

at San Diego and Berkeley. Alastair Hannay has also translated Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, *The Sickness unto Death* and *Papers and Journals for Penguin Classics*. His other publications include *Mental Images - A Defence*, *Kierkegaard (Arguments of the Philosophers)*, *Human Consciousness*, *Kierkegaard: A Biography*, and *Kierkegaard and Philosophy: Selected Essays*, as well as articles on diverse themes in philosophical collections and journals.

SØREN KIERKEGAARD

Either/Or

A Fragment of Life

Edited by

VICTOR BREMITA

Abridged, Translated and with an Introduction and Notes by
ALASTAIR HANNAY

PENGUIN BOOKS

PENGUIN BOOKS
UK | USA | Canada | Ireland | Australia
India | New Zealand | South Africa

Penguin Books is part of the Penguin Random House group of companies
whose addresses can be found at global.penguinrandomhouse.com.



Penguin
Random House
UK

This translation first published 1992
Reprinted 2004

042

Copyright © Alastair Hannay, 1992
All rights reserved

The moral right of the author has been asserted

Printed in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-0-140-44577-0

www.greenpenguin.co.uk



Penguin Random House is committed to a sustainable future for our business, our readers and our planet. This book is made from Forest Stewardship Council® certified paper.

CONTENTS

<i>Translator's Note</i>	vi
<i>Introduction</i>	i

PART ONE: CONTAINING THE PAPERS OF A

Preface	27
1 Diapsalmata	39
2 The Immediate Erotic Stages or the Musical Erotic	59
3 Ancient Tragedy's Reflection in the Modern Shadowgraphs	137
4 The Unhappiest One	163
5 Crop Rotation	209
6 The Seducer's Diary	223
7 The Seducer's Diary	243

PART TWO: CONTAINING THE PAPERS OF B: LETTERS TO A

1 The Aesthetic Validity of Marriage	381
2 Equilibrium between the Aesthetic and the Ethical in the Development of Personality	475
3 Last Word	591
4 The Edifying in the Thought that Against God We Are Always in the Wrong	595

Notes	610
-------	-----

3 ANCIENT TRAGEDY'S REFLECTION IN THE MODERN

An Essay in the Fragmentary Endeavour

Read before
*Sympantekromenoi*¹

If someone said the tragic will always be the tragic, I wouldn't object too much; every historical development takes place within the embrace of its concept. At least assuming that what he says makes sense, and that the twice-repeated 'tragic' isn't just a meaningless bracket surrounding a contentless nothing, the meaning must be that the content of the concept didn't turn the concept off its throne but enriched it. But then surely no observer has failed to notice something — what the reading and theatre-going public indeed already thinks it has legal possession of as a dividend for the labours of the culture experts — namely that there is an essential difference between ancient and modern tragedy. If one were to go on and absolutize this difference, and exploit it first stealthily and then perhaps forcibly to separate the ancient from the modern conception of the tragic, this would be no less absurd than in the former case, for one would be forgetting that the foothold one needs is the tragic itself, and that far from their being separable, this was precisely what bound the ancient and the modern conceptions together. And it must be a warning against any such partisan attempt to separate them that aestheticians still constantly invoke Aristotle's apparatus of conditions and criteria as exhaustive of the concept. All the more necessary this warning in that it must seize people with a certain sadness that, however much the world has changed, the concept of the tragic nevertheless remains essentially unchanged, just as weeping still comes no less naturally to man.

Reassuring as this may seem to one who wishes no divorce, let alone a separation, the same difficulty just circumvented reappears in another and even more dangerous form. No one at all familiar with modern aesthetics, and who therefore recognizes how closely Aristotle's principles are adhered to and still constantly apply in modern aesthetics,² will deny that we still keep on going back to Aristotelian aesthetics, not just from dutiful observance or force of habit. But when we look more nearly at these principles the difficulties are immediately evident. The criteria are quite general in kind, and one could easily agree entirely with Aristotle and yet in another sense disagree. So as not to anticipate the discussion

that follows by mentioning right at the start the subject that will provide its content, I shall illustrate what I mean by making the corresponding point about comedy. If an aesthetician of the past had said that what comedy presupposes is character and situation, and that what it gives rise to is laughter, this is something we can appeal to over and over again; but as soon as one reflects on how different the things can be that make people laugh, one is quickly apprised of the criterion's colossal scope. Anyone who has ever observed others' or his own laughter, anyone who in the course of such observation has kept his eye less on accidental differences than on the general features, whoever has noted with psychological interest how different the things are that each generation finds laughable, will be readily convinced that this unchanging criterion of comedy — that it gives rise to laughter — embraces a high degree of changeableness respecting how the world consciousness conceives the laughable, yet without the differences being so far-reaching that the bodily expression of laughter might be weeping. The same, then, is true of the tragic.

The gist of this little inquiry will, in the main, be not so much the relation between the ancient and the modern conception of the tragic, as an attempt to show how the special characteristic of ancient tragedy can be discerned in the modern, so that the true tragedy in the latter may come to light. Yet however hard I try to ensure that it does come to light, I shall refrain from prophecies about this being what the age demands. Nothing, then, will result from its coming to light; all the more so that the tendency of the whole age is rather towards comedy. Human existence is considerably undermined by doubt on the part of its subjects and isolation is consistently gaining the upper hand, the best confirmation of which is to take note of all the various *social exertions*. By aiming to oppose the tendency to isolation, such exertions serve only to confirm it, as far as they do so by adopting such misguided means. To be isolated is always to assert oneself numerically; when you assert yourself as one, that is isolation. I'm sure all friends of association will concur with me in this, even if they are incapable of seeing that just the same isolation obtains when hundreds want to assert themselves as nothing but hundreds. To a number itself the number is always a matter of indifference, whether it is one or a

thousand or the whole world's population specified merely as a number. This spirit of association is therefore in principle just as revolutionary as the spirit it would counteract. When David wanted to savour properly his power and glory, he had his people counted.³ In our age you might say, on the contrary, that to feel their importance in the face of a greater power, people count themselves. But all these associations bear the stamp of contingency and are usually formed for some accidental purpose or other, naturally that of the association itself.

