way. He suggests that a person, who has an artistic vision, is absolutely has a full hearted feelings. A painter, for example, must have some imagination based on emotions while choosing his paints. Also a lover has to be a dreamy person while thinking of his beloved. He says: "I should now see her too as soon as possible, or rather, on second thoughts, I shall avoid doing so. It is better for me to see her with the eyes of her lover [...] why should I ruin the beautiful image I have?"⁸² Here, Werther speaks about the farmer lad who loves his master so profoundly. He confirms that he never saw such pure and passionate desire in his life, but considers his story very resembling to the farmer's one. Though Werther wants to see the lucky widow, but he does not want to destroy the image built in his mind.

At the end of the novel, Werther comes to realize that his love cannot be successful. Also, he is convinced that he follows the stormy feelings in his heart rather than a rational logic existing in mind. He feels that his passion makes his life miserable. Even Lotte tries to give him an advice: "Be reasonable! Your intellect, your knowledge, and your talent should offer you such a variety of satisfaction! Be a man! Get side of this hopeless attachment to one who can do anything but pity you."⁸³ It is evident through her words that she cannot love Werther as he wishes, and wants him to forsake his hobbies. She tries to make him look for the right girl who can give him happiness. However, every advice given to Werther by Lotte or his best friend Wilhelm is fruitless since he chooses to make an end to his life.

On the other hand, Tolstoy's novel *The Death of Ivan Ilych* does not really express the theme of love as Goethe's one. Since the main objective of Tolstoy is to depict his society's real situation at that period, little importance is given to emotions. The novel is mainly about class, illness, and death. Actually, Tolstoy mentions that Ivan Ilych's marriage is built on self-interest rather than love. And through the novel we remark the bad relationship between husband and wife.

At the beginning of their married life, everything is so peaceful between Ivan Ilych and Praskovya Fedorovna. However, when she becomes pregnant, Praskovya's behaviors change completely. She becomes jealous and blames her husband for every unpleasant event. As we have said earlier, Werther considers his beloved Lotte the most charming and kindly woman. However, Ivan describes his wife to be the worst one ever. In the first chapter, Tolstoy describes Praskovya carefully during the funeral: her sadness, tears, and everything seemed very exaggerated and false. Instead of feeling sad for her husband's cruel death, Praskovya tries to know the amount of money she can get from the government. Also, when she describes the sufferings and screaming of Ivan, we are convinced that she is sorry for herself not for her dying husband.

During Ivan's malaise and illness, Praskovya does not take care of her husband but arranges parties and sometimes goes to theatre with her daughter. When Ivan tells his wife about the doctor's session, she listens but does not care "Well, I am glad! Mind now your medicine regularly. Give me the prescription and I will send Gerasim to the chemist."⁸⁴ While Werther uses the most beautiful words to show his love for Lotte, Ivan Ilych hates his wife and the hatred grows more and more every day.

He feels for her Ivan Ilych looks at her, scans her all over, sets against her whiteness and plumpness of her hands and neck, the gloss of her hair and the sparkle of her vivacious eyes. He hated her with his whole soul. And the thrill of hatred makes him suffer from her touch.⁸⁵

From what is said earlier, it is recognizable that love is absent and replaced by money and self-interest. Ivan Ilych is a man who thinks more about his future and wants to make it brilliant, and forgets about his family and true human relationships. As a result, he finds himself lonely in the last moments of his life. In *Miss Julie*, love does not and cannot even happen between members of different classes. On one side, the protagonist Julie uses her servant Jean as she wishes, but does not respect him. On the other side, we find that Jean is betraying Julie by making her believe in his love. So, we come to conclude that what exists between the two characters is not real.

End notes:

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³⁸August, Strindberg. *Miss Julie*. 1889, p13.

³⁹Wolfgang von Johann, Goethe. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. 1774, p04.

⁴⁰Wolfgang von Johann, Goethe. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. 1774, p57.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²August, Strindberg. *Miss Julie*. 1889, p12

⁴³Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p372.

⁴⁴Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p381

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⁴⁸Khan, T. *Strindberg's Miss Julie as "A Naturalistic Study"*. Delhi University, 2014, p 414. Accessed on: May 22, 2019.

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⁵²Wolfgang von Johann, Goethe. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. 1774, p19.

⁵³Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p17.

- ⁵⁴Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p20.
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- ⁵⁶http://ddceutkal.ac.in/Syllabus/MA_English/Paper_15.pdf accessed on May 22, 2019.
- ⁵⁷Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p85.
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- ⁶⁵Ibid, p105.
- ⁶⁶Ibid, p101.
- ⁶⁷Strindberg, A. (2014). Strindberg's Miss Julie as "A Naturalistic Tragedy". *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities*, June, 2(2), pp. 413-420. Accessed on May 22, 2019.
- ⁶⁸Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p41.
- ⁶⁹Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p410.
- ⁷⁰Wolfgang von Johann, Goethe. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. 1774, p100.
- ⁷¹Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p394-395.
- ⁷²Ibid, p395.
- ⁷³<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/ivanilych/themes/> accessed on May 22, 2019.
- ⁷⁴<https://vtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/RomanticismVersusEnlightenment> accessed on May 22, 2019.
- ⁷⁵<https://boobsandbooks.wordpress.com/2015/05/11/the-sorrows-of-young-werther-by-goethe/> accessed on May 22, 2019.
- ⁷⁶<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-sorrows-of-young-werther/themes/the-heart-vs-the-mind> accessed on May 22, 2019.
- ⁷⁷Wolfgang von Johann, Goethe. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. 1774, p31.
- ⁷⁸Ibid, p39.
- ⁷⁹Ibid, p15-17.
- ⁸⁰Xiaoshu, X. *A Psychoanalytic Interpretation of Strindberg's Miss Julie*. (2019). Foreign Languages College, University of China, p483. Accessed on May 26, 2019.
- ⁸¹Wolfgang von Johann, Goethe. *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. 1774, p34.
- ⁸²Ibid, p36.
- ⁸³Ibid, p90.
- ⁸⁴Leo, Tolstoy. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1884, p31.
- ⁸⁵Ibid, p52.

