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# The Theatricality of Edward Bond's Plays

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A Thesis submitted for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Drama  
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## Abstract

This thesis examines the theatricality of Edward Bond's plays, the devices, methods and aspects of characterisations, and the dramatic strategies and structure that emphasise the political consciousness behind them. It investigates the relationship between Bond's drama and social reality through the mentioned aspects, concentrating on the technicality of the playwriting. Apart from the Introduction and Conclusion, the thesis is divided into three parts.

Part One investigates Bond's main anti-illusory devices. Chapter One discusses the topic of the histrionic words and actions. Chapter Two discusses the trial scenes in the plays and concludes that with the exception of *Human Cannon*, all Bond's courtrooms are diegetic, occurring within the narration. Chapter Three investigates three dramatic devices which are connected in the plays: 1) the atmosphere of playfulness or the sequences of horseplay, 2) the divided focus of aggro-effect which developed into 3) simultaneous action. Chapter Four focuses on the play-within-the-play especially when it is used as a detaching/detached device. Chapter Five investigates Bond's dramatic lyrics and songs.

Part Two concentrates on Bond's methods of characterisation. As part of his schematic structure, Bond uses some figures to represent an abstract notion. Chapter One investigates the phenomenon of father figures (or "Wise Fools") which develop into the ultimate father figure/artist. These father figures are always portrayed in relation to young figures who are split into two halves. One of these halves represents the submission to socialised morality and the other represents the search for an alternative political system to the dehumanising one of the father figure. This oppositional configuration of the Siamese twins is the topic of Chapter Two. Chapter Three looks at Bond's employment of ghost figures, some of which die a second time in the play. The chapter links these life-in-death representatives to other sorts of figures who represent death-in-life. These latter figures are called *corpora*, metaphorically dead characters. The possessed figures are the subject of Chapter Four which concludes that Bond's uses of mad figures is theatrical and gives little attention to illusion.

Part Three is divided superficially into three chapters to deal with Bond's plays and their structure: Chapter One deals with the plays from *The Pope's Wedding* to *The Sea*, Chapter Two from *Bingo* to *The Bundle*, and Chapter Three from *The Worlds* to *The War Plays*. This part uses the findings of the earlier parts to facilitate an overview of the plays in order to specify the principal features of Bond's increasing theatricality, a theatricality which he uses as a vehicle to carry his own political analysis of the situation presented on the stage.

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To

my wife Zeinab and my daughter Dina.

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## Introduction

'Theatricality' is an equivocal and ambiguous term: some critics have used it as a synonym for 'theatricalism', a term which is used to label all nonrealistic modes of theatre. Others have objected to this 'loose' definition and claimed to be using it to 'refer to large spectacular productions, frequently involving the radical interpretation of "classic", or at least well-known, playscripts'.<sup>1</sup> In other words, it is used to signify interpretations of standard and classic texts in unusual and idiosyncratic ways, usually involving large casts and an emphasis on the visual. In the same special issue of *Drama Review* on 'theatricalism', or on the directors who offered such radical interpretations, Martin Esslin used the term 'theatricality' and not 'theatricalism' in his article on Max Reinhardt. The two terms have been interchangeable. Theodor W. Hatlen is another example of the critics who use 'theatricality' and 'theatricalism' to signify the same meaning: he speaks of Artaud as the fountainhead of much of the experimental 'theatricalism' on the contemporary stage which appears in the Absurdist, Jean Genet, Peter Brook, Jerzy Grotowski, the New Theatre, the Open Theatre, to name a few. Brecht, to Hatlen, is also one of the important contributors to this 'theatricalism'. The inclusion of Brecht among the theatricalists means that Hatlen uses 'theatricalism' to identify the anti- or the nonrealistic trends in modern drama.<sup>2</sup> 'Theatricalism' is also used by another critic to describe a play which contains things like the *scène-à-faire*, the 'big scene', the 'great aria' in opera, as well as Ibsen's framed discussion scenes and also trial scenes, arraignments and ceremonies because all these constitute plays within plays or theatre within theatre. Brecht's V-effects were also taken by that critic as theatrical technique of *making the audience conscious of the theatrical image*.<sup>3</sup>

'Theatricality' has also been used to designate the process by which theatre can be defined as an artistic form: in this usage 'theatricality' designates that which is specific to theatre. The semantic attempt to situate the significance of the text and its relationship to the performance in creating the 'theatricality' of the theatre, nonetheless, has given theatricality a conceptual confusion. This is the confusion a critic like

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Kirby, *Drama Review*, 21, 2 (June 1977), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See *Orientation to the Theatre*, third edition (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981), p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Ronald Peacock, *The Art of Drama*, second edition, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960, pp. 165-6.

Wladimir Krysinski indicates when he asserts that 'the status of the theory of theatricality is equivocal and perhaps incapable of resolution'.<sup>4</sup> In his study of 'the textual signs of theatricality', he arrives at the conclusion that theatricality depends on the director as equally as the text.<sup>5</sup> In order to stress the importance of the text in establishing the 'theatricality' of a play, he concludes that theatricality exists somewhere between a theological theatre dominated by the Word and an atheological theatre where the Word as such is absent. Krysinski's 'theatricality' means the *theatre fact*, the performance *and* the text: it is what gives specificity to theatre. The text, to him, is a vehicular structure of theatricality. A happy solution to this critical confusion over the connotation of 'theatricality' has been introduced by Jean Alter: 'theatral' is her term to indicate that which is specific to theatre, that which defines theatre as a form, that which indicates those processes by which the critic can define what constitutes 'theatre'.<sup>6</sup>

The success of Roland Barthes' re-evaluation of Brecht's theatre and the re-introduction of its 'language' to the West, and the separation of the study of dramatic literature from performance studies have contributed to the popularity of using 'theatricality' as anti-illusory signifier and have given it the upper hand over 'theatricalism'. Unlike 'theatricalism', 'theatricality' might be created by simple devices, it might depend on one actor in direct communication with his audience because it depends on creating political consciousness in the audience. The sensationalism of 'theatricalism' is not necessary to expose the reality of the theatre event in order to advocate political or social consciousness, in order to interact with reality and show it as changing and changeable. The re-assessment of Brecht's theatre and its aesthetical and political significance has encouraged critics to call Brecht's theatre 'theatre-theatrical' because it exposes the stage as a stage and the actors as actors. In this way, Brecht's theatre establishes a relationship between art and reality that depends on a degree of illusion but also on many 'theatrical' effects to expose the theatre event as such.

What such approaches to 'theatricality' and 'theatricalism' have in common, however, is a realisation that theatre is an anti-illusory form by nature. The decisive factor in defining theatricality, in my opinion, is

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<sup>4</sup> 'Changed Textual Signs in Modern Theatricality: Gombrowicz and Handke', translated by Ruby Cohn, *Modern Drama*, 25, 1 (March 1981), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> See 'From Text to Performance', *Poetics Today*, 2, 3 (Spring 1981), p. 113.

the relationship between the play and its reality; the function of the play in its environment. Artaud's method, for example, is not to make the audience aware of being in a theatre, but to involve them in the enactment; his play is a rite. Theatricality might not be a proper name for his kind of theatre or for the theatre of other theatre-makers. Theatricality depends on establishing the theatre event as a theatre event, on exposing the 'reality' of the stage as a stage. There is a function for exposing the 'reality' of the theatre event as such: it is to make the audience conscious of the reality of the stage and appreciative of the political issue demonstrated on it. Theatricality depends on awareness, it is the political dramatist's means to keep his audience aware of the presented world and, consequently, of the content of the argument on the stage. Theatricality makes the presented world part of the reality outside the theatre building.

In order to facilitate this function, the dramatist employs all means that help to expose the reality of the stage. But those means revolve around the simple principle that theatre is an *imitation* of reality and not a substitute for it. Creating theatricality as a vehicle for advocating political consciousness necessitates employing devices which as well as having political significance in themselves (they make the audience alert to the 'reality' of the theatre event) are carriers of meaning, vehicles for the content of the drama. Likewise, methods of characterisation and dramatic strategies which create the succession or the juxtaposition of scenes on the stage(s) have significance as methods and as carriers of meaning.<sup>7</sup> But the question of the relationship between the dramatic and the political in the theatre remains one of 'balance' between 'enjoyment' of the imitation and the dramatist's 'instruction' through the imitation, in deciding what is 'enjoyable' and what is 'didactic', which differ from age to age. To illustrate the relationship between theatre and reality, two attempts are briefly discussed below, attempts which could situate Bond's: Brecht's and McGrath's.

The term 'epic' was used by Brecht to denote a sense of detachment: he looked for devices and methods of structure to make the audience avoid complete involvement with the enactment on the stage. He wanted to enable the audience to judge, to evaluate, to criticise the events on the stage. He objected to uncritical empathy towards his characters and his practice as a director served to increase the audience's

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<sup>7</sup> The importance of the elements of form in generating meaning, apart from what they contain, is indicated by John McGrath. According to him, 'The devices and conventions of theatre are very much part of the language {of the theatre}, and can, at times, be decisive. They do indeed have meaning, quite apart from that they "carry" in terms of "content"'. See *A Good Night Out: Popular Theatre: Audience, Class, and Form*, Eyre Methuen, 1981, p. 20.



awareness of the fabrics of the stage, of the *imitation* of 'real' events, of the actors as actors: harsh white lights, projection, masks, well-worn props and costume, songs, revolving and minimal stage. Concerning illusion he wrote, 'The illusion created by the theatre must be a partial one in order that it may always be recognised as illusion. Reality, however complete, has to be altered by being turned into art, so that it can be seen to be alterable and be treated as such'.<sup>8</sup> The alienation effects were deployed in order to bring the audience to realise the strangeness of social conditions which they take for granted. His technical and textual 'interruptions' of the illusion emphasise Brecht's attempt to underline that the most important human experiences were no longer personal stories of individuals but, rather, significant social events. Therefore, Brecht discouraged audience involvement with the psychology of the individual by means of theatricality.<sup>9</sup> His purpose of advocating political consciousness necessitated the foregrounding of the means of presentation. He stressed and created awareness of the sign-vehicle and its operation on the stage. An essential means is his understanding and presentation of action as imitation, as a 'game' played by players. When he built a huge bridge on a small stage, he was stressing the fact that the bridge is an imitation of a real bridge. Brecht's main concern, then, is to influence reality, and his alienation effects were his primary vehicle to do so.

Alienation, as Ronald Barthes noticed, is not just a matter of technique: it is the method of exposing reality and is used to throw light on the different political meanings of exploitation. Thus it helps the spectator to alter his or her social environment:

This is what distancing is: to fulfill the true purpose of a play where meaning is no longer the actor's truth, but the political relationship of situations. In other words, distancing is not a form (which is precisely what all those who want to discredit it say it is); it is the relationship of a form to content. In order to distance, there has to be a reference point: the meaning.<sup>10</sup>

Theatrical techniques are the means with which and through which the dramatist advocates his political consciousness. The purpose is to make the audience aware of the semiosis of the theatre in order to alert them to the content of the story and its social and political significance. In this degree of theatricality lies the strength of Brecht's political message to the middle-class audience.

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<sup>8</sup> *Brecht on Theatre*, edited and translated by John Willett, Methuen, 1964, p. 219.

<sup>9</sup> See Hatlen, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

<sup>10</sup> 'Seven Photo Models of *Mother Courage*, translated by Hella Freud Bernays, *Tulane Drama Review*, 21, 1 (Fall 1967), p. 45.

Brecht's influence on the British theatre has altered some playwrights' perceptions of political theatre, and even the conventional theatre could not ignore some political themes or plays that refer to politics. The choice of Margaretta D'Arcy and John Arden to work with the oppressed through popular forms, such as melodrama and music hall, has been influenced by Brecht. Overtly politically conscious groups, like CAST, Belt and Braces, Foco Novo, and 7:84, have emerged because, among other reasons, of the Brechtian influence. But these groups have hoped to break through to new audiences and therefore they ventured out to unfamiliar spaces for their performances, depending mostly on theatrical means of interacting with the audience and theatrical devices to advocate their political message.

McGrath's attempt to connect the play to its environment is remarkable in using popular forms of theatre as theatrical means of advocating political consciousness. He dedicated himself to a type of theatre in which the context was of immense importance: he insisted that theatre forms must be taken from the people's tradition in order to attract and be able to influence the people. To McGrath, any form that is not derived from the people is alien, and the message will be lost. Texts, or dramatic literature, as he calls them, could be altered according to the ever changing reality, but the presentation of the dramatic literature, the method of embodying the words, the method of interacting with the audience are what matters and what constitutes a political theatre which could, he believes, overcome Brecht's and Piscator's patronising approach to the audience. McGrath looked for the 'language' of the working class: Gala, Christmas panto, Rock concert, impersonations, songs, as means of political theatre. Brecht's pedagogy, according to McGrath, necessitated passing down information and judgements to the audience; McGrath wanted to enter the working class's places of entertainment and he used popular forms in a conscious way. He attacked the main trend in the modern English 'political' theatre which was fostered by the Royal Court Theatre, where Bond spent a good deal of his professional life and which has championed Bond. To McGrath, this mainstream of political theatre was nothing more than a novelty and it lacked the theatrical means and venues to make the political message work.<sup>11</sup>

Among British dramatists, Bond has introduced his answer to the relationship between drama and society: his various attempts at finding new devices, employing new methods of characterisation, and using

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<sup>11</sup> McGrath, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-42.

different dramatic strategies prove his preoccupation with the relationship between drama and society. Brecht and his method of theatricality have influenced Bond. This has been realised from the very beginning, and *Saved* and *Narrow Road* were described as Brechtian in shape. The points of correspondence between Bond and Brecht are going to be indicated in this thesis whenever it is necessary to illustrate the theatricality of Bond's plays.<sup>12</sup> But as is widely known, Bond has built on Brecht's technique to the extent that some of Bond's devices (such as aggro-effects) were meant to oppose some of Brecht's alienation devices. To Bond, Brecht's alienation devices can deteriorate into an aesthetic style which encourages the audience to feel detached from the events on the stage and therefore safe in their daily life. It is one of the purposes of this thesis to examine Bond's theatricality in its relationship to Brecht's. The influence of Tennessee Williams's *Camino Real* is also studied. But it is mainly an examination of Bond's theatricality and how it is meant to define and establish a relationship with reality, it is an attempt to define the relationship between the aesthetic and the political in Bond's plays with stress on the technicality of the playwriting itself.

This text-based study (with the aid of the performances of some of the plays and what has been written about these and other performances) is an attempt to investigate the devices with which Bond advocates political consciousness, the characterisation through which he demonstrates this consciousness, and the kind of dramatic structure which allows Bond to keep the audience aware of the happenings as social events. The thesis is divided into three parts. As a general rule, the plays are divided into three phases or periods: the first from *The Pope's Wedding* to *The Sea*, the second from *Bingo* to *The Bundle*, and the third from *The Worlds* to *The War Plays*. The separation between the three parts is rather superficial and aims at facilitating looking at the progress of one phenomenon at a time. I found it convenient to end the second phase with *The Bundle* because, firstly, that play witnessed Bond's last effort to investigate viable political systems in history. From *The Worlds* onward, Bond's plays are temporally either in the present or in the future. Secondly, *The Bundle* is the play in which the protagonist not only arrives at specific tactics with

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<sup>12</sup> For further reference on this relationship see, Peter Holland, 'Brecht, Bond, Gaskill and the Practice of Political Theatre', *Theatre Quarterly*, 8, 30 (Summer 1978), p. 33; Bond's interview with Giles Gordon, *Transatlantic Review*, 22 (August 1966), reprinted in *Behind the Scenes: Theatre and film Reviews from "Transatlantic Review"*, edited by J. F. MacCrimdale, Pitman, 1971, pp. 125-36; Bond, 'On Brecht: a letter to Peter Holland', *Theatre Quarterly*, 8, 30 (Summer 1978), pp. 34-5.

which to overthrow the repressive and dehumanising regimes but also the play in which the revolutionaries succeed in establishing their humane society. From *The Worlds* onward, the protagonists appear as having already achieved their political consciousness *before* the start of the dramatic action. Finally, *The Bundle* witnessed the last appearance of many theatrical devices and figures in Bond's plays.

The first part investigates Bond's most obvious theatrical devices, and the way they progressed throughout his career, in order to establish the relationship between the play and its audience. The first chapter discusses Histrionic Words and Actions, the words and actions which have special links with the world of theatre. The choice of 'histrionic' is used to designate this link because it is derived from the Latin adjective *histrionicus*, which connotes a sense of being stagy and hypocritical, of pretence, players, play-acting, acting, and theatricals. The Trial Scenes are the subject of the second chapter because they are used by the same hypocritical figures who use the histrionic words and action to maintain the appearance of justice. The third chapter investigates the effects on the lower classes of using the hypocritical words and actions and the trials. The chapter links two theatrical devices, Playfulness and Simultaneous Action, through a stage of Divided Focus of Aggro-effects, because they are linked in the plays discussed in the chapter.

'Play' is an ambiguous and elusive term, and attempts have been made to define its ontological character from Heraclitus to Nietzsche, and from Hegel to Huisinga. I take it to be an eminent manifestation of human freedom; it is not the opposite of serious pursuits of life, but an essential element of man's ontological makeup. As a spontaneous act and a vital impulse, play, contrary to other phenomena, is not a means to the final end, namely his ultimate happiness. Play, as Eugen Fink asserts, 'has only internal purpose, unrelated to anything external to itself'.<sup>13</sup> But 'play' remains related to normal life in a very meaningful way, namely in its mode of representation. 'Play', Fink confirms

is a basic existential phenomenon just as primordial and autonomous as death, love, work and struggle for power, but it is *not* bound to these phenomena in a common ultimate purpose. Play, so to speak, confronts them all -- it absorbs them by representing them. We play at being serious, we play truth, we play reality, we play work and struggle, we play love and death -- and we even play play itself'.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> 'The Oasis of Happiness: Toward an Ontology of Play', in *Game, Play, Literature*, edited by Jacques Ehrmann (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 21.

Aristotle gave this phenomenon the term 'mimesis' or 'imitation' which he considered to be natural and therefore pleasurable to human beings. It is the core of theatre, of even inventing plays, including tragedy. This is what, I think, Brecht meant when he said that theatre 'constructs its workable representations of society, which are then in a position to influence society, wholly and entirely as a game'.<sup>15</sup>

Throughout Chapter Three, playfulness is treated with this connotation in mind. It appears in Bond's plays in sequences of horseplay that lead to the murder of the most innocent member of society in a violent action. The chapter follows this connection in some plays and studies how the divided focus of aggro-effect has developed into the simultaneous action and the relationship between this action and the violent one in some later plays. Chapter Four is an attempt to study Bond's concept of his art when he employs plays within plays. The play-within-the-play is a known device of the anti-illusory form of theatre, and in this chapter I follow Bond's employment of the device and how his purpose of employing it changes. Chapter Five investigates Bond's Dramatic Lyrics and Songs and how they function in the plays. The role of the German composer Hans Werner Henze in changing or underlining Bond's employment of song is also studied in this chapter.

Part Two of the thesis is concerned with Bond's methods of characterisation which help in demonstrating the issues of the plays. Chapter One investigates the methods of depicting the relationship between the father figure and the young protagonist and how the father figure changes into a cultural father figure in *Narrow Road to the Deep North* and how the phenomenon of the father figure/artist then is dropped. The chapter also investigates the relationship between Bond as an artist and the artist in the plays; how the characterisation of the artist is theatrical. Chapter Two studies the image of the Siamese Twins Bond has created in *Early Morning* as a matter of illustration and how this characterisation started in his earlier plays. This characterisation of a pair of characters to illustrate the division of self, a method which has been employed by Brecht among others, is traced also in the plays following *Early Morning*. My own pairing of the divided characters is different from Bond's own pairing, and the reasons are explained in the chapter. Chapter Three is an attempt to study Bond's method of characterisation by using the anti-illusory method of

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> *Brecht on Theatre, op. cit.*, p. 186.

ghosts. The influence of Frank Wedekind, especially the last scene of his *Spring Awakening*, a play which Bond has translated, is indicated. The plausibility of the character of the ghost in a fourth-wall theatre style is discussed and the extent of Bond's employment of this method, and of a variation on it called *corpora*, is also studied in Bond's recent plays such as *The War Plays*. The Possessed figure is the subject of Chapter Four: how it is theatrical, what is its function, and in what way the possessed is linked to another theatrical phenomenon in Bond's plays, the thesis element.

This thesis element is further investigated in Part Three. The part also investigates other minor theatrical devices such as anachronisms, the bare stage, and the learning process of the protagonist and/or the audience. The theatricality of the overall structure of the plays is linked to Bond's strategy of exposing the socio-political orientations of character before it follows an undistinguishable member of that society to his end. This schematic structure of a Bond play facilitates investigating an issue, the 'case' in society. The main features of the theatricality of this kind of structure are studied using the plays in chronological order of writing as far as possible. The results of studying the dramatic devices and the methods of characterisation, Parts One and Two, are used and connected to the dramatic structure to facilitate an overall view of the plays discussed; some repetition is inescapable.

By the time most of this thesis had been written, Bond published *Two Post-Modern Plays (Jackets and In the Company of Men with the short play September)* and some important theoretical writing. It was late to consider these plays, but I tried to make use of the theoretical writing for the conclusion because it confirms many points this thesis detects.

These brackets { } are used in the thesis to inclose my own additions.

The place of publication of any material used throughout is London unless otherwise indicated.

## Part One

# The Theatricality of Dramatic Devices

## Chapter One

# Histrionic Words and Actions

There are some words that, though not exclusively used in the theatre, are of paramount importance to it. Words such as 'act', 'play', 'perform', 'scene' have special connotations when they are spoken on the stage because they are immediately linked to the world exposed. Thus, they trigger a specific response from the spectator by turning his attention to the world of the theatre. The frequency of their occurrence, the kind of dramatic structure and the dramatic situation in which they occur are decisive factors in deciding the degree of their effective theatricality. In turn, these words affect and colour the dramatic structure itself. This dialectical relationship between the words and the structure, however, defines the kind of reality the playwright wishes to establish and the type of relationship he creates between the play and reality. They also, by the text and context of their employment, can be used to establish the metaphor of the world as a stage; they become descriptions of actions and reactions. They define their speaker and give him a specific air and characteristics. The histrionic words and actions forbid illusion as they make the spectator watch somebody who is either an actor or pretends to be one.

For a dramatist like Pirandello, illusion is at the core of a fluid reality, and man has no alternative but to create a mask of identity for himself to fulfill his various needs. Many of Pirandello's plays revolve around the problem of personal mask and the moments of its collapse; the moments that show the existence of another mask behind the lifted one. In his plays, there can be no single true identity beneath: truth is relative and cannot be established or fixed. Thus, the histrionic words and actions are the means of exploring the complex relationship between the illusory and the real, between the stage and life. Theatre, to Pirandello, is a metaphor to show the tension between the illusory and the real, and the impossibility of even separating them. In his plays, it is almost impossible to distinguish between actors and characters, between the real and the fictitious.



In Brecht's case, the separation between the real and the fictitious is unequivocal. What takes place on his stage is a theatre event, aimed at demonstrating and illustrating. Because Brecht believes that truth is graspable, his plays are parables for the world and the stage is a platform for the political education of the audience. Thus, structure and technical staging means are directed towards showing the 'reality' of the stage as a stage. Brecht's stage, contrary to Pirandello's, is exposed to show that illusion is not an integral part of human life and that truth is obtainable, and, hence, human life is changeable. In many of Brecht's plays, the histrionic words and actions are used to emphasize the fictitious nature of the theatre event and to distinguish the real from the fictitious, convincing the spectators that the play is an image of the world.

In Bond's plays, the histrionic words, though not appearing frequently, are linked in most cases to figures of authority, heads of states, leaders of communities, and representatives of power. Some of these figures of authority even express their comprehension of their domination and supremacy in histrionic words. Heros, though 'only a dummy on Athens' knees',<sup>1</sup> embodies the Athenian power. He knows his own absolute authority over his fighters: 'I'm God to my men -- obviously I am'(p. 180). Lord Are specifies his symbolic representation of society, refusing to play any other role: 'In my person I am society, the symbol of authority, the figurehead of law and order. Make me a fool or a villain and the mob will dance in the street'.<sup>2</sup> Mrs Rafi's consciousness of her representation of a specific class, in *The Sea*, influences her practices of bullying and harassment. Trench's strength as a character/'maker' of a new world lies in the fact that he has 'the stuff of the builder' in him. On innumerable occasions, the artist figures in Bond's plays also use these words. Despite Bond's conscious avoidance of writing about the artist's creation or creativity, the artistic words have been scattered around in the plays that deal with the artist.

Some of these authority figures have a special inclination towards a particular artistic profession. The first group is apt to dramatise their own or other people's lives, to dictate and authorise what others

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<sup>1</sup> Bond, *The Woman*, in *Plays: Three*, Methuen, 1987, p. 181. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Bond, *Restoration* (with *The Cat*), Methuen Modern Plays, 1982, p. 56. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition (unless otherwise indicated) and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

should or should not say, when and how to say it. The second group has a tendency to act their situations passionately and/or their feelings rapturously as if they were actors on the stage. Though they might not, in many cases, use histrionic words, they act or over-act their situations. Such characters treat the events of life as theatre events, and some of them rehearse others to play parts in reality. The third type of characters appears as fully preoccupied with defining the meaning of words as if they were dramatic terms. Some words have special meaning to some figures in the three groups, they consider them as the gems in their crowns, and therefore they use the words to create particular effects.

## I) Dramatisation and Self-Dramatisation:

Queen Victoria forms a clear example of the author-like figure in deciding the permitted words and actions, but her power maintains the appearance of dignity. Her instant devaluation and dismissal of Arthur's protest against not being warned in advance of the marriage of his Siamese twin, George, demonstrates the extent of her power over such personal matters. His protest is 'not diplomatic',<sup>3</sup> she decisively replies and dismisses her court on the ground of not permitting 'family bickering in public!'(p. 145). She does not only use her power to write the scenario of George's life when she forces him to marry Florence in order to 'pacify people'(p. 139), but literally scripts their official as well as personal dialogue. On the official level:

George (*reads his note*). Dear Miss Nightingale, I welcome you to Windsor and hope you will be happy here.

Florence (*reads her note*). Thank you. (p. 144)

And on the personal level, Florence confesses her love to George by reading from 'another note'(p. 146), obviously written by Victoria.

Throughout the play, Victoria displays a tendency to form characters according to her own definitions. In Arthur's case, she fails to form him according to her characterisation of the good citizen until he actually acts according to Victoria's morality and kills. The whole play could be construed as a struggle between two methods of forming personalities, with Arthur ascending at the end of the play leaving her rejoicing in the fact that her life-effort has prospered. Contrary to that is Florence's sexual and

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<sup>3</sup> Bond, *Early Morning*, in *Plays: One*, Methuen, 1977, p. 145. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

social subservience to Victoria, which strips her of her identity: she accepts Victoria's arrangements to marry George; she is Victoria's tool in the poisoning of Albert; she assents to Victoria's lesbianism; she literally prostitutes herself to the soldiers in Victoria's war; she is forced to disguise in the mask of John Brown. All these actions demonstrate Victoria's success in structuring Florence according to her ethos and morality.

One of Lear's assets is his tendency to dramatise and self-dramatise, a habit which he practises almost throughout the play. Though Lear uses fewer histrionic words, they contain an extraordinary power because they come from a character with a greater tendency towards acting or over-acting. The confrontation with his daughters in the first scene, for example, ends in an outpouring of scorn and curses in which he prophesies the scenario of their future lives. His horrible scenario induces even his own tears:

Lear. You will throw old men from their coffins, break children's legs, pull the hair from old women's heads, make young men walk the streets in beggary and cold while their wives grow empty and despair --<sup>4</sup>

The inferno-like picture he imagines and voices almost comes to realisation as the events unfold.