The numerous associations thus prove the age's dissolution, and themselves help to hasten it. They are the infusoria in the organism of the state which indicate that it is indeed in dissolution. When did political clubs begin to be general in Greece if not just when the state was on the point of dissolution? And hasn't our own age a remarkable similarity to the one which not even Aristophanes could make more ludicrous than in fact it was? Hasn't that invisible and spiritual bond loosened which held the state together politically? Isn't the power of religion, which held fast to the invisible, weakened and destroyed? Haven't the statesmen and clergy this in common, that like the augurs of old they find it hard to look at one another without smiling?⁴ Our age certainly has one peculiarity to a greater degree than Greece, namely that it is more melancholy and hence deeper in despair. Our age is thus melancholy enough to realize there is something called responsibility and that it has some significance. So while everyone wants to rule, no one wants the responsibility. It is still fresh in our memory that a French statesman, on being offered a portfolio for a second time, declared that he would accept on the condition that the secretary of state be made responsible.⁵ The King of France, we all know, has no responsibility, while his minister has; the minister does not want to be responsible but wants to be minister provided the secretary of state becomes responsible. Naturally, the end result is that the watchmen or street wardens become responsible.⁶ What a subject for Aristophanes, this upside-down tale of responsibility! On the other hand, why is it the government and rulers are so afraid of assuming responsibility, if not because they fear an opposition party that seeks to evade responsibility through its own ladder of command? When one imagines these

two powers in mutual opposition but unable to come to grips with each other because the one constantly evades the other, because the one only makes its obeisances before the other, a set-up like that would certainly not lack comic effect. This is enough to show that the real bonds of the state have dissolved, yet the isolation thus incurred is naturally comic, and the comedy is that subjectivity wants to assert itself as mere form. All isolated individuals always become comic by asserting their own accidental individuality in the face of evolutionary necessity. There is no doubt that it would be most deeply comical to have some accidental individual come by the universal idea of wanting to be the saviour of the whole world. On the other hand, the appearance of Christ is in a certain sense the deepest tragedy (in another sense it is infinitely more), because Christ came in the fullness of time, and — a point I must particularly stress in connection with what follows — He bore the sins of all the world.

Aristotle, we know, mentions two things, *dianoia* and *ethos* [thought and character], as the source of the action in tragedy. But he remarks also that the main thing is the *telos* [end or completion], and the individuals do not act in order to portray characters but the latter are included for the sake of the action.⁷ One quickly notes a departure here from modern tragedy. The peculiarity of ancient tragedy is that the action does not proceed from character alone, that the action is not reflected enough in the acting subject, but has a relative admixture of suffering. Nor is it the case that ancient tragedy has developed dialogue to the point of exhaustive reflection, so that everything can be absorbed in that. In the monologue and the chorus it does in fact possess the separate elements of dialogue. Whether the chorus approaches the substantiality of epic or the exaltation of lyric, it still points in a way to that extra which will not be absorbed in individuality. The monologue, for its part, has more of the concentration of lyric and its extra is what will not be absorbed in action and situation. In ancient tragedy the action itself possesses an epic feature; it is just as much event as action. The reason is of course to be found in the fact that in the ancient world subjectivity was not fully conscious and reflective. Even though the individual moved freely, he still depended on substantial categories, on state, family, and destiny.

This category of the substantial is the authentically fatalistic element in Greek tragedy, and its true peculiarity. The hero's downfall is therefore not the outcome simply of his own action, it is also a suffering, while in modern tragedy the downfall of the hero is really not suffering but action. In modern times, therefore, it is really situation and character that predominate. The tragic hero is subjectively reflected in himself, and this reflection hasn't simply refracted him out of every immediate relation to state, race, and destiny, often it has refracted him even out of his own preceding life. What interests us is some certain definite moment of his life as his own deed. Because of this, the tragic element can be exhaustively represented in situation and words, there being nothing whatever left over of the immediate. Hence modern tragedy has no epic foreground, no epic heritage. The hero stands and falls entirely on his own deeds.

The significance of this brief but adequate account is to illuminate a difference between ancient and modern tragedy which I consider of great importance: the different kinds of tragic guilt. Aristotle, as we know, requires the tragic hero to have *hamartia* [guilt]⁸. But just as the action in Greek tragedy is something intermediate between activity and passivity, so too is the guilt, and in this lies the tragic collision. On the other hand, the more the subjectivity becomes reflected, or the more one sees the individual, in the Pelagian manner, left to himself, the more the guilt becomes ethical.⁹ Between these two extremes lies the tragic. If the individual is entirely without guilt, the tragic interest is removed, for the tragic collision loses its power. If, on the other hand, he is guilty absolutely, he can no longer interest us tragically. So it is surely a misunderstanding of the tragic that our age strives to have the whole tragic destiny become transubstantiated in individuality and subjectivity. One turns a deaf ear on the hero's past life, one throws his whole life upon his shoulders as his own doing, makes him accountable for everything; but in so doing one also transforms his aesthetic guilt into an ethical guilt. The tragic hero thus becomes bad. Evil becomes the real object of tragedy. But evil has no aesthetic interest, and sin is not an aesthetic element. No doubt this mistaken endeavour has its origin in the whole tendency of our age to work towards the comic. The comic is to be found precisely in the isolation. If you try to let the

tragic take effect inside this isolation, you get the evil in all its baseness, not the properly tragic guilt in its ambiguous innocence. It isn't hard to find examples when one looks about in modern literature. Thus that in many ways brilliant work of Grabbe's, *Faust und Don Juan*, is really built around the notion of evil.¹⁰ However, so as not to argue from just a single work, I shall indicate this instead in the general consciousness of the age as a whole. If one wanted to portray someone upon whom an unhappy childhood had had so disturbing an effect that the experiences in question were the cause of his downfall, a thing like that would simply have no appeal for the present age — and not of course because it was badly handled, for I can certainly take for granted that it would be handled with distinction, but because our age sets another standard. It won't listen to such effeminacy; it holds the individual responsible for his own life, without further ado. So if he goes to the dogs it isn't tragic but bad. It leads you to think this must be a kingdom of gods, this generation in which I too have the honour to live. However, that is by no means the case; the energy, the courage, which would thus be the creator of its own fortune, yes, the creator of itself, is an illusion and in losing the tragic the age gains despair. There is a sadness and a healing power in the tragic which truly one should not despise, and when one wants, in the larger-than-life manner of our age, to gain oneself, one loses oneself and becomes comical. Every individual, however original, is still a child of God, of his age, of his nation, of his family, of his friends. Only thus does he have his truth. If in all this relativity he tries to be the absolute, he becomes ridiculous. In language one sometimes finds a word which, used in a particular case because of the construction, ends up by having independence declared on its behalf, if you will, as an adverb in that particular case.¹¹ For the experts a word like this acquires an emphasis and weakness it never recovers from. Should it seek recognition as a substantive all the same and insist on its right to be inflected in all five cases, it would be truly comic. And so, too, with the individual when, fetched perhaps with difficulty from the womb of time, he wants in this monstrous relativity to be absolute. But if he renounces the claim of the absolute in order to become relative, then *eo ipso* the tragic is his, even if he were the happiest of individuals; indeed I would say that it is only when the individual has the tragic that he becomes happy.