Chapter Two: Clash between Society's and Heroes' personal Aspiration

a. Past Mistake :

Arthur Miller states in his essay *The Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949) that modern tragedy represents the psychotic and sociological view of life. Since modern man lives in a skeptical and doubtful manner, he is unable to control himself or decides in a logical way. According to Miller, tragedy becomes a critique on society, on some of its aspects that is perceived as evil or destructive, not just to this individual, but to thousands like him.⁸⁶

Werther is the protagonist of Goethe's novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). He is a common man, well educated and a very open-minded. His vision about life differs from the people surrounding him. He is an irrational man who gives much importance to feelings and sensitiveness. His pleasure consists of enjoying nature and art. In Walheim, the small and pleasant town; Werther meets Lotte and he falls in love with her but sadly she is engaged to someone else. Lotte becomes the weakness of Werther and he does not take her marriage into consideration. He ignores people's advice to keep himself away from her and considers their advice as a disturbance to his happiness. Werther favors his emotions and feelings over logical reasoning. He believes that encountering deep emotions is the best way to experience life.⁸⁷ Werther declares: "My only pride, and the fountainhead of all-all strength, happiness and misery. Anyone can know what I know. My heart alone is my own."⁸⁸

In the first chapters of the novel, Goethe shows the real interest of his tragic hero. In fact, the novel was written in the period of Romanticism, a movement which emphasizes emotions and art over reason. Simply, Goethe's hero in this novel represents the romantic ideas which brought to humanity happiness and prosperity. Werther claims: "what would the world mean to our hearts without love! What is a magic lantern without its lamp!"⁸⁹ Werther's ignorance is shown in many cases in the novel. He rejects everything related to logic, even his family issues and the purpose of his travel. He simply enjoys his life in Walheim with Lotte

and reading Homer's poems. For him, the best life is to enjoy nature and art and ignore everything that may cause stress and negative thinking. Until that moment, Werther's life is very joyful and full of pleasure. Every day he writes a letter to his friend Wilhelm in which he narrates his adventures with Lotte and expresses his deep emotions toward her. Contrary to Werther, his friend Wilhelm is a rational man. He tries to convince Werther to put his passion aside and think logically about his future life and that this crazy love may ruin his life. Wilhelm writes: "Pull yourself together and try to get rid of an unfortunate passion that is bound to burn up all your energy."⁹⁰

From the above quotation, we can understand that Werther ignores any advice concerning his love for Lotte. In fact, Werther is over controlled by his passion and cannot prevent himself from loving her. In this context, Werther writes to his friend saying: "She is sacred to me. Any desire is silenced in her presence. I never know what I feel when I am with her; it is as if my soul were spinning through every nerve. She plays a melody on her clavichord with the touch of an angel."⁹¹ The unconditional love makes him blind and occupies all his thoughts. Even Lotte gives him advice and hopes that he will turn away from his irrationality. Lotte says: "Werther! You can, you must see us again, only do be reasonable. Oh, why did you have to be born with this temper, this uncontrollable clinging passion for everything you touch! Please be reasonable!"⁹²

Despite all these advice, Werther remains faithful to his passion and his uncontrollable emotions. In fact, Werther and Lotte share a lot of similarities; Lotte is a sensible woman, very emotional but she tries to make a balance in her life and be rational. She is prudent in her society by accepting the different laws that were given by the societal institutions. Unlike Werther who declares that society does not exist and its rules have no importance, we find that Lotte respects every law or condition made by her society. According to Werther, these laws are only obstacles in front of the freedom of human beings which make their life very

limited. For him, life is enjoying freedom, love, nature without limitation and society does not provide the best environment for that. These conditions make him very confused and prevent him to find his rightful place. He becomes a victim of the incompatibility between his individual desire for love and socio-moral expectations.”⁹³

Werther’s life becomes absurd and more painful. All his thinking is focused on Lotte although he knows that she loves Albert and they are engaged to be married. He does not focus on his work and he does not succeed to make close connections with Bourgeois people. The rational thinking of people and their focus on materials and gaining money irritates Werther. He prefers the simple life of the peasants; and rejects the aristocratic mode because he finds their people very superficial. In fact, Werther sees the bourgeois people very artificial because they focus on work, how to gain money and look for a higher position. Their greed makes him disgust. The essential for Werther is to live the present moment and there is no need to be afraid of what is coming.