As well as dramatising the futures of other people, Lear possesses the capacity for self-dramatisation and talking in images. In his trial, he compares himself to a caged animal who suffers the cruelty of the 'monsters' who replaced his daughters. He also acquires the capacity of evaluating his life before his last action as 'a black tree by a pool. The branches are covered with tears. The tears are shining with light. The wind blows the tears in the sky. And my tears fall down on me'(p. 100). In his old age, he speaks only in images and becomes a story-teller to his followers who come to 'listen' to him. When he reaches such a stage, he levels his own status to that of the *word*. The powerful Cordelia is asked to be nothing more than another listener to his immortal character and eternal word. He defines his status as resting in people's minds, an unkillable idea that lives as long as people live.

Mrs Rafi appraises her artistic potentials at the end of Scene Seven in *The Sea*. Her private confession signifies the mediocrities surrounding her as well as self-appreciation that dissolves into an epitaph for her future as a helpless old woman. Her monologue provides an instant platform for self-dramatisation that

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<sup>4</sup> Bond, *Lear*, in *Plays: Two*, Methuen, 1978, p. 21. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

lifts her above the 'monotony' of the surrounding people and dialogue. Her fear of getting old motivates the scenario she draws, complete with its imagined dialogue:

Mrs Rafi. I'll grow old and shout at them from a wheel-chair. That's what they're waiting for. They get their own back for all the years I bullied them. They wheel you where they like. 'Take me there.' 'You went there yesterday. We want to go the other way.' 'You don't want to see the sea. You saw the sea yesterday. The wind's bad for your head. If you misbehave and catch a cold we'll shut you up in bed. You'll stay there for good this time.' Subtle. Jessica would probably stick matchsticks under my nails ... You give up shouting. You close your eyes and the tears dribble down your ugly old face and you can't wipe it clean -- they won't give you your hanky. 'Don't let her have it. She gets into a tizzy and tears it to shreds.' There you are: old, ugly, whimpering, dirty, pushed about on wheels and threatened.<sup>5</sup>

Victoria's overwhelming power to dictate the permitted dialogue and action is given a legal force in *Derek*. Derek and Biff share the reading of the lawyer's letter which requests Derek to agree to selling Biff his brain, but Derek's objection is dismissed immediately as an inappropriate line:

Biff: No, no! You're supposed to say yes now! Look it's in the letter!<sup>6</sup>

The stability of social order necessitates the proprietorship of the best brains by the upper-class characters, and the lawyer anticipated Derek's positive response to his offer. For him and Biff, the protest of the lower-class character is un-textual. In *Derek*, as in all the incidents discussed above, the class-divided society requires the authority figures to keep their place on top: any actions or answers must be dictated by them. In daily life, they are authoritarian and oppressive, and the histrionic words and actions are designed to show them as such.

## II) Displaying the Mask:

This is another tendency in the authority figures, a tendency which works in accord with using the histrionic words. When the authority figures are at their most hypocritical moments, they embody their precious words. Some of them combine this tendency of treating society as a stage with acting on a real one, as Mrs Rafi does. At such conjunctions of words and actions, the hypocrisy of such characters becomes clear. The profession itself uncovers their practice of bullying and humiliating the underprivileged. Bond has developed such a tendency into a 'theatrical' character who has the capacity to articulate to his audience

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<sup>5</sup> Bond, *The Sea*, in *Plays: Two*, Methuen, 1978, p. 161. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>6</sup> Bond, *Derek and Choruses from "After the Assassinations"*, Methuen's New Theatrescript series, 1983, p. 12. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

his knowledge of being deceitful. It is with Lord Are that Bond reaches the peak of depicting a character who performs 'roles' to other characters within his environment, as if with the approval of the audience.

In *Early Morning*, Gladstone restrains the mob's desire to lynch Len on the ground that he does not want them 'to act like common criminals'(p. 170). However, when Len refuses to play his part in Gladstone's kangaroo court the mob kick the accused in what Gladstone considers as an undisciplined and over-excited enactment. As an 'old hand' expert in the field, he demonstrates an effective, well-disciplined, and economic kick: 'Watch that toe. Keep a good right angles t' the target. The other way looks good but it's all on the surface. Yer don't do yer internal damage. Study yer breathin': in when yer go in, out when yer come out. Got it?'(p. 172). To Gladstone, it is 'child's play'. He behaves as an experienced director who improves the performances of his excitable young players.

The Inspector in *Black Mass* shows an inclination to direct the social events as theatre events. Shooting people, to him, is no more than playing a match by a team of which he is the trainer. But the game has lost its fun, he tells the Prime Minister: 'Too many rules in the game. It doesn't really qualify as a sport any more -- though mind you the lads still try to play in the spirit of the old amateurs, even if they've turned professional'.<sup>7</sup> And with this sportsmanship, the lads 'put up a show' and kill as many as they can. The Inspector, furthermore, assumes the role of a detective in a thriller when he discovers that the Prime Minister has been poisoned and starts to 'examine the scene of the crime for clues'(p. 233). Consequently, expelling Christ leaves an empty 'space' in the church that Christ used to fill. Immediately the Inspector finds the solution in appointing a young policeman, dressed fascist-style, to replace Christ. The Inspector rehearses and directs the policeman, shows him how to counterfeit Christ, and orders him to replace Jesus.<sup>8</sup> The Inspector's talents as a director are proved and theatre is exploited to give a plausibly religious appearance to the state of law and order:

Inspector. We'll just have a little rehearsal. We don't want any slip ups. Church parade is a parade like any other parade. The same smartness and superior turnout and every movement at the double. (p. 235)

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<sup>7</sup> Bond, *Black Mass*, in *Plays: Two*, Methuen, 1978, p. 231. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel Richard Jones sees this rehearsal as a 'parody of the changing of the guard at the Queen's palace in London'. See his 'Edward Bond's Rational Theatre', unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of London, 1979, p. 269.

The understudy creates an 'improvement' in the image of the church: the stability of law and order is maintained.

Lear is one of the most tyrannical characters in Bond's plays and his tyranny informs his attitude to the outside world, including his people. His account of his relationship with them betrays over-acting, though what he wants to display is honesty:

Lear. I gave my life to these people. I've seen armies on their hands and knees in blood, insane women feeding dead children at their empty breasts, dying men spitting blood at me with their last breath, our brave young men in tears --. But I could bear all this! When I'm dead my people will live in freedom and peace and remember my name, no -- venerate it!...They are my sheep and if one of them is lost I'd take fire to hell to bring him out. I loved and cared for all my children, and now you've sold them to their enemies! (p. 21)

His ferocious utterance has sprung from his daughters' opposition to killing an innocent worker on Lear's wall. Bodice's reaction to his trying the worker ridicules Lear's tyrannical behaviour and links it to ham acting. She uncovers the truth about this proclaimed relationship by telling him that those people 'already say you act like a schoolboy or an old spinster'(p. 18). Consequently, the two sisters disassociate themselves from the 'act' of killing the worker and, furthermore, Bodice showily announces that her father should be taken back to his camp due to bad health. Lear enacts the verdict himself, shoots the worker, and faces the daughters with an accusation of conspiracy: he knew about their correspondence with his enemies and their schemes and plans to betray him. But his accusation proves, first of all, that he had not acted in accord with what he knew, that he was able to separate reality and appearance.

The second scene, furthermore, complements and underlines the same issue of deceit and conspiracy emphasised in Scene One between the daughters and Warrington: Warrington betrays the daughters by delivering their letters in which they ask him to betray Lear to the latter who, while discussing this topic with Warrington, greets his regiments.<sup>9</sup> Bond's text makes Lear's greetings an exaggerated acting: on a *saluting stand*, *LEAR stands with both arms stretched out in a gesture of salute and blessing* (p. 22). Lear's capacity to strike a stagy pose while discussing matters of loyalty and treason manifests his deceitful attitude to others.

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<sup>9</sup> The two scenes discussed here signify a deeper phenomenon in the play: 'Falsification of the truth is acknowledged as an unspoken agreement with which all parties are willing to comply'. See Horst Oppel, 'Success and Failure of Bond's Approach to Shakespeare's Tragedy', in *Edward Bond's "Lear" and Shakespeare's "King Lear"* (Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 1974), p.11. One important result of this phenomenon is Bodice's appreciation of the spies as 'the only moral institution in this country'(p. 60).

Other manifestations of the discrepancy between reality and appearance are confessed by Fontanelle: her husband deceived her when 'an actor posed for his photographs', and his letters to her were written by a civil servant. The sisters deceive each other and their husbands as they deceived their father. Later in the play, the sisters torture Warrington for his loyalty to Lear: while Fontanelle and a soldier punish him, Bodice knits coolly and when she interferes, she 'asks the soldier to play-act begging for Warrington's life, so that she can play-act refusing his pardon'.<sup>10</sup> After that, she deafens Warrington with her knitting needles. When she herself is captured, she pretends to be important and in power. She obeys the instructions of Soldier M as if he were leading her to her crown.

Bodice. In here? Yes. Thank you. Did my letter go to the government?

Soldier M. Wait 'ere.

Bodice. Yes. Thank you. I must see someone in authority. I want to explain my letter. You see. (p. 74)

Mrs Rafi's burning desire to create a specific image of herself is illustrated in her search for things that give her a special appearance. She carefully chooses gloves 'that accommodate themselves'(p. 110) to her character. Her interest in her image matches an equal interest in her movement: 'one uses one's hands to point and emphasize and gesture. People are judged by what they have on their hands'(p. 109). The prima donna's image which she creates for herself indicates her awareness of the relationship between sign and meaning, between appearance and interpretation. Her exhibitionist attitude in life conceals an authoritative power with which she controls her 'people'. She is conscious of her sort of character as a 'forceful woman' with a powerful imagination: she, for example, can 'enlarge' her impression of a 'small piece' of curtain 'into the entire scene' of her house(p. 109). And this powerful imaginative character releases her energy on ceremonial occasions like funerals, and puts her instinctive showy energy in 'theatricals'.

Apart from her ordinary histrionic behaviour, Mrs Rafi shows her artistic skills on two occasions: the first is the playlet she rehearses in her house, and the second, strangely enough, is Colin's funeral, which she treats exactly as a show.<sup>11</sup> She directs the funeral as the hidden god, an image she implicitly formulates in the rehearsal, with a leading role to play, a piano on a cliff-top, the procession of the colourful town banner, and a 'word' to the congregation. She practises the lead role on an occasion that could cause

<sup>10</sup> Tony Coult, *The Plays of Edward Bond*, second edition, Methuen, 1979, p.94.

<sup>11</sup> Mrs Rafi directs this occasion, as Delia Donahue observes, 'with the same High Artistic dedication she lavished on her amateur dramatics'. See her *Edward Bond: A Study of his Plays* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1979), p. 104.

sadness and grief, but, contrary to that, she aims at impressing her audience. The funeral is another occasion for her to show the 'socially-correct death-rhythm'.<sup>12</sup> She enters the scene to a pre-dictated atmosphere of silence, carrying, impressively, an urn full of Colin's ashes. Her words to the congregation are accompanied, according to the stage directions, with 'mime'. These directions explicitly indicate the presence of 'dramatic pauses' in her recitation, 'dramatic' movements of groping towards the edge of the cliff-top, and 'dramatic' staring at the urn (pp. 154-5). She also *snatches a handful of ashes and holds them triumphantly* (p. 155). Such actions and behaviour confirm her showy attitude and also her success, like any professional actress who knows when and how to act for emotional effects: with every move Mrs Rafi makes the audience gasp.

The pretence and grandiloquent disposition of some characters in Bond's early plays reach a deeper level of deception in later ones. The replacement of Christ by a surrogate policeman to retain the semblance of religious practice finds a matching operation in *Grandma Faust*. Grandma consciously adopts an acceptable image by dressing differently from the orthodox image, the one that 'had horns and a tail-- an breathed *real* hot fire'.<sup>13</sup> Her real image would not be attractive and therefore changing the appearance is necessary.<sup>14</sup>

In this manner of pretence, it is noteworthy to discover that Hecuba parries Ismene's accusation of covering her real intentions behind linguistic jargon by offering the counter accusation that Ismene is over-acting. As Hecuba tries to 'show' the reluctant Ismene something, the latter, feeling insulted, starts to leave. Her action is seen in the light of performing arts, as hiding the true self and feeling:

Ismene. Excuse me, I must --

Hecuba. Please don't make a scene in front of the child. One shouldn't frighten children. (p. 191)

Hecuba herself is accused of acting, in the scene Heros depicts of what must be happening inside Troy after Priam's death. The hostility between Hecuba and her Son is shown in the latter's accusation: 'You bully people! She treats this city as if it was on a stage' (p. 176).

<sup>12</sup> Coult, *The Plays*, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>13</sup> Bond, *Grandma Faust*, in *A-A-America & Stone*, Methuen Modern Plays, 1981, p. 6. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>14</sup> Contrary to this aim for fraudulent disguise is Clare's in *The Fool* which happens for celebrating Christmas and the richness of seasons, not for deceiving others.



The histrionic words and actions appear more frequently in the plays of the third period, thus intensifying the theatricality of these plays. The words and actions interact with other theatrical elements in these plays and thus the words' theatrical strength becomes more remarkable. The whole play *The Worlds* could be analysed through the characters' use of histrionic words: they are prevalent in every scene. They colour the action of many a character with hypocrisy and deceit. As the first scene is preoccupied with the (almost critical) definition of character, the discussion in the second focuses on the reactions to the abducted character, J T. Bigdyke puts the whole operation of kidnapping in images of playing games:

Bigdyke. Suppose your football team had to play a vital match. You kidnap the Chairman of the opponent club or his child (the imagination runs on) and threaten to kill him if his side wins. Imagine the spectators at such a game. In one blow we'd be back in the arena in Rome.<sup>15</sup>

Bigdyke requires a full obligation to the society which is capable of transferring the natural violent actions of human beings into substitute activities. But the 'think tank' cannot go that far because of their obligation to the marketplace and their commercial organisation. However, Harris suggests that they 'should make a gesture'(p. 20) of acceptance of the workers' demands when they negotiate them. Building on Bigdyke's metaphor, he thinks that the gesture is 'like playing whist at a funeral parlour'(p. 20). Harris's gesture to the workers is also a gesture towards the absent character, Trench. But, to Kendal, it describes Harris's manoeuvring role as: 'The vampire with the clean fangs'(p. 21). In this group of characters, Hubbard holds the extreme position in refusing to save J T: he wants to 'exploit the situation'(p. 21) by letting the company 'go public'(p. 21), to the players in the arena.

Playing roles is further underlined when different characters use that metaphor. For instance, OAP shouts at the picketing workers and accuses them of locking their boss up while pretending the opposite: 'Don't play the innocent with me'(p. 28). The metaphor is also fully operated in the play-within-the-play. In it, Ray expresses a desire to go back to work as the conflict with the management has been complicated by the newly introduced element of violence: 'This is something else. If they wanna play silly buggers'(p. 29). To respond to this circumstance, John explains that they are defending their rights only: 'now if you lot over there are playing gunfights that's your pleasure. Bang away. I'm here askin for what's mine'(p. 31). Terry also explains that the terrorists did not bring the law into the conflict. For him, the law is there

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<sup>15</sup> Bond, *The Worlds*, Methuen Modern Plays, 1980, p. 19. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

all the time 'only it don't show up'(p. 32), and 'they play the match but their goal's boarded up'(p. 32). John summarises the reasons for using violence: Trench does not have to use violence 'till you play it his way'(p. 33). What the terrorists have done, in essence, is that they 'have caught Trench at his own game!'(p. 33).

Trench's return witnesses what Kendal terms 'a show of emotions' from some of the workers, but this show 'means nothing' in changing the company's new legal situation. Trench's discovery of their betrayal brings to the surface the reality and essence of their characters. Although Trench 'watched' them grabbing, he did not think of them 'plotting and scheming'(p. 39) against him. He accuses them of hoping he would be shot, 'then', he says, 'this scene would have been avoided'(p. 38). Hubbard's defence, that they 'acted' for the good of the company, elicits a furious reaction from Trench: they are worse than the terrorists because they made him a 'joke'. He charges them: 'You act like cowards and hypocrites'(p. 39). The end of the scene sees Trench's invitation to them to celebrate his escape, while hiding another intention. This invitation, to Hubbard, signifies that Trench 'wants to go out playing the elder statesman'(p. 41).<sup>16</sup>

Exposing the abstract values and definitions of character which the businessmen introduced comes soon after Trench is freed, when he arranges a farewell party. In this scene, he asks his guests to put their heads, one after another, in holes deliberately left in a drawing:

Trench. Put your head in. Show us what you are. Kendal -- you? Will it show the truth? Only a game. Afraid of party games? Little Kenny can't come out and play truth he doesn't know the rules! (p. 47)

Trench's request is tantamount to asking his guests to show their real, hidden selves, not the masked ones which they regularly show in their social life. This indicates that masking is the normal face in the competitive world of the businessmen. And that request *is* what triggers the grotesque reaction from the businessmen and their wives. As if on cue, Pru proceeds physically to enact what Trench asked for: she sticks her head through one of the holes. In seconds, the fever spreads in what Pru calls: 'the greatest strip show on earth! The Trench festival of striperama!'(p. 47). The filling of the empty holes constitutes a materialisation of the essence of the businessmen characters. This embodiment offers 'what Trench finds to be the

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<sup>16</sup> Playing roles is repeated by other characters: Michael to Lisa: 'Don't play the hero'(p. 55); Harris: 'Kendal likes to play Napoleon. But he's not. Nowhere near'(p. 69).

moral quality of their lives -- offering a visual illustration of their moral bankruptcy'.<sup>17</sup>

In *The Cat*, Arnold discloses to the spectators that he acted deceitfully to his uncle throughout the years in order to get his inheritance. The confession of pretending seems to happen because the uncle has decided to marry, which meant Arnold's loss of substantial wealth. In an aside that proves the discrepancy between appearance and reality, as is the case with Lear's daughters who use it as well, Arnold reveals his true characteristics:

For years I pandered to this fool  
I acted as his humble tool  
I laughed at every stupid joke  
And groaned beneath this heavy yoke  
For I am very very broke<sup>18</sup>

Basho, in *Narrow Road*, introduces the interesting opposite of not-acting, which causes the suffering of the whole community. Basho assumes the role of the passive spectator to a file of prisoners shuffling past him on their way to execution. He displays his negative attitude to society by using the word 'watch'.<sup>19</sup> In so saying, he excludes any connections between himself and the victims, but by the same token, Bond seems to be passing a judgement on Basho: to watch suffering betokens inhumanity.<sup>20</sup> From Basho's behaviour one can conclude that the attitude of non-acting is not the opposite of displaying the mask of hypocrisy: one, the play indicates, must act; but it is the moral commitment which differentiates between the truthful and the fake actions. Wang's advice to Tiger in *The Bundle* to watch and learn proves the point. By their knowledge, they free the suffering woman from her pain. Similarly, Bond puts Willy and Rose in a position that allows them to be incompletely separated from the events. Their position helps them to comprehend the text and context of the play rehearsed in *The Sea*.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Jenny Sue Spencer, 'Structure and Politics in the Plays of Edward Bond', unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1982, pp. 228-9.

<sup>18</sup> Bond, *The Cat* (with *Restoration*), Methuen Modern Plays, 1982, p. 111. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>19</sup> Bond, *Narrow Road to the Deep North*, in *Plays: Two*, Methuen, 1978, p. 178. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>20</sup> To Adolf K. H. Barth, Basho is a replacement of the Author as spectator in the tradition of the *Theatrum Mundi*, 'it is the wise man Basho now who, though taking part in the process, is sufficiently detached from the mainstream of the action to embody an observer-part within Bond's play'. See his 'The Aggressive *Theatrum Mundi* of Edward Bond: *Narrow Road to the Deep North*', *Modern Drama*, 18, 2 (June 1975), p.196.

<sup>21</sup> It is significant that the word 'watch', apart from its synonyms, occurs many times from different characters for different motivations in *The Sea*. This explains the nature of the characters' activity in watching each other suspiciously. Examples of 'watch' are on pages 112, 115, 116, 117 (four times), 118, 120, 121 (twice), 134, 150, 159.

### III) Critical Self-Evaluation:

To linguistically define words or comment upon them, to react linguistically to others' words means the foregrounding of language whereupon language becomes the focus of attention. Because the definition, comment, or reaction to words is embodied also in words: language becomes the subject and the object. The object-language, to use Elam's terminology, transfers the dramatic dialogue into being about itself.<sup>22</sup> On the stage, this process necessarily entails the foregrounding of discourse, the language becomes its own interest and concern. When the definition, comment or reaction to words have links with criticism or drama, the connection to theatre becomes stronger. By commenting, and defining words, especially the histrionic ones, the authority figures put the dramatic discourse in the focus of theatre experience: theatricality becomes in the focus. This tendency reaches its ultimate limit when the character critically evaluates his own, or others', language or artistic performance. Then, the language becomes metadramatic, a theatrical device that contributes to the play's whole theatricality by the way the playwright arranges or uses it as a way of inter-communication between the characters and/or the audience.

In the plays of the first period, the characters' self-evaluation or their use of language as a focus of attention is very limited, and thus contributes little to the theatricality of the plays. The Inspector of *Black Mass*, for example, voices the first instance of self-evaluation and critical attitude to performance. When it comes to critical judgement, the Inspector states, the 'lads' are 'their own hardest critics'(p. 232) of their own practice and performance of shooting people. Mrs Rafi's self-esteemed critical approach manifests itself twice in *The Sea*. In the first instance, she defends her choice of the appropriate song for the performance of *Orpheus and Eurydice*. She promptly passes her own critical judgement on her own performance of the song of her own choice, even before it takes place, as 'one of the highlights of the evening'(p. 123). The cliff-top witnesses her second critical practice. To her critical standard, she confesses to Willy, no one around her 'can act', she is 'surrounded by mediocrities' which dim the 'flaming torch' of her talent (p. 161). At such moments of self-evaluation, the characters themselves become the object of the audience's evaluation, and the judgement on such characters is bound to be harsh because of the obvious contradiction

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<sup>22</sup> See Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1980, pp. 154-6. According to Elam: if a speaker characterises metalinguistically another's general mode of speaking, or if he reflects philosophically, morally, psychologically, etc, or on the uses and limits of language at large, it is an object-language.

between the song and the myth.

In the plays of the second period, the use of artists in three plays makes it inescapable that self-evaluation will appear because one of the artist's functions is to evaluate. With the process of artistic creation or practice comes self-evaluation; within contacts with society, the artist is bound to judge society and self. For employing the artist as the protagonist of three plays, and for the employment of other theatrical devices in this period, the theatrical effect of the object-language is exceptional.

In *Bingo*, Shakespeare responds aesthetically to the social confrontation of the characters around him. He, linguistically, aestheticises their experiences and suffering in terms of self-dramatisation on many occasions. Lou Lappin observes that Judith, the Son, and the Old Man, 'each "theatrically" confronts Shakespeare, but this is not a performance and they are not actors. They are victims in a scenario that a play might redress through the transforming power of art'.<sup>23</sup> Shakespeare's social isolation and his inability to communicate are best illustrated by his dialogue with Judith when he underlines the formality of discourse without recognising his responsibility in shaping her means of expression. He, rather, considers her as an escapee from one of his plays:

Shakespeare (*flatly*). Stop it, Judith. You speak so badly. Such banalities. So stale and ugly.  
Judith. I can only use the words I know.<sup>24</sup>

Writing and not writing dominates Scene Four, in which Shakespeare pronounces his inability to write. But still, as a playwright, Shakespeare forms an obstacle to Jonson. As language is part of Jonson's pride, he uses it to characterise Shakespeare's 'genuine ignorance' and 'lack of education'. His descriptive comments serve as a tool in this literary duel as well as bringing the dramatic discourse to the foreground as an object:

Jonson. Shall I tell you something about me? I hate. Yes -- isn't that interesting! I keep it well hidden but it's true: I hate. A short hard word. Begins with a hiss and ends with a spit: hate. To say it you open your mouth as if you're bringing up: hate. I hate you, for example. For preference actually. (p. 47)

As language fails to keep Jonson polite, and as Shakespeare confesses he has nothing to write about, Jonson accuses Shakespeare of stealing his ideas. In histrionic words, he sarcastically advises Shakespeare to base

<sup>23</sup> *The Arts and Politics of Edward Bond* (New York: Peter Lang, 1987), p. 56.

<sup>24</sup> Bond, *Bingo*, in *Plays: Three*, Methuen, 1987, p. 32. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

on him a 'minor character who comes on for five minutes while the lead's off changing his clothes or making a last effort to learn his lines'(p. 47). But as is clear from his offer, Jonson's accusations indicate his self-depreciation: wanting to attack Shakespeare, he belittled his own status.

In *The Fool*, Patty's conversation with Clare forms a metalinguistic expression of the chasm that separates them. Patty's objection to Clare's 'daft' images that preclude a 'proper conversation' between them indicates the distance Clare has travelled from his environment, including Patty. His dismissive scream of 'Health gall?' characterises the differences in understanding and locating his situation; it reflects his bitterness towards the society in which he lives and of which Patty constitutes an important element:

Patty. On't talk so daft! Talk straight so a body can hev a proper conversation. If you're on fire you goo up in smoke. On'y smoke I seen out a you's tobacco -- when you scrounge it ... Limbs! Normal people hev arms an' legs. Chriss sake talk like a man. On't comfortable with you in the house. Talk like some little ol' gall so well brought up she can't git her gloves off without the footman. Aches an' pains? I'll know what smartin' is when I hev your kid.<sup>25</sup>

The object-language that signifies the non-communication between Patty and Clare reappears again in *The Woman*, there showing the mistrust between the two fighting parties at Troy. The mistrust is embodied metalinguistically when Hecuba, who demands the truth, confronts Ismene with her lies. The occasion, to Hecuba, requires the uncovering of all lies, but this demand is felt by Ismene, rightly, as an accusation. She responds: 'This is too serious to play with words-'(p. 191). The metalinguistical struggle underlines their inability to communicate because they mistrust each other. In Ismene's case, it is a mistrust which is the result of drawing Hecuba's image as an aristocratic whore in the play-within-the-play which she witnessed.

Scene Three of *The Worlds* also stresses the words by making them the focus of attention. Trench's confused reading of the ultimatum of the terrorists and the subsequent correct reading of it indicate the attitudes of the two parties towards language as a meaning-bearer. The confused reading demands that the auditor settle his mind on the language itself. The correct reading puts the meaning on its head and thus makes the confused reading, in one sense, a trick that necessitates the clarification of the words used. The two readings illustrate two different attitudes to language and, more importantly, manifest two different sets

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<sup>25</sup> Bond, *The Fool*, in *Plays: Three*, Methuen, 1987, p. 132. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

of corresponding values.

Trench orchestrates the evening's discussion at his 'think tank' within the spirit of playing games by proposing the critical definition of 'what is character?' and 'how to measure character?'. Although a diversion from the more important issue, the industrial action his company is facing, the question is nevertheless of thematic importance. According to his critique, a character is the 'whole man'. The way a character 'shakes' hands is just an indication and does not show the character's wholeness. More important is his applied principle 'what you invest in a man', that is, a character, is 'what you get out of him'(p. 13). As a character in power, he earns the consensus of his employees, that is, his supporting characters. Trench's critique is applied to him when he becomes an un-investable character: the company's board sacks him in his absence while he is kidnapped. The supporting characters betray the very values they articulated as definitions of character: trust, loyalty, friendship, and respect for Trench's authority. A stronger power, the marketplace, forces them to take a different approach to what they approved, and therefore they sacrifice Trench. Kendal, for example, asks Trench to display his sort of character when he says: 'You name your own handshake'. But Kendal's statement, and similar statements by other characters, disclose his own sort of character by implication. Not one of the businessmen throws a lifeline to Trench after pushing him overboard, not one of them offers him a hand, he is even denied the *right to judge* for which he screams at them. To him, they 'act like cowards and hypocrites'(p. 39). The conflict between the two sides proves the falsity of both kinds of definition, his and theirs.

Such incidents of putting language as the object of discourse serve to stress the power of language in culturally shaping the individual. But the theatrical effectiveness of such metalanguage depends on how the playwright arranges it as well as its context. 'At an extreme of linguistic self-consciousness', Elam explains, 'such commentary serves to "frame" the very process of character-to-character or actor-to-audience verbal communication, and so becomes part of a broader metadramatic superstructure'<sup>26</sup> of which language is only one element. In this light, we can conclude that all the metalinguistic incidents indicated above frame a character-to-character verbal communication, and therefore their effectiveness in creating a metadramatic self-conscious superstructure is limited. It is only in a play like *Restoration* that a

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<sup>26</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 156.