The tragic contains an infinite leniency; really it is what divine love and mercy are, but from the aesthetic perspective on human life; it is even milder, and so I would say it was a maternal love which soothes the troubled. The ethical is strict and harsh. So if a criminal pleads to the judge that his mother had a propensity for stealing, and particularly at the time she was carrying him, the judge secures the Board of Health's opinion of his mental condition and decides that what he is dealing with is a thief and not a thief's mother. Since we are talking about a crime, the sinner can't very well flee to the temple of aesthetics, and yet the aesthetic will put in an extenuating word for him. Still, it would be wrong for him to seek comfort there, for his path leads him not to the aesthetic but to the religious. The aesthetic lies behind him, and it would be a new sin for him now to grasp at the aesthetic. The religious is the expression of a paternal love, since it contains the ethical but in a mollified form. And mollified by what? Precisely by what gives the tragic its leniency: continuity. But while the aesthetic gives this pause before the profound opposition of sin is pressed home, the religious does not give it until after this opposition is seen in all its fearfulness. Just when the sinner is about to sink under the general sin which he has taken upon himself, because he felt that the more guilty he became the better his prospects for salvation — in that same moment of terror, consolation appears in the fact that it is a general sinfulness which has asserted itself, now also in him. But this is a religious consolation, and he who thinks to attain it in some other way, for instance by aesthetic volatilization, has taken this consolation in vain and doesn't really possess it. In a sense, then, it is a very proper tactic of the age to hold the individual responsible for everything. But the unfortunate thing is that the age does not do it deeply and inwardly enough, and hence its vacillation. It has enough conceit of itself to disdain tragedy's tears, but it also has enough self-conceit to dispense with divine mercy. But then what is human life when we take these two things away? What is the human race? Either the sadness of the tragic, or the profound sorrow and profound joy of religion. Or is that not the peculiarity of everything that emanates from that happy people — a melancholy, a sadness, in its art, in its poetry, in its life, in its joy?

In the preceding I have mainly sought to underline the difference

between ancient and modern tragedy, so far as this becomes clear in differences in the tragic hero's guilt. This is really the focus from which all other characteristic differences radiate. If the hero is unequivocally guilty, the monologue disappears and with it destiny. The thought is transparent in the dialogue, and the action in the situation. The same can be put from another point of view with regard to the mood evoked by the tragedy. Aristotle, as we know, requires that tragedy should arouse fear and pity in the spectator. I recollect that Hegel aligns himself with this view in his *Aesthetics* and embarks on a double, though not particularly exhaustive, reflection on each of these points.¹² In respect of Aristotle's distinction between fear and pity, one could interpret fear as the mood accompanying the particular event, and pity as the mood forming the definite impression. It is the latter that I have most in mind, because it is this that corresponds to tragic guilt, and so it has the same dialectic as that concept. Now Hegel observes in this connection that there are two kinds of compassion, the ordinary kind concerned with the finite aspect of suffering, and true tragic pity. This, indeed, is correct, but for me of less importance, since the common emotion is a misunderstanding which can just as well apply to ancient as to modern tragedy. What Hegel adds regarding true pity, however, is straight to the point: 'True pity, on the contrary, is sympathy at the same time with the sufferer's justification.'¹³ While Hegel considers compassion in general and its differences in individual variation, I prefer to underline differences in compassion as they are related to differences in tragic guilt. To make the point in a trice I shall let the passion in the word 'compassion' be split up and ascribe the sympathy which the word expresses to every man, without saying anything about the mood of the spectator that might be traced to his contingency but in such a way that, in explaining the difference in his mood, I also express the difference in the tragic guilt.

In ancient tragedy the sorrow is deeper, the pain less; in modern tragedy, the pain is greater, the sorrow less. Sorrow always contains something more substantial than pain. Pain always indicates a reflection on suffering which sorrow does not know. It is very interesting, from a psychological standpoint, to watch a child when it sees an older person suffer. The child hasn't sufficient reflection to feel pain,

and yet its sorrow is infinitely deep. It hasn't sufficient reflection to have a conception of sin and guilt, so when it sees an older person suffer, it does not occur to it to think about it, and yet when the cause of the suffering is concealed from it, there is a dim presentiment of it in its sorrow. Such too, though in complete and profound harmony, is the Greek sorrow, and that is why it is at one and the same time so gentle and so deep. But when an older person sees someone younger, a child, suffer, his pain is greater, his sorrow less. The more clear the conception of guilt, the greater the pain and the less profound the sorrow. Applying this, then, to the relation between ancient and modern tragedy, one has to say: in ancient tragedy, the sorrow is deeper, and in the corresponding consciousness, too, the sorrow is deeper. For one must always bear in mind that the sorrow lies not in me, but in the tragedy, and that to understand the deep sorrow of Greek tragedy I must enter into the Greek consciousness. Often, then, it is surely only affectation when so many people profess to admire Greek tragedy; for it is obvious that our age has at least no great sympathy with the real character of Greek sorrow. The sorrow of Greek tragedy is deeper because the guilt has the ambiguity of the aesthetic. In modern times the pain is greater. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,¹⁴ that is what one might say about Greek tragedy. The wrath of the gods is terrible, yet the pain is not so great as in modern tragedy, where the hero suffers all his guilt, is transparent to himself in his own suffering of his guilt.

