

# The tragic sense of life

Philosophy



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of the Philosophy of the Concerned 28 September Miguel de Unamuno- The Tragic Sense of Life The Tragic Sense of Life intends to extend an idea of life in which the actual actions tend to endow the incumbent ethics with their inherent strength, resilience and timelessness.

In The Tragic Sense of Life Unamuno declares himself to be a man of contradictions, pragmatically evincing in the larger context that the ultimate destiny of man is quintessentially based on contradictions. At the core of human consciousness lies a fear of complete annihilation, intermittently justified by objective contemplation and logic. Scientific objectivity and pure logic lead the humanity to conclude that death is inevitable and perhaps total in its scope and consequences. Yet, the human desire for immortality and perpetual existence and relevance makes it move towards faith which readily offers immortality and meaning, a sense of immortality that is vulnerable to doubt, yet, at the same time richly endowed with meaning and hope. It is this mutual contradiction of these two ideas, one ensuing from objectivity and the other from faith is the eventual source of life's unity. In a broader context, both these ideas, complement and complete each other. It is the sense of annihilation ensuing from a scientific objectivity that moves the humanity towards faith, and the doctrines of faith, though seeming mystical, ambiguous and vague ultimately does have the power to move the men to act in a way that actually makes people think that these doctrines if not true, ought to be true. That death, if it is the eventual destiny of man, is a destiny that is undeserved and unjust.

Unamuno boldly declares that “ We think because we live (157).” However, by ‘ thinking’ here, Unamuno does not mean what most men consider thinking to be. For truly speaking, in case of most of the individuals, thoughts

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are nothing, but a pretext for justifying their actions to oneself and others. Nudged to act by their innate, basic and primordial instincts, they present thoughts as a sophisticated veneer to cover up the essential senselessness and vagueness of their actions, or rather to project some sort of a meaning over their actions. Yet, the shallowness of their thoughts is evinced the minute there start to appear chinks in their adopted or professed doctrines, taking a heavy tool of their belief in the very integrity of their actions. By 'thinking' Unamuno means that an innate belief, which embraces both the impermanence indicated by logic and the immortality offered by faith and proceeds to act irrespective of the inherent contradiction of these two ideas, confident that the very character of the actions engendered by this belief while resolve this contradiction and endow life with a meaning. Doing so, Unamuno places upside down the conventional notions regarding the relationship existing between theory and practice. As per Unamuno, it is the integrity and meaningfulness of the act that eventually endows the theory with its meaning.

Conclusively speaking, Unamuno's philosophy is of immense relevance in the contemporary age marked by a deluge of science and technology and the commensurate dilution of faith.