"character"-to-audience relationship starts to appear.

#### IV) Why Tragedy Is Not Enough?

The words 'tragedy' and 'tragic' have special meaning and connotations in Bond's plays. Some of the authority figures believe in them, or advocate belief in them as a cogent method of deceiving others. They know that such words have a special effect when they are heard by many people, and therefore they exploit this effect to advance their own cause. *The Sea* and its 'Note for Programmes' contain the most effective and complete observations on the subject of tragedy and tragic, observations which emphasise Bond's rejection of tragedy.<sup>27</sup> But first of all, it is a doubtful praxis to try to discern whether Bond or his characters talk about tragedy as a dramatic genre or about the pessimistic vision that finds tragedy in human nature and/or the human condition itself. Such comments are interchangeable in the play and in Bond's Note. Jaspers' surpassing of tragedy could be a model by which to understand Bond's. Jaspers' definition of 'tragic knowledge' is that it could be expressed in two different ways: a vision and an artistic form. Tragedy, epic, and the novel are, to Jaspers, vehicles of the tragic knowledge, knowledge which could also appear in life and philosophy.<sup>28</sup>

Mrs Rafi and Evens instantiate two versions of what Jaspers calls 'the distortion of tragic knowledge' into a tragic world view. The first pole of opinion is the tragic pose which treats tragedy as the proper attribute of chosen people. In this vision, the tragic is turned into an absolute and made to appear as if it constitutes the essence of life and of man. This absolutisation is a form of belief in what Jaspers terms 'nothing-but-tragedy'. This pose can explain Mrs Rafi's attitude to tragedy. Her direct comment on tragedy occurs on three occasions, two of which expose her histrionic behaviour (the play she rehearses and the funeral) and the third exposes her autocratic expression of power over the draper (the rejection of the curtains). On the first occasion, she acknowledges the acquisition of wisdom through specific tragic experiences: Jessica's tragedy, because 'nothing' has happened to her, does not qualify her, in Mrs Rafi's judgement, to

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<sup>27</sup> Bond's rejection of the tragedy is similar to Brecht's rejection of the Greek concept of *moira* upon which the traditional notion of tragedy is largely based. Though some reservations about Brecht's understanding of Aristotelian tragedy as relying upon emotional appeal to communicate a sense of metaphysical inevitability, and on Bond's evaluation of tragedy's pessimism, might be in order, the dramaturgical strategies of both dramatists concentrate on demonstrating that the problem of evil is social and not metaphysical. For both, it has nothing to do with fate, inevitability, or *moira*.

<sup>28</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Tragedy Is Not Enough*, translated by Harald A. T. Reiche, Harry T. Moore, and Karl W. Deutsch (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1969), p. 28.



give advice. Although Jessica's situation is tragic, she herself is not one of the chosen. It is more convenient to say that to Mrs Rafi there are people and people. The chosen one is Colin whose death, to her, is a 'tragedy'(p. 136). Colin's heroic potential is indicated by many characters, and his magnitude is undisputable to Mrs Rafi. Furthermore, his tragedy, which happened because unspecified 'they' have got him, will remain forever as 'a ghost haunting the sea'(p. 162). Equally, her comments indicate that she herself is 'haunted' by this vision: even when she is controlling the chaos of her community, she will be thinking of the sea and dead Colin. Mrs Rafi's attitude is to play her part in life in the shadow of death; she is inauthentic to life.

But the much celebrated comment on tragedy comes from Evens, who establishes the second pole of opinion on the subject, a variation on Mrs Rafi's opinion. In this second stance, tragedy reveals the worthlessness of life itself, of all individual finite human life; that the world is set up to break and destroy the individual.<sup>29</sup> Colin's death to him is an 'accident'(p. 116), that could have been prevented 'if he had not gone to sea'(p. 120), or ventured out in the bad weather. The tragedy, if it is one, is insignificant because it is just a single one within the tragedy of the world, and even 'chance' came into it. As Jaspers explains, in this vision, chance is one of the indispensable idiosyncratic qualities of the negativity of the universe. This vision senses the course of the world and the universal destruction of all that has emerged as tragic. Seeing Willy's depression and crying, Evens starts to assess the tragedy and put it in a wider, universal perspective. To prove the insignificance of individual tragedies, Evens puts Colin's within the total tragedy of the universe. He alternates his speech to Willy from one *instance* to another about the same subject.<sup>30</sup> His speech moves between different parallel tragedies: the tragedy of losing his wife, who died of something 'quite minor', the tragedy of a man who was drowned and washed by the flood to his own garden, the tragedy of the sea as uncontrollable natural power, the tragedy of human behaviour in general, and Colin's

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<sup>29</sup> Evens shares with Mrs Rafi her social position, her articulateness and consciousness of her role as well as her undisguised cynicism towards human efforts, but the difference is that Evens avoids any action to the extent that he lives on the beach, out of people's way. This equality was stressed in the play's first performance at the Royal Court, 1973, directed by William Gaskill, who put Mrs Rafi and Evens in the funeral scene, the only scene that sees them together, on the same level but on opposite sides of the stage, both separate from the group of mourners in the middle. For more details see, Jeremy Kingston, 'Theatre': a review of *The Sea*, *Punch*, 264 (30 May 1973), p. 774.

<sup>30</sup> Malcolm Hay and Philip Roberts observe that Evens gives more than the required answer about tides, and that Evens's lines continually shift from one train of thought to another and from one *subject* to another because that is how Bond depicts the character. These sections of speech, to them, are sections of individual statements that convey information about Evens. The subject, to my judgement, does not change and it conveys Evens's intellectual viewpoint that sees tragedy everywhere. See *Bond: A Study of his Plays*, Eyre Methuen, 1980, p. 149.

tragedy. This characterisation and description make it evident that tragedy, to Evens, involves everything and everyone. Within this assessment comes Evens's comment on tragedy as a genre:

Evens. It doesn't matter how clear the main currents are, you have to live with the details. It's always the details that make the tragedy. Not anything larger. They used to say tragedy purified, helped you let go. Now it only embarrasses. They'll make a law against it. (p. 118)

The occurrence of tragedy, to Evens, could depend on chance; something 'quite minor', not on larger causes like God, Fate, gods, or *moira*, who make the final result of tragedy irreparable. Evens's 'details' is another name for Jaspers' 'context' in which tragedy occurs, or to which we relate it. Evens's understanding of the tragic is fundamentally pessimistic because it has led to a position of complete withdrawal where tragic knowledge has withered to a mere pinpoint of self-assertion. But the dim optimism in it springs from his allocation of the causes of tragedy to minor ones, reparable in themselves. It is not until Scene Eight that Evens clarifies his intellectual attitude to tragedy. During his assumptions and surmises of the Encompassing reality and of the future, in which he anticipates the abolition of human beings as we know them, he makes another comment on tragedy.<sup>31</sup> In this inhuman future, with transplanted organs put in better containers, tragedy, sadly for Evens, will disappear as the condition of life. Grass will exist no more: 'Why? What's it for? There'll be no more tragedy. There's no tragedy without grass for you to play it on'(p. 168).<sup>32</sup> He expresses to Willy the need for tragedy as a human experience.

It seems also that he is empowering Willy with understanding of the necessary balance between power and awareness: as in Jaspers' philosophy, tragedy occurs wherever awareness exceeds power. But a world without tragedy will result in 'discipline and madness', as Evens comments. The results have already started to appear in the form of Hatch's madness, as Evens himself links the introduction and the result. Suffering through tragedy though, is essentially human because it leads, in Evens's opinion as well as in Bond's, to laughter.<sup>33</sup> Although Evens does not gain tragic knowledge, he is aware of his own limits

<sup>31</sup> The Encompassing (the Universe sometimes) is Jaspers' term for the reality that encompasses all we know and all we think. Although we can neither know its structure nor verify any proposition about it as a whole, we cannot live without making assumptions or surmises about it. The parts of it that become known cease to be parts of the Encompassing, but parts of our field of knowledge and action. See Jaspers, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-16. Mrs Rafi's self-epitaph is her surmise, and Evens's assumption is his simile of the rat and the rat catcher.

<sup>32</sup> Significant as it is, such an imagined inhuman world without tragedy echoes Jaspers' phrasing of the alternative: 'The alternative to recurrent tragedy, the abolition of the margin of awareness, might well destroy the humanity of man. A person whose limits of awareness should coincide precisely with his limits of successful action would be unlikely to suffer'. See Karl W. Deutsch, Introduction to *Tragedy Is Not Enough*, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>33</sup> According to Jaspers' understanding, 'in the original vision, tragedy and the release from it are linked together. But if we rob tragedy of its opposite pole and isolate it as nothing-but-tragedy, we fall into a bottomless chasm'. Jaspers, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101. Such a vision achieves no comprehensive interpretation of the world and lacks faith in human release.

as the 'wise fool' and therefore he advises Willy to go and find the truth, to change the world, and not to despair. According to Jaspers' philosophy, Evens's apathy does not lead to redemption; his aesthetic detachment is Mrs Rafi's pose in another guise. Genuine tragic knowledge believes in the inevitability of the tragic, but equally in the possibility of the release from it.

Although Willy does not speak about tragedy directly, he experiences both Mrs Rafi's tragic pose and Evens's philosophic apathy before he is able to give shape to his thoughts about Colin's death, his awareness of the tragic and the possibility to transcend it. His awareness appears before Colin's corpse; before the tragedy. First, he recognises man's limits and voices his knowledge to Rose: the heroic figure of Colin 'was afraid', 'a hero's fear', 'a hero must be afraid of weaker men'. That Rose's question 'Why?' goes unanswered implies that Willy understands Colin's tragedy, and any tragedy for that matter, as a natural, unexplainable human phenomenon. Contrary to that is Rose's understanding: she prefers her tragic belief in the absolute gulf between life and death. She, as Hay and Roberts explain, closes her ears to Willy's account of how Colin drowned 'preferring her role as a tragic heroine to the disturbance Willy's new tone would cause her'.<sup>34</sup> She still thinks of Colin as a heroic figure without whom her life is ruined. This contrast in their opinions proves that Willy's thought-pattern has changed: 'life is all unbearable but that is where you have to find your strength'(p. 148). Scene Seven witnesses the main action necessary to prove Willy's achievement of tragic knowledge.<sup>35</sup> Willy's swimming in the sea in which Colin drowned signifies primarily his acceptance of danger and his will to transcend the tragedy, to be liberated from it because facing the tragedy, in Jaspers' philosophy, means, paradoxically, liberation from it. This becomes the occasion on which Willy plays out his name. He practises his will in the face of the tragic, something which Rose does not believe for a while.

The encounter between Evens and Willy in the last scene confirms Willy's decision to abandon the island. As Jaspers explains, when faced with tragic knowledge, philosophic apathy, a pose Evens fosters, fails to carry liberation far enough as it is mere endurance and shrinks to mere meaningless self-assertion. Though the young and the old men share specific opinions, what Bond does is to make Evens play out his

<sup>34</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>35</sup> According to Jaspers, tragic knowledge 'arises only where man actually accepts danger and that inescapable nexus of guilt and doom implicit in all true action and accomplishment in the real world'. See *ibid*, p. 96.

name: he 'evens' Willy's thoughts for the future. The wise fool's knowledge, as Evens explains to Willy, is fundamental, but not enough. In this scene, though he has resigned and plays no part in life, Evens does not appear as in favour of inaction nor does he approve of shipwreck being experienced by *everyone*: 'It wouldn't help *them* if they lived here. We all have to end differently'(p. 168). He advises Willy to avoid his own position of philosophical apathy. What Evens does is not to liberate Willy as he, as indicated above, has liberated himself, but to transform Willy's knowledge into, to use Jaspers' term, 'tragic readiness', that is, when awareness of the inevitability of the tragic becomes basic to man's awareness of reality, or, to use Bond's term, into 'moral maturity' that 'living involves failure'.<sup>36</sup>

On a more fundamental level, the 'last encounter' between Evens and Willy embodies another important aspect in Jaspers' optimistic philosophy, namely: the will to communication. As Bond has said 'the old man doesn't say anything that Willy hasn't already told Rose, in essence, when they talked on the beach just before they found the body -- but the act of saying it and listening to it demonstrates their belief in the possibility of a rational, sane society'.<sup>37</sup> The encounter shows this will to communication, but it is not the communication of the obvious or the trivial, but of the difficult, the controversial and the half-known. Evens becomes a Bond/Jaspers-like figure in fighting against pessimism and expressing the need to transcend shipwreck.<sup>38</sup> Tragedy for the three men (Jaspers, Bond, and Evens) is essentially human and a basic characteristic of life. We cannot either escape or deny it, but we do not have to stop there and, at best, play the victims: tragedy and the release from it are bound together.<sup>39</sup>

Apart from the theatricality generated from the words 'tragic' and 'tragedy', their significance lies in the fact that Bond's use of them exposes the histrionic attitude of the authority figures. It is obvious that

<sup>36</sup> 'The Author's Note for Programmes', *The Sea*, Methuen Modern Plays, 1973, pp. 68, 66 respectively. The Note has been added to the 1975 reprint.

<sup>37</sup> Bond, letter to Tom H. Wild, 16 January 1977, in *Bond: A Companion to the Plays*, edited by Malcolm Hay and Philip Roberts, Theatre Quarterly Publications, 1978, p. 57.

<sup>38</sup> Bond, 'We even need a sense of tragedy. No democracy can exist without that. But tragedy as something to use in our lives, that gives us sympathy and understanding of other people. Only a moron wants to grin all the time, and even he weeps with rage in the night. Tragedy in this sense is necessary for moral maturity, it doesn't lead to despair, and it certainly has nothing to do with a catharsis that makes us accept abominations to which there should be political solutions. It leads to knowledge and action'. Bond's 'Note for Programmes', *The Sea*, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

<sup>39</sup> If the optimistic belief in man's ability to transcend tragedy has made Jaspers condemn the pessimistic tragic visions that do not see the release from it (as he has done with Buddhism, Christianity, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Wagner, Hebbel, Bahnsen, Unamuno, and the German tragedies of the nineteenth century), Bond considers *The Sea* a condemnation of the pessimistic 'absurd' visions that assume that human beings are innately destructive (as Christianity, 'ritual' anthropology, the general theory of psycho-analysis, and the Theatre of the Absurd). Both Bond's and Jaspers's visions oppose philosophies that emphasize the weakness and incapacity of man.

Bond's rejection of tragedy is a rejection of a pre-written fate for the individual and an attempt to persuade him to believe that living authentically to life, and not to death is what makes the human being rational. It is important to observe in this respect that Evens as well as Jaspers expresses the need to live by faith, that is, by the depth and effectiveness of our commitment to our assumptions or surmises and to our unending search for better ones. To 'live by faith' is the essential thing to Jaspers, an understanding which Evens reflects when he advises Willy to 'have faith'. Evens, however, cannot define the object of that faith because he himself does not believe in one.<sup>40</sup> Bond requires the characters to live authentically, without any pretensions. It is an advice to avoid the roles allocated to the characters by the authority figures and the dehumanising reality. It is an advice for the characters to know the inevitability of tragedy, and if they do that, it means that they live an authentic life, without displaying masks or playing deceitful roles.

The futility of the attitude of believing in nothing-but-tragedy, in playing roles faithfully to death, appears again in *The Woman*. The Son claims his knowledge of his role as a tragic scapegoat, a knowledge which involves him immediately in the theatrical. Living in complete awareness of their future actions, according to Franco Tonelli and Judd Hubert, means that the characters live in a suspended time, not realistic one:<sup>41</sup>

Son. I'm off to the temple to weep and wail and inspire the people. I shall be the man who stands on the street corner of history with a rope round his neck and beckons the spectators to come and be hanged. (p. 207)

Ironically, his 'spectators' kill him in order to get rid of him and the Statue.

That sort of self-sacrifice is exactly what Lord Are asks Bob to do in *Restoration*. The symbol of society shows how the word 'tragedy' has a special meaning about it, a meaning which he aims at exploiting for his own ends. Lord Are shows understanding but also contempt of the mode of tragedy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: 'O the tedium of a tragedy: everything is said twice then thrice'(p. 47). Sarcastically, he wonders about the absence of any signals of anger when he seizes Bob's pardon, for he essentially does not believe in the existence of tragedy:

Are. Now sure I am looked on by a guardian angel -- though from whence I know not! I hold in my hand his pardon. I shall not deliver it. What, no lightning stroke? No thunder? The sun

<sup>40</sup> See Deutsch's Introduction to Jaspers, *op. cit.*, p. 17 and *The Sea*, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

<sup>41</sup> See their 'Theatricality: The Burden of the Text', *Sub-Stance*, No. 21 (1978), p. 82.

does not stop in its course! (p. 88)

But expressing his disbelief privately to the spectators does not prevent him from exploiting the 'common' idea of tragic sacrifice. In his private interview with Bob, he persuades him to play 'the hero', to save his neck.

In *The Fool*, Bond falsifies the doctrine of the Parson who ignores the material causes of the unjust social circumstances that led Clare astray, and validates Clare's suffering. In justifying Clare's ordeal, the Parson states to Patty: 'Tragedy is like justice, blind and over pity. Clare didn't ask for help. He scorned us ... In a way his sufferings condemn him. They protect him with the arrogance of a certain sort of pain'(p. 141).

In his theoretical writing, Bond states his desire for Scene Two of *The Swing* to be played farcically to show that 'the white characters are not passive victims of tragic fate'.<sup>42</sup> Bond's aim is to make these characters responsible for their actions. Denying them the 'dignity of tragedy'(p. 34), to Bond, means preventing the spectator from sympathizing with such figures. In general, Bond's rejection is of tragedy when it implies a pessimistic interpretation of the world, an interpretation whereby subjective suffering and fate are tied to being human, when a fixed idea of human nature prohibits an action to alter man's destiny. To Bond, man's subjection to suffering is not a universal law. The unchangeable pre-determined fate of man, whether rooted in religion or dramatic genre, is the means with which the systems of law and order persuade people to believe in their hearts that they are condemned to their fate. Such tragic destiny, as Bond himself says in the 'Song of the Seven Deadly Veils', transfers life into a useless 'Side Show Called The Dance of Death':

The priest and teacher whisper together  
Mankind is a tragic animal  
Destined by nature to fight forever  
Man against man with tooth and claw<sup>43</sup>

The world, to Bond, is rational, not tragic nor absurd, but the behaviour of some people is so: they reach for something beyond their limitation. In his fable 'Not a Tragedy but an Error, Not an Absurdity but a

<sup>42</sup> Bond, 'Author's Note', *The Swing*, part two of *A-A-America*, in *A-A-America & Stone*, Methuen Modern Plays, 1981, p. 33. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>43</sup> Bond, *Stone*, in *Plays: Three*, Methuen, 1987, p. 323. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

Mistake' he explains that the people who over-reach themselves out on the slender branches fall to their deaths, but 'it would be ridiculous to call the *tree* tragic or absurd'.<sup>44</sup>

## V) The Master of the Theatre Convention:

Like Mrs Rafi, Lord Are acts, directs, stage-manages, dramatises, and critically comments on the medium in which he resides. But Are is allowed to practise his mastery in and out of that illusion. The first impression we have of Are signifies him as an actor/deceiver as he 'poses' to resemble a sketch: 'I had it drew up by a man renowned for his landscapes to show me how a gentleman drapes himself across his fields'(p. 8). The reason for this 'imitation' of an extravagant gesture is to influence his coming audience: his bride-to-be, Ann, and his future father-in-law, the wealthy industrialist, Hardache. But if, as Philip Roberts says, 'life imitates art' in this scene,<sup>45</sup> it is clear that the kind of art which Are tries to imitate is deceptive and remote from the harsh realities of the countryside manifested in the rest of the play. Are is contemptuous of the countryside, but he makes an effort to use its picturesque qualities to lend him an impressive appearance. Throughout the play, he is rarely seen in his true colour. In Scene Ten, Bond indicates in the stage directions that Are '*is seen in a shirt and breeches and without a wig* (p. 84) for the first time. And then Are *suddenly becomes his old self again* (p. 90) when he realises the different sort of behaviour required for the 'public' hanging. And throughout the play, he objects to being the villain, the fool, the public lampoon, or the clown, but he kills his wife.

Around this fatal 'mistake' the play revolves, and Are is caught in the ridiculous, farcical circumstances of the murder. He finds no fault with his own performance, but instead puts the blame on the 'location' in which it took place: 'Had a kinder providence set the scene in a London salon, under two chandeliers, I'd have recognised her even with one of her father's buckets over her head'(p. 56). In playing the family ghost to frighten him, Ann 'played death to life. A performance to retire on'(p. 45). The confrontation of the two attitudes proves the deadliness of Ann's. He has no doubt of her death but if she is not dead then she has reached the border of actuality in her performance: the complete involvement in the character

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<sup>44</sup> Bond, *Summer and Fables*, Methuen Modern Plays, 1982, p.79. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>45</sup> 'The Search for Epic Drama: Edward Bond's Recent Work', *Modern Drama*, 24, 4 (December 1981), p. 470.

she portrayed. His sarcastic comment on her death manifests his disbelief in her 'consummate' acting. To Are, this method means that the death of the character is the death of the actor himself. To avoid such eventuating one has to be flexible in one's performance.

As Lord Are threatens Bob to make him take the blame for the murder, he is faced with the truth voiced by Rose. For a short time, he loses control but he 'recovers himself and is soon back to his usual stage-managing of the situation'.<sup>46</sup> He also succeeds in avoiding Old Lady Are's melodramatic manoeuvre to play the *dea ex machina* to reprieve Bob at the last moment. Are ruthlessly gives the pardon she gets for Bob to his ignorant mother with which to start a fire. Immediately after the Messenger exits, leaving the pardon to Are, the latter shows the talents that made him succeed in avoiding the consequences of the killing. The multi-talented man dramatises, directs, and acts another imaginary situation in which he pretends he is trapped. He shows the spectators the way he could defraud the countrymen into making them believe his excuses for not succeeding in arriving at the hanging scene with the pardon in time:

Are. Think, I cannot ride up with the pardon! I must forgo the hanging! I take not the coach. I say I go horse-back to go faster. On the way I fall. Racing and hollooming with the joy of glad tidings, over I go tippity-top - knocked out. When I get to my feet the jade hath run. (I shall whip her off. 'Tis a faithful beast and will cling - but I'll break my whip on her, and if that don't serve throw stones.) Then I have my limp. (*Practises.*) Nay severer. (*Practises as he talks.*) I hobble (I have cut a stick from the hedge) to a nearby farm. All at the hanging. We have not seen such desolation since the black death. On I crawl. Till time hath run out and poor Bob the Boob is led under the tree. (pp. 88-9)

Are's ability to direct the situation and the consequences of an action is deadly and his deadliness is 'partly masked by his ability to perform a public turn to the audience, often in conspiratorial manner, as if the audience were naturally expected to endorse his stance'.<sup>47</sup> He proves that some dramatic genres or styles are not worthy opponents to his mastery in deceiving the rest of the characters. The failure of these dramatic genres and styles to reprieve the innocent Bob is beyond Are's doubts or questioning. He even tries to use the tragic genre to save his own neck when he persuades Bob to play the 'hero'. He tries to elevate Bob to the stature of the tragic hero by sacrificing himself. Are advocates the widespread idea that the doom of the tragic hero becomes his restoration, hence one of the meanings of the title.

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<sup>46</sup> Katharine Worth, 'Bond's *Restoration*', *Modern Drama*, 24, 4(December 1981), p. 488. I am indebted to Worth for the subtitle of this section.

<sup>47</sup> Roberts, 'The Search for Epic Drama', *op. cit.*, p. 470. Worth also sees that Are invites the spectators to see the situation with him as a piece of theatre. See her *loc. cit.*'.



**Summary:**

1) Bond has created some figures of authority who are inclined to use artistic vocabulary in their daily life in order to self-dramatise or to dramatise other people's lives and situations. Other figures are apt to act their situations with an over-acting attitude, which makes one feel that they think of themselves as actors on a stage. They use the histrionic words to act, to appear different from their reality, to deceive the lower class characters. Some of these figures use the stage as a means of controlling and bullying people. Characters of a third type are apt to criticise other people's performance, or to evaluate their linguistic vocabulary.

2) However, the words tragedy and tragic are used by some characters to impose a pre-determined fate on man. The comparison between the philosophy of Karl Jaspers and Bond's ideas, has proved that, for Bond, 'the *bête noire* is not so much the tragedy'<sup>48</sup> but a vision that makes man's destiny unalterable. Bond's employment of the words 'tragedy' and 'tragic' exposes the attitudes of the authority figures as role players in life, playing roles in the shadow of death.

3) In Lord Are, Bond creates a master of the theatre convention who practises all these activities. Are is also the only character in Bond's plays up to and including *Restoration* who is allowed the Brechtian practice of informing the audience's presence and behaving as if in their endorsement and support.

4) These words and actions, though limited in Bond's plays, create theatricality by putting the world of theatre itself in the focus, reminding the audience that they are in theatre. The words and actions are Bond's means of establishing one side of the duality between illusion and theatricality in his plays. Contrary to Pirandello, with his undefinable sceptical world in which illusion mixes with reality, and to Brecht, with clear separation between the reality of the actor as actor and his presented character, Bond creates characters who know they are real people but have sometimes to enact different deceiving roles. They are allocated their powerful positions by their social class and therefore they use the histrionic words to preserve their power and the appearance of stable social order. Bond's purpose is to indicate their hypocritical behaviour in their deceptive, fraudulent cultures by allocating them these artistic words. The illusion of

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<sup>48</sup> David L. Hirst, *Edward Bond*, Macmillan, 1985, p. 89.

the stage in some of Bond's plays is *partly* diminished by using artistically conscious characters within the enacted world.

## Chapter Two

### The Trial Scenes

The trial scene usually offers the playwright an instrument with which he/she can illustrate how just or unjust a society is by showing the confrontation between the powerful and the powerless and how the powerful practises his authority over the powerless. The question of justice is investigated in the trial in order to unmask the political in society. The structure of the trial, the course and the practice of justice, as well as the verdict, reflect the playwright's implicit or explicit judgement upon the system of justice, and hence unavoidably the whole sociopolitical system. In this, the dramatist can use the trial to function in:

i) The unmasking of the authority figures, especially when they use their histrionic words and actions.

The trial reflects the practice of politics as it is administered at a sensitive point in the life of the individual: between innocence and guilt. The encounter between the antagonists brings forward their best abilities to defend themselves. However, bringing the antagonists together results in showing opposite methods of accrediting their convictions and standpoints. On the one hand, it necessitates a narrative, cool voice to reinforce their viewpoint as logically as possible. On the other, the need to affect their audience requires an explosive, tense, inflammatory voice to obtain a favourable response.

ii) The creation of consciousness, for both the protagonist and the audience. Within the duel between the antagonists, the political and social background are introduced in a concentrated form. Thus, the trial becomes a vehicle with which the dramatist advocates consciousness; it becomes an essential and decisive point for teaching the protagonist and the audience the reality about the governing political system. The trial does not only introduce facts that are normally hidden, but is a microcosmic version of the society in which it occurs. When the microcosm is introduced, the protagonist is more likely to be able to judge and evaluate. The trial becomes the occasion at which the dramatist practises the manufacturing and conditioning of the spectator's response to the social system in which the trial takes place as well the protagonist's judgement on it.

iii) The creation of a degree of detachment for the audience because trials are the summing up of past events. The excitement of experiencing the suspense of the action in the present is undermined and a critical distance is created by the very device of the trial. If the verdict is known beforehand or the dramatist makes it clear what the verdict is going to be, the degree of detachment is greater.

Within the practice of dramaturgical strategies, two main types of trials are normally found: the first is the trial that occurs within the narrative, or within the dramatic universe. When the trial occurs within its diegesis, its function is diegetic, that is, it becomes the point at which the dramatist sums up the narrative.<sup>1</sup> The other type of depiction is the use of the trial as an alienation effect. Although it is connected to the dramatic world, some arrangements make the trial appear as a detaching/detached device. The alienation device carries most features of the diegetic trial, but the degree of detachment that makes it an autonomous entity is greater. It is constituted as a theatrical device by other means, and equally contributes to theatricalising the whole structure of the play.