Here, as with tragic guilt, we must show what is the true aesthetic sorrow and what the true aesthetic pain. Now, obviously the bitterest pain is remorse, but remorse has an ethical, not an aesthetic, reality. It is the bitterest pain because it has all of guilt's total transparency, but just because of this transparency it has no aesthetic interest. Remorse has a holiness which obscures the aesthetic. It won't be seen, least of all by the spectator, and it requires quite a different kind of self-activity. True, modern comedy has sometimes presented remorse on the stage, but this just shows lack of judgement on the part of the author. Perhaps it has to do with the thought of the psychological interest one may have in seeing remorse portrayed, but then again, psychological interest is not the aesthetic. This is part of the confusion evident in so many ways in our age: we look

for a thing where we ought not to look for it; and worse, we find it where we ought not to find it. We want to be edified in the theatre, to be influenced aesthetically in church, to be converted by novels, to enjoy books of devotion; we want philosophy in the pulpit and the preacher in the professorial chair. This pain is accordingly not aesthetic pain, yet clearly it is this the modern age works towards as its highest tragic interest. The same is true of tragic guilt. Our age has lost all the substantial categories of family, state and race. It has to leave the individual entirely to himself, so that in a stricter sense he becomes his own creator. His guilt is therefore sin, his pain remorse. But the tragic is then done away with. And what is, in a stricter sense, the tragedy of suffering has really lost its tragic interest, for the power from which the suffering comes has lost its meaning, and the spectator cries: 'Heaven helps those who help themselves!' In other words, the spectator has lost his compassion. But compassion is, in an objective as well as a subjective sense, the authentic expression of the tragic.

For clarity's sake, and before going further with this account, I shall identify true aesthetic sorrow a little more closely. Sorrow has the opposite movement to that of pain. So long as one doesn't spoil things out of a misplaced mania for consistency — something I shall prevent also in another way — one may say: the more innocence, the deeper the sorrow. If you press this too far, you destroy the tragic. There is always an element of guilt left over, but it is never properly reflected in the subject; which is why in Greek tragedy the sorrow is so deep. In order to prevent misplaced consistency, I shall merely remark that exaggeration only succeeds in carrying the matter over into another sphere. The synthesis of absolute innocence and absolute guilt is not an aesthetic feature but a metaphysical one. This is the real reason why people have always been ashamed to call the life of Christ a tragedy; one feels instinctively that aesthetic categories do not exhaust the matter. It is clear in another way, too, that Christ's life amounts to more than can be exhausted in aesthetic terms, namely from the fact that these terms neutralize themselves in this phenomenon, and are rendered irrelevant. Tragic action always contains an element of suffering, and tragic suffering an element of action; the aesthetic lies in the relativity. The identity of an absolute action and an absolute suffering is beyond the powers of aesthetics

and belongs to metaphysics. This identity is exemplified in the life of Christ, for His suffering is absolute because the action is absolutely free, and His action is absolute suffering because it is absolute obedience. The element of guilt that is always left over is, accordingly, not subjectively reflected and this makes the sorrow deep. Tragic guilt is more than just subjective guilt, it is inherited guilt. But inherited guilt, like original sin, is a substantial category, and it is just this substantiality that makes the sorrow deeper. Sophocles' celebrated tragic trilogy, *Oedipus at Colonus*, *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*, turns essentially on this authentic tragic interest. But inherited guilt contains the self-contradiction of being guilt yet not being guilt. The bond that makes the individual guilty is precisely piety, but the guilt which he thereby incurs has all possible aesthetic ambiguity. One might well conclude that the people who developed profound tragedy were the Jews. Thus, when they say of Jehovah that he is a jealous God who visits the sins of the fathers on the children unto the third and the fourth generations,¹⁵ or one hears those terrible imprecations in the Old Testament, one might feel tempted to look here for the material of tragedy. But Judaism is too ethically developed for this. Jehovah's curses, terrible as they are, are nevertheless also righteous punishment. Such was not the case in Greece, where the wrath of the gods has no ethical character, but aesthetic ambiguity.

In Greek tragedy itself we find a transition from sorrow to pain, and as an example of this I must mention the *Philoctetes*.¹⁶ This is, in the stricter sense, a tragedy of suffering. But here, too, there is a high degree of objectivity. The Greek hero reposes in his fate, his fate is unchangeable, there is nothing further to be said about it. This factor furnishes the element of sorrow in the pain. The first doubt with which pain really begins is this: why has this befallen me, why can it not be otherwise? It is true that in the *Philoctetes* there is — and this is something that has always struck me as remarkable and as essentially distinguishing this piece from the immortal trilogy — a high degree of reflection: the masterly portrayal of the self-contradiction in his pain, which contains so deep a human truth while an objectivity still sustains the whole.¹⁷ Philoctetes' reflection doesn't become absorbed in itself, and it is typically Greek that he complains that no one understands his pain. There is an exceptional

truth in this, and yet it is just here that the difference shows between his pain and the reflective pain that always wants to be alone in its pain, which seeks a new pain in this solitude of pain.

True tragic sorrow accordingly requires an element of guilt, true tragic pain an element of innocence. True tragic sorrow requires an element of transparency, true tragic pain an element of opaqueness. This I believe best indicates the dialectic in which the categories of sorrow and pain come in contact with each other, as well as the dialectic inherent in the concept of tragic guilt.

Seeing it is contrary to the spirit of our Society to produce closely coherent works or greater wholes. Seeing it is not our purpose to labour upon a Tower of Babel which God in His righteousness can descend upon and destroy. Seeing that we, conscious of the justness of that confusion of tongues, recognize the fragmentary as a characteristic of all human striving in its truth and realize that it is precisely this that distinguishes it from the infinite coherence of Nature, that an individual's wealth consists precisely in his power of fragmentary extravagance, and that the producer's enjoyment is also that of the receiver, not the laborious and meticulous execution, nor the protracted apprehension of this execution, but rather the production and enjoyment of that gleaming transience which for the producer contains something more than the completed effort, since it is the appearance of the Idea, and which for the recipient, too, contains a surplus, seeing that its fulguration awakens his own productivity — since all this, I say, is contrary to our Society's penchant (and since, indeed, even the period just read could well be regarded as a disquieting attack upon the interjectory style in which the idea breaks out but without breaking through, a style which in our Society is accorded official status), then, having called attention to the fact that my conduct still cannot be called rebellious, seeing that the bond holding this period together is so loose that the intermediary clauses stand out in a sufficiently aphoristic and arbitrary manner, I shall merely call to mind that my style has made an attempt to appear to be what it is not — revolutionary.