Werther as a modern and ordinary man cannot control his life which turns him dissatisfied and very confused. Werther was incapable to have a normal position within society because he is against its oppressive rules toward the individuals. His thinking makes him different from the other ordinary men and be a common hero in modern world.

In his essay *The Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949), Arthur Miller states that common man is “as apt a subject for the modern tragedy in its highest sense as kings were.”⁹⁴ Also, the tragic heroes are unable to accept anything which may affect their status and freedom in life. This fact makes the tragic hero a fighter to preserve and protect his right self-image in society.

The protagonist of the novel *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886), shares the similarity with Werther to be a tragic hero of the story. Ivan Ilych is a serious man, responsible and very successful in his life .He is a member of the Court of Justice. He wants to achieve his goals in life and be a man of power in society. Ivan Ilych is a decorous man inspiring general respect

and capable of separating the official duties from his private life.⁹⁵ Unlike Werther; who does not have any interest to have a stable and a successful job; Ivan lives an ordinary life because he does what society expects him to do. Ivan does not give much importance to feelings and emotions and he favors all what support his pursuit of a powerful career and high social standing contrary to Werther who prefers emotions over success and holding high position in society. For Ivan, living well is to have a professional success and material possessions. By contrast, “love of family and friends has no much importance in lifetime. In fact, Ivan lived in a superficial world full of pride and vanity.”⁹⁶ He is like many people who live a productive life according to society’s standards since he represents a man of law. As a result, Ivan must be correct and do all his duties perfectly .Tolstoy states:

Even when he was at the school of law, he was just what he remained for the rest of His life: a capable, cheerful, good-natured, and sociable man, though strict in the Fulfillment of what he considered to be his duty: and he considered his duty to be what was so considered by those in authority.⁹⁷

Tolstoy has succeeded to present Ivan’s ignorance of spiritual life and everything related to love or sympathy. He is convinced that the best way to be happy and have a stress less life is to be wealthy, marry a wealthy woman from his own class, and live in a luxurious house full of modern conveniences. Ivan’s life is dominated by the different standards of society. He sees himself through their eyes; his real personality is hidden under the artificial one. There is nothing in Ivan’s house which represents his own personality, everything resembles to what the upper class have. Ivan accepts other’s ideas and makes all his efforts to imitate those people of high position. These characteristics make him different from Werther who totally ignores the opinions of others and denies the existence of society.

Even marriage is considered just the right and the proper thing to do among upper class. Marry a beautiful woman who has a high position in society is such a good deal one can have. As a reaction, Ivan decides to marry because he considers marriage just a stage in life like

most of his surroundings. To emphasize this point the author says: “The marriage was considered the right thing by the most highly placed of his Associates.”⁹⁸

The aristocratic society makes a great influence in Ivan’s life. In order to be a part of their environment, Ivan marries with a beautiful and a clever woman named Praskovya wishing that this engagement may strengthen his position in society. And that is the case in Ivan’s first months of marriage. However, the pleasure and stability do not last so long and his pleasant life starts to vanish.

The first pregnancy makes Ivan’s life miserable because of Praskovya’s change in her mood. She becomes so irritable and demanding. From that moment, Ivan’s life starts to be detestable and marriage becomes like a jail for him. He does not understand praskovya, denies her sensibility, and ignores her needs. Although Ivan knows that praskovya needs more affection and love in this delicate period, but he spends all his time in work.

In fact, he does not make any efforts to find a suitable solution for the difficult problems. Simply, Ivan avoids them to remain comfortable and ignore everything that may disturb his daily comfort. So, Ivan tries to devote all his time to his work and becomes more isolated from his family. He is transformed to a selfish and artificial man. By adopting the values of high society, Ivan has lost the real value of life and his superficiality is increased. Indeed, the tragic hero does not realize that his decorous life may fall down at every moment, and he cannot recover it once again.

b. Fanatic Struggle for Dignity:

In the essay *The Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949), Miller stresses the point on personal dignity and the struggle faced by the tragic hero to secure his position in society and free himself from its laws. Arthur Miller declares:

As a general rule, to which there may be exceptions unknown to me, I think the tragic feeling is evoked in us when we are in the presence of a character who is ready to lay down his life, if need be, to secure one thing his sense of

personal dignity. From Orestes to Hamlet, Media to Macbeth, the underlying struggles that of the individual attempting to gain his rightful position in society.⁹⁹

From Miller's citation, we can understand that the hero in modern tragedy is ready to lay down his life in order to preserve his personal dignity in society. Although it seems to be the act which leads to his downfall at the end, the tragic hero takes any risk to gain his right position. "The tragic hero must be brave enough to fight against the societal rules since the majority of people are dominated by the laws of the community and accept them out of fear"¹⁰⁰ The citation reveals that bravery is the only solution which makes common man a hero while others are dominated by societal rules.

In *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, Goethe depicts Werther's struggle toward his personal dignity. Generally, the hero in modern tragedy is the person who comes against society because he feels that it destroys him and limits his dreams. And that is the case with Werther who fights against society, against the Bourgeois system, and everything that may be an obstacle to his freedom and sense of dignity. Werther loves Lotte but he knows that he will never be with her since she is engaged to be married with the rational gentleman Albert. His passion toward Lotte makes him very oppressed and in a total grief. So, to put an end to the wildness of his passion, Werther decides to leave Lotte and leave her live in peace with Albert. Werther moves to a new town called Weimar hoping to live a respectable life like the others and getting a good job there. Actually, getting a job or having a lot of money does not mean much for him. Instead, Werther moves just to gain some peace in his life and trying to forget Lotte.