Brecht's courtroom scenes are the best illustration of the second type of trial, the type which is an adequate vehicle for the political playwright. These scenes in Brecht, as Keith A. Dickson explains, 'can more appropriately be ranked amongst the epic features of his theatre, since the reconstruction of past events by witnesses and their interrogators automatically divests them from their dramatic immediacy and thus furnishes a ready-made alienation-effect'.<sup>2</sup> The courtroom facilitates learning and teaching, and therefore it is considered as a variant of the learning process.<sup>3</sup> In both types of trials, the procedures and especially the verdict are the means of furnishing a specific reaction to the social system that administers justice. The verdict becomes the means of agitating the audience, especially in the political type. In Brecht's plays, for example, the trials 'as often as not produce an unacceptable verdict on the events, although they make it quite clear what the verdict should be, with the effect of adding provocation to instruction'.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The word diegesis is actually derived from the Greek for the 'narration' of the obligatory parts of judiciary discourse or the recital of facts. The concept of diegesis is used by film semiologists to describe what designates the film's represented instance, that is 'the sum of a film's denotation: the narration itself, but also the fictional space and time dimensions implied in and by the narrative, and consequently the characters, the landscapes, the events, and other narrative elements, in so far as they are considered in their denoted aspect'. Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, translated by Michael Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 97-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Towards Utopia: A Study of Brecht* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 145.

<sup>3</sup> See for example, *loc. cit.*; Ronald Speirs, *Bertolt Brecht*, Macmillan, 1987, p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> Speirs, *loc. cit.*.

The two types of trials are to be found in Bond's plays: the diegetic and the alienation device. However, the former type prevails, especially in the plays of the first period. All the diegetic trials in Bond's plays are conducted by the ruling-class who also, on many occasions, play the prosecutors. This joint role illustrates the extent of injustice the individual suffers when he is prohibited from having a fair trial. The courtroom thus becomes the means of practising power for the authority figures without giving much thought to the underprivileged. Furthermore, the accused has no defence of any kind in these trials. But in the plays of the second and third periods, especially *Human Cannon*, the trial starts to become an alienation device.

## I) The Diegetic Trial:

### 1) The Trial in "*Early Morning*":

In *Early Morning*, there are three trials. The first one corresponds intertextually to Bond's second performed play, *Saved*. Bond has repeatedly announced that the trial scene in the first act of *Early Morning* 'is in fact a trial of the whole play *Saved* seen from Arthur's point of view'.<sup>5</sup> Bond meant this scene to be a deliberate looking back at the earlier play; mostly to see the motivations behind the stoning of the baby by lower-class characters. The first trial is, in a sense, a widening of the metaphoric meaning of the baby-stoning: for what has been added is the ruling-class and how they administer their justice. This first trial takes place in Windsor palace throne room: Bond thus links the question of justice directly to that of politics. Victoria, as the judge, is obsessed with maintaining the formality of the trial:

Victoria. Put him on oath, but don't let him touch the Bible. King James would turn in his grave.  
(p. 148)

The appearance of justice is more important; the trial 'would look better'(p. 151), in Albert's opinion, which gains the immediate approval of Victoria, if they find someone to defend the accused Len and Joyce. The details around the killing and eating of Joseph Hobson; the title of the film; who ate which part of the body...etc, overwhelms the essence of the crime. The cannibalism is virtually forgotten under the accumulation of irrelevant information and discussions. The cannibalism appears to be a self-evident crime. The

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<sup>5</sup> Bond, 'Letter to Irene' in *A Companion, op. cit.*, p. 43. See also 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', with Harold Hobson, Irving Wardle, Jane Howell, and John Calder, *Gambit*, 17 (October 1970), pp. 14-15.

doctor who testifies about Len and Joyce, upon Arthur's demand, gives his bureaucratic evidence:

Doctor. I have examined the accused. Loosely speaking one was male and the other was -- I made a note of it at the time...*(He finds his note. He realises that he is reading it upside down. He turns it the right way.)* I see, it's a diagram...female. (p.151)

'The doctor', Frances Rademacher comments, 'fails to account for the individual; Len and Joyce are their attributes, existing only in terms of notes and diagrams'.<sup>6</sup>

The verdict of the court is as ludicrous and provocative as the trial itself. It shows Victoria's system and justice:

Victoria. The sentence of the court upon you is that you be taken from this place to a lawful prison and that you be there kept until you are dead, and that your bodies be afterwards handed over to the doctors, and your souls to our lady novelist royal. (p. 152)

But although the authority figures' practice of justice unmasks their interest in keeping the trappings of law, the trial itself shows that the commoner is not only an aggressor but also a victim of that very political system that administers justice, or injustice. Len and Joyce are aggressors and accused of cannibalism, but it is equally clear that they are victims. The symptoms of their culture's sickness appear in the titles of films they watch: *Buried Alive on 'Ampstead' Eath* or *Policeman in Black Nylons*. The violence they are accused of is internalised as natural and therefore they do not feel their abnormality when they eat a human being. Len does not question his culpability but on the contrary, he defends his normality and even accepts his sentence happily. He expresses a necessary common guilt that everyone, sooner or later, must experience:

Len. I done it! Thas that! Get mate, get! ... I got a right a be guilty same as you! And you next matey! You ain' out a reach! (p. 153)

The trial, however, goes beyond its diegetic function because it incorporates three theatrical elements. The first is the juxtaposition of the modern characters with the Victorians in a seemingly unified world. The trial is the first occasion on which the two temporally different worlds are coordinated, a coordination which exposes the similarities between them. Both worlds, as the trial exposes, co-exist, without either of them feeling the temporal extraordinariness of it. That co-existence creates theatricality as the play abandons the suspension of disbelief. This scene, as Michael Patterson has observed of Peter Stein's production of the play, 'seems to come from another play'.<sup>7</sup> The other two elements are the song and the introduction

<sup>6</sup> 'Violence and the Comic in the Plays of Edward Bond', *Modern Drama*, 23, 3(September 1980), p. 262.

<sup>7</sup> See *Peter Stein: Germany's Leading Theatre Director*, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 32.

of the image of the Siamese twins. The song shows Bond's desire to theatricalise the trial scene by having Len and Joyce sing a song similar to a routine: it is a parodic version of 'Lloyd George knew my father/my father knew Lloyd George' which is itself a sort of parody, being sung to the tune of 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. The song, however, is similar to the Expressionist 'number', an artifact which reminds the audience of the artificiality of the spectacle.

Len's second trial at the hands of Gladstone leaves no doubt that the appearance of justice takes over. Len's death punishment and the location of the lynching are already decided, but Gladstone, nevertheless, urges the mob to try Len first. He insists upon following procedures:

Gladstone. 'Old it, brothers. Trial first.

Griss. Stick yer trial.

Gladstone. Yer 'ave t' 'ave yer trial first t' make it legal. Yer don't wan'a act like common criminals. Trial first, death after. (p. 170)

Repeatedly, Gladstone expresses his interest in the 'dignity of the court' and the 'legal situation' of Len because 'irrational man rules by the book, by the trappings of official authority divested of substance'.<sup>8</sup> The histrionic words in his dialogue emphasise his attempt to cover the savagery of the action. These words are followed by his theatrical action of demonstrating to his followers how to torture victims. Amending the law at the lynching spot, however, is easy for him: he legalises the mob's request to castrate Len. But changing the law twice in one day is 'unimaginable' for him and therefore he allows Griss to put a 'nose rag' on his arm and Joyce to put the top of her stockings on her arm in order to maintain the formality that necessitates wearing uniforms for the punishment.

The real purpose of depicting the first trial and the meaning Bond wants to drive home are evident in the next scene: the aggression committed by Len and Joyce, that is specified as an act of homicide and of which they are condemned, is perpetrated on a larger scale by the ruling establishment in the picnic scene. The comparison between the lower-class crimes, for which they are punished, and the upper-class crimes, for which they are not judged, is inescapable. The comic due legal process of the second trial and Len's torture indicate the extent to which the ruling-class institutionalise their violence, and also how they create and internalise a human need to behave according to the 'book'. The aggression of the mob, created by the

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<sup>8</sup> See Debra A. Castillo, 'Dehumanized or Inhuman: Doubles in Edward Bond', *South Central Review*, 3, 2(1986), p. 81.

perversion of justice, serves the establishment to maintain its authority. As Espagne Pauner observes, Len's two trials, first by the head of the state, Victoria, then by the co-prime minister, Gladstone, 'constitute extensive examples of the perversion of the law on the part of those who are supposed to uphold it'.<sup>9</sup>

Len's prophecy in the first trial comes true and Arthur is tried in heaven. As Len is tried for victimising Hobson, Arthur is tried for victimising the human race. Arthur's search for an alternative political system leads him to one solution which is the abandoning of any moral commitment. In heaven, he is accused of being against God; interrupting the natural order of things. His attempt at eliminating the human species meant, to Victoria and her society, the elimination of any future possibility of further trials, as if a human being were created to kill and be tried. In this trial, criminal acts (rape, killing) fall into the same category as social conventions and formalities, and apparently trivial accusations (nose-picking, wasting electricity, dreaming). They are all equally sanctioned by the jury. Thus, the very concept of 'crime' comes under scrutiny as everything is 'criminalised' by the jury. Victoria's role in defending Arthur actually leads to admitting him to a heaven of cannibalism. She, confidently, asks the jury for a verdict of guilty because Arthur, to her, fulfilled her motherhood when he, as she says, 'killed us all'(p. 199) on earth. He is admitted to a heaven of literal cannibalism which is a concretisation and dramatisation of the human activity on earth.<sup>10</sup> But Arthur's humanity is not completely dead and therefore he does not eat the leg Len offers him. Although he is physically freed from George, he feels the painful situation in which he is put and which is similar to that on earth.

The trial, in short, constitutes the substance of dramatic events from which he learns. He is present at the first two trials, they constitute an essential part in the way his awareness is developed. In the first trial, he is not only present, but 'part' of the accused Len. Len and Arthur are virtually the same person, and the trial is of Arthur, though he is not accused. Although he is one of the ruling-class, the trial awakens him to question the motivations behind Len's crime of cannibalism. The trial constitutes the beginning of his long journey towards finding an alternative viable political system to Victoria's. Arthur is a victim of the politi-

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<sup>9</sup> 'Dehumanization and Violence in the Plays of Edward Bond', unpublished M. Phil. thesis, University of East Anglia, 1979, p. 85.

<sup>10</sup> The trial in heaven is, Hirst observes, 'a parody of that on earth'. See his *op. cit.*, p. 109. Hirst uses the term parody in its musical meaning: as a sustained imitation, rather than mere satiric deflation. The comparison is with the first trial.



cal scheming and counter-scheming in Victoria's palace. His bewilderment appears in his speculation as to why Len was not given a proper defence at the trial. He is asked to defend Len, but throughout the process, he feels the impossibility of having a fair trial. He feels his own defencelessness, and, furthermore, he feels his painful situation as a Siamese twin when he discovers that Len and Joyce are handcuffed together. He starts questioning the motivations behind Len's killing and eating a man. The trial, therefore, is the starting point from which Arthur starts questioning the validity of Victoria's political regime. Len's prosecution affects Arthur and persuades him 'to acquiesce in Albert's coup' as a first step towards changing the political system.<sup>11</sup>

## 2) The Trial in "Narrow Road":

The very short trial in *Narrow Road* sums up the dramatic events. It is linked to the tradition of the *Theatrum Mundi* in which the trial scene ought to offer an ultimate evaluation of the whole dramatic enactment, although Bond's play is secular.<sup>12</sup> As a Prime Minister, Basho tries Shogo, and takes the blame for not being able to discover the innate aggressiveness of the ex-ruler of the city when he encountered him as an abandoned baby. The crowd groans during Basho's address, a groaning which emphasizes the extent to which they are subjugated. By the end of Basho's confession, Shogo's body is immediately shown in a grotesquely distorted form, a victim of a dehumanised society.

The very trial, however, does not lead to the emancipation of his Siamese twin, Kiro. Kiro's discovery that 'Shogo was left by the river when he was a child', and that now 'the upturned boat knocks against the pier'(p. 221) indicates a false understanding of the source of human aggressiveness and dehumanisation. As Basho fails to account for the sociopolitical reasons the Peasant and his Wife introduce in the Introduction as explanations of their abandoning of their baby, Kiro fails to comprehend the real reasons. In a sense, Kiro submits to Basho's explanations. This belief leads to Kiro's negative answer to the moral commitment to life; he commits suicide. The audience's understanding of the reasons is not similar

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<sup>11</sup> See Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 72. Although Bond has indicated that Arthur is morally and emotionally a more developed version of Len in *Saved*, I find Len's kicking of the dead man's clothes confusing. Rather emphasizing that Arthur is 'still very much tied up' in Len's sort of character, as Bond says, the action identifies Arthur with the dead man as he is 'clothed' in his clothes. See Bond's 'Letter to Irene', in Hay and Roberts, *A Companion, op. cit.*, p. 43; 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', *op. cit.*, p.14.

<sup>12</sup> See Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

to Kiro's, and therefore the trial must be the method of enlightening the whole dramatic situation.

### 3) The Trial in "*Lear*":

Lear presents a unique exemplification of the three sides of the trial: the judge and prosecutor, the prosecuted, and the protagonist who achieves, fully or partly, consciousness through his trial. In the first scene with the pseudo-trial of The Third worker, Lear openly practises his authority unjustly. He orders the fetching of a firing squad almost in the same breath of announcing 'a drumhead trial for sabotage'. Lear sacrifices the worker to his political purposes embodied in the building of his wall. In order to frighten the workers and the officers, Lear lies against one of his (showily announced) 'sheep', and consequently he himself shoots the worker. The worker is another example of the commoner's suffering at the hands of the ruling-class. The dead man, as the live one, is worthless to Lear, but he uses the accident to serve his own purposes, magnifying the charges against the Third Worker in order to frighten the rest of the workers to work harder. Lear does not try the Third Worker for killing a human being, but for delaying the work on the wall which is 'a flogging crime', and he also 'improvises' another charge of digging up the wall. Thus the audience learn about Lear and how he practises his power over the powerless. But the trial leaves no doubt of the worker's innocence as well as Lear's awareness of it. Lear's justice immediately throws into question the whole sociopolitical set-up when he himself shoots the worker.

And to make the audience compare Lear and his daughters, and to indicate whether Bodice and Fontanelle have learned from their father's mistakes in guarding justice, Bond makes the second act start with a trial of Lear at the hands of his daughters. The dramatic structure of the play parallels the trial of the Third Worker with that of Lear at the hands of his daughters: every act starts with a trial and the parallel does not only heighten a sense of poetic 'justice', but also puts the audience in expectation of the fate of the daughters as they will be judged and tried by another political system. The parallel emphasizes the misuse of power which is reflected in the administration of justice by every side that clings to office.

Bodice persuades the judge to understand the political nature of the trial, although she puts the cart before the horse. She informs him: 'This is a political trial: politics is the higher form of justice'(p. 46). Apart from her false claims, the trial is of her fabrication. Hay and Roberts observe, the trial 'is stage managed' by her.<sup>13</sup> But Lear is obviously condemned beforehand by the system he instituted. The

<sup>13</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 126.

marionette judge, who works upon Bodice's instructions, was appointed by Lear because of his corruption, and the Old Councillor, who gives evidence against him, was employed by Lear, though he betrayed him.

The trial makes it clear that the nature and machination of the daughters' system of justice corresponds to their father's. Bodice dictates to the judge that 'the old king's mad and it's dangerous to let him live. Family sentiment doesn't cloud our judgement. I've arranged to call the people who upset him most'(p. 46). In her spurious trial, Bodice pushes her sister to give evidence against Lear, but when she realises her failure in destroying him completely beforehand, she takes her mirror to Lear because, as she says, 'madmen are frightened of themselves'(p. 48). In his complete helplessness, Lear sees himself as a caged animal, unjustly and cruelly condemned. Bodice seizes Lear's metaphor in order to torment him. His exaggerated emotional bursts prompt Bodice to order the judge to adjourn the trial.

Guarded and tortured, he is brought to the court. Although he disputes the authority of the Judge, shows care to the Old Sailor, and dishonours the Old Councillor, most important of all he denies fathering Bodice and Fontanelle, which is a denial of his complete political responsibility for the system itself. The substantial modification Lear shows at his trial, and through his emotional disturbance, is a sense of tenderness towards an imagined animal he sees in Bodice's mirror instead of his own reflection. Lear's realisation of the caged animal indicates his self-pity, but also that a dim political consciousness has started to emerge inside him. He links his suffering *and the rest of the prisoners' blood to the torture and suffering of the caged animal*. Leaving the court, he shouts: 'Its blood's on the steps where the prisoners come!'(p. 50).<sup>14</sup> Lear's self-pity and dim political understanding develop into compassion in the next scene where he befriends and harbours the Gravedigger's Boy's Ghost, and as the events unfold, Lear develops towards gaining his political consciousness which started at the trial.

The next political regime, the Carpenter's and Cordelia's, does not even consider trying the two sisters: the course of injustice arrives at its inevitable end -- the abolition of any system of justice at all. When Fontanelle asks for a trial, she discovers that hers is an already closed case:

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<sup>14</sup> Lear's political awareness is best explained by Richard Scharine: 'At his trial Lear can smell on the steps the blood of all the prisoners who were convicted in the corrupt court he created. He still does not understand, however, that he himself is the architect of his prison. He denies that Bodice and Fontanelle are his children, even though their very action is a product of his own. See his *The Plays of Edward Bond* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1974), p. 203.

Fontanelle. Are you putting us on trial?  
 Carpenter. Your father's case is still open. But yours has been closed.  
 Fontanelle (*calmer*). If I appealed it would go to you?  
 Carpenter. Yes. (p. 71)

Bodice is tried, found guilty, sentenced to death, in her absence, by a *committee*. Her request to be tried in a court passes unheeded. It seems that Bond clarifies his dismissal of the three successive political regimes by using the idea of the trial, which he constructs to beckon the spectator to support his dismissal.

#### 4) The Trial in "*We Come to the River*":

*We Come to the River* shows a court in which its judge and prosecutor is a General who believes in the eternity of war as if it were a second nature of the human being. 'There is no victory', he declares in the trial, 'you only win time you need to prepare for the next war'.<sup>15</sup> And although the General 'understands' the motivations of deserting battles because he experiences them, he sacrifices the Deserter in order to make the rest of the soldiers stay and fight, in order to perpetuate the dehumanising political system. The trial itself takes only seconds to send the accused soldier to death. The Deserter finds no courage to defend himself and nobody to do so.

As is the case with *Lear*, the structure of *The River* reinforces a sense of poetic justice. In the next scene, which consists of three sections played simultaneously, the Deserter recounts the melodramatic life he lived and asks the Second Soldier to shoot him in the forehead while, at the same time in another section, the Doctor tells the General that he is going blind. It seems that the General's blindness is a punishment for his decision to have the Soldier killed.

#### 5) The Trial in "*The Woman*":

The trial in *The Woman* also shows the Greeks, especially Heros, as similar to the General in *The River*. All of them are transgressors and adherents of the eternity of war and aggression. Heros, privately, uncovers to Ismene the real reasons behind judging her: the perpetuation of war by mistrusting others. 'If I left Troy tomorrow', he informs her, 'Troy would attack us -- or someone else would attack Troy'(p. 214). His assessment is shared by all male members of the trial. Being a woman in such a court adds another

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<sup>15</sup> Bond, *We Come to the River* (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne), 1976, p. 12. All subsequent references to the play (unless otherwise indicated) will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

dimension to Ismene's charges. Nestor, who presides over the trial, finds Ismene's accusations against the Greek officers excusable because she is a woman:

Nestor. You were a hostage trying to save her life -- right and proper in a woman. (p. 210)  
 Nestor, by assuming her natural weakness as a woman who feels ashamed of her weakness in the trial and therefore pretends a 'show of strength', as he puts it, finds her bravery 'too late' and this will lead to another accusation of defiance. His system of justice leads to adding a charge of defiance to that of treason and therefore he confronts Ismene, sending her to her death.

The Greek militarists misunderstand the motivation behind Ismene's accusations and her pacifist attitudes towards war because, mainly, they are cynics, incapable of love or pity, especially her husband. He agrees to 'take part' in his wife's trial and claims, like Bodice, that political responsibility forces him to renounce love and pity. 'I can't', he claims, 'break the law and then build a new city of justice'(p. 210). Heros, throughout the trial 'will remain locked in pride, retaining the hollow power that tradition has given him'.<sup>16</sup> Ismene's trial consolidates a humanistic vision: in her trial, she articulates her experience of suffering and sickness in Troy in order to persuade the Greek militarists to save Troy. It is her experience, which the Greeks distrust, that informs her pacifist view. She finds no alternative but to shout the truth at the trial. The court tries to excuse her actions but the end is inevitable. Heros tries to persuade her to commit suicide when they brick her inside the wall but her refusal proves that her accusations were not a despair of life, but rather a longing for a peaceful one.

The effectiveness of the questions she poses to Heros at the end of her trial comes from their generalising nature and also, as Lappin states, because Ismene's words 'are addressed more to the audience than to a mock jury of Greek militarists'.<sup>17</sup> But her affirmation of reason and compassion that stands behind her actions and the desire to record the truth on earth, as she says, is immediately ridiculed by Heros in histrionic words that expose their histrionic attitude:

Ismene. If I were free tomorrow to curse the Greeks when they went into Troy -- then I'd be remembered.

Heros. You'd be a sideshow. A parody of the real truth. (p. 215)

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<sup>16</sup> Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 153.

Although Bond, here, is indicating the limits of her humanistic view, the trial informs her of the truth about her husband and how far she deceived herself about his reality. It constitutes an important step towards her gaining happiness and sanity with the Dark Man, not Heros, at the end of the play.

## 6) The Trial in "*The Cat*":

In *The Cat*, Bond shows a judge who is 'cynical, eccentric and probably mad'.<sup>18</sup> Although he declares his absolute impartiality at the beginning of the trial, he alters his position as soon as he becomes aware of the noble origins of the accused, Tom. All Tom's charges become 'little matters' that could be dropped. The judge's relation with 'one side of the case' is indispensable to the extent that his declared impartiality seems meaningless: like Lord Puff, he holds bonds and stocks in factories and docks. The same economical powers make him reverse his partiality with Puff as he discovers a new master, Tom. The trial makes it clear that justice follows wealth. The Jury are shown as a group of birds who are intimidated and acquiescent, knowing their limited power. Their weakness and instrumental use by the Judge is stated at the beginning of the scene:

The geese were summoned by the fox  
 To be his jury  
 We quietly sit in his jury box  
 We do not ask him if the law  
 Defends the rich to rob the poor  
 That's not what he summoned us for  
 We do our humble duty  
 As citizens quack quack! (p. 145)

Their stated function leaves no doubt of the fabrication of trials in order to support the authority figures and their dehumanising political systems.

## II) The Alienation Device:

### 1) The Trial in "*Stone*":

The more Bond's aesthetics have become Marxist, the more his trial scenes resemble those of Brecht's. The trial scene in *Stone* comes closer to the Brechtian type of courtrooms, especially the trial in the short *Lehrstück: The Exception and the Rule*. Critics have indicated several analogies between the two

<sup>18</sup> Roberts, 'The Search for Epic Drama', *op. cit.*, p. 465.

plays, among them that 'the Judge in Brecht's play uses the same pseudo-logic in justifying his acquittal of the Merchant for shooting the Coolie that we hear from the Judge and the Mason in *Stone*'.<sup>19</sup> He also ignores the Policeman's confessed aggression and violence because, in reality, the ties between them are deeply rooted; the Policeman protects the interests of the Judge and their collaboration deters any outsider. The Judge unjustly sentences the Man to be chained with the stone he was carrying until he reaches the Mason's house, thus perpetuating the system of exploitation.

The Judge protects his own interests as a landlord although he claims impartiality and consideration of the spirit of law: 'This is a court of justice before it's a court of law'(p. 331). He faces the Girl's pretentious offer to leave her artistic profession with equally pretentious negation, because her offer will affect his own income as a landlord:

Girl. I turn my back on life. I'll go in a nunnery.

Judge. Impossible. It's your duty to run your inn and dance for the public.

Girl. If that's the court's ruling.

Judge. But I'll have to raise the rent. (p. 333)

As in *Early Morning*, when the song ends the trial, the 'Poem of Naivety' is cited within the trial in *Stone*. The poem is a theatrical device because it is linguistically foregrounded. It is theatrical in another sense as it is an account of what happened between the Man and his parents before the start of his journey.

## 2) The Trial in "*The Swing*":

*The Swing*, Scene Three, constitutes a unique amalgamation of the use of the histrionic words with a trial scene, although it is also not a trial in the regular sense: its judges/prosecutors are self-appointed. But its significance lies precisely in its irregularity as a trial just as it lies in its use of histrionic words. The scene is not only, as Donahue observes, 'a real *coup de théâtre*',<sup>20</sup> but also takes place on an old vaudeville theatre stage. The use of the histrionic words arises partly because of this fact but mainly because of the histrionic attitude of all the characters involved in the lynching of an innocent citizen, Fred.

The scene starts off by showing the resurrection of the 'old for vaudeville' Mrs Kroll, who has a chance to appear in a last performance on her own stage. That is also a resurrection of this kind of stage

<sup>19</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 229. See also Hirst, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 161.

because of the decision to transform it into a grocery shop, which is a sign of cultural changes. Mrs Kroll, in a provocative 'theatrical Edwardian dress' and carrying a parasol, 'sings a suggestive little song very much out of keeping with her dress, but very much in accord with the vaudeville rule "look but don't touch"'.<sup>21</sup> Her song 'I Wore a Little Grey Bonnet', functions as a curtain raiser for releasing Skinner's disguised madness. He senses not only the occasion but also the location in choosing and using the suitable terminology. He uses dramatic jargon to formulate his obsession with law and order, religious fanaticism, and the carrying out of the lynching.<sup>22</sup>

Through Skinner's greetings to his massive attending 'audience', Bond seems to suggest a sense of the collectiveness of the crime. Skinner's happiness at the 'full house t' night'(p. 69), which is crowded with all representatives of society, manifests the extent to which the whole society is frenzied. The manifestation is maximised, moments later, when his persuasion of his audience underlines no individual responsibility of the 'act' that is going to be 'acted':

Skinner. Friends. If this is wrong -- it ain, but if -- we done it t'gether. We act and speak united.  
You're all in this. No one man t' blame. The guilt's on all. No man can point out his brother  
or pour scorn on his neighbour. (p. 70)

The collective 'enactment' of the lynching persuades Skinner to march '*authoritatively to the centre of the stage*'(p. 76), urging his audience and the vaudeville orchestra to join his singing of the American national anthem.

The religious fanaticism of Skinner and his audience is evident. His overenthusiastic belief in the metaphysical power, his consciousness of playing a role on the stage, and an overt desire to 'improve' the stage's conventions inform his thought-pattern: he requests his audience to join him in a collective 'act' of prayer on the stage. In essence, he acts as a religious fanatic who transfers his and their responsibility for the act to rest on God's will. The 'ideological' reasons behind Skinner's act emphasize perpetuating the social laws, embodied in 'place' and 'rank'. To Skinner, every man is cursed with his inevitable fate and the inclination to change that fate causes anarchy. In reality, the crux of all his efforts concentrated on maintaining law and order that guarantee him his profit:

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<sup>21</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>22</sup> Ann Marie Demling describes Skinner as a 'master of ceremonies for the ghastly show that is to follow'. See her 'The Use of the Grotesque in the Plays of Edward Bond', unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1983, p. 91.



Skinner. Each man has his own place and rank: with his own tasks an ability t' carry them out. Law and order writ on the palm of your hands as sure as Cain's curse was writ on his head. (*Applause.*) Step out of line: you take on tasks for which you *ain* got abilities. In my book that's anarchy: you cut off your hands! (p. 71)

To maintain law and order,<sup>23</sup> he bribes his audience by offering a voucher worth fifty cents to everyone carrying a gun. 'The voucher is exchangeable for goods', he claims, 'on the day I open my new store -- in the new one *or* the old one!'(p. 71). The 'pay off' is not out of place in the trial and lynching but leads back to the real reason behind the whole thing: the mugging of his store rather than Greta's rape, if she was raped at all.