This Society demands at every one of its meetings a renewal and rebirth, and for the following reason: that its inner activity may be rejuvenated by a new description of its productivity. Let us then describe our purpose as essays in the fragmentary endeavour, or in

the art of writing posthumous papers. A fully completed work has no relation to the poetic personality; with posthumous papers one constantly feels, because of their broken-off, desultory character, a need to imagine the personality as being a part. Posthumous papers are like a ruin, and what haunt could be more natural for the interred? The art is therefore artistically to produce the same effect, the same carelessness and contingency, the same anacoluthic flight of thought. The art is to produce an enjoyment which never actually becomes present, but always has in it an element of the past, so that it is present in the past. This is already expressed in the word 'posthumous'. In a sense everything a writer produces is posthumous, yet one would never think of calling a completed work posthumous, even if it possessed the accidental quality of not having been published in his lifetime. Also, it is, I assume, a characteristic of all human productivity, as we have apprehended it, that it is an inheritance, since it is not men's privilege to live in the everlasting sight of the gods. Inheritance [*Efterlædenskab*] is therefore what I shall call what is produced among us, an artistic inheritance; negligence [*Efterlæthed*], indolence, I shall call the genius that we appreciate: *vis inertia*,¹⁸ the natural law that we worship. In saying this I have complied with our sacred customs and rules.

So draw nearer to me, dear *Symparanketromeni*, gather round me as I send my tragic heroine out into the world, as I give to the daughter of sorrow as her wedding gift a dowry of pain. She is my creation, yet her outline is so vague, her form so nebulous, that each one of you is free to fall for her and to love her in your own way. She is my creation, her thoughts are my thoughts, and yet it is as if I had lain with her in a night of love, as if she had entrusted me with her deep secret, breathed forth both it and her soul in my embrace, and as if the same instant she was transformed before me, had vanished so that her reality could only be traced in the mood that lingered on; instead of the opposite being true, that she was born to greater and greater reality from my own mood. I put words in her mouth, and yet to me it is as though I abused her confidence, she seems to stand reproachfully behind me; yet it is the other way around, in her secrecy she becomes more and more visible. She is my possession, my lawful possession, and yet sometimes it is as if I had crept into her confidence, slyly, as if I must constantly look round

to find her behind me; and yet it is the other way around, she is constantly in front of me, she comes into existence only when I bring her forth. She is called Antigone. This name I retain from the ancient tragedy, which in general I shall follow, except that everything will be modern. But first a remark. I use a feminine figure because I really believe that a feminine nature is best suited to showing the difference. As a woman, she will have the substantiality needed for sorrow to be revealed, but as a member of a reflective world, she will have reflection enough to experience pain. In order to experience sorrow, tragic guilt must vacillate between guilt and innocence; what conveys the guilt into her consciousness must always be some substantial feature. But since, in order to experience sorrow, tragic guilt must have this vagueness, reflection must not be present in its infinitude, for then it would refract her out of her guilt, since reflection in its infinite subjectivity cannot allow the element of inherited guilt to which sorrow is due to remain. Since, however, her reflection is awakened, it will not refract her out of her sorrow but into it, at every moment transforming her sorrow into pain.

Labdacus's family, then, is the object of the angry gods' indignation.¹⁹ Oedipus has killed the sphinx, liberated Thebes; he has murdered his father, married his mother, and Antigone is the fruit of that marriage. Thus it is with the Greek tragedy. Here I depart from it. I keep all the facts of the case just as they are, yet everything is different. That he has slain the sphinx and liberated Thebes, we all know. And Oedipus lives honoured and admired, happy in his marriage with Jocasta. The rest is concealed from the eyes of men, and no presentiment has ever summoned this horrible nightmare out into reality. Only Antigone knows it. How she has come to know it falls outside the tragic interest, and everyone is free to concoct his own explanation. At an early age, before she is yet fully matured, vague suspicions of this horrible secret have now and then gripped her soul, until with a single blow certainty casts her into the arms of anxiety. Here, straightforwardly, I am given my definition of the modern idea of the tragic. For anxiety is a reflection, and in this it differs essentially from sorrow. Anxiety is the organ through which the subject appropriates sorrow and assimilates it. Anxiety is the energy of the movement by which sorrow bores its way into the heart. But the movement is not swift like the arrow's, it is

gradual. It is not once and for all, but in constant becoming. As a passionate, erotic glance desires its object, anxiety looks at sorrow in order to desire it. As a quiet, incorruptible glance of love is preoccupied with the beloved object, anxiety preoccupies itself with sorrow. But anxiety contains something extra which makes it cling even more strongly to its object, for it both loves and fears it. Anxiety has a double function. It is the movement of discovery that constantly touches, and by fingering it, discovers sorrow by going around it. Or anxiety is sudden, positing the whole sorrow in the here and now, yet in such a way that this here and now instantly dissolves into succession. Anxiety in this sense is a genuinely tragic category, and this is where the old saying *quem deus vult perdere, primum demens*²⁰ comes properly into its own. The fact that anxiety is a phenomenon of reflection is something language itself indicates; for I always say 'to be anxious about something', thus separating the anxiety from that about which I am anxious; I can never use anxiety to refer to its object. Whereas, if I say 'my sorrow', this, on the contrary, can express what I sorrow over just as much as my sorrow over it. Anxiety, furthermore, always involves a reflection upon time, for I cannot be anxious about the present, only about the past or the future; but the past and the future, holding on to each other so tightly that the present vanishes, are reflective phenomena. Greek sorrow, on the contrary, like the whole of Greek life, is in the present tense, and therefore the sorrow is deeper but the pain less. So anxiety is essential to the tragic. Hence Hamlet is deeply tragic because he suspects his mother's guilt. Robert le Diable asks how he could ever have come to cause so much evil.²¹ Hogné, whom his mother had begotten with a troll, happening to see his image in the water, asks his mother how his body acquired such a shape.²²