Moving to a new town does not change Werther's life for the better as he hoped. In Weimar, he found a lot of obstacles which stand against his wishes. Werther is the type of persons who like simplicity, the thing which he never finds among the bourgeois people. They live a superficial life and give much importance to external appearances. Furthermore, their

life lacks sincerity and full of selfishness which make it difficult for Werther to interact easily with them and adapt their environment. Werther declares: “A person who drudges for the sake of others, for money or honors or what not, without following his own ambition, his own need, is always a fool.”¹⁰¹

Besides, Werther cannot live with sensitive people who abide strictly to societal rules which determine how they should do and how to live. He does not find his freedom at all. Also, he cannot enjoy his new job and finds it boring. Werther remembers his life in Wahlheim and his nice adventures with Lotte and feels lost. As well, he does not find a way to understand himself and be normal person like other people. Werther’s rejection of society and its laws makes him different from his surroundings that live as they should be, not as they want. All these circumstances prevent Werther to find his real place among people and to have a stable life.

Sadness and hopelessness encounter Werther’s life everywhere. His interaction with the aristocratic people makes him aware of their superficiality and their excessive rationality. All their desires are focused on how to gain money and have material possession. For them, the individual may lose his dignity in society if he does not possess money and a home full of luxuries. Werther disgusts their lifestyle and they are a group of people who value future gains over pleasure in present. In this context, Werther claims:

What dreadful people there are whose minds are completely absorbed in matters of Etiquette, whose thoughts and aspirations all year long turn over the single problem how to push oneself one chair higher at table [...] the fools, who do not understand that actual rank does not matter at all that he who occupies the top very rarely plays the chief role.¹⁰²

The Bourgeois society does not suit Werther. Goethe in the novel shows the injustice of upper class and that society may destroy people’s life as the case with the poor Werther. Werther “annoyed at the society where he finds himself mainly after getting mocked at a social party by his aristocratic friend Fraulein von B, the poor Werther felt snubbed by the

entire aristocratic milieu.”¹⁰³ With a lot of guilt and anger he expresses his feelings to his friend Wilhelm by sending him a letter, he says:

I wanted one person to dare reproach me so I could drive a dagger through his body; if I could see blood I would feel better. Oh, I have grabbed a knife a hundred times to ease this oppressed heart! They tell of a noble race of horses that, when they are terribly driven and overheated, instinctively bite open a vein to help them breathe. I often feel that way, I would like to open one of my veins, to bring me eternal freedom.¹⁰⁴

Miller in his citations claims that society may be the cause in ruining person's life and makes it very complex. The terrible experience in Weimar obliges him to leave because Werther realizes that the Bourgeois environment does not suit him. So, he chooses to go away and resign from his job because he wants to preserve the respect and dignity that still in him after the embarrassment of his new friend. His dignity comes before everything, job, friends and wealth. To mingle with them again means to put his dignity in a lower position. According to Miller, in the modern tragedy, the hero never accepts the position that may ruin his self-esteem. As a reaction, Werther tries to escape and forget about his experiences. He does not want to be like them or imitate them and share the same vision on life as they do. To be superficial and greedy is not Werther's nature so he chooses to leave searching for his real place in society far from Weimar. He writes to his friend:

I have requested my dismissal from Court [...] tell my mother gently; I cannot help myself, and she will just have to accept that I cannot help her either. Of course she will be hurt. To see the fine career that her son was just beginning, leading to privy councilor and ambassador, suddenly brought to a halt.¹⁰⁵

The disillusionment of the poor Werther is obvious. He is lost again due to his failure in improving himself in society as other people do. Werther becomes miserable and frustrated after his experience in Weimar with the bourgeois people. He takes a decision to come back to Walheim where he can enjoy nature and the most important thing is to be near Lotte, “knowing that he is reopening the gates of his passion, intending to lose himself entirely to his devotion to her.”¹⁰⁶ Werther declares: “I only want to be closer to Lotte once more; that is all.”¹⁰⁷

The wishes of poor Werther will not be able to realize again because Lotte and Albert become married and forming a small family. This news causes sadness for Werther but he cannot deny his happiness when he sees Lotte again. His love prevents him to see the reality and accept it. And he still has a hope that Lotte loves him and she will be happier with him rather than Albert. Werther declares: "She would have been happier with me than with him. Oh, he is not the man to satisfy all the needs of her heart. A certain lack of sensitiveness, a certain lack of- call it as you will-." ¹⁰⁸

Werther is still struggling to win Lotte's heart despite all the obstacles that prevents their relation. To be clear, Werther in fact does not want to understand Lotte's vision of life. She believes that life does not stand to emotions only and that reason plays a crucial role in its harmony. In addition, accepting some rules helps the individual to make a balance in his private life and in society also. However, for Werther it is not the case because he considers these laws just elements to disturb people's freedom. He goes angry when Lotte asks him to stop his visits because she is a married woman, and it is inappropriate to spend too much time with another man. Werther does not want to change his mind because after all they are just in unfair conventions. For him, accepting these rules is considered as a betrayal to his personal dignity and self-esteem. But in his inner thoughts and consciousness, Werther knows that he will lose this battle against society, and this belief in dignity will led to his down fall.