The lynching, to Skinner, is a nostalgic recalling of past events. He considers it as a re-enactment of previous actions from the 'golden' days with the 'good ol' Justice Riders'. By such comments, Skinner evokes the old days of vigilante justice, and by the same token, Bond connects the action to those of racist groups like the Ku Klux Klan. The massive present audience in the exposed footlights of the public stage indicates the extent of injustice in his society, rather than justice.

Skinner. We're riding in the footlights. There's nothing t'hide. We ain ashamed of doing what's right. I declare this stage t' be a hall of justice! (p. 69)

Through Skinner's declaration, Bond 'establishes the stage as a metaphor for legal institutions'<sup>24</sup> in which the whole society eliminates one of its members and his 'disruptive' influence, in other words, sacrificing a scapegoat. As the events unfold, Skinner shows another sign of his insensitivity and barbarism: the prayer he leads introduces a sequence of clowning. The grotesque acts of Mrs Kroll and Skinner are a curtain raiser for the real 'show' that starts with the Clown who plays the impotent fool while begging for the first shot. The Clown goes on horseplaying around with his water-pistol making everyone laugh. The image of the clown who makes everyone laugh when in fact there is little to laugh at is used 'to demonstrate how suddenly a situation which is laughably absurd can turn into something much nastier'.<sup>25</sup> This is the essence of a much wider phenomenon in Bond's plays that illustrates the way playfulness changes into

<sup>23</sup> Skinner's obsession with maintaining law and order is a reminder of Gladstone's mania for them in *Early Morning*. Actually, Skinner paraphrases Gladstone: 'Rules are made t' abide by. One foot off the straight an manner an yer never know what yer'll tread in'(p. 170). The lynching is similar to that of *Early Morning* except that it takes place on a stage in *The Swing*.

<sup>24</sup> Demling, *op. cit.*, p. 92. The comparison with the metaphoric meaning of transforming the throne room into a courtroom in the first trial in *Early Morning* is suggestive.

<sup>25</sup> Susan Goad, 'Language, Violence and Comedy in the Plays of Edward Bond', unpublished M. Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1985, p. 74. Bond, verbally, uses this image again in *Bingo*, Scene Four, p. 48, and in *Restoration*, Scene Eight, p. 78.

violent action of sacrificing a scapegoat because of the dehumanisation the individual undergoes in these societies. The Clown makes sexual jokes, pretends, squirts water under his crutch, ears and mouth, but at the end he really shoots Fred, and the audience turn to fulfill their burning desire to shoot.<sup>26</sup>

The priorities Skinner allocates to his audience emphasize the social division: according to his arrangement, 'Every ticket-buying member of this audience is entitled t' one shot. Them that paid the higher prices git the first shot'(p. 71). The audience collaborate in the murder, even Ralph Skinner abandons the stage-lighting and rushes on to shoot Fred repeatedly. Fred's body hangs bloody and torn on a stage of which even its stagehands and mechanical devices are used to victimise.<sup>27</sup>

In *The Swing*, Fred is the victim of lynching while Paul, earlier on as a narrator, anticipated his own death. Fred's crime is dealing humanely with the black-man, Paul. This humanitarianism offends Skinner specifically because it is not legally defined as a crime, it is not covered in the law book but in his own book. That makes it more dangerous and offensive. The trial exposes the dehumanising power of the American society to its fullness, and furnishes its protagonist with consciousness, and consequently he leaves the town.

### 3) The Trial In "*Human Cannon*":

The trial in *Human Cannon* authorises an unprecedented depiction in the canon of Bond's court-rooms.<sup>28</sup> This trial is not only in absolute opposition to Bond's previous trial scenes, both in structure and proceedings, but sets up the procedures with which they could be criticised as well. The trial is carried out by the momentarily victorious Spanish revolutionary system, and although the events of other trial scenes are based on historical incidents (*The Swing*, for example), the trial in *Human Cannon* occupies a unique position. Bond, for the first time, depicts a trial that is positioned in the 'correct' and 'positive'. Thus, the trial here is an instrument with which one can measure the trials of the other plays. For example, the antagonists of this trial are reversed: the usually powerless commoner, the peasants, judge a priest as a morality

<sup>26</sup> If the actor-audience are situated amongst the real spectators, the the latter become virtual accomplices in the crime.

<sup>27</sup> Goad makes a comparison between this violence and the gory spectacle 'not so very far removed from situations like a boxing match, a bullfight, or the Roman Coliseum in its heyday'. See *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>28</sup> Bond informed me that the balance between the trial of the Priest (discussed here) and the trial of Agustina (entitled *Human Cannon*) is meaningful. But *Human Cannon*, to my judgement, is an interrogation rather than a trial and therefore it is not investigated here. Personal interview with Bond at his home in Cambridgeshire on 9 March 1990.

creator, and thus a member of the ruling-class. Other elements like the method of appointing the judges and the aim of the trial are also in complete opposition to the previous procedures followed in the previous trials.

Bond's choice of depicting the trial in the era of the historically defeated Spanish Popular Front in their momentarily victorious moments makes it a positive exemplification of both his idea of a scrupulous trial and a lesson in avoiding the faults of those revolutionaries who enact it. The historical victory and defeat of the people's militia of the Republic in the Civil War signify the trial's beginning and ending. Two main points would clarify the difference in the machination of this trial. These two points contribute to the theatrical structure of the trial as well as to its content.

#### **A) Role-Playing:**

The first point is role-playing which emphasizes the theatricality of the scene as a detached/detaching entity. And although there is no mention of the separation between actor and character in the trial, it remains obvious that the scene's theatricality depends on having the actor at a specific distance from his/her character, and not completely separated from it. In this scene, Bond employs a dramaturgical strategy which enables the character to play another character, but both remain within the confines of the stage during the trial. At no point in the trial does Bond allow the actors to be separated from the characters they play. However, role-playing remains the important feature of the trial because Bond employs the strategy of separating actor from character between the scenes, a strategy which enhances role-playing in the trial, though role-playing here has a different meaning. In the trial, characters play other characters for different reasons than theatricality or communications with the audience. Role-playing appears in and is constituted by complementary theatrical devices, such as the location of the trial; the relationship between actor and character outside the dramatic events of the trial; and the use of verse and histrionic words.

The re-composition of the location for the trial is followed by assigning different roles for the participants to play. No one of them, however, has ever been an authority figure or assumed a formal juridical role. Being victims of the pre-revolutionary regime, the peasants act as the powerful and that changed personality and status inevitably underlines role-playing. There are many examples that indicate the role-

playing within the trial: Ignacio's decision to prosecute; the choice of the three judges from amidst the peasants; the Priest's choice of someone to 'speak' for him. Such different roles are assigned to the characters to play, but even the witnesses' narrations of telling of the way they lived means transforming them to play roles they played before. The narration technique itself underlines role-playing. This role-playing gains effectiveness from the following theatrical devices:

i) Actor/Character Relationship:

The structure of the play and of the scene strongly enforces the notion of role-playing in relation to the actor/character relationship. Ignacio's narration as an actor that ends the previous scene, in which he has no part, establishes the proceedings of the trial in which he plays the character of the revolutionary organiser and consequently that of the prosecutor. Although the role of the prosecutor complements the revolutionary viewpoint Ignacio practises without and within the scene in the sense that he is allowed the role and the interpretation of the dramatic events, it remains obvious that he narrates as an actor. This technique of playing different character within the trial facilitates for him the possibility of being in and out of his character, he also plays a completely different character when he 'speaks' for the illiterate dead victim, Manuel. But on another level, he remains an actor who plays *all* these characters.

Eventually, Tina closes the scene with a narration that predicts the fall of the Republic. This narration confirms the role-playing in relation to the actors because the narration as well as the prediction is obviously the actor's not the character's:

Tina:

For three years the people's militia slowly  
retreated before Hitler Mussolini and Franco  
In December nineteen thirty-eight Barcelona fell  
Soon Madrid would fall  
And on the first of April nineteen thirty-nine  
the republic would fall<sup>29</sup>

On the whole, the scene invokes a sense of role-playing greater than Bond has practised up to this time. The structure of the play eases, if not necessitates, the shift from actor to characters, although Bond does not indicate them overtly thus, and instead, he uses the characters' names when they narrate.

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<sup>29</sup> Bond, *Human Cannon*, Methuen New Theatrescript series, 1985, p. 13. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

ii) Linguistic Theatricality:

Two linguistic devices are used to help in stressing the theatricality of the trial and also to ease the shift from character to actor. The first is the verse used for the court's verdict and for Tina's and Ignacio's narration at the beginning and the end of the scene. The verse contrasts with the dramatic discourse the characters use throughout the play. Apart from the technique of narration itself, which is a potent device of theatricality, the 'twist' in the characters' intelligence as well as changing the mood of the scene stresses the shift from actor to character. This is contrary to what happens in *Early Morning* when Len and Joyce sing in the vernacular and is linguistically in accord with their social background, while the contrast between the colloquial dialogue and the formal verse in *Human Cannon* contributes to the theatricality of the actor/character relationship.<sup>30</sup>

The second linguistic element is the histrionic words used in the trial. In speaking for the illiterate dead man, Manuel, Ignacio uses dramatic terminology to uncover the falsehoods on which the pre-revolutionary regime instituted its power. In building their acts, characters, and lives on believing the assumptions of the authority, the peasants themselves have become fakes and illusory:

Ignacio: To maintain so much injustice almost every truth has to be corrupted. Those who do it get paid, but worse -- they do it in good faith. Priests, officers, teachers, men who call themselves philosophers and scientists, editors, judges, public oracles -- they look at this terrible world and say men are beasts and without us their state would be even worse. And we -- we are the people who allow this to happen! Why? Because we have founded our lives, our acts, our characters on believing their falsehoods. (p. 10)

The occurrence of such histrionic words, and others, in an overtly theatrical structure complements and deepens their technical meaning for the spectator and at the same time feeds back into the overall dramatic structure of the play.

iii) The theatricality of the space:

The trial takes place in a school room, but the props of the schoolroom are rearranged for a court. The adults, according to the stage directions, sit in the children's chairs. The teacher's desk is reserved for the witnesses who only have to 'tell' how they live. The transformation of a school room consolidates two complementary conclusions. The first is the establishing of the school metaphorically as a hall of justice in

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<sup>30</sup> In my interview with Bond on 9 March 1990, he told me that the verdict, is meant to be sung by a group. The theatricality of the group singing underlines the verdict's linguistic theatricality.

which everyone has the right to speak, and therefore the transformation underlines the trial's 'teaching' function for the spectator both within and beyond the trial. The second makes the trial a conscious dramatic device: the rearrangement of the location for a different sort of enactment in front of the spectators exposes the stage's plasticity, its ability to be transformed into a different kind of place.

### **B) The Purpose of the Trial:**

The second point that clarifies the processes of this trial is its aim, which is embodied in its verdict. The verdict, especially when it is prefigured predetermines (i) the function and (ii) the course and practice of justice. Although the verdicts in other trials presided over by the authority figures could be easily anticipated, if the dramatic events do not make it known beforehand, the difference is that in *Human Cannon* the verdict does not decide the fate of the individual, but rather describes the practice of justice by the ruling-class and puts landmarks for the practice of justice in this trial. The aim of the trial is not to name a criminal or to sentence him. Judge 1 summarises the grounds on which the verdict is taken:

Judge 1: We sat in court and searched for justice  
 It was as if we polished a silver plate that had  
 lain in the soil for years  
 Where it had been buried when our village  
 had been pillaged and put to the sword  
 Now we see ourselves in the silver (p. 10)

The verdict, though it sends the Priest to be shot, does not individualise a member of that regime, or even condemn the previous regime. Judge 3 'authenticates' the real direction of the verdict, which is the flourishing of the peasants' life. Rather than knocking down 'the wall that makes Manuel's small field as dry as a dead lizard', the verdict should encourage them to make the fields flourish, keep the river running, and pick the fruits of the land. The orientation of a new way of life determines the function and the process of justice in this trial because, as Bond puts it, 'Justice is not achieved simply by saying who is guilty'.<sup>31</sup>

#### **i) The Didactic Function of the Trial:**

As the intention of the trial is not solely to issue a verdict upon one individual, its function changes to the explanation of the nature of the pre-revolutionary regime, it becomes a teaching method. The didactic

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<sup>31</sup> Bond, as recorded by Karl-Heinz Stoll, 'Interviews with Edward Bond and Arnold Wesker', *Twentieth Century Literature*, 22, 4 (December 1976), p. 420.

function appears in Ignacio's statement: 'The facts aren't in dispute, we have to decide the meaning of the facts!'(p. 7). This didacticism makes the trial a real *lehrstück* that abandons the suspension of disbelief and openly and directly addresses the issues concerned. From the repressed point of view, Bond shows different procedures and proceedings in this trial in order to exemplify it. His teaching purpose and his political views are obvious and penetrate the whole trial and are embodied in the narrations. Bond stands clearly behind Ignacio's statement: 'no court can be more just than the society in which it sits'(p. 7) and many other similar statements. Even Bond's depiction of the revolutionaries' failure in achieving justice is aimed towards making it be a lesson in avoiding its faults. Apart from the outside assistance for Franco's regime, the revolutionaries themselves make mistakes in the play. The latter half of the trial shows its consequences that, figuratively speaking, led to its failure.

The sentries, leaving their guard and turning to looting, facilitate the Priest's escape. Catalina, Manuel's wife, feels sorry for the Priest and unbolts the door for him to escape. The court, Bond implies, has to carry out its verdicts efficiently to the end otherwise, as Nando states: 'What's the use of trials if prisoners get away?(p. 12). In a moment of anger, they kill Sentry 1 and wound Sentry 2 while Nando shouts: 'learn how to live'. Nevertheless, the experience of the trial and its outcome furnishes the revolutionaries with a new understanding and awareness of their difficult situation from which they have to 'straighten up' or face their fate:

Nando: We're pushing down a prison wall with our bare shoulders. When it falls we have to straighten up quickly or we'll fall with it. (p. 13)

As Hirst puts it, *Human Cannon* 'reveals the difficulties of initiating and achieving revolutionary conduct'.<sup>32</sup> The trial functions in showing an important aspect of these difficulties and the lower-class's gaining of consciousness and awareness. The trial becomes the means from which they (and the audience) learn about their mistakes, and the way they might correct them if they are to live justly.

#### ii) The Course and Practice of Justice:

As an exemplary trial, the course and practice of justice seems to be in accord with its didactic function. The practice of justice in this court is sharply different from its counterpoint in the eras of the ruling-

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<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 124-5.

class: here, it is more democratic because all the lower-class members have suffered injustice at the hands of the ruling-class and therefore, the trial implies, they are capable of being just. This democracy appears in the following:

1- the choice of the three judges which depends on no social status, but happens at random. That indicates their equality as exploited peasants who judge the system that caused their suffering: Manuel's case exemplifies their case. The momentarily powerful peasants therefore dispense with formality and the appearance of justice altogether. At the outset, Ignacio announces that a revolutionary court uses no oaths and as they are put in the seats of judges, and contrary to what happens in other Bond plays, they show impartiality in their practice of justice. First, they ask the accused Priest to name someone to defend him. As the action unfolds, he pleads to Agustina to help him, but as she is not a churchgoer, she shows unwillingness. The Judges persuade her to assist the Priest:

Judge 2: If he wants your help you should give it Agustina. (p. 8)  
They are not only impartial, but also merciful: they allow the condemned priest to pray. They treat the accused humanely and gracefully because they distinguish between the Priest-the-person and the Priest-the-moraliser.

2- The personality of the accused. The Priest did not participate in Manuel's suicide, he is accused of murder on the grounds of his spiritual responsibility. His obligation is as great as his responsibility for establishing and preserving the moral standards of the society. He stands on trial not as a representative of the escaped landowner Marquis or a surrogate scapegoat for the ruling-class, but as the former of morality of both the peasants and the landowner. The passivity of the Priest is uncovered in the court as he claims his powerlessness against the Marquis. The Priest's knowledge of the conspiracy the Marquis fabricated against Manuel in order to confiscate his land involves the Priest in the crime as an accomplice. He knew about the Marquis' scheme to legalise his usurpation of the land to avoid any complaint or revolt from the peasants. When he, as the Marquis's 'spiritual adviser', mentioned that 'he was endangering his soul', he is lectured in that 'interview' about the economic machination of the competitive society that allows no alternative but charity. The Marquis manipulated his economic power over Manuel instead of using violence, though he believed in the enforcement of law. The Priest's guilt is greater than the Marquis' because he



made all that injustice possible through the foundations of religion. The manipulation of economic power is covered up by a religion that internalises the fear of law that exploits human beings:

Priest: The Marquis acts on what he was taught are the principles of a christian gentleman. The law must be enforced with rigour because it must be feared: the church is the fountain of mercy -- and so he endows it with money. He said the mortgage had given Manuel a year on his farm and now the church should put him in one of the almshouses he paid for. (p. 9)

3- The behaviour of the defender and the prosecutor which illustrates the unequivocal teaching voice in the trial. The tactics they use as well as the standard of their arguments make it obvious that they aim at the real audience. Agustina, defending the Priest, employs a strategy of defending by accusation. In order to defend him, she attacks his morality that soothed for him the acceptance of social indifference. The Priest, according to her, felt at home with both the rich and the poor without raising a finger against the immorality of the rich. She accuses the religious thought-pattern as a whole when she accuses the Priest of madness for believing in the bestiality and sinfulness of human beings. In order to defend the accused, Bond allows Agustina to practice her revolutionary agitation through attacking the passivity of the peasants as well. She accuses her 'audience' for their acceptance of their exploitation and for the escapist individual reactions they maintained to their collective suffering, of being much worse characters than they think they are:

Agustina: A priest's power depends on persuasion but your power is your strength when you act. Suppose he'd spoken from the pulpit? The bishop would shut him up. He couldn't have done anything, he takes on obedience with the cassock. But you could have spoken on the streets in the clothes you're wearing now -- and you can make far more noise on the street than you can in the pulpit! But you did nothing. You're worse than the priest, you're as bad as the Marquis. (p. 9)

Ignacio, the prosecutor, takes the agitation a step further by practising his revolutionary concepts and ideas of reformation.<sup>33</sup> He does not only uncover the Marquis's manoeuvre that led to Manuel's suicide, but also uncovers the very foundations of the unjust competitive society. He explains the engineering of exploitation of the poor and the Priest's role in facilitating this injustice. On a more fundamental level, the Priest is accused of internalising the principles of repression in the past and, more importantly, in the present. He uses the present tense in his accusations:

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<sup>33</sup> In my interview with Bond on 9 March 1990, he expressed admiration of a performance he saw of *Human Cannon* in which the Prosecutor addressed the audience as part of the court. Thus Bond stopped pretending he was not there, he was caught up in the fictional situation. Addressing the audience, however politically effective it was, means enhancing the formal theatricality of the trial by including another formal theatrical device within it.

Ignacio: I accuse the priest -- not because he said we'd get justice in another world but because he makes the injustice of this world possible! He doesn't fire the gun. He's the silencer on the gun. (p. 10)

However, it seems that the two complementary voices of the defender and the prosecutor are designed not only to lead to the inevitable end, the condemning of the priest, but to express Bond's own ideas of justice, human nature, exploitation, ownership...etc. It is noticeable that many, if not all, the viewpoints adopted in this trial are echoes of Bond's viewpoints expressed in theoretical writing and interviews. The similarities give the scene not only an overtly didactic tone (obvious in the lengthy analysis of the situation the defender and the prosecutor encounter; the intellectual tone of the illiterate characters; Agustina's strategy of agitation through her defending) but also exhausts even its didacticism as every character repeats the same opinions or a variation on them. It seems that even the Priest's expression of his helplessness towards the Marquis' economic manoeuvre, and his understanding of the principles of Christianity, are manipulated to express Bond's concepts of them.

As far as drama is concerned, the exhaustion of the didacticism appears on many occasions: in Agustina's tactic of accusing the Priest of madness, for example. In order to save the Priest, Agustina charges him with madness. Her questions of the priest are not designed to redeem his predicament, but they appear rather as landmarks for verbalising the previous chronicles of Manuel's death. She keeps interrupting the priest's lengthy 'narration' of the past events in order to draw a full picture of the relationship between religion and economy that represses human being, at least from Bond's point of view.

### Summary:

By analysing the trial scenes in Bond's plays we can find that they fall into two functional categories:

- 1) the diegetic that occurs within the dramatic universe and which sums up the diegesis or the narration, and
- 2) the alienation device that, although it functions dramatically as the diegetic trial, is nevertheless detached from the drama and is itself a detaching device. In all the plays, with the exception of *Human Cannon*, the features are:

- 1) It is between a political system, embodied in authority figures, against an individual. Those figures are interested in preserving their power than achieving justice for the individual. They maintain all the trappings of the law, the appearance of justice. In some cases they preside over the judge's chair to

maintain tighter control over the individual.

2) They sometimes employ judges and jury to maintain the formality, the juridical members work upon the instructions of the figures of authority.

3) The individual is rarely given any kind of protection, and in case he/she is given one, the defender is a variation on the accused, and he is keen to defend himself, in a sense (like Arthur in *Early Morning*).

4) The powerless who suffers the injustice is often the commoner, and the trials show his exploitation in the form of unfair judges, the process of the court, and the unacceptable verdicts, but the protagonist also is the subject of many trials, and the trial constitutes a starting point in his journey to understanding, compassion, and sanity. Some protagonists, such as Lear, practise the three roles of the powerful, the powerless, and the protagonist who judges and is judged.

5) The trial appears as another instance that shows the authority figures' practice of deceiving and manipulating, not strange then to find the histrionic words and especially actions linked to the trial. The figures of authority use theatrical terminology in the court as a means of covering their real intentions.

6) In Bond's progress, *Stone* clearly marks the point at which Bond's courtrooms started to resemble Brecht's. Many features are common between *Stone* and Brecht's *The Exception and the Rule*. *The Swing* constitutes a unique combination of the use of the histrionic words and the miscarriage of justice because, among other reasons, it takes place on a vaudeville theatre stage.

7) Within the overtly theatrical structure of *Human Cannon*, Bond reverses the proceedings of the trial and allows the lower-class to judge the defeated ruling-class. On the level of the dramatic structure, the play employs Marxist aesthetics and politics and therefore the trial appears as a clearly theatrical element and facilitates other theatrical aspects such as role-playing and political didacticism which reaches exhaustion at some points. The separation between the actor and character between the scenes contributes to and underlines the theatricality of role-playing, but Bond does not allow the actors to appear as such within the process of the trial itself. He employs other dramatic strategies which facilitate the character playing another character. Other linguistic and spatial devices emphasize the trial as a detached/detaching device.

## Chapter Three

# From Playfulness to Simultaneous Action Through Divided Focus of Aggro-effect

### I) Playfulness:

Playfulness creates a sense of theatricality when the audience sees that what happens on the stage is nothing more than a game played by some participants. It takes the spectator back to the very essence of theatre. The word 'play' itself describes the core of all theatrical activity (motion through space and time, fun and make-believe, the flow of appearance and experience) in many languages and periods. Many of the artifacts needed for the practice of theatre took on terms related to the central activity of playing. Since Aristotle playing has been considered as a natural need, from which all sorts of imitations spring.

One important result of the authority figures' practice of power (embodied in histrionic words and actions) or in justice (embodied in courtrooms), is the dehumanisation of the poor. In such cultures, the weak, particularly children, are the first to suffer. Some scenes in Bond's plays depict the way the poor express their feeling of togetherness embodied in sequences of horseplay and depict the way this playfulness turns to aggression and violent action. This depiction shows, on a more fundamental level, the relationships of this kind of people with their societies. Most, if not all, of these scenes occur in exterior settings and public places in order to link the individual and the society. The main feature of these scenes is that they show unfocused behaviour; these social gatherings expose the energy of the youth that is wasted in hitting, rough actions, coarse jests, and sexual jokes. The futile expenditure of their energy shows the lack of serious role for them to play in their societies and their inability to master their fate. The horseplay expresses their spontaneity, innocence and joyful participation, but the fact that it turns to aggression shows how they are dehumanised, and their lack of control over their lives.

The criticism Bond directs towards society in the first two plays concentrates on showing and

dramatising the repercussions, rather than the causes, which the class-divided society has on the under-privileged. Thus, these sequences show the frustrated sexual relationships, the cultural void that young people live in, and the disastrous, sometimes tragic, outcome of such innocent gatherings. *The Pope's Wedding* opens with what seems to be a violent action, in a public, open space, between Scopey and Bill; they hit each other, twist each other's arm, but that immediately dissolves into a matter of passing the time between a group of farm-labourers on a weekend night. The physical togetherness finds its release in insensitive jests, foul-mouthed jokes. They have no aggressive intentions to hurt: though they might encourage each other to fight, they are not serious about it:

Ron. 'Ent yoo gooin' a fight?

Byo. They couldn't 'it a fly on the end a their nose.

Joe. Just let me catch yoo next time an' you'll know it.<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to summarise such a scene of horseplay or to find a real subject amidst the many the boys talk about. But that in itself is a strong indication of the lack of subject in their life. Nevertheless, there are some recurring motifs: their lack of money on Thursday night, their hate of their working conditions. Their lack of money indicates not only their low economic standard, but also their economic exploitation at the hands of the owners and their alienation from the products of their labour. Their economic needs will be further exploited later at the hands of the farm owner, Bullright. Their working conditions cease to be enjoyable, though they are intimate with the mechanical equipment in the farm. Ron is proud of maintaining a machine: 'I oiled that owd Ferguson this mornin'. Yoo should a seen 'er. My life!' (p. 233). But it is always 'Bloody work tmorrow' (p. 231).

This economic exploitation is reflected in many aspects, one of which is the sexual frustration. This frustration is expressed through repeated sexual double entendre jokes and through their attempt to uncover the mysterious contents of Pat's handbag which they break.<sup>2</sup> Scopey's explanation of the reason for his breaking the handle -- 'I was only larkin'(p. 237) -- stresses the innocent purposes of their gathering. What is more important is Bond's investigation of the practical, or impractical, purposes of having handbags or shirts in the first place. Pat has bought her handbag, though expensive, not for its utility but to 'goo with 'er

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<sup>1</sup> Bond, *The Pope's Wedding*, in *Plays: One*, Methuen, 1977, p. 232. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>2</sup> See Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

new shoes'(p. 236). The capitalist industry persuades people to buy the products regardless of their practicality. For the same purpose of profit, the advertisers, for example, revive old-fashioned shirts.<sup>3</sup>

This handicap their society gives them, and others, is depicted in the second scene. The annual cricket match is a clear example of the farm owner's economic power over the youths and their desire to be involved in fair play. But he insists on keeping the strongest member of the boys' team to guarantee his own success. Every one of the boys faces the challenge with animation and involvement:

Bill. That's rotten play, ent it?

Scopey. Can 'e doo it?

Bill. 'E can afford to. (pp. 242-3)

In frustration, they threaten, but their threats are not dangerous nor destructive; Bill's threat to 'thread 'is missis', for example is meaningless and diffused since he is having an affair with her. What such threats constitute is the striving of the young man to play a game in which both sides are governed by the same regulations. 'For Scopey,' Pauner notices, 'the cricket game offers a tangible example of a well-ordered world where rules are followed by all participants in order to maintain, for the common good, a meaningful pattern of action'.<sup>4</sup>

Such manipulation of the boys' economic needs sharpens their instinctive revolt against their society; their social assembly is corrupted because the economic necessities cripple them and their society victimises them. The good fellowship between them is countered and poisoned and therefore the horseplay turns into a series of insults to each other. Such unhealthy release of energy, in turn, leads them to victimise the weakest member amongst them and to meet any outsider aggressively. Their treatment of the hermit Alen is a consequence of the way their society treats them. They think he approached a satisfying way of life for which they are eager. Their idea to 'goo and turn owd Alen's dump over,'(p. 256) is not aggressive. It is not, according to Simon Trussler, 'more than a spur-of-the-moment idea to alleviate boredom'<sup>5</sup> and the stoning of his hut occurs amidst half-hearted threats and light jokes with no intention to cause harm.