The difference is now plain to see. In the Greek tragedy Antigone is not at all concerned about her father's unhappy destiny. This rests like an impenetrable sorrow over the whole family. Antigone lives as carefree a life as any other young Greek girl; indeed the chorus pities her, seeing her death is preordained, because she is to quit this life at so early an age, quit it without having tasted its most beautiful joys, evidently forgetting the family's own deep sorrow. That doesn't at all imply frivolity, or mean that the particular individual

stands alone by himself, unconcerned with his relationship to the family. It is authentically Greek. Life-relationships are assigned to them once and for all, just like the heaven under which they live. If that is dark and cloudy it is also unchangeable. It gives the soul a keynote, and that is sorrow, not pain. In Antigone, tragic guilt focuses on a definite point: that she had buried her brother in defiance of the king's prohibition. If this is seen as an isolated fact, as a collision between sisterly affection and piety and an arbitrary human prohibition, then the *Antigone* would cease to be a Greek tragedy, it would be an altogether modern tragic subject. What in the Greek sense provides tragic interest is the fact that, in the brother's unhappy death, in the sister's collision with a single human circumstance, there is a re-echoing of Oedipus's sorry fate; it is, one might say, the afterpains, the tragic destiny of Oedipus, ramifying in every branch of his family. This totality makes the spectator's sorrow infinitely deep. It is not an individual that goes under, but a little world; the objective sorrow, set free, now strides forward with its own terrible consistency, like a force of nature, and Antigone's sorry fate is like an echo of her father's, an intensified sorrow. So when Antigone, in defiance of the king's prohibition, resolves to bury her brother, we see in this not so much a free action on her part as a fateful necessity which visits the sins of the fathers on the children. There is indeed enough freedom here to make us love Antigone for her sisterly love, but in the necessity of fate there is also, as it were, a higher refrain enveloping not just the life of Oedipus, but all his family too.

So while the Greek Antigone lives a life free enough from care for us to imagine her life in its gradual unfolding as even being a happy one if this new fact had not emerged, our Antigone's life is, on the contrary, essentially over. It is no stingy endowment I have given her, and as we say that an aptly spoken word is like apples of gold in pictures of silver, so here have I placed the fruit of sorrow in a cup of pain. Her dowry is not a vain splendour which moth and rust can corrupt,²³ it is an eternal treasure. Thieves cannot break in and steal it; she herself will be too vigilant for that. Her life does not unfold like that of the Greek Antigone; it is not turned outward but inward. The scene is not external but internal, a scene of the spirit.

Have I not succeeded, dear *Sympantekromeni*, in arousing your

interest in such a girl, or must I resort to a *captatio benevolentiae*?²⁴ She, too, does not belong to the world she lives in; however flourishing and healthy, her real life is clandestine. She, too, though living, has in another sense departed; quiet is that life and hidden, not even a sigh does the world hear, for her sigh is hidden in the privacy of her soul. I need not remind you that she is by no means a weak and sickly woman, quite the contrary, she is vigorous and proud. Perhaps nothing ennobles a human being so much as keeping a secret. It gives a man's whole life a meaning, though one that it has only for him. It saves him from every vain regard for his environment; sufficient unto himself, he rests blessed in his secret—we can almost say that, even if his secret were the most sinister. Such is our Antigone. Proud of her secret, proud that she has been chosen to save in so remarkable a manner the honour and esteem of the house of Oedipus; and when the grateful people cheer Oedipus and applaud him, she is conscious of the role she is playing, and her secret sinks deeper into her soul, even more inaccessible to any living being. She feels how much has been placed in her hands, and this gives her the larger-than-life dimension needed for her to engage us as a tragic personality. She must interest us as an individual figure. More than just a common young girl, she is yet a young girl; she is a bride, but in all innocence and purity. As a bride, woman achieves her destiny, and ordinarily a woman can interest us only to the degree that she is brought into relation to this her destiny. But there are analogies here. One says of a bride of God that it is faith and spirit that provide the substance in which she rests. I would call our Antigone a bride in perhaps an even more beautiful sense, indeed she is almost more than that, she is mother; in the purely aesthetic sense she is *virgo mater*,²⁵ she bears her secret under her heart, out of sight and undetected. She is silence precisely because she is secretive, but this self-withdrawal, implicit in silence, makes her larger than life. Proud of her sorrow, she is jealous over it, for her sorrow is her love. Yet her sorrow is not a dead, immovable possession: it is constantly in motion, it gives birth to pain and is born in pain. As when a girl resolves to dedicate her life to an idea, when she stands there with the sacrificial wreath upon her brow she is a bride, for the great inspirational idea transforms her and the votive wreath is like a bridal garland. She knows not any

man, yet she is a bride; she knows not even the idea that inspires her, for that would be unwomanly. Yet she is a bride.

Such is our Antigone, the bride of sorrow. She consecrates her life to sorrow over her father's destiny, over her own. A misfortune such as has overtaken her father calls for sorrow, yet there is no one who can grieve over it, because there is no one who has knowledge of it. And as the Greek Antigone cannot bear to have her brother's corpse flung away without the last honours, so she feels how cruel it would be should no one come to know of this; it troubles her that no tears should be shed; she practically thanks the gods because she has been chosen as this instrument. Thus is Antigone great in her pain. Here, too, I can indicate a difference between Greek and modern tragedy. It is genuinely Greek for Philoetes to complain that there is no one who knows what he suffers; it is an expression of a deep human need to want others to realize this. Reflective grief, however, has no such desire; it does not occur to Antigone to wish that anyone should learn of her pain. But she feels it in relation to her father, she feels the justice of having to suffer grief, which is just as proper aesthetically as that a man should suffer punishment if he has done wrong. So while it is the idea of her being about to be buried alive that first wrings from the Antigone of the Greek tragedy this outburst of grief:

O hapless alien,

Lodged with neither mortal man nor corpse,

Not with the living nor yet with the dead,²⁶

our own Antigone can say this about herself all her life. The difference is striking: there is a factual truth in the former's assertion that makes the pain less. If our Antigone were to say the same, it would be unreal, but it is this unreality which is the real pain. The Greeks do not express themselves figuratively, precisely because the reflection that goes with this was not present in their lives. So when Philoetes complains that he lives solitary and forsaken on a desert island, what he says is also an outward truth. But when our Antigone feels pain in her solitude, it is only in a figurative sense that she is alone. Yet just for that reason, her pain is real pain.