After Lotte's visit, his intention to kill himself is strengthened and welcomes death with open arms. He feels that his life become miserable more than before and lost its meaning. Goethe describes the situation of Werther saying: "Depression and apathy had more rooted themselves in Werther's mind, had become tangled and gradually had taken hold of his whole being. The harmony of his spirit was totally destroyed." ¹⁰⁹

The poor Werther accepts his failure in life and his only wish is to live in dignity with the woman he loves. Nevertheless, he is forced to choose another direction in his life which may

release his pain forever. Werther's dignity derives him to put an end to his misery and his passion by preferring to die calmly. In the last chapters of the novel, Werther shows his dislike for everything around him and he feels dissatisfied all the time. His only happiness is Lotte, however; she refuses him and chooses to be with another person.

Arthur Miller in his essay *The Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949) explains the rules for the tragic life. Miller argues that the hero is a person who lays down his life to secure his personal dignity. In *the Sorrows of Young Werther*, the protagonist Werther presents the ideal tragic hero because he prefers death over living in misery and dissatisfaction.

Ivan Ilych, the tragic hero in Tolstoy's novel *the Death of Ivan Ilych*, shares a common point with Werther which consists of struggling to secure the personal dignity in society. He is a very successful man, very correct and so witty with people. "His ambition in life helped him to be a respected person in his society. He attracted to people of high social standing."¹¹⁰ He assimilates their values, behavior and views on life. Ivan is an official for provincial governor in the province and it is his first position after graduating from school of law. His life is very stable and pleasant; he tries to be a brilliant personality in the eyes of his fellows and colleagues. Although he has some problems at home with his wife, he ignores her because she ruins his comfort and stability all the time. So, he spends most of his time at work and amusing himself with friends. Ivan is a serious man and performs his professional duties with exactness since he is a man of law. However, this seriousness at work does not help him to get the post of presiding judge in 1880. Ivan feels angry because of the betrayal of his colleagues, despite his correctness and honesty at work. For the first time, he is convinced that society is unfair with him. Ivan's pleasant life is interrupted. His experience that year causes him a deception and severe depression. His situation gets worse even his salary becomes not enough to cover his family's living expenses. In chapter three, Tolstoy writes:

This was in 1880, the hardest year of Ivan Ilych's life. It was then that it became evident on the one hand that his salary was insufficient for them to

live on, and on the other hand he had been forgotten, and not only this, but that what was for him the greatest and most cruel injustice appeared to others a quite ordinary occurrence.¹¹¹

Like Ivan who decides to leave to countryside to his brother's house in order to save some money, Werther also resigns from his job after the bad experience with the Bourgeois people. Ivan abandons his official post to seek another one. He becomes depressed at the country side, dissatisfied, and thinks about the injustice done to him in his previous work. The narrator says: "In the country, without his work, he experienced ennui for the first time in his life, and not only ennui but intolerable depression, and he decided that it was impossible to go on living like that, and that it was necessary to take energetic measures."¹¹²

The two heroes experience a lot of events in their society which decrease their hope and cause deception. Ivan decides to challenge and put his despair apart. In Petersburg, Ivan has the chance to find a pleasant job with a higher salary unlike Werther who comes back to the place where his misery begins. Tolstoy depicts the ambition and the courage of his character in life in modern society as kings were in the classical age. Although he lives a bad moments, he continues to struggle. So, Ivan has succeeded to escape the rural life which bores him so much because it does not offer him many opportunities like the life in the town. In this stage of Ivan's life, we can grasp a clear contradiction between Ivan and Werther. Both of them are heroes but each one lives his heroic life differently. Ivan still hopes to be a wealthier man who belongs to the upper class despite all the obstacles contrary to Werther who escapes the bourgeois environment which is full of greedy people and seeks for simplicity far from disturbance.

In the third chapter of *The Death of Ivan Ilych*, Tolstoy describes Ivan's happiness after getting a better job in the department of justice. Ivan becomes happy because he can punish the previous colleagues that failed to appreciate him, and regains his respect and personal dignity. The decorous life of Ivan Ilych shows its face again, and it seems to be better than

before because his salary is higher in his new job. Ivan's dream is to be a part of the bourgeois class in order to improve himself and preserve his dignity in society. Ivan begins to realize his dreams and finds a delightful house for his family in St .Petersburg. He took a great pleasure to decorate it before the arrival of his wife and his children. Ivan wants to be satisfied in his life as before, he decorates his house as one who belongs to the Bourgeois class. In this context, the narrator writes:

In reality it was just what is seen in the houses of people of moderate means who want to appear rich, and therefore succeed only in resembling others like themselves: there were damasks, dark wood, plants, rugs, and dull and polished bronzes all the things people of a certain class have in order to resemble other people of that class.¹¹³

Ivan Ilych's pleasure consists of trying to be accepted by people of the higher rank. He feels satisfied when those people treat him as one who belongs to their group. Ivan values himself through their eyes contrary to Werther who did not give any importance to others, mainly the bourgeois people, with whom he dislike living and interaction. Ivan works hard to preserve his status and dignity among the upper class and does everything that makes him as one of their own. To be like them, he spends a lot of money to organize dinner parties and invites a lot of Bourgeois people just to show his is wealth and preserve his social image.