The fragility of the boys' innocence comes from their inability to conceptualise the causes of the society's injustice and thus they are limited to passive revolt. They might show disrespect for God or the

<sup>3</sup> See the discussion p. 233.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> *Edward Bond, Writers and their Work series*, 249 (Harlow: Longman for the British Council, 1979), p. 9.

vicar but these are signs of their ignorance of satisfactory explanations of hideous facts. Lorry's idea that 'owd Alen's put 'is curs on us,' (p. 243) exemplifies their attitude to social understanding of the causes of their suffering. Their frequent request for quietness signifies a reaction to their unjust society.<sup>6</sup> Actually one of them, Scopey, tries to integrate himself fully in Alen's quietness but it is in essence unsocial commitment. Scopey's disengagement, rather than quietness, of which he is unaware, absorbs him to the point of the disastrous final result: the complete withdrawal by becoming nothing in an old man's coat, hut, and personality.

The same depiction of the horseplay resurfaces in *Saved*. The South London youths express their identity as a spontaneous opposition to the existing social circumstances; to their families, work, community and even to each other. As the histrionic words and actions are part of their cultural heritage, they appear at such moments of playfulness. The experience of the youths is shaped by the controlling power of the upper classes and their 'artistic' products, e. g. films. Thus, Pete's description of how he deliberately killed a child with his car is met with sarcastic comments from his fellows:

Mike. Crunch.

Colin. Blood all over the shop.

Mike. The Fall a the Roman Empire.<sup>7</sup>

No one takes Pete's story seriously and Bond's depiction leaves many doubts as to whether Pete has done it at all. Pete's mates subject the accident to more jokes. As is the case with *The Pope's Wedding*, the energy of the young people in *Saved* is undeniable: whenever they are on the stage it is energetic and 'the joking and bickering is so fast that no one has time to complete a chain of thought before someone else jumps in or the tack is changed'.<sup>8</sup> Scene Three contains the smallest number of silences in the play: one 'slight pause' occurs after the appearance of the newcomer Len, and another before they leave the stage. The killing itself occurs when it is least appropriate to expect it: the horseplay precedes it. But both dramatic techniques of playfulness and aggro-effect illustrate the dehumanising circumstances that lead to the killing of the most fragile creature, the baby:

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<sup>6</sup> See Scopey's request, p. 251 and Byo's repeated request, p. 252, for example.

<sup>7</sup> Bond, *Saved*, in *Plays: One*, Methuen, 1977, p. 38. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>8</sup> Goad, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

Colin. Got me!

*He falls dead. Barry pushes the pram over him.*

Get off! I'll 'ave a new suit out a you.

Barry (*pushing the pram round*). Off the same barrer?

Pete. Ain' seen you 'ere before, darlin'.

Barry. 'Op it!

Pete. 'ow about oppin' in the bushes?

Colin. Two's up.

Barry. What about the nipper?

Pete. Too young for me. (pp. 73-4)

The five priests in *Narrow Road*, Scene Three, are also innocent and victims. They appear for the first time in their yellow robes, burdened with the heavy weight of a sacred pot on an ark. The pot is not really heavy, but it feels so because, as Argi explains, it is 'holy'(p. 180). And as soon as they drink, a rich, earthy atmosphere of merriment begins to emerge. They play a subdued version of hopscotch, sing, grab and whirl, dance, play leapfrog and spin at each other. But the religious burden starts to appear and the 'holy' principles they are taught coexist with their instinctive joy and kind nature. The religious procedures merge and disturb their straight emotions and light-heartedness. They play like innocent children, but 'like children', Coult observes, 'their innocence has about it something vulnerable and fragile'.<sup>9</sup> This vulnerability springs, as is the case with the young people of *the Pope's Wedding* and *Saved*, from their lack of understanding of the sociopolitical realities around them of which their religion is part.

The harmless teasing and rough horseplay sometimes reach a dangerous level, they produce or lead, as I mentioned above, to violent actions. In *the Pope's Wedding*, Scene Two, Joe holds Lorry and Byo moves the scythe blade over the back of Lorry's head; Bill swings his scythe in circles and therefore Lorry and Scopey have to jump to avoid it. The youths stone Alen's hut in an atmosphere of playfulness they enjoy outside the hut. The youths of *Saved* stone a baby to death. In *Narrow Road* the five priests realise in embarrassment that the head of one of them is stuck inside the holy pot and he risks suffocation. Through their timidity in facing the problem, Bond reveals the inadequacies of their search for enlightenment: they are, like the youths of the two earlier plays, victims of the social institutions that repressed their kind nature and crippled them. But in *Narrow Road*, Bond reveals the causes behind the suffering of the youths by making Basho, the supposedly enlightened religious priest, encounter them. Basho asks Kiro to enact absurd things in order to save his life: to 'think small'(p. 187) because making the pot 'think big', as

<sup>9</sup> *The Plays, op. cit.*, p. 28.



Basho points out, is beyond Kiro's power. Subsequently, Basho exploits the incident as a yardstick in challenging the ruler of the city, Shogo.

## II) From Playfulness to Divided Focus of Aggro-effects:

Such incidents show that the playful elements in the youths' life disappear because their society victimises them.<sup>10</sup> Playfulness soon leads to violent action, if not in the same scene then in another. This depiction is a common feature in all three plays under discussion here.<sup>11</sup> Bond has termed the violent action in his plays as aggro-effect by which he aims at involving the audience emotionally with the events portrayed on the stage. In contrast to Brecht's dramaturgical strategy of alienation, Bond's own preference is for the authentic, not the sensational, presentation of violence. By such a device Bond tries to avoid Brecht's 'faults' of letting the people set back and 'enjoy' the distanced events. Bond shares with Brecht his attempt to make 'people notice', but Bond uses aggro-effects to 'disturb an audience emotionally' in order to involve them in the events. To Christopher Innes Bond has explained:

I have what I call the necessity for an "aggro-effect". In contrast to Brecht, I think it's necessary to disturb an audience emotionally, to involve them emotionally in my plays, so I've had to find ways of making that "aggro-effect" more complete, which is in a sense to surprise them, to say, "Here's a baby in a pram -- you don't expect these people to stone that baby". Yet -- snap -- they do.<sup>12</sup>

The contrast between the atmosphere of playfulness and of the violent action is meant to make the latter more effective and shocking. Thus, the stoning is sudden in order to gather into one fierce action the argument of the dramatic events. That is what Jan Needle and Peter Thomson meant, I think, when they asserted that 'the immensely powerful emotional impact of the key scene -- in this case, the stoning of a baby -- is isolated and brought into harsh focus by its placing within the play'.<sup>13</sup> The main reason of depicting such scenes of merriment and joy that leads to unveiling of violent actions is to indicate the inadequacies of the social system that leaves the weakest members of the society unprotected by care, knowledge, or

<sup>10</sup> See Robert L. Tener, 'Edward Bond's Dialectic: Irony and Dramatic Metaphors', *Modern Drama*, 25, 3 (September 1982), p. 425.

<sup>11</sup> Many critics have observed the similarities between the horseplay sequences in these three plays. Tener has indicated the similarities between the five priests of *Narrow Road* and the youths of *Saved*, especially in Scene Six. See *ibid*, p. 425. Joseph E. Duncan also has seen the youths of *The Pope's Wedding* as they pound the corrugated iron shack with stones and obscenities as an anticipation of the stoning of the baby in *Saved*. See his 'The Child and the Old Man in the Plays of Edward Bond', *Modern Drama*, 19, 1 (March 1976), p. 3. Hay and Roberts detailed some of the corresponding aspects in the three plays. See *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>12</sup> 'Edward Bond: From Rationalism to Rhapsody', *Canadian Theatre Review*, 23 (Summer 1979), p. 113.

<sup>13</sup> *Brecht* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p. 213.

justice. But the significant formal feature about the aggro-effects is that they are structured in divided points of attention on the stage.<sup>14</sup>

Although the violent action creates emotional shock, the divided focus balances this shock with a degree of detachment. The principal technique is to alternate, and sometimes to match, two opposite elements of theatricality and of involvement during the aggro-effect. The most important feature in this is the divided focus of attention. This can be seen in Scene Seven of *Saved*. The scene tries, first, to balance the two opposite elements that create illusion or theatricality: 1) the proscenium arch stage which creates illusion and 2) the bare stage which creates theatricality.<sup>15</sup> And secondly, by creating two centres of action by having Fred and Mike sitting down-stage left while the other boys push the pram around, leading to the aggro-effect. The two centres work, momentarily, as a cooling overdistancing device as the spectator's attention remains divided between the two centres of action. The killing itself makes the baby a central object around which the youths act. As the baby is objectified, the boys' narrative becomes functionally neutral, though they are completely involved in the happenings as the other centre of action. The narrative cools the atmosphere of the atavistic frenzy of the killing.

The pattern is repeated in other plays of the first period. In *Narrow Road*, though the events are diverse and chaotic, the last scene shows three paralleled points of focus during the trial of Shogo. But the violent action is matched by playfulness. The playful atmosphere is created by the crowd's roaring and exaltation on and off stage with 'a band playing out of tune -- a Sullivan medley or "Sussex by the Sea"' (p. 222). They celebrate their salvation from Shogo's tyranny. Consequently, the crowd erupts onto the stage rejoicing at the haunted Georgina's favourite shout 'Hallelujah' because of the dismembering of Shogo, whose physically quartered body appears nailed to a placard as a displayed scapegoat. The crowd celebrates around the objectified body, as the youth of *Saved* celebrate around the baby.

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<sup>14</sup> This divided focus is an extension of Bond's practice of suggesting an outer reality by adding offstage voices that work as a context to the visible action onstage. For further details see, Scharine, *op. cit.*, p. 274; Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 41; Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 167, 179; Goad, *op. cit.*, p. 89; Tener, *op. cit.*, pp. 423-7. However, these approaches of looking at the theatre, in my judgement, are reductive. Furthermore, one of the motives for using a baby cry from offstage, for example, springs from the practical impossibility of having and timing a baby's cry.

<sup>15</sup> Seeing a performance of the play at the Edinburgh Festival, 1987, in an intimate atmosphere proved this point to me. The performance took place on the ground of an empty space in a church-hall that was surrounded by seats on three sides. In this obvious theatrical staging, the stoning had lost its horrific effects which it had generated after the play's first performance at the Royal Court Theatre. The absence of the proscenium arch stage, among other reasons such as the familiarity of violence in modern times, cancelled the distance that creates the suspension of disbelief.

There is the quiet personality, Kiro, on one side of the stage reading Basho's poetry, and who subsequently commits suicide. This is similar to Fred and Mike sitting downstage in *Saved*, who subsequently participate in the violence. In this instance, it is a violence against the self. Kiro is the innocent victim who pessimistically ends his search for enlightenment when he observes how the crowd is oriented by the priest-cum-politician-cum-poet, Basho. The third centre is the frenzied Georgina whose internal haunted self is externalised and embodied in her madness. She is involved with the other two centres and at some stage, her frenzy becomes obviously sexual. The three centres of focus overlap, and thus the continuity of the illusion is broken and theatricality is generated.

But *Lear* contains the ultimate aggro-effect in quality and quantity. The scene of Warrington's torture differs little in its dramaturgical strategies or in its violent content from any other scene of aggro-effect in the plays of the first period. The element of playfulness, for example, is connected to that of frenzy in one person, Fontanelle, who enjoys the torture (as Barry and Pete in *Saved*, or the crowd in *Narrow Road*), and participates in it. The structure of the scene holds the same principles of three points of focus:

- i) The objectified tortured figure, Warrington.
- ii) The silent figure embodied in Soldier A at the beginning, then in Bodice. She shows no sign of excitement, anger, or satisfaction from the torture. To her, it is functionary punishment and a political lesson that must be carried by Warrington's body. She puts her energy into knitting and commenting sarcastically on Fontanelle's childish behaviour. Finding out that the torture has reached its required level (as to be adequate to the message), she suddenly reverses the roles. Instead of the spectator, she plays the woman in charge. She orders the Soldier to play a different part, the reverse of his previous role, to her. He has to beg mercy and forgiveness for the object he has been torturing.
- iii) The third element in the compounded torturers of Soldier A and Fontanelle. Soldier A is an opportunistic and unfeeling machine of torture who is aware of his idiosyncrasies. His awareness of his role in the whole operation as having 'a job to do'(p. 30) makes him the more frightening figure. And although he belongs morally (or immorally) to Bodice's world (and that is why he exchanges roles with her), he is a character from, to use Peter Fitzpatrick's expression, 'another play':<sup>16</sup> from a play about our modern world.

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<sup>16</sup> 'Bond's *Lear* – A Study in Conventions', in *Page to Stage: Theatre as Translation*, edited by Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt

His presence situates the audience firmly on the stage side by side with the historical characters, a situation that causes the audience the discomfiture he/she feels in the torture. His colloquialism and professionalism bring the scene into the auditorium.

Fontanelle gets excited when the torture is underway. Her excitement, partially, represents the element of playfulness that leads to the violent action in other Bond plays. But her frenzy has a sexual implication as well as containing an element of revenge that causes her satisfaction. Her satisfaction 'can only be achieved by the destruction of the thing she hates and her language collapses into that of a child with an opportunity for revenge on a parent'.<sup>17</sup> The torture brings her oppressed childhood into the open. For that reason, she represents the 'horseplay' element in the scene, an element that equates to the crowd in *Narrow Road* or the boys in *Saved*. The mixture of the horseplay and the torture makes the scene the more horrifying.

On the structural level, the divided focus is embodied in the juxtaposition of unpleasant torture with elements of farce and laughter, a juxtaposition which leaves the audience anguished. Warrington is 'subjected, like a puppet figure in an evil Punch and Judy show, to every kind of monstrous cruelty'.<sup>18</sup> But it is placed with laughable characters and comments, and thus the irritation is felt by juxtaposing different kinds of motivations, styles, characters, and modes. The most important dramaturgical technique for treating violence, and contrary to Shakespeare, for example, who places violent actions within a caring context, is Bond's location of it within an unfeeling context, a crueller environment. The juxtaposition of farce and the violence of the torture, for example, force the spectators to 'rethink the adjustment they may have made to merely horrific scenes'.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, Bond's dramaturgy connects the action to the spectator to make him feel the inescapable guilt of participating in the action, of being an accomplice, either by asides or the linguistic modernity of Soldier A.

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(Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1984), p. 140.

<sup>17</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>18</sup> Leslie Smith, 'Edward Bond's *Lear*', *Comparative Drama*, 13, 1 (Spring 1979), p. 74.

<sup>19</sup> Goad, *op. cit.*, p. 81. To Coult, 'Bond's technique of emotional counterpoint creates a riveting tension in which comedy frames and controls the violence. The actual act of violence provokes a strong emotion of reaction, as it should do. Left to speak for itself, it would provoke only disgust, despair, or an important desire for revenge. With the comedy to control it, and comedy which itself makes points about the peculiar class-relationship between the soldier and the two sisters, the audience's judgement is solicited, so holding the emotion in check without for a moment diminishing it'. See *The Plays*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

In *The Sea*, Scene Six, Willy encounters Colin's corpse which becomes the object around which different opinions about life revolve. The corpse itself becomes the yardstick by which the audience measures Willy's progress, and the acid test for Willy to formulate his understanding of life and his despair after the death of the 'hero'. Unaware of the corpse's existence, Willy demonstrates his courage, embodied in his narration of the details of the drowning, of the tragedy, for the first time, in confronting his memories of Colin. His assessment of the drowning and the maturity reflected in his speech influence Rose, who still rejoices in the role of the bereaved: romanticising about Colin and the crippling effects his death brought upon her. He confronts her despair, by using some of her very images to prove that they have the capacity to suffer the tragedy but also to transcend it. To their astonishment, they discover that these exchanges have occurred in front of the very tragedy that caused their grief and bereavement. The positioning of the corpse, the catastrophe, in front of the audience from the beginning, and not in front of the two characters, functions in facilitating measuring the characters' state of mind, their passion and attitude to life against the most arbitrary factor in life: death.

As Bond intends the corpse to be the yardstick with which to measure the characters' moral commitment to life, he involves Hatch in the scene in order to corroborate the opposite, frenzied reaction. Hatch, hunting for Willy, arrives at encountering Colin's corpse and stabbing it with a knife in frenzied state of mind, while Willy watches the stabbing coolly and unfeeling. He even calls it 'an innocent murder'. 'The body' Hay and Roberts explain, 'is used as a focus for the contrasting states of mind -- and views of the world -- that Willy and Hatch have arrived at'.<sup>20</sup> And to control the horrific action of the stabbing, Bond places Willy on a second centre of action as a silent spectator to the aggro-effect. The occasion proves to be the rebirth of Willy who comes out more determined to live a different sort of life than that of the characters of *The Sea*. But part of the success of employing the divided focus in this play comes from the fact that the play is framed by a series of disjunctions within which the divided focus harmonises. As Richard Allen Cave asserts, 'the technique of the divided focus of action grows naturally out of the many disconnections that make up the fabric of the play'.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 159.

<sup>21</sup> *New British Drama in Performance on the London Stage: 1970-1985* (Gerrard Cross: Colin Smythe, 1987), p. 278.

In the plays of the first period, theatricality is created through the playfulness the characters of the lower class practice in sequences of horseplay. These sequences lead to an abrupt violent action in sharp contrast to the atmosphere of playfulness. This violent action is mostly depicted through the method of dividing the stage into two or more centres of actions: one of them is the tortured victim and the other is the victimisers who are normally in a frenzy over the violent action (Hatch in *The Sea*, Fontanelle in *Lear*). One party of these victimisers might be cool, aloof (Mike and Fred downstage in *Saved*, or Bodice in *Lear*, Willy in *The Sea*, Kiro in *Narrow Road* (though he commits suicide), scientifically precise (the Fourth Prisoner in *Lear* is a sufficient example).

The divided focus for the parts of aggro-effects functions in balancing the empathy generated from the horrific deed with a detaching element. Thus it must enable the viewer to see beyond the immediate violence and to place the catastrophe within a wider social context. This division could be acquired by different means of juxtaposing different styles or modes, characters, dialects, motivations; the whole field is open for it: by direct address every now and then (as in *Narrow Road*), or by making the torturer a representative of the audience (as in *Lear* or *Saved*), or by asides (as in *Lear*). But the last divided focus in the plays of this period (*The Sea*) constitutes an occasion at which the protagonist arrives at specific understanding of his situation in life. The torture of Colin's corpse persuades Willy to abandon this society in which such violent, inhuman actions occur.

### III) From Divided Focus to Simultaneous Action:

In the plays of the second period, Bond has developed the technique of the divided focus into a more complex way of seeing which is the simultaneous action. The simultaneous action, however, is not directly produced from playfulness, or exclusively used to show the execution of the violent action. The element of playfulness is found elsewhere in the play (in a play-within-a-play in *The Fool*, or in festivity and celebration of seasons in the second part of *The Woman*; or dissolves into a play-within-a-play in *The Bundle*). The violent actions, however, are not absent from the scenes of simultaneous action though they are not executed in the same scenes (a gibbeted woman in *Bingo*; a boxing match in *The Fool*). The relationship between playfulness and violent actions through a multi-focused stage remains in the plays of the second period, but it takes a different arrangement. In some of these plays Bond connects that which seems to be

unbridgeable in reality, and the act of connecting the various sections in one locale introduces a new theatrical device into Bond's structure. He shows two *different* happenings which illuminate and explain each other because of their occurrence in one unified locale. The connection of these locales makes the stage appear more doubled than divided. In the plays of divided focus there are two actions in one place, in the plays of the doubled focus the stage connects two actions in two places in one locale. In *We Come to the River*, he uses three fixed stages to signify over ten locales.

Bond has developed the idea of divided focus into the spatial juxtaposition. The physical proximity at some moments indicates that the characters inhabit different worlds, commenting on each other by their physical connection. At such moments of doubled stages, Bond's stage becomes, to use Stanley Vincent Longman's expression, a 'floating Stage', which is favoured by the epic theatre.<sup>22</sup> And although locales in all the plays of the second period, with the exception of *We Come to the River* and, to some extent, *The Fool*, are not as widely separated as *Mother Courage*, Bond's stage could be called a 'floating stage' that juxtaposes different actions in different locales. This technique decentralises the stage in contrasting groups or actions, letting the audience synthesize them. The continuity of illusion is broken as the audience's focus of attention alternates between two different locales. The purpose of demonstration takes over in the plays of this period, and thus the aggro-effects grow rather weak and less horrifying than those in the first period.

Apart from the remarkable economy of expression this technique facilitates, it emphasizes Bond's preoccupation with the elements of space and time in his plays in order to create theatricality. The device of simultaneous action, as I am arguing, means breaking away from the concept of time meaningful in a successive cause and effect relationship. On the formal level, the simultaneous action definitely increases theatricality because it destroys linear time. And so far as the content of the scene is concerned, the spectator is asked to assess the presented situation. He is challenged not only with complex ways of seeing, but also with various moral viewpoints from which or with which he has to side.

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<sup>22</sup> The floating stage, Longman asserts, falls somewhere between the two extremes of the fixed and the fluid ones. It 'respects the confines of the stage and maintains them throughout the duration, but they correspond to the boundaries of a generalized locale. This gives it the floating quality, for it stands as a sort of island removed from its normal surrounding: it is a relatively neutral stage made to represent a limited number of specific places within the general locale'. See 'Fixed, Floating, and Fluid Stages', *Themes in Drama*, 9 (1987), p. 159.

### 1) The Simultaneous Action in "Bingo":

In the course of his writing of *We Come to the River*, Bond has written two plays in which he employs the device of the simultaneous action on a smaller scale than that of the opera. Scenes Three and Four of *Bingo* employ simultaneous actions on a unified stage. Scene Three opens with two static figures, one of them (Shakespeare) is metaphorically and the other (the Young Woman) is physically dead. The process of the trial that sends the Young Woman to her death, and the hanging itself, are not shown, only the consequence of this judgement and of that action. The social biosphere, however, is as cruel as that which surrounds any aggro-effect in the plays of the first period, because the corpse of the woman remains in sight for days, an indication of the inhumanity of that society. The reaction of that society to the hanged woman is revealed later in the scene by many figures, some of whom become frenzied. Shakespeare sits on a bench downstage left, facing away from the gibbeted woman, a position which reveals his response to her death. The rest of the scene shows different responses from different characters, i. e. perspectives to death, or to the gibbeted woman. The main point in this depiction is to connect both centres to other activities in that society, a connection which is unlikely to be found in reality. As Robert F. Gross notifies, 'the gibbet and the brooding figure of Shakespeare throw the otherwise inconsequential main text into sharp relief'.<sup>23</sup>

The two labourers who simultaneously manifest their insensitivity towards the gibbeted woman and their appreciation of simple physical pleasures and companionship is an extension of a similar depiction in Bond's earlier plays. It is the use of dramatic contrast of a horrifying part in contrast to a domestic one in order to balance the intense emotional impact of the situation.<sup>24</sup> Joan and Jerome show conviviality, good fellowship, and accord with nature through feeding the birds, actions which are a variation on playfulness in other plays. But their very actions at the foot of the gibbeted woman, as well as their ideas and language, suggest a primal tension between life and death and signify cruelty to the woman similar to that of the South London youths to the baby. They are victims of a much wider social cruelty, including Shakespeare's 'civilised' alienation, practised upon them, and therefore they victimise the woman as the

<sup>23</sup> 'The Main Text in Contemporary Drama: Osborne, Bernhard, Handke and Bond', unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1979, p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> See Tener, *op. cit.*, p. 429; Demling, *op. cit.*, p. 120.



youths victimise the baby.

The tableau of three centres of action strengthens the tension among the elements of death, pastoral ideal, and social cruelty. The gibbet stands as a yardstick to the reactions of other figures involved in the scene. As a response to Judith's question whether he saw the hanging the day before, Shakespeare starts to disclose his perception not only of the significance of the hanging itself within the social context, but mainly of the position his dramatic texts occupy within their immediate social context. The violent action of gibbetting brings home to him the facts about his society and the acceptance of his plays in it. He begins to see his plays, as Jenny Sue Spencer states, 'as analogous to a public hanging, and finds himself appalled to have written for an audience who walked to the theatre under sixteen severed heads and listened to his plays over the noise of bears suffering in the nearby pit'.<sup>25</sup>

Although Shakespeare does not describe or react to the hanging occasion, a reaction fully depicted by the Son and the Old Man, his description of the Elizabethan bear-baiting and the whole social context of his dramas connect the hanging to the much wider reality of inhuman society. He perceives the corpse's significance through a personal revelation, he assesses his artistic as well as personal life against the victimised 'object'. The climax of the scene shows 'his outburst downstage from the hanged Young Woman, in which, like one of his own play characters, he is made to force conclusions home to himself'.<sup>26</sup> Death on the gibbet becomes the measure with which Shakespeare sees the cost of his career and the suffering he has ignored by committing himself to money and ownership:

Shakespeare. What does it cost to stay alive? I'm stupefied at the suffering I've seen. The shapes huddled in misery that twitch away when you step over them. Women with shopping bags stepping over puddles of blood. What it costs to starve people. The smile of men who see no further than the end of a knife. Stupefied. How can I go back to that? What can I do there? I talk to myself now. I know no one will ever listen. (p. 40)

Shakespeare reaches new conclusions in the face of the confronting gibbet, but he is not fully committed to action. His is an aesthetic response which distorts the real causes of the woman's death: the social and economic depravity in which she 'lived'. It is a response which is not very dissimilar to the Son's response, which adds another distorting interpretation through his fanatical, religious response. In a frantic

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<sup>25</sup> 'Edward Bond's *Bingo*: Historicity, Politics and Subjectivity', *Themes in Drama*, 8 (1986), p. 217.

<sup>26</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

dialogue, the Son objects not to unjust causes that lead to death, but to the 'reception' of death, leaving the causes to the metaphysical. In histrionic words, he expresses his objections to people's mockery and irreverence, and unintentionally depicts the picture of the hanging occasion:

Son. A festival a dark. Singin', dancin', layin' money how long she'll live. The sexes going back a hedges. Is that reverence? Lord god is wherever there's justice. When a soul go satan-ways lord god come t'watch an' weep. Reverence, friends. That out-a be a festival a light an' prayer. (p. 36)

These, however, are not the only responses to the gibbeted woman; Bond widens the perspective to include Judith and the Old Woman. Judith feels guilty because she was the direct reason for the woman's death when she informed the magistrate, Combe. This is a repetition of the way Shakespeare treated Judith: unsympathetically. But it is the simple Old Woman who describes in a matter-of-fact manner and tone the horrifying state of the dead woman; her smell, twisted face, and ugliness. Contrary to Shakespeare, she finds neither perfection nor beauty in the dead woman's face, her dialogue persuades Shakespeare to realise the sordid reality of the situation, of death.<sup>27</sup>

The juxtaposition of these actions puts in motion what seems to be a steady situation as it polarises different perspectives on the significance of the Young Woman's death and correlates these images in one unified reality. The cohesion of different angles, however, comes also from the manipulation of dramatic time to indicate its oneness. The juxtaposition of actions means the juxtaposition of parallel realistic times into one dramatic time. The importance of that is the confirmation of dialectical happenings as a governing principle in understanding the process of society. And by such a method of staging, the spectator is disallowed the simple identification with the emotional state of the character, as the focus keeps changing all the time. But there is also a different sort of juxtaposition Bond uses in this scene, and throughout the play; a juxtaposition which could be taken as a variation on the juxtaposition he used in *Early Morning*, the juxtaposition of the fictional and the historic which enhances the technique of simultaneous action and is enhanced by it. In this scene, for example, this juxtaposition creates a generic tension between the historic bard, Queen Elizabeth, public executions, bear-baiting, and fictional characters with their language which is not historically that of the seventeenth-century and which contains some anachronistic elements.