As far as the tragic guilt goes, on the one hand it lies in the fact that she buries her brother, but also partly in the context of her

father's sorry fate, which is presupposed from the two preceding tragedies. Here again I come to the peculiar dialectic which puts the guilt of Oedipus's house in relation to the individual. This is hereditary guilt. Dialectics is commonly considered fairly abstract; one thinks usually of logical steps. However, one soon learns from life that there are many kinds of dialectic, that nearly every passion has its own. So the dialectic which puts the guilt of the race or family in connection with the particular subject, so that the latter is not just a passive sufferer under it — for that is a natural consequence one would try in vain to steel oneself against — but bears the guilt along with the suffering, participates in it, this dialectic is foreign to us, does not compel us. But if one were to envisage a rebirth out of ancient tragedy, then every individual would have to be concerned about his own rebirth, not just in a spiritual sense, but in the definite sense of a rebirth from the womb of family and race. The dialectic which puts the individual in connection with family and race is no subjective dialectic, for what that does is precisely to remove the connection and take the individual out of the network of relationships. No, it is an objective dialectic. Essentially it is piety, and to preserve piety cannot be considered in any way harmful to the individual. In our time one allows in respect of nature what one is loth to allow in matters of spirit. Still, one would not wish to be so isolated, so unnatural, as not to regard the family as a whole, of which one must say that if one member suffers, then all suffer. This one does involuntarily, and why else should a particular individual fear lest another member of the family brings disgrace upon it, if not because he feels that he, too, will suffer the disgrace? This suffering the individual must obviously take along with him, whether he wants to or not. But since the point of departure here is the individual not the family, this enforced suffering is *maximum*; one senses that mankind cannot be complete master over its natural circumstances, yet still wants to be so as far as possible. If, on the other hand, the individual looks on the natural tie as a factor involved in his own truth, the way to express this in the spiritual world is: the individual participates in the guilt. This is an implication many people would perhaps be unable to grasp, but then neither could they grasp the tragic. If the individual is isolated, he is either absolutely the creator of his own destiny, in which case

nothing tragic remains, but only the evil — for it is not even tragic for an individual to be blinded by or engrossed in himself, it is his own doing — or individuals are nothing but modifications of the eternal substance of existence, and so once again the tragic is lost.

Regarding tragic guilt, a difference in the modern version comes readily to view only after the latter has discerned the ancient within it, for only then can we speak of this. The Greek Antigone participates in her father's guilt through filial piety, as does also our modern one. But for the Greek Antigone her father's guilt and suffering is an external fact, an immovable fact, which her sorrow does not alter (*quod non voluit in pectore*);²⁷ and in so far as she herself, as a natural consequence, personally suffers under her father's guilt, this again is an altogether external fact. With our Antigone it is otherwise. I assume now that Oedipus is dead. Even while he lived Antigone had been aware of this secret but lacked the courage to confide in her father. His death has deprived her of the only means by which she could be freed from her secret. Confiding it now to any living being would be to disgrace her father; the meaning her life acquires for her is in its dedication, through her inviolable silence, to showing him the last honours daily, almost hourly. There is one thing, however, of which she is ignorant. She does not know whether her father himself knew. This is the modern feature; the disquietude in her sorrow, the ambiguity in her pain. She loves her father with all her soul, and this love draws her out of herself and into her father's guilt. The fruit of such love is a sense of alienation from mankind; she feels her own guilt the more she loves her father; only with him can she find rest, so that, equally guilty, they would grieve with each other. But while her father was living she had been unable to confide her sorrow to him, for she did not know whether he knew about it, and so there was a possibility of plunging him into a similar pain. And yet, was he less guilty for not knowing about it? The movement here is constantly relative. Had Antigone not known the circumstances with certainty, she would lack significance, she would have nothing but a suspicion to struggle with, and in that there is too little of the tragic to interest us. But she does know everything; yet even in this knowledge there is still an ignorance which can always keep sorrow in motion, always transform it into pain. In addition, she is constantly at odds

with her external surroundings. Oedipus lives in the people's memory as a king favoured by fortune, honoured and fêted; Antigone herself has admired as well as loved her father. She takes part in every celebration in his honour, she enthuses over her father as none other in the realm, her thoughts constantly return to him, she is praised throughout the land as a model of a loving daughter. Yet this enthusiasm is her only way of giving vent to her sorrow. Her father is always in her thoughts, but how is he in those thoughts? — that is her painful secret. And yet she dare not give in to her sorrow, dare not openly fret; she feels how much depends on her, she fears that if anyone saw her suffering, people would pick up the trail, and so from this side, too, what she gets is not sorrow but pain.

Expanded and reworked in this way, I think we can very well find interest in Antigone. I think you will not reproach me for frivolity or paternal partiality when I believe that she might well try her hand at the tragic disciplines and venture an appearance in a tragedy. Hitherto she has only been an epic figure, and the tragic in her only held an epic interest.

Nor is it all that hard to find a context in which she could fit. In this respect we can just as well make do with the one provided by the Greek tragedy. She has a sister living. Let's have her rather older than Antigone and married. Her mother could also be living. That these will naturally always be minor characters goes without saying, as also the fact that in general the tragedy acquires an epic element, as the Greek one does, though it need not be so very conspicuous on that account. Still, the monologue will always play a principal role here, even if the situation ought to come to its assistance. One has to imagine everything united around this one main interest which comprises the content of Antigone's life, and when everything has been put in order, the question arises: how is the dramatic interest to be brought home?

Our heroine, as she has presented herself in the foregoing, is set on wanting to skip over an element in her life; she is on the point of wanting to live in a wholly spiritual manner, something nature does not tolerate. With her depth of soul she needs to love with an extraordinary passion, if she does fall in love. Here, then, I have the dramatic interest — Antigone is in love, and I say it with pain,

Antigone is mortally in love. Here manifestly is the dramatic collision. In general one should be rather more particular about what to refer to as dramatic collision. The more sympathetic the colliding forces are, and the deeper but also more homogeneous they are, the more significant the collision. So she is in love, and the object of her affection is not ignorant of this fact. Now, my Antigone is no ordinary woman, and so her dowry, too, is unusual — it is her pain. Without this dowry she cannot belong to a man, that she feels would be too high a risk; to conceal it from such an observer would be impossible; to want to have concealed it would be to sin against her love. But can she belong to him with it? Dare she confide it to any human being, even to a beloved husband? Antigone has strength; the question is not whether to reveal something of her pain for her own sake, to lighten her heart, for this indeed she can bear without support. But can she justify this to the dead? She herself would suffer, too, in a way, by confiding her secret to her husband, for her own life too is grievously interwoven in it. This, however, does not trouble her. The only question concerns her father. From this angle, therefore, the collision is of a sympathetic nature. Her life, formerly peaceful and quiet, now becomes violent and passionate, always of course within herself, and her words here begin to fill with pathos. She struggles with herself, she has been willing to sacrifice her life to her secret, but now what is demanded as a sacrifice is her love. She wins — that is to say, the secret wins and she loses. Then comes the second collision, because in order for the tragic collision to be really profound, the colliding forces must be homogeneous. The collision described up to now lacked this quality, for the real collision is between her love for her father and her love for herself, and whether her own love is not too great a sacrifice. The other colliding force is the sympathetic love for her beloved. He knows he is loved, and boldly sues for her hand. Doubtless her reserve puzzles him, he notes that there must be some quite special difficulties, but not insurmountable ones. The all-important thing for him is to convince her how much he loves her, yes, persuade her that his life is over if he must waive his claim to her love. His passion becomes at last something almost unreal, but then only the more inventive because of her resistance. Every assurance of his love increases her pain, with every sigh he buries the dart