The pride and vanity of Ivan Ilych may play a crucial role in his downfall. Ivan's misery begins while he was decorating his new house and loses his balance slightly in trying to put up the drapes. Then he falls down and knocks his side against the knobs of the window frame.¹¹⁴ this simple accident as it seems to be, causes a general change in Ilych family. Their decorous and pleasant life starts to vanish.

Ivan's ignorance of the real sense of life and his family's issues affects even his health. His family continues to live happily in their new life, making friends with the right sort of people and Ivan does his job perfectly. "He lives life as he believes life should be lived: easily, pleasantly and decorously."¹¹⁵ The situation of Ivan starts to show its seriousness by

the beginning of the fourth chapter in the novel. The pain in his left side becomes regular and his taste seems to be undesirable. The pleasure of Ivan to live starts to decrease; he alienates himself from people around him, and prefers to stay alone in his room. Ivan does not understand what happens to him and tries to convince himself that is an appendix problem as the doctors say. He tries to control himself all time and to be the old Ivan, but he fails. Even at work, Tolstoy's hero cannot concentrate as he used to be. So in order to put an end to his doubts and negative thinking, Ivan tries to be optimistic. In one night, Ivan thinks about his situation while lying in his bed and replies:

I will take up my duties again after all I used to live by them. And banishing all doubts he would go to the law courts, enter into conversation with his colleague and sit carelessly as was his wont, scanning the crowd with a thoughtful look and leaning both his emaciated arms on the arms of his oak chair; bending over as usual to a colleague and drawing his papers nearer he would interchange whispers with him, and then suddenly raising his eyes and sitting erect would pronounce certain words and open the proceedings.¹¹⁶

The pleasant life is vanished suddenly, and Ivan feels that he lost his dignity because he can no longer do anything as he used to do. He becomes dependent on other people to take care of him. Ivan suffers both physically and mentally which leads to his downfall. His sufferings from fear, loneliness, and loss of dignity diminish the sense of living. He loses hope in his capacities and tries to convince himself that it is just a difficult period. However, Ivan realizes that things cannot return as they were, and it is a serious problem.

Ivan Ilych and Werther, represent the tragic heroes of the two tragedies. The struggle to secure their personal dignity and searching for finding a rightful position in life led them to their downfall. Arthur Miller states in his essay that in "the modern tragedy the tragic hero loses his life while attaining to secure his personal dignity and searching to gain his rightful position in society"¹¹⁷ because of his dissatisfaction of his current position in life as the case with Ivan Ilych.

c. Final Fall

In his essay *The Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949), Arthur Miller claims that modern tragedy is concerned with the common man in modern world. He contradicts the Aristotelian ideas about tragedy and retains only one concept which is the catastrophic ending of the tragic hero. This means the death of the tragic hero because of his struggling within society to secure the personal dignity, and gain the rightful position among other people.

Both novels present the downfall of two ordinary men that seek to find their real belonging in modern society despite their sorrows. Goethe's hero, Werther, loses hope in life and sees it meaningless. The refusal of Lotte to accept and understand his deep passion marks the end of Werther's life. Werther's emotions are very sincere toward Lotte but society will not let them to be together. Lotte is very prudent in her life and very faithful to her husband. A relationship with another man may cause a deep damage in her marriage, and also may lose her self-respect in society. Werther thinks that in a triangular relation one must die to leave the others live in peace. His love toward Lotte makes him a miserable and depressed person. Werther, in order to put an end to his terrible suffering, decides to put an end to his life. He prefers dying over his horrible life which is full of pain and deception. After a deep thinking about his terrible life and self-destruction, he realizes that he does not find the real place in society although he is surrounded by many people, he feels alone. It is clear that the real cause of Werther sorrows is his deep love to Lotte but on the other hand, society plays a role in his self destruction.

The injustice of society may destroy people's life as Arthur Miller claims in his citations. Werther as an ordinary man lives many experiences which increases his pain and depression, mainly with the bourgeois people with whom he feels lost. At the end of the novel, Werther is sure that his dream to be with the beloved Lotte and find his real place among people can never be fulfilled. Werther takes his own life by using Albert's pistols. Unfortunately, he

knows that this act will cause a great pain among people around him mainly Lotte, but his sorrows are much painful to resist. In the last chapter of the novel, Goethe describes Lotte's mood after giving the pistols to Werther's servant because she has an intuitive impression of what will happen. Goethe narrates:

Lotte was thunderstruck; she staggered when she tried to get up, and almost fainted. Trembling, she walked slowly to the wall, took down the pistols, wiped off the dust, hesitated, and would have hesitated still longer if Albert's questioning glance had not urged her on. She gave the fatal weapons to the young man without saying a word; and when he had left the house, she gathered her work together and went to her room in a state of unspeakable anxiety.¹¹⁸

Goethe ends his tragedy by a letter in which the tragic hero expresses his last wishes before putting an end to his misery. Werther shoots himself with the gun handed by the lovely Lotte and this causes a big surprise for his surroundings. Before he dies, poor Werther wrote a letter to Albert and Lotte where he expresses his regret in making their life miserable and wishes a farewell to everyone. He also wrote to his best friend Wilhelm saying: "Wilhelm, I have seen the fields, the woods, and the sky for the last time. Farewell, you, too! Dear mother, forgive me! Comfort her, Wilhelm! God bless you both!"¹¹⁹