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<sup>27</sup> By such dramatic device, 'Bond anatomizes a culture that resists any sense of community or responsibility'. See Lapin, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

The same technique is also used in Scene Four with added simultaneous verbal exchanges at some points in the action. The historic figures of Shakespeare and Jonson sit at a stage right table discussing the life of the theatre. Shakespeare's feelings about the relationship between his art and his life are confronted with another alternative sort of relationship: Jonson's. Contrary to Shakespeare's, Jonson's life has been a continual series of engagements. But his self-deprecation confirms Shakespeare's negative attitude towards the whole artistic enterprise and towards life. Jonson's engagements have been used to support either the status quo or his self-interest. The test of the truthfulness of these two stances comes in the shape of the collectively revolting peasants. They introduce a real battle, or what could be a real battle, in resisting the land enclosure. The resistance for the enclosure has drawn together even Jerome and the fanatic Son. But a large open fire separates the peasants and the artists, composing two separate centres. Thus, the spatial separation reflects a symbolic cleavage between artist and reality.

However, 'the two centres of the scene', Hay and Roberts analyse, 'come together with the simultaneous speeches of Jonson, Combe and the Son, the lyrical pastoral alternative from the writer and the hard faced threats of Combe'.<sup>28</sup> Jonson's amusingly inaccurate evocation of pastoral life contrasts the plans of the peasants and their engagement with Combe's logical and forceful argument: the two plans are delivered simultaneously. But the drift between all parties remains open. And although this verbal juxtaposition in the theatre is always difficult, and depends largely on the spectator's ability to perceive it, it clarifies the separation between the two worlds of the peasants and the writer and indicates their segregation.

## 2) The Simultaneous Action in "*The Fool*":

As Coult observes, Scene Five of *The Fool* introduces a comprehensible example of Bond's mastering of the device of simultaneous action on a confined stage: 'One of Bond's most characteristic pieces of stagecraft is a kind of theatre counterpoint, where two events are juxtaposed, sometimes in ironic contrast, sometimes to enlarge and explain the individual actions'.<sup>29</sup> What is more interesting in the practice of the simultaneous action in *The Fool* is that Bond takes it a step further by introducing different events that are more unlikely to coexist in reality. His previous practice has been more inclined towards the likely, but

<sup>28</sup> *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

<sup>29</sup> *The Plays*, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

here the theatricality of the realistically unbridgeable events is greater. The capacity to 'float' the stage between various places is greater in *The Fool*, the deliberation in choosing the corresponding locales and joining them together becomes obviously the playwright's.

The action of Scene Five takes place in Hyde Park: downstage is Clare with his patron Mrs Emmerson, upstage is a boxing match. For much of the scene, there is no contact between the two locales, but the relationship between them becomes clearer as the scene progresses. The action alternates and overlaps between the two centres to show Clare's newly recognised artistic talent and his introduction to the upper classes and to parallel the exploitation the same classes practised on the black and Irish boxers. The quality of cinematic montage is evident; it enables the spectator to associate the events in the two areas. The spectator is allowed to examine the events in one area in the light of the other, he is persuaded to question events the participants take for granted. The exact nature of the relationship between patron and artist is brought out by comparing it to the same relationship between patron and boxer: Clare's poetic talent is put within the context provided by the other action. Appropriately, both sides of the lower class, Clare and the boxers, are betrayed before the start of the scene, though the spectator only knows about it later.<sup>30</sup>

The immediate context of Clare's art is exposed by the activity on the other centre of action. Mrs Emmerson, accompanies Clare, has a vague romantic concept about artistic creativity and a functionless subjectivity of art. She approves of a genteel art that her social position requires, and her comments are a sort of interrogation of Clare's art, and the altering focus between the violent boxing and the genteel conversation functions, as Cave comments, 'to deepen our sense of the offensive cruelty of Mrs Emmerson's efforts to tutor Clare's genius'.<sup>31</sup> Admiral Radstock, a more influential patron than Mrs Emmerson, confirms that polite society, the landowning classes, are the only class who can support the artist and therefore Clare must cut the lines that criticise it. Furthermore, the relationship between art and patron is examined by the presence of another artist: Lamb. He defines, though ambiguously, Clare as a

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<sup>30</sup> As Bond explains, the simultaneous action shows the society in action rather than offering one individual to cover the range of social experience. The simultaneous action shows the complexity of society and the individual in social organisation. The simultaneous action generates a straightforward irony. Bond: 'All these people in the front scene are Clare's patrons and upstage, these boxers are knocking themselves to death to please *their* patrons, their backers. What I am saying of course is that the people in the front are really the same sort of people in the back. Clare's patrons are in fact destroying him because they are not really interested in his art. It's an irony which I carry throughout the scene'. Recorded by Beverly Matherne and Salvatore Miaorana, 'An Interview with Edward Bond', *Kansas Quarterly*, 12, 4 (1980), p. 69.

<sup>31</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 287.

poet/truth-teller in a society that is governed by the unsuitable laws of supply and demand. Telling the truth in such circumstances is damaging: 'only a wise man tries to do that - or another sort of fool'(p. 121). In the course of the scene, Clare is unable to grasp the real relationship between himself as an artist and his patrons, he is unable to understand why the 'fool' boxer kept coming back despite the harm the other boxer caused to him, and proves that he is the fool Lamb talked about. Hence, the play's title.

The undermining of the authority of polite society in Clare's poetry is 'fought back' viciously by the Admiral, and the background fight, with its spectators increasingly becoming crueler and insensitive and bloodthirsty, makes the result inevitable. The very classes from which Clare seeks protection are going to be his betrayers, this way or another. 'The complicity of an old cockney and a Marquis who join to capitalise on the defeat of the Irishman', according to Lappin, 'serves as the background for the selling of Clare'.<sup>32</sup> The boxer and Clare are objects of exploitation to the polite society: one is knocked down without even getting his pay, and the other is not yet conscious of the situation. The operation of putting the two together functions in showing the real ironhand, literalised in the boxing, in the velvet gloves of the 'polite' society of Mrs Emmerson and admiral Radstock and their ilk. The two worlds become one at the end of the scene as Clare is almost dragged towards the defeated boxer, and their short encounter anticipates his fate. As one critic notices, it is 'a brief union between a lost cause and one soon to be lost, a communion and a commiseration of shared despair'.<sup>33</sup> And eventually Clare sees himself as a boxer in later scenes, and visualises the image when he meets one of his opponents, Lord Milton.<sup>34</sup>

The simultaneous action in *The Fool* is successful because of the theatricality that appears in some factors concerning time, place, and realistic improbability. For such reasons, the audience perceives the connection as an explanation, throwing light on specific events in society. Even if Clare does not comprehend the meaning of the events around him despite Lamb's vague explanations, the audience are more likely to have an interpretation because of the simultaneous action. Another reason for the success is that one of the centres of the action does not need much attention to details; the physical action of the fight

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<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 79. Demling observes that the fighting evokes ethnic and racial prejudice. It is significant, to her, that 'the opponents are members of oppressed groups -- the Irish and the blacks'. See, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>33</sup> Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>34</sup> See Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 138; Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

and the cries of support are the main thing on that corner, it becomes a background to the main action of the mental confrontation at the front. The main requirement for the fighting is where to insert the comments and the fight into the conversation in order to avoid interference.

### 3) The Simultaneous Stages in "*We Come to the River*":

The problem of effectiveness of verbal juxtaposition which *Bingo* suffers because of its verbal simultaneity is the repercussion of Bond's practice of the device in the opera *We Come to the River*, not only of simultaneous action, but of simultaneous action on three fixed stages. Bond's stage comes to its ultimate effect when he exploits its maximum capacity to contain two (or more) related events to house a meaning; events that might or might not be connected in reality. The same principle is practised in the opera but on fixed stages throughout, which means that the simultaneous action is *the* structural feature in it.

But the fixing is not really necessary, as Bond himself unintentionally proved. Some scenes could use a single stage, and that is what Bond did when he prepared the Methuen edition of the opera. Bond's revisions are mainly to make the opera readable on the page, he indicates in a general note to the Methuen edition that some of the scenes are simultaneous. By the same token, Bond's revision means that there are scenes in the opera that do not need three stages. Bond, it seems, exaggerated in using three stages to meet the composer's requirement.<sup>35</sup> But, in my judgement, the simultaneous action had its origins in Bond's own plays; it has progressed from the divided stage which mostly appeared in the scenes of aggro-effects in the first period. And it is worthwhile to notice that Bond had started writing the opera as soon as the first cycle of plays ended.

When *The River* was performed at Covent Garden, London, the device stirred different reactions, but most of them were cautious. Adrian Jack, for example, saw that the simultaneous action 'helps simply to counterpoint the opposed classes ... or provide opportunities for ironies and tricky parallels'.<sup>36</sup> For him, the separate acting areas allowed the presentation of related events without the formal artificiality of sequential scene changes and guaranteed relevance to the events depicted. And he has admitted that some

<sup>35</sup> According to Hay and Roberts, the idea of staging a number of scenes simultaneously had originally come from Henze. The composer wanted it for both dialectical and formal reasons of writing polyphony, and Bond submitted a 'carefully tailored' libretto to meet Henze's requirements. For more details see their, *A Study, op. cit.*, pp. 167-8.

<sup>36</sup> 'Side-shows', *Listener*, vol. 96 (22 July 1976), p. 88.

of the simultaneous actions were much clearer in the broadcast than in the opera house. Desmond Shawe-Taylor has called the simultaneous action a 'self-defeating device', because whatever the artistic intention behind it, 'the first and most serious consequence is inaudibility of detail, especially of words', and later he added that 'actions and music get lost' too.<sup>37</sup> Hay and Roberts also have expressed doubts and questioned the possibility of achieving the analytical purpose behind the particular kind of dramatic counterpoint Bond and Henze aimed at. They have predicted that in performance, many 'fine details in the libretto will inevitably get lost when simultaneity of action and music is employed to any great extent'.<sup>38</sup>

But so far as theatricality is concerned, the employment of three fixed stages establishes the theatricality of the opera (if it needs establishing) and keeps it in focus throughout. Being there throughout leaves no room for any illusions of reality, the same function the bare stage performs for other Bond plays. As the action is performed on three stages, continuity and unity of place are broken.<sup>39</sup> The opera also works within the main principle governing the plays of the second period: showing different parts of reality and different reactions to a violent deed, and the opera is full of atrocities which the simultaneous action connects and interrelates.

Scene One parallels the events in the tent of the General, who is reporting victory to his emperor on stage I, and the soldiers' celebration of it in a canteen on stage II. The depiction seems to be offering the official and the domestic ways of celebrating victory. The depiction widens the reality to include different parts of that society, but more importantly, it shows that there is a single voice of a soldier who expresses an attitude dissimilar to the General's. On the two stages, the two contrasting attitudes to war of the General and Soldier 2; the complete submission of the General and the Soldier's eagerness to quit war altogether, are paralleled. However, the two stages remain parts of the floating stage that represents the general area of a locale, the barracks. The events on the two stages are more likely to occur simultaneously in reality. The result is that the practice is limited; it shows the general atmosphere of a victorious army at its top and at its bottom.

<sup>37</sup> 'Armies of the Night', *Sunday Times*, 18 July 1976, p. 29.

<sup>38</sup> *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>39</sup> Unlike plays that have simultaneous decor, Miller's *A Death of a Salesman* or Peter Nichols' *The National Health*, II, 5, Bond's opera resembles some medieval plays, especially a Latin play called *Cenodoxus* (1602), which has the action performed on three planes simultaneously: heaven, hell, and earth. For further details see, Peter H. Davison, *Contemporary Drama and the Popular Dramatic Tradition in England*, Macmillan, 1982, p. 75.

But Scene Three stresses the realities of the leaders and the common soldiers further still. As the Deserter is tried, he is taken guarded to a small, bleak room to be executed, while the General enjoys the loyalty and support of the community for his victory. The reality of war for both the Deserter and his executioners is harsh and unfeeling; it is the reality from the perspective of the oppressed. The Deserter is going to be executed for showing human weakness. But the society that lives on oppression and waging wars is also punished for these very reasons: Bond involves Stage II in the action. On this stage, a Doctor tells the General that he is going blind as a result of an old wound from a war: the simultaneous action generates melodrama by paralleling the two events. The three stages, furthermore, show that other events are melodramatically inter-connected at that very moment: on stage I, the Deserter asks his executioners to shoot him in the forehead, while on Stage II the Doctor informs the General of his blindness. On Stage III, the Aide introduces three whores to some of the officers after the end of the civilian celebration. We see three different realities which comment on each other, but which also create a sense of melodramatic poetic justice: as the General sends the Deserter to his death, he himself is sentenced to blindness: a fate that seems inevitable for the whoring officers.

But the same scene shows the weakness and limits of the simultaneous action when it becomes *the* governing structural feature. Bond is forced to weaken an action or to depict an insignificant one in order to foreground another to allow the audience full comprehension. On the very occasion discussed above, the text is punctuated so as to allow one important piece of information at a time. And the important dialogue between the Doctor and the General occurs on an almost silent background of the dance of the civilians and officers. The dance seems an attempt to 'delay' the introduction of the whores to coincide with the introduction of the other two actions of shooting and telling of blindness.

In Scene Five, and on a different stage, the going blind General encounters a different reality from that he encountered as a victorious militarist. He sees the victims of his very war; the wounded and the crippled in their shouts of pain and suffering. The whole encounter, however, introduces another melodramatic exaggeration: the shouts of the suffering soldiers are exaggerated and are repetitive in essence. But they leave an immense influence on the General, while he is supposed to be familiar with such shouts and pain. What the depiction does is to endorse a formula that blindness leads to vision. The General, who



is introduced as believing war is an eternal phenomenon in which nobody wins, sees what he has never seen before! This is a deliberate manipulation of dramatic action to put the General on the first step of the learning process. During this encounter, the General comes across a Young Woman who is looting and searching for her husband amidst the bodies of the dead. This suffering world is melodramatically paralleled with the 'polished' surface of the army as it is introduced to the public. On another stage, some soldiers are preparing a parade ground, with a WO who longs for the 'maximum' cleansing results from his soldiers (p. 23). In a gesture of acting and demonstration, and in a language that tries to exaggerate the importance of the trivial job of sweeping, and in an almost mechanical manner, the WO shows his soldiers how to prepare the ground and the atmosphere for the coming new Governor.

Another melodramatic incident occurs in this scene when Bond depicts the execution of the Deserter. The soldiers take him from Stage I, where, ironically, the parade is to be started later on, through Stage II, where the reality of war is shown from the wounded soldiers' viewpoint in front of the General, into Stage III. The movement links the three areas and gives the locale a different 'meaning' as a signifier. The passing through different stages gives the unified stage a plasticity and capability of signifying different meaning. The capability of the space of floating becomes greater, but this plasticity encourages the seeing of the events as melodramatic: the Deserter is shot on Stage III while his wife, the Young Woman, is looking for him among the dead and wounded on Stage II at the same time, for example.

The place as a signifier takes a new turn in Scene Eight, the madhouse. The General is put there, but he occupies Stage II, while the mad people occupy Stage III. Soldier 2 encounters the General, trying to persuade him to participate in the people's revolt against the emperor, on Stage II. As the General rejects participation, the place itself signifies his madness: the mad inmates 'enter' his stage, he mixes with them. A similar signification is generated by placing the Governor on Stage III during his negotiation with the General to win him back to the emperor's service. The General remains aloof on his stage, which is also a judgement on his sanity. He refuses to be exploited for the benefit of the Emperor, to be used again as a tool of torture or suppression. When the Governor and the Doctor leave, the General regrets his refusal to collaborate: his regret is expressed on Stage I, which could be taken as a place for monologue and self-criticism, of commenting on his own action. When he decides to collaborate, he goes back to Stage II, the

place of encountering reality. These incidents show another signification for the three stages as different signifiers of mental state of mind, or as a descriptive comment on a state of mind.

Scene Nine widens the range of the floating stage to include the house of Soldier 2 (on Stage I), who waits hiding at a gateway outside the meeting of ministers and officers (on Stage II), while on Stage III, the meeting itself is taking place. Stages II and III, however, do not need separate stages, but the distance could be great between I and II, a distance Soldier 2 crosses in a matter of seconds. When Soldier 2 returns to Stage I (a slum room in which three children sleep on a low bed), the social circumstances which led Soldier 2 to assassinate the Governor are represented in deep contrast to the world of Stage III. The ministers require the stability of social order to attract investment that will guarantee the ruling class more benefits. These three stages represent the worlds of the poor, the rich, and in between them, Soldier 2 who is tormented for being unable to provide his family with an adequate and just social life. The extent of his predicament is illustrated through the repetition of questions his children ask about fear, bombs, knives. Having three stages makes the cause and effect relevant, and shows the immediate after-effects of an action. It makes the movement swift, saves time, relates the actions on them, and shows the consequences of one action in two different places.

Contrary to the traditional way of using the stage as a floating one, that is, one part signifies one locale, Bond's stages in *The River* are more flexible: every single stage is used to identify different locales in every scene. But Bond's plasticity of having three stages and assigning different locales to them according to the new situation has its difficulties as well. Because Bond keeps the three stages permanently throughout, sometimes he loses the freedom of manoeuvre to the extent that he seems unsure what to do with them at some points in the action. Thus one stage at some point is nothing more than a passage to another, losing its function as a signifier of place altogether.<sup>40</sup> And at other times, having three stages to signify *one* locale makes no sense.<sup>41</sup> These scenes have no formal call for using the simultaneous, 'fixed' stages. The content of many actions would in no way be damaged by traditional sequential structure or by

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<sup>40</sup> See p. 26 when the Aide, Officers 1-4, NCO and Soldiers 1-6 come on quickly to Stage I then proceed to Stage II where the General stands.

<sup>41</sup> See Scene Five, the reception of the Governor; Scene Six, the shooting of the Young Woman in the battlefield; Scene Seven, the shooting of the Old Woman in the river; Scene Eleven, where the blind General sees his victims the moment he is blinded.

using a single stage.

**Summary:**

1) Horseplay is a formal device through which Bond shows the implications and the effects of an unjust and oppressive society upon the lower classes. In the plays of the first period, this gathering of the poor turns out to be an expression of frustration and bitterness. The energetic youths of the three plays *The Pope's Wedding*, *Saved*, and *Narrow Road*, are polluted with social, religious and economic necessities that cripple them and therefore disable them from playing their 'role' joyfully and justly. The social injustice frustrates them and leaves them unable to formulate the reality of their situation within their society and consequently they become victimisers as well as victims.

2) The horseplay sequences in these plays changes to produce the most drastic scenes in Bond's plays. He termed the violent action in these scenes 'aggro-effect', but to control the empathy generated from the violent action, Bond depicts them in a way that divides the focus of attention. The device controls the emotional effect and balances it so the audience can situate the violent action within its wider reality.

3) The division of the focus of attention takes different and varied methods: juxtaposition of different styles, centres of action, or characters. The technique mostly uses a victim around whom exists a frenzied part, a cool or scientific one. What the divided focus also does is to allow the audience to view the event in the light of another, occurring simultaneously. Thus, the spectator can question both. And Bond has moved from this simple and visually enriching technique to a more complex one in the plays of the second period. He started to magnify the presence of the stage as a stage by allowing more than one action, mostly unrelated in reality, to occur simultaneously. The device is employed for demonstration and comment. The playwright appears clearly behind the choice and arrangement of events. The relationship between playfulness and violent action exists in the plays of the second period, but in a different order.

4) In *Bingo* and *The Fool*, Bond uses the device of simultaneous action, and sometimes a verbal simultaneity. *The Bundle* witnesses the end of depicting the playfulness of the poor when the ideologically affectionate Wang succeeds in turning the occasion into an opportunity for understanding the laws of society and how to turn them for the benefit of the lower class (see Part Three). *The Woman* anticipates this

end when it shows, amidst the tragic actions, a playfulness that is built on understanding and readiness to sacrifice for the purpose of ending the oppression of the unjust Greek system.

5) But the extent of employing simultaneous action appears in *We Come to the River*, where Bond uses three fixed areas of acting to signify several locales. In this opera Bond has given the place more plasticity and floating quality, which enriches the possibilities of the stage as a signifier. The fixation of the stages, however, creates its own problem, such as inaudibility. But whether in moments of playfulness or violent actions, whether in the divided focus or the simultaneous action, Bond's stage remains conscious, and not self-conscious. He does not venture to create a stage that shows its hidden lights, that comments on itself during the action, or that exposes its contents.

## Chapter Four

### The Play-within-the-Play

If the histrionic words belong, mainly, to the characters' subjective expression of their types of personalities, the play-within-the-play belongs to both the characters and the playwright: it could be employed by the characters and/or the dramatist. This employment complements other dramatic devices to heighten a much larger phenomenon, namely, the stage's self-consciousness. As J. L. Styan observes, 'in the twentieth century, the wish to counter persistent expectation of realism stimulated a variety of deliberately anti-illusory devices, and the play-within-a-play was found serviceable once again. As in Elizabethan times, it was accompanied by abrupt stylistic changes'.<sup>1</sup> Since the sixteenth century the play-within-the-play has been used frequently as a self-conscious expression by the playwright through which he calls attention to himself and/or, to his craft.

The device has been also used to extend or contradict the argument of the outer play. Robert J. Nelson defines the play-within-the-play as the 'formal imitation of an event through the dialogue and action of impersonated characters occurring within and not suspending the action of another imitation'.<sup>2</sup> The offstage spectators are always the reference point in defining the inner play as a play and its innerness. The onstage audience might or might not comprehend that they are watching or participating in an inner play but their comprehension or incomprehension contributes nothing to the offstage spectators' acknowledgement of the reality of the outer play. This definition calls attention to various aspects that affect the connection between the actor and his role and the aesthetic distance between the performance and the spectator.

Ruby Cohn asserts that the dramatic device of the play-within-the-play usually 'enhances the reality of the frame play by the very artifice of the inserted device'.<sup>3</sup> The employment of the device means that the

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<sup>1</sup> *Drama, Stage and Audience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> *Play within a Play: The Dramatist's Conception of his Art* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Currents in Contemporary Drama* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1969, p. 201.

characters of the outer play and their world cannot be illusory like the characters of the inner play and their world. The boundaries between the fictitious and the real worlds are underlined. However, the device can illuminate the kind of reality of the outer play by simultaneously implying that an element of illusion is an indispensable part of the human condition. For example, with Pirandello, truth is relative, it is as you see it. Indeed, to compose a definition of reality is almost impossible. In Pirandello, 'there is no external, fixed reality to which one can cling in the constant shifting of the action, in him no social code of good faith to which all can appeal as the ultimate sincerity'.<sup>4</sup> It is, then, according to the playwright's perception of reality that the boundaries between the inner and the outer play stand.

As it is considered amongst the preferred techniques of reducing distance, it could equally be said that it distances. The relationship between the player and the played reflects and facilitates a wider correlation between stage and audience. The playwright's concept of reality is manifested in the relationship between actor and character in the outer play and/or the inner one. The device of the play-within-the-play affects the aesthetic distance as it 'necessarily calls attention to the actor as actor'.<sup>5</sup> The nature of the audience participation varies, but the general assumption is that illusionistic staging precludes participation. Such participation occurs in, for example, the environmental and living theatres in which the illusionistic aspects are dispensed with in time, space, and material. In both cases the ideological outcome could be actually unknown from the beginning.

The play-within-the-play remains as the essential dramatic device in establishing the metaphor of the world as a stage, (see Part Three). As Nelson observes, 'the world stage concept is the very essence of the play-within-a-play idea'.<sup>6</sup> Through this device the playwright can operate the simile so as to show the relationship between reality and illusion. Pirandello and Brecht could be taken as the opposite poles in using the device of the play within the play. Pirandello's concept of the existence of illusion in reality makes the boundaries between the inner and the outer plays, which he, using Cohn's terminology, 'fictionalizes as not-play', fluctuate. In his plays, especially the trilogy, he brings the spectators to face the bare bones of

<sup>4</sup> Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>5</sup> Cohn, *Currents in Contemporary Drama, op. cit.*, p. 208. See also Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 155; Oscar Büdel, 'Contemporary Theatre and Aesthetic Distance', in *Brecht: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed., Peter Demetz (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1962), p. 66.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

theatrical technique and to recognise the complex relationship between art and reality. The extent of this employment of the device occurs in *Tonight We Improvise*, in which the line between the happenings on the stage and the auditorium is breached in various ways. 'In this way', Susan Bassnett-McGuire explains, 'the theatrical experience mirrors Pirandello's vision of life as indefinable and unstoppable process where security of perception is mere illusion'.<sup>7</sup>

The structure of the trilogy, in general, revolves around the very process of play-making: he uses this device to expound a vision of man's existential plight that is mirrored in the constraints of theatre, hence his theatre is metatheatre. But in Pirandello, even the audience figure is written: the ideological outcome is fixed and final. His *Six Characters in Search of an Author* is the best known example of the use of the play-within-the-play as a self-reflexive device. It is considered as theatre within theatre rather than play within play. Within this tradition comes Stoppard, whose plays comment on themselves, tamper with the classics and long-performed plays.

Contrary to that is Brecht's concept of reality as changing and changeable. To make that clear, his technique makes no attempt to introduce reality in an illusionistic way. On the contrary, he insists on introducing the process of play-making as such, exposing every aspect of the stage to the spectators. One way to make that exposition possible is his insistence that the story overall should not make invisible the significance of its parts: every part should appear as a separate play within the play. As he has indicated in 'A Short Organum for the Theatre', 'the individual episodes have to be knotted together in such a way that the knots are easily noticed. The episodes must not succeed one another indistinguishably but must give us a chance to interpose our judgement. ... The parts of the story have to be carefully set off one against another by giving each its own structure as a play within the play'.<sup>8</sup> The structure of a Brecht play evades the linear construction and depends, instead, on structuring every scene as an almost autonomous playlet. The aim, as is widely known, is the destruction of the temptation of illusion. His actors do not imitate reality or enter under the skin of the imitated characters but 'play' these characters as if a distance exists between them. By such devices the planes of illusion and reality are separated: the events on the stage are

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<sup>7</sup> Luigi Pirandello, Macmillan, 1983, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup> See Brecht on Theatre, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

structured as theatre events which form part of the overall reality.

Like Pirandello, Brecht does not have the audience participate in the performance, but, contrary to him, the ideological outcome is somehow left open to re-thinking or discussion outside the theatre.<sup>9</sup> In Brecht the emphasis on the sociopolitical circumstances underlines the possibility of understanding reality and of resisting any predetermined role for the individual. In Pirandello the excursus between outer and inner plays emphasises the fact that comprehending reality is beyond the human endeavour. Both dramatists reject the trappings of illusion but they underline two different conclusions.

Bond's interest in using the device dates back as early as 1973. Since then, it has been used increasingly in his career.<sup>10</sup> His major plays from *The Sea* on operate the device and/or an approximation of it in an extended fashion in *The Fool*, *The Woman*, *The Bundle*, and *The Worlds*. But a play like *The Swing* is presented as a play-within-a-play, as the events occur as a re-enactment of Paul's revealed plot at the beginning of the play. In his next plays, the separation between the actor and the character is more obvious and therefore the need for the device is less urgent. The plays up and including *The Worlds* employ the device: in the later plays, creating theatricality depends on other devices such as the exposure of the actor as an actor.

Bond operates the device for different reasons in every play, but the main observation is that the device is linked with other devices like the histrionic words and actions, playfulness, and the simultaneous action in order to create theatricality. This latter connection is important because the two devices of the play-within-the-play and the simultaneous action correspond in that both signify a relationship between two (or more) realities.<sup>11</sup> In some cases, playfulness dissolves into a playlet, like that in *The Bundle*. The theatricality of playfulness is taken to its functional realisation in the drama of audience participation. To

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<sup>9</sup> Styan summarises the difference between Brecht and Pirandello taking plays as exemplary: In *Six Characters*, Pirandello prepared the audience with the un-romantic actuality of the stage in order to deceive it into accepting the unreal. In his *Antigone*, Brecht prepared the audience with the un-romantic actuality of the stage in order not to deceive it about the reality of his play. See *Drama, Stage and Audience*, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

<sup>10</sup> Ruby Cohn's comment that Bond 'has staged more writers than plays within plays' is not accurate. Plays such as *The Fool* and *The Bundle*, plays she ignored, operate the device. See her 'Theatre in Recent English Theatre', *Modern Drama*, 30, 1 (March 1987), p. 9. Tener also has ignored all plays prior to *The Fool* in which Bond, Tener claims, uses the drama as an ironical device for the first time. But, on the other hand, Tener extends his definition of the play within the play, rightly, to include the poetry/fighting episode as a parallel to the mummies' playlet. See his *op. cit.*, pp. 432-3.