of sorrow ever deeper into her heart. He leaves no means untried to persuade her. Like everyone else, he knows how much she loved her father. He meets her at Oedipus's grave, to which she has repaired to ease her heart, where she abandons herself to her yearning for her father, even though this very yearning is mingled with pain, for she knows not how a new encounter with him might be, whether he was cognisant of his guilt. Her lover surprises her and beseeches her in the name of the love with which she enfolds her father; he sees that the impression he is making on her is an unusual one, but he persists, he puts all his hope in this means, and he doesn't know that in doing so he has defeated his own intentions.

What the interest focuses on, then, is his being able to wrest her secret from her. Letting her become momentarily deranged, and so betray it in that way, would not help. The colliding forces hold their own so evenly that action becomes impossible for the tragic individual. Her pain is now increased by her love, by her sympathetic suffering with the one she loves. Only in death can she find peace; thus her whole life is consecrated to sorrow, and it is as though she had set a limit, a dike against the woe that might perhaps have fatally transmitted itself to a succeeding generation. Only in her moment of death can she admit the intensity of her love; she can only admit that she belongs to him at that instant when she does not belong to him. When Epaminondas was wounded in the battle of Mantinea, he left the arrow in the wound until he heard the battle was won, because he knew that the moment it was drawn out he would die. Thus our Antigone bears her secret in her heart like an arrow which life has driven constantly in, deeper and deeper, without depriving her of life, for as long as it remains in her heart she can live. But the moment it is drawn out she must die. Wrestling her secret from her is what her lover must constantly strive for, yet this means her certain death. By whose hand, then, does she fall? That of the living or the dead? In a sense of the dead, for what was prophesied of Hercules, that he would not be slain by someone living but by someone dead,²⁸ is true also of her, in so far as the cause of her death is the memory of her father; in another sense it is by the hand of the living, in so far as her unhappy love provides the occasion for that memory to put her to death.

3 *Ancient Tragedy's Reflection in the Modern*

1. A Greek expression coined by Kierkegaard, which can be roughly translated as 'the fellowship of buried lives'.
2. Cf. Aristotle's *Poetics*.
3. I *Chronicles* 21.
4. Cf. Cicero, *De divinatione* II, 51; *De natura deorum* I, 71. Kierkegaard confuses the Roman augurs with the Etruscan prophets and soothsayers, about whom Cato recounts that he could not understand how they could look at one another without laughing.
5. A Danish newspaper in March 1839 had a report to this effect about Thiers.
6. A street warden (*Gadekommissair* or *Gadefoged*) was responsible for seeing that the streets were clean.
7. See Aristotle's *Poetics*, Chapter 6.
8. *ibid.*, Chapter 13.
9. Pelagius (c. 360-c. 431), reputedly of British origin, denied the doctrine of original sin, played down the importance of divine 'grace', and rejected the subordination of ethics to religious dogma. His individualistic view ran counter to that of Augustine, who nevertheless held Pelagius in great respect.
10. Chr. D. Grabbe, *Faust und Don Juan: Eine Tragödie*, Frankfurt, 1829.
11. For example the Latin *partim*, an adverb meaning 'partly', was once an accusative of the substantive *pars* ('part').
12. Aristotle, *Poetics*, Chapter 6, and G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, tr. T. M. Knox, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975, vol. II, p. 1197.
13. Hegel, *op. cit.*, p. 1198. Kierkegaard quotes the German.
14. Hebrews 10.31.
15. Exodus 20.5; 34.7.
16. The *Philoctetes* is a tragedy by Sophocles. Philoctetes was the most famous archer in the Trojan War and one of Helen's suitors. He was left on the island of Lemnos because a wound in his foot produced such a stench, and remained there for ten years before being rescued by Ulysses and Diomedes.
17. *Philoctetes*, verses 732ff.
18. The principle of inertia: that by which matter continues in its existing state, whether rest or motion, unless affected by an external force.
19. Labdacus, son of the Theban king, Polydorus, numbered Oedipus, Polynices, Eteocles and Antigone among his descendants (known collectively as Labdacidæ).

20. 'Whom the god would destroy, he first makes mad.'
21. Robert, first Duke of Normandy, was given to the devil by his mother before his birth and later lived up to the relevant expectations. The story is found in a thirteenth-century verse romance.
22. In Northern mythology Hogné was the son of Grimhild and a troll.
23. Matthew 6.19-20.
24. An attempt to predispose in favour of one's case.
25. Virgin mother.
26. *Antigone*, verse 850. The present translator's own translation. Kierkegaard quotes the Greek with a German translation in a footnote.
27. 'Which she does not meditate upon in her heart.'
28. Sophocles, *The Trachinian Maidens*, verse 1159. Hercules died from the blood of a centaur which had been poisoned when Hercules killed him with a poisoned arrow.

4 *Shadowgraphs*

1. Kierkegaard quotes these two poems in German. The second, *Gestern lieb't'ich*, is from Lessing's *Song from the Spanish*, *Sämmtliche Schriften* (Maltzahn) I, p. 240.
2. I Kings 19.11-12: 'And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.'
3. Cf. Psalms 18.15: 'Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.'
4. In Hesiod's *Theogony* (verses 123ff.) the night is the daughter of chaos and mother of the ether and day.
5. Art here is of course painting and sculpture. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-81) was a German scholar and critic who, in the essay referred to here, attacked the neo-classical conception of antique beauty. Laocöon was a Trojan priest whose destruction, along with his two sons, by two serpents is the subject of a famous work of ancient art, found in 1506 and now in the Vatican. The effect of Lessing's essay was partly to free art from religious and social pressures and to focus attention on the artistic process itself.