Furthermore, Werther asks Albert for forgiveness because he disturbed the peace of his home, but he will make them happy again because he is living. Werther wrote a note for Lotte's father where he asks him to take care of his dead body and to be buried under the two linden trees in the churchyard. He says in his letter to Lotte with deep affection:

His last words were written to Lotte to express his deep passion to her and that he hopes to live happily. But in fact, his death will cause for Lotte a deep grieve which can be never forgotten. Werther put an end to his internal pain and died after 12 hours of agony. Even in his death experiences suffering and pain, he took a lot of time to die and release his pain.¹²⁰

His death causes a big grief mainly in Lotte's heart and falls enters in a severe depression. Werther is died alone and buried alone. His death is miserable as his life used to; no one

attended the funeral, neither Lotte nor Albert. Werther is buried in the place which is mentioned in his letter without a church service because suicide is considered a crime and forbidden by religion.

By analyzing his last letter, we can notice that Werther assimilates himself to the noble man as he sacrifices his blood for the happiness of Lotte. He was brave enough to end his life to let others live in peace and prefers dying in dignity over living a miserable life. Arthur Miller claims that the modern world is full of heroes and modern tragedy is a process designed to represent the sufferings and the social experiences of the ordinary people in modern period, as kings were in the classical one.

Tolstoy's novel also depicts the downfall of an ambitious man who lived an incorrect life with much pride and vanity. Ivan Ilych, who lost his life after three months of pain and misery, is considered a tragic hero in modern literature. In his last days, Ivan hates everything even his friends and family due to the terrible pain. No morphine or opium could calm it. The terrible situation of Ivan makes him dependent on others because he cannot take care of himself anymore. During this period, Ivan Ilych becomes aware of the hypocrisy and the lack of compassion of his surroundings, mainly his wife who ignores his pain and suffering. He hates her because she is not caring about him and she seems to be happy for that. The narrator writes:

Ivan finds his comfort only with Gerasim, the young peasant who takes care of him all the time with much love and sympathy. The young's man's company is one of Ivan Ilych's few pleasures: "Health, strength, and vitality in other people were offensive to him, but Gerasim's Strength and vitality did not mortify but soothed him".¹²¹

Gerasim does all his duties with pleasure and dignity and he treats Ivan as a small child during his last days. He is a simple man who has faith and accepts the idea that everyone will die one day. Gerasim considers death as a part of life which cannot be denied contrary to

other members of Ivan's family, colleagues and surely Ivan who deny its existence. Gerasim says openly: "Shall all of us die, so why should I grudge a little trouble."¹²²

The simple peasant helps Ivan to attain his spiritual freedom through honesty and kindness. Gerasim is the only person in Ivan's life that inspires reality and helps him to face death contrary to others who ignores him. Praskovya tries to show that she is caring about him and asks him to take the necessary medicines in the right time, but Ivan feels his real ignorance. Furthermore, his daughter who is also careless as her mother enjoys her time with her fiancé, and she is impatient with her father because his illness interferes with her happiness.

Ivan realizes that his life is full of superficial people and his illness helps him to discover the truth around him. Ivan's pain increases at night and feels a terrible suffering. He is always dreaming about death and misery. The narrator says: "He and his pain were being thrust into a narrow, deep black sack, but though they were pushed further and further in they could not be pushed to the bottom. He was frightened yet wanted to fall through the sack, he struggles but yet co-operated."¹²³

Ivan is afraid of dying and asks God why all this happens to him. He does not want to die; rather wants to come back to his old and decorous life. He feels that he is not ready to die contrary to Werther who welcomes death with open arms and decides to put an end to his misery. During his last days, Ivan starts to question himself about his life before his sickness. As a result, he realizes that his life is empty and artificial: "As soon as the period began which had produced the present Ivan Ilych, all that had then seemed joys now melted before his sight and turned into something trivial and often Nasty."¹²⁴

He recognizes that his life does not contain the necessary meaning to sustain him through sufferings and death¹²⁵. He did not live correctly and ignores his consciousness, spirituality and cares only about external appearances. He regrets about his past lifetime and asks Praskovya for forgiveness because he is neither a perfect husband for her, nor a good father to

their children. He has succeeded to realize his past mistakes under the pressure of his daily pain, and listened to his inner conscience. Ivan prefers to die with dignity instead of regrets about his past life. He feels some comfort when he asks for forgiveness, it is just a simple act, but has a deep effect on him: “Yes, I am making them wretched, they are sorry, but it will be better for them when I die.”¹²⁶

After his realization about the false life he had, Ivan starts to think about his family and their happiness. He thinks that his death is the suitable solution for them and for himself because he regrets his past and he wants to put an end to his mistakes. Leaving his family live in peace is Ivan’s last wish like Werther who considers his death a best solution for him and for his horrible experiences in life. and for the others also to live happily.

The two tragedies end with a tragic ending, the death of the hero after bad experiences and pain as Miller claims that in “*the modern tragedy the common man*”: “Experience the real life in the modern world which is full of skepticism and doubt”¹²⁷. Society may become the cause of self-destruction and disillusionment of the individual and the modern tragedy may consider as a critique to society and how it can influence people positively and negatively.

Endnotes:

⁸⁶<https://interestingliterature.com/2017/10/03/a-short-summary-of-arthur-miller-tragedy-and-the-common-man/> accessed on June 05, 2019.

⁸⁷<https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-sorrows-of-young-werther-summary-analysis.html> accessed on June 05, 2019.

⁸⁸Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.1774, p62.

⁸⁹*Ibid*, p31.

⁹⁰*Ibid*, p35.

⁹¹*Ibid*, p31.

⁹²*Ibid*, 88.

⁹³Hoefle,A.J,(1800).*The Liberating Masculinity of Goethe’s Werther and its Repression in Modern China*. In: Cho, J.M. and McGetchin, D .T .(eds). London and New York: Palgrave Macmillon: Palgrave Series in Asian Studies, pp.151-169. Accessed on June 05, 2019.

⁹⁴Arthur Miller, *The Tragedy and The Common Man*. 1949, p01.

⁹⁵<https://books.google.dz/books>. Accessed on June 05, 2019.

- ⁹⁶<https://www.encyclopedia.com/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/death-ivan-ilych> accessed on June 05, 2019.
- ⁹⁷Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. 1886, p372.
- ⁹⁸*Ibid*, p375.
- ⁹⁹Arthur Miller, *The Tragedy and The Common Man*.1949, p01
- ¹⁰⁰*Ibid*, p01
- ¹⁰¹Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. 1774, p32.
- ¹⁰²*Ibid*, p53.
- ¹⁰³<https://www.booksontrial.com/the-sorrows-of-young-werther-the-passages-that-inspired-suicide/> accessed on June 05, 2019.
- ¹⁰⁴Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. 1774, p59-60.
- ¹⁰⁵Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.1886, p60.
- ¹⁰⁶<https://owlcation.com/Humanities/Emotion-Art-and-the-Self-in-The-Sorrows-of-Young-Werther>. Accessed on June 05, 2019.
- ¹⁰⁷Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.1774, p63.
- ¹⁰⁸*Ibid*, p64.
- ¹⁰⁹*Ibid*, p80
- ¹¹⁰<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/ivanilych/section2/> accessed on June 07, 2019.
- ¹¹¹Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.1886, p379.
- ¹¹²*Ibid*, p379.
- ¹¹³*Ibid*, p382.
- ¹¹⁴*Ibid*, p382.
- ¹¹⁵*Ibid*, p383.
- ¹¹⁶Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.1886, p397.
- ¹¹⁷Arthur Miller, *The Tragedy and The Common Man*.1949, p03.
- ¹¹⁸Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.1774, p104.
- ¹¹⁹*Ibid*, p105.
- ¹²⁰*Ibid*, p106.
- ¹²¹Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.1886, p406.
- ¹²²*Ibid*, p401.
- ¹²³*Ibid*, p371.
- ¹²⁴*Ibid*, p410.
- ¹²⁵<https://scrapsfromtheloft.com/2017/10/20/ivanilych-the-tragedy-of-an-unexamined-life/> accessed on June 07, 2019.
- ¹²⁶Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.1886, p418.
- ¹²⁷Arthur Miller, *The Tragedy and The Common Man*.1949, p03.

V. General Conclusion:

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) and Leo Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886) are among the most significant works of modern literature. Through this research paper, we have undertaken a comparative study of the two tragic heroes Werther and Ivan Ilych. In order to analyze the modern tragic hero and to grasp the possibility of tragedy to be produced in modern times, we have relied on August Strindberg's and Arthur Miller's theories on modern tragedy.

Our dissertation is divided into two chapters. In the first, we have delineated the harsh aristocratic conditions on Werther and Ivan Ilych's personalities. In fact, we have noticed that Goethe's main character rejects all the aristocratic values and considers upper class people selfish and hypocrite. On the other side, we have found that Tolstoy's protagonist, Ivan Ilych is extremely adapted to those standards and even forgets his principals. Ivan Ilych represents Strindberg's ideas of a "New Man" since he wants to improve his social status to achieve his dream of being an important member of society. Furthermore, through our analysis we come to conclude that both novels deal mainly with class tensions. It appears that the main similarity between both heroes is their downfall. Both Werther's and Ivan's lives ends tragically, and both did not accept being guilty. This point makes them modern tragic heroes as Strindberg defines it.

In the second one, we have studied the relation of the hero to society and its effect on him. In both novels, the two authors describe the life of a two ordinary men whom their life ends tragically. The tragic end of the two heroes symbolizes their sacrifice for dignity; they preferred dying rather living in a miserable condition and past regrets. The notion of modern tragedy differs from the classical one and these differences are distinguished by Arthur Miller in his essay *The Tragedy and the Common Man* (1949). He emphasizes that common man is suitable to represent the skeptical life in modern society. By applying Miller's theory in this

chapter, we have noticed that the two novels are vivid examples of modern life and depict its real picture.

Our piece of research in comparing Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* and Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* is nearly handled for the first time in our department. We have attempted to study the two novels by relying on Miller and Strindberg theories of modern tragedy. We have made our best to make the two authors known for our readership, but because of lack of time and scope, our paper did not deal with all the issues depicted in the two books. So, it remains an interesting area for further investigation which may be done by the coming students. Otherwise, we invite them to undertake the issue of moral sufferings in Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) and Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886).

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