<sup>11</sup> Unruh Des Roches sees the play-within-the-play in *The Sea* as a juxtaposition of two worlds. See her 'The Sea: Anarchy as Order', *Modern Drama*, 30, 4 (December 1987), pp. 485-6.



appreciate the nature and purpose of his operation of the device we have to look in some detail at some of the plays that employ the device.

### **I) Exploiting the Power of the Stage: "*The Sea*":**

When the townspeople leave the clifftop at the end of Colin's funeral, Mrs Rafi renounces her previous public vow: 'I will not break the stage's unwritten law and comment on my fellow artists' performance'(p. 123). She does comment. What is significant about her remarks is not her ever-proclaimed self-appreciation and professionalism, nor is it the depreciation of the mediocrities around her, but it is rather her confession of using her 'theatricals', including staging plays, as a means of controlling and bullying people. Her theatricals are regarded as a compensation, though unsatisfactory and poor, for her inability to inhabit another sort of character, that is, the abyss. Her employment of the theatre medium is, then, not surprising because it is the medium that allows her the adequate channel to practise both her real and surrogate characters with all that come with them: histrionic words, absolute control over the participants/'nuns', the freedom of choice of roles, texts and subtexts, and, last of all, the opportunity to show her power of authorising, directing, and criticising.

The occasion for which Mrs Rafi rehearses a play, raising money for the coastguard including the depressed draper, Hatch, signifies the use of the medium to support the social system of which she constitutes a vital element. It is an 'annual' performance, and that brings it closer to being a rite. Her manipulation of the power of the stage appears during the orchestration of the rehearsal in her house, though some decisions are taken previously. Some of her arrangements and decisions are taken for granted by the rehearsers, while others face some opposition or incomprehension. Her choices of the theatre as a medium, of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, of her role as Orpheus, as well as directing the entertainment and designing its decor, are all subject to no discussion during the rehearsal. She assumes complete responsibility for the performance, and her fellow artists express no objection. Even after a marginal remark from Mrs Tilehouse to 'get on' with the rehearsal, Mrs Rafi shows unyielding and firm control. But at three points in the process, she faces different sorts of incidents in which she shows strength and determination to be the authority figure:

i) Roles: Except for the Vicar, Mrs Rafi forces her choice of casting the play, including giving herself the male leading part. She, however, faces Mafanwy's objection to having always been given the role of an animal with dismissal that is not based on artistic grounds but on another practice of social activity, that is of raising funds for animal charity. That is, of course, an excuse for Mrs Rafi to force her opinion on Mafanwy because the suitability of casting is subjected to no discussion and Mafanwy is told that the role is 'a chance to earn some more gratitude from your little friends'(p. 124). When it comes to roles, Mrs Rafi displays herself as the only bestower.

ii) Acting Methods: Mrs Rafi's response to Mafanwy's incomprehension of how one could pretend to swim while in fact walking shows the method of acting in which she believes. Acting, to her, means the submission of self to the character portrayed. Mrs Rafi's comment: 'I cannot jump in and out of my part like a lady athlete'(p. 123), is another indication of the method she upholds. Mrs Rafi's delivery of Orpheus's lines: 'Eurydice, let me clasp your marble bosom to my panting breast and warm it with my heart'(p. 126), which provokes the tears of her supporting actresses, shows the standard of emotionalism required for the night of the performance. 'I hope you'll act like that on the night'(p. 127), Mrs Rafi comments. As a director, she works within the method of acting which requires the audience to 'make believe'. She indicates that the spectator's imagination will do most of the work to believe in the reality of the enactment. This passively receptive spectator would be absolutely absorbed in the illusion of the stage to the extent that he would believe in Mafanwy's pretence. The props, within Mrs Rafi's method of staging, function in heightening the illusion, and therefore Mrs Rafi indicates that decorated sheets and the sound effects of splashing water under the stage would make the swimming seem real. The ladies are promptly persuaded. The atmosphere Mrs Rafi created by the song would also move her to crying 'together with a large part of the audience, if things go as usual'(p. 123).

The questioning of her method of acting means the questioning of her eligibility as a director, to which she responds aggressively because her directorial role reflects her social position. Keeping order in the rehearsal is a reflection of her ability to establish social stability. Her fierce reaction to the interruptions Mafanwy and Mrs Tilehouse make in the rehearsal manifests a wider social concern. Her justification for supporting the illusory method of staging reveals the possibility of exploiting the method for supporting the

established social order:

Mrs Rafi. Do you not wish to support the coastguard? Has it no meaning for you?

Mafanwy. How cruel, Louise.

Mrs Rafi. Then act. Give yourself to the part and it will carry you through. (p. 124)

iii) Songs: Another incident that shows Mrs Rafi's manipulation of the stage in support of the social system arises in her choice of the 'right' song for the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Her selection of 'There's No Place Like Home' is questioned but immediately defended. Her defence acknowledges no artistic merit or dramatic necessity or probability but, rather, consents to the townspeople's expectation. The song's improbability becomes clearer as it would be sung by the traditional 'type' of singer, musician, and poet: Orpheus. In the myth, when Orpheus sang his sweet voice attracted wild beasts, trees and plants would bow down to him, and the wildest of men would become gentle.

## 1) Art and Reality:

Mrs Rafi's rehearsal of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice shows the extent to which art has ceased to have any relevance to the reality around her. The stage is exploited to serve the purpose of her own vanity and superficiality. On a more fundamental level, the trivialities and hollowness of the rehearsal reflect how wanting in humanity this society is, and how superficiality is maintained at its highest level. But despite having given Mrs Rafi the complete responsibility, Bond does not allow her, structurally, to break the illusion of the stage whether through over- or under-distancing. At no point is she allowed to cross over the boundaries with the audience, though Bond's structure links the two realities of the inner and the outer plays. In this respect, every character knows about his or her playing of a role in an illusory event: the planes of illusion and reality are separate but the two worlds of myth and reality are related for the audience. Accordingly, Bond makes the linkage between the inner and outer plays in order to illuminate the kind of reality in which the inner play takes place through A) thematic correspondence and B) dramatic structure.

### A) Thematic Correspondence:

Bond's own version of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice and its correspondence to reality has been studied by many critics. Scharine, for example, finds the subject of the inner play as a *roman à clef* for the

remainder of the outer play if we substitute Colin, Rose, and Willy for Orpheus, Eurydice, and Pluto. That is because, mainly, the relevance of the Orpheus theme of death and rebirth is reflected in Rose's situation and her relationship with Willy and Colin. Eurydice's description of her past relationship with Orpheus as 'dust scattered over the sea' comes as an accurate forecast of what happens to Colin's ashes in a later scene. Scharine continues to observe the similarities thus: 'One of a pair of lovers dies, but their love survives. That love attaches itself to a new lover who is associated both with death and with flowing waters. The lover tries to return physically to his loved one, but death makes this impossible. He is left to become merely "dust scattered over the sea"'.<sup>12</sup> But even this general account fails to indicate that the events in the inner and outer plays do not fully, or even to a great extent, correspond: Eurydice does not *want* to go back to Orpheus while Rose *cannot*; Colin's yearning aspiration to return to his loved one is mysterious while Orpheus' reasons are obvious; Colin's ashes are scattered over the sea while Orpheus's fate, in Bond's version, is not known; Orpheus succeeds in crossing to his love while Colin fails.

Other critics have looked for general areas of correspondence between the myth as it is known, rather than as Bond gives it, and the outer play. Cohn asserts that Bond makes a telling point through the familiar myth: as Orpheus rescued Eurydice from the realm of the dead, so Willy rescues this Rose, but there will be no looking back by this couple. The latter point is controversial. Des Roches argues that 'because the stage directions explicitly state twice that Willy looks back, we assume that the myth has been shattered, and that Rose is no longer bound by the conditions of Eurydice'.<sup>13</sup> Neither in the original myth nor in Bond's version does Orpheus finally rescue Eurydice.<sup>14</sup> Although Des Roches's argument is not beside the point, her argument depends on what Bond does not show in the events of the play-within-the-play. Willy's looking back is more related to his and Rose's immediate situation than to the myth's correspondence to reality. Willy's purpose is to discover Rose's reaction to his confrontation with the tragedy, his attempt to transcend it by swimming in the sea. She still prefers the role of the spectator and therefore she proposes to hold his clothes.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 232-3.

<sup>13</sup> See Cohn's 'Theatre in Recent English Theatre', *op. cit.*, p. 9 and Des Roches's *op. cit.*, p. 492, respectively.

<sup>14</sup> In Vergil's version of the myth, as soon as Orpheus turned back, Eurydice fainted and died a second time, she was immediately dragged back to Hades by an irresistible force and Orpheus had to return to earth alone.

<sup>15</sup> Other minor points of correspondence are searched for: Des Roches compares Eurydice's shout (soundlessly, according to her) at Orpheus/Rafi 'Go back' to Rose's 'go home' at Willy as a rejection of love. See her *op. cit.*, p. 487. It is obvious, however, that the first shout is a rejection of Orpheus's love while Rose's is a sympathetic advice to Willy when she

The thematic correspondence with the outer play, in my opinion, focuses on the relationship between Rose and Willy/Colin in the immediate situation in the scene, with the exception of the correspondence between the failure of love between Eurydice and Orpheus and Rose and Colin that is crystallized in the sentence 'dust scattered over the sea'. The only two other straightforward points of thematic correspondence concern Rose's situation and Willy's descent.

i) Rose's playing the role of Eurydice underlines the former's own situation as a bereaved.<sup>16</sup> Though the relevance of Rose's situation to the theme of loss and suffering in the myth is totally lost to Mrs Rafi and her cycle of ladies, for the spectator it remains strongly attached to her situation. The inner play starts with a statement of loss which parallels Rose's position. The inner play also shows Eurydice's settlement in the realm of the dead, which reflects Rose's settlement and her inability, at this stage, to transcend the tragedy. The inner play eventually ends when communication between Eurydice and Orpheus becomes impossible, because of elements in the outer play, which, furthermore, stresses Rose's isolation from her immediate surroundings.

ii) In relation to Willy, it becomes obvious that Cerberus' shout at Orpheus, 'Oh mortal, do not disturb these shades of darkness'(p. 125), which is measured against a knock on the door that comes immediately after, makes the parallel inescapable for the spectator. The knock is the maid's who brings Willy in, and it is he who eventually disturbs these shades of darkness and succeeds, where Colin failed, in getting Rose out of the darkness.

The crux of the play-within-the-play, generally, depends on the thematic correspondence between the worlds of art and reality: the grand, rhetorical, and hollow world Bond portrays through the myth is reflected in reality that is portrayed as hollower and more pretentious. The farcical inner play pillories the silliness and pious world of Mrs Rafi and her ladies. Bond 'wants to show not only the ridiculousness of their values but the *unnaturalness* of their behaviour'<sup>17</sup> as well, and the thematic correspondence remains

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sees him pale and confused at the end of the rehearsal. They are not in an appropriate position to think about love, let alone reject it.

<sup>16</sup> In relation to Rose's situation, it is surely 'not mere coincidence that Rose is chosen to play Eurydice; she alone preserves her dignity in an entertainment which is a travesty of the experiences of death and loss. Her speech echoes her own bereavement and curiously anticipates the scattering of Colin's ashes'. See Paula Vivienne Brown, 'The Problem of Individuality in the Plays of Edward Bond', unpublished M. A. thesis, Exeter University, 1975, p. 85.

<sup>17</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, 154.

the partial means of showing the links between the two worlds.<sup>18</sup> But structural juxtaposition of the two worlds is Bond's dominant technique of associating the two worlds.

### **B) Juxtapositional Structure of the Scene:**

The projection of a grotesque vision of the mythical world that intersects with the real world subordinates the significance of the correspondence. The fact that the thematic similarities yield themselves uneasily, and that some of them are in contradictions deepen the idea of correspondence, not the points of correspondence themselves, though these latter are important. Bond's parody of the myth, as Des Roches correctly observes, tells us that Bond 'does not intend a serious consideration of the Orpheus and Eurydice story; however, by directing our attention to it he obviously wants us to take its inclusion seriously'.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the interplay and exchanges between the rehearsal and the frame scripts knot the two worlds together. The juxtaposition, technically, demands that the action of the scene progress on two, or more, fronts which thereby become associated in the spectator's perception. It is from the juxtapositioning of the two worlds that the thematic correspondence gains effectiveness.

On the level of structure, the entrances and exits of some characters connect the two worlds together. If Rose's entrance signifies the start of the inner play, and her participation in the enactment of the myth suggests her inclusion in the mythical world, Willy's entrance transforms him into a second Orpheus. The voice of terror, of a 'living man', who disturbs the underworld, is timed with the knock on the door that brings him in. Because Willy does not belong to either the world of myth or that of Mrs Rafi, he is seated to 'watch' them both. However, his complete absorption in Colin's death indicates that he is not completely out of them either. His ambivalent position is explained by one critic:

That he wakes up to his surroundings only after the rehearsal ended, implies that he is deaf to the assumptions of the myth; similarly, his emotional energy places him in a different mythology. Yet his "if only" response (a logic Evens has already questioned) suggests a connection with the logic of Park House.<sup>20</sup>

Up to this point he, like Rose, is absorbed in the tragedy of his friend, Colin. He, it seems, still believes

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<sup>18</sup> Aspects of the inner and outer plays counterpoint each other throughout the scene: Mafanwy portrays Cerberus upon her observations of her own dog, Roger; the Vicar protects his bitch, Ajax, from Roger while he, as Pluto, tries to protect his Eurydice.

<sup>19</sup> Des Roches, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 487.

that death is the end of life and not a condition of it; a stance he will alter later. His response to the death connects him to Rose and to the world of Park House in which communication on any positive level is impossible. It is not surprising, then, that the inner play ends at this point of impossible encounter between Orpheus and Eurydice: the start of the play-within-the-play corresponds to Rose's situation and the end of it manifests the state of reality. The guns that rattle at the point of non-communication bring Willy and Rose back to a reality that was not far removed from the content of the inner play, but the same point connotes a different start for them together. Art plays its role in exposing reality for the two bereaved characters.

Several juxtapositions confirm the connection between art and reality. The rehearsal takes place in a semi-dark drawing room. As Rose comes down, Mrs Rafi orders the ladies to shut off the natural light and put on the artificial light. She, unintentionally, transforms Park House into the dark world of Hades in which the inner play takes place. The swappings between the outer and inner worlds show that Mrs Rafi wants to put in the myth a song from reality, and eventually she sings part of it; Mafanwy collects for Save the Animals Fund in reality while she plays the role of a dog, her accent in playing Cerberus is Welsh; the Vicar wants to include a reference to a choir of his acquaintance and to make a reference to a congregation in reality in the myth; his comment on Mafanwy's performance links it to his bitch, Ajax; the hum of the 'Eton Boating Song' accompanies Orpheus's crossing the river Styx.

## 2) Function and Learning Process:

The playlet functions in exposing the reality and the way it is composed by the authority figures who 'direct' and 'play' the leading roles in it. The choice of myth to perform confirms the procedures on which those figures build their intellectuality and the content of the myth illustrates the principles they universalise. It is a myth in which the individual plays no part in changing his/her fate, it invokes the perception that tragedy is inevitable and that the human endeavour to transcend it is fruitless.<sup>21</sup> The swapping of the worlds of reality and the trivialised myth confirms the inhumanity of the outer reality.

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<sup>21</sup> Des Roches's comment that the myth characterises a 'way of thinking about the world which Willy has entered' is a verification of Claude Levi-Strauss's interpretation of the characteristics of the myth. See her *op. cit.*, p. 486.

As stated above, Willy and Rose are both emotionally captivated in the tragedy of Colin's death. The dialogue allocated to Eurydice corresponds to Rose's own position of suffering and grief. But the two figures, to some extent, are detached from the events and characters around them. Willy is even seated to 'see everything' happen in the rehearsal. Rose also is, in a sense, emotionally detached because she is treated differently as if she is touched by death, though she states that later. Such emotional uniqueness is reflected in their positioning on the stage as detached, to facilitate their learning from the artistic experience.<sup>22</sup> Margaret Biddle has explained the importance of being detached/involved in both Rose and Willy's case and the spectator of a Bond play:

The balance between involvement and detachment is important in Bond's work; the plays suggest that it is, for him, necessary to the process of commitment he is concerned with. Elsewhere this is evident in the relation between life and figures that watch life. In *The Sea*, Bond implies that this is a relation between audience and theatre performance which facilitates learning and decision. The relation is even more important than the quality of art.<sup>23</sup>

The enactment of the device of the play-within-the-play serves to demonstrate that a play could be positively used as a vehicle with which one could understand his/her world. For both Willy and Rose, there is an obvious relevance of art to life. They understand their reality and leave it behind for a new one. Although the play-within-the-play constitutes a learning device, the difficulty with Willy's situation immediately after the end of the inner play springs mainly from Bond's ambivalent dialogue at the end of the rehearsal. The sentence Bond allocates to Willy makes it easier to assume that he was completely absorbed in his own thoughts to the extent that he 'noticed nothing till the guns...?' (p. 131). The sentence makes Willy's learning process through the play-within-the-play unsatisfactory and doubtful.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Hay and Roberts detail John Dillon's production of the play at the Asolo Theatre, Florida, and Gaskill's production at the Royal Court, London in which Rose's and Willy's emotional detachment from the rest of the characters were emphasised by positioning them downstage facing the spectators in order to stress their *presence*, not their *involvement*. See their *A Study, op. cit.*, pp. 152-3.

<sup>23</sup> 'Learning and Teaching for Change, and the Plays of Edward Bond', unpublished D. Phil. thesis, The University of York, 1985, p. 208.

<sup>24</sup> Hay and Roberts have attempted to underline Willy's learning from the rehearsal by using Bond's adaptation of the play for the television. In this adaptation, they state, 'Willy appears as a pale, ghostly, unmoving shape in the background'. This defence is unconvincing not only for the theatre spectator who has no television script, but also because in itself it does not indicate anything that confirms their reading. Furthermore, they betray their own interpretation when they observe a complete change of tone in Willy when he, for the first time, speaks directly about Colin's drowning in a sentence that comes immediately after the one stated in the text. His question about what was happening in the rehearsal is not, then, different in tone from the prior sentences which show his absorption in Colin's death. See their *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 154.



## II) Playfulness and Disintegration: "*The Fool*":

If *The Sea* shows the interplay between a rehearsal script and a reality, *The Fool* displays an almost complete performance within its reality. That adds another dimension to Bond's depiction of the relationship between art and reality through plays within plays. As it is almost an autonomous performance, it shows the production in relation to its audience and environment. But on a more fundamental level, it shows the extent of theatricality created by the inclusion of a work of art in his plays. The device in *The Fool* clarifies Bond's operation of it from a different angle than that of *The Sea*. But as is the case with *The Sea*, the players here also know they are playing; a life outside the event is attributable to them. But before discussing the thematic correspondence or the dramatic structure, it is valuable to look at the performance particulars.

i) The Location: At the the porch of Lord Milton's house on a Winter evening, a group of peasants, dressed up in the fancy costume of mummers, appear. Once again, the events take place at one of the upper class characters' houses, which signifies a specific social relationship between the classes. As no one questions Mrs Rafi's eligibility to house the rehearsal, no one here but Darkie seems to think about the question. Milton's porch seems the natural place for the enactment.

ii) The Occasion and its Social Significance: The purpose of the mummers' gathering at Milton's house at Christmas signifies an annual re-enactment of the traditional popular story of the victory of St George over the powers of death and darkness. They are assembled in the 'hope' of winning Milton's and his guests' favour, and thus satisfying the gentry unmistakably motivates the players. This purpose is reflected in the inner play's opening lines of the Enterer In: to have a 'treat'. With this purpose in mind, the performance proceeds.<sup>25</sup> However, the mummers' costume initiates an atmosphere of playfulness that is connected to the peasants' 'idea of a theatre'. This atmosphere is established with the announcement of the Enterer In at the inauguration of their play and maintained throughout:

For acting time is come and we appear

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<sup>25</sup> As Biddle has observed, for the peasants 'the performance earns them what they need to live. For Milton, his family, and his guests, the event is simply entertainment'. See, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

Let merriment begin

This joyful time a year (p. 84)

Although Lawrence's sudden warning 'lines' the players up to be seen and inspected by their benefactor Milton, and although some of them panic and 'go hot' when they see the lord, they maintain vitality and a spirit of merriment comparable to those in the horseplay sequence in other plays by Bond.

iii) The Idea of Playing: The playlet brings two classes together in one place and on an occasion of 'merriment' and 'joyful' atmosphere. The gentry even hiss, boo, laugh, and whistle in response to the mummers. But the very idea of performing *for* someone else shows the separation between these classes. The social context of the performance shows the essence of that class division. Within the social gathering of Christmas, there is a gulf between the two groups: the spectators do not participate or identify with the characters at any stage. The performance is not even particularly absorbing for the gentry: when St George is wounded Milton's concern is that Carrie should stand out of the wind. The alienation between the lowly, poor actors and the upper-class spectator is great.

iv) Opportunity for Preaching: The performance also provides the Parson with an opportunity to explain the relationship between the poor and the rich. He announces the transitional nature of the age when he, at the end of the performance, lectures the participants on the changes that are taking place in the England of 1815. The Parson's speech declares the end of what is left of the common ground between the classes which appeared in the gentry's response to the mummers. The political, rather than the religious, motif of his speech as well as being directed at the peasants, rather than the gentry, establishes the Church as a forerunner in supporting the newborn middle class. The enactment constitutes, for the Parson, an occasion that gathers even the non-churchgoers, such as Darkie. However, Darkie's response to the Parson expresses the peasants' dissatisfaction with the present dehumanising feudal system as well as the new bourgeois one. It is a response which finds some justification in the events of the inserted device.

### 1) Thematic Correspondence:

The inner performance is slightly adapted to correspond to the current realities. St George appears in a different context: he already 'met the dragon' and 'killed him as you've heard'(p. 84, 84), he tells his audience. He is actually England's champion and he appears to 'defy' the new representative of the powers

of death and darkness. The new power is the militarist Colonel Bullslasher, who kills St George to 'take his money'.<sup>26</sup> The implied meaning is that even England's traditional champion cannot conquer the new power because he is out of proportion and context. There must be a miracle to have him back to life, and this miracle is supplied by the Doctor, who charges the poor double the rich. The Doctor's behaviour belongs to the new standards of the age and his medicine worsens his patient. That St George is portrayed as a very poor character satirically comments on what it is like to be poor in a society that is built on exploitation. Though entertaining, the play-within-the-play criticises the class division and thus reflects some of Darkie's dissatisfaction. In one sense, as Jones comments, 'the performance is a cleverly disguised commentary upon the exploitation of the poor by the rich in the play as a whole'.<sup>27</sup>

The fact that another militarist, admiral Radstock, 'kills' the potency of Clare's poetry parallels Bullslasher's action and makes the thematic correspondence effective. And the fact that another Doctor 'kills' the vitality in Clare is also significant in this respect. Against such powers, Clare cannot be England's champion. The correspondence between art and reality thus anticipates the fate of the protagonist.

## 2) Structural Significance of the Mummers' Play:

The mummers' episode, structurally, almost begins the outer play. Clare's 'We'll Start then', which prepares the players to face their audience is followed by the knock on the door to bring them out. As stated above, the play-within-the-play constitutes a finished artistic product which is completely performed. The degree of theatricality is greater because of the autonomy of the inserted device. The playfulness of the occasion is reflected in the very structure of the inner performance: a clearly theatrical structure. The inner play starts with a simple narration by the Enterer In, which provides an introductory frame for the events that are about to be enacted. The Enterer In, by definition, functions as the introducer of the events. He does the following:

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<sup>26</sup> The Enterer In says that St George is poor, while Bullslasher wants to kill him to take his money. This is one of the points which I wanted Peter Gill, the play's first director, to clarify. Sadly, he informed me that he is 'no longer able to remember all the details connected with the production'. Personal correspondence with Gill, letter dated 12 September 1989.

<sup>27</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 242.

- a) Launches and explains the happenings and feelings. His narrational function connects the two worlds of players and audience together without any illusion.
- b) In a non-illusionary way, he sets the tone for the onlookers by clarifying the nature, circumstances, and aim of the performance.
- c) One way of making contact with his audience is to demolish any aesthetic barrier with them by addressing them directly.
- d) Another way is the introduction of his characters to the viewers, who proceed with their roles immediately.
- e) To show his talents, he participates in the action by asking the Doctor to cure St George. He also sings.

But the theatricality of the inner play is underlined throughout the performance by having the characters introduce themselves to their audience. They believe in no illusion. Make-believe is dispensed with: St George resurrects from death as soon as the Doctor pours a bottle of medicine down his throat.

The Parson, a character from the outer play, ends the atmosphere of playfulness and introduces a new 'reality' to the peasants. They become spectators of his enactment, but the vitality of the mummers' language washes against his formal speech. He 'uses conventional rhetoric to describe the momentous changes -- and economic deprivation -- which are about to overtake the labourers'.<sup>28</sup> The new industrial revolution, the Parson's speech explains, needs different values and attitudes, but more important, as far as artistic forms are concerned, it implies the need for different artistic methods and practice: playfulness and innocence must disappear. As Lappin has perceived, the mummers' play is 'a prologue to the main action and sets the tone for the idea of loss and passage. It is the incursion of a former age in which a culturally unified laboring class sought and derived solace from the protection and paternalistic attitude the gentry adopted'.<sup>29</sup> The peasants actually are participating in a traditional form of art that is vanishing. The vitality, spontaneity, and playfulness elements in their game are gone as soon as the Parson speaks. Unconscious of his role, he wonders: 'I'm surprised at the turn this festivity's taken'(p. 88).

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<sup>28</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 200. See also Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>29</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 74. See also Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 200.

The new age necessarily develops its own artistic forms, and the structure of *The Fool* parallels an approximation of the device of the play-within-the-play with the poet-boxing scene which expresses the new artistic sensitivity (or insensitivities) of the new age. The play-within-the-play starts the first part while the poet-boxing match starts the second. The parallel underlines the spirit of the new age as deprived of playfulness and joy. This idea of passing from one specific set of social and artistic circumstances to another set is more evident in Clare's artistic experience which leads him to madness.

### III) The Illusion of the Stage: "*The Woman*":

The deployment of the play-within-the-play in *The Woman* differs from Bond's use of such a device in his other plays. *The Woman* takes another turn in adapting the device to Bond's changing purposes in every play. Waiting outside Troy, Heros, as part of his effort to 'review the situation' inside the city after Priam's death, dramatises his own comprehension of what is happening in the city. Here, there is no pre-written text for the characters to use, but rather Heros's prompt dramatisation of the current situation. The events, according to Bond's stage directions, take place inside Heros's head, and therefore he seems to be its sole spectator. The events are externalised and embodied in a playlet for the benefit of the audience. The planes of illusion and reality are, contrary to what happens in *The Sea* and *The Fool*, homogenized.

The thematic correspondence is formulated between the reality inside Troy and the playwright's image of it. But the playwright here is Heros. It is an indication of his understanding of reality. Of course the inner dramatisation is Bond's depiction, but the depiction here is intended to illustrate the relationship between Heros' depiction and reality. The inner scene becomes the device with which Bond articulates the truth about Heros himself. Bond's depiction of the reality inside Troy from Heros's point of view indicates a process of self-deception by the Greeks, rather than the reality of the Trojans which Bond shows as different in the next scene. As Donahue has said, 'Heros' fantasy of what must be happening in Troy after King Priam's death is very far from reality'.<sup>30</sup>

In this imagined fantasy, Hecuba enters as a painted aristocratic whore, which is an image of her ostensible strength and capability of winning political power after her husband's death. The discussion

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<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 184.

around Priam's coffin reflects not so much Hecuba's mistrust of the Greeks, as rather the Greeks' assumptions about the Trojans' trust or mistrust, love or hatred. The inner dramatisation shows only the moments of succession of power on the Trojan side and therefore it reflects Heros's agony about his own part as a leader. The occasion of reviewing the situation of war at a cross-roads, and the occurrence of the play-within-the-play in Heros' head, draw attention to Heros's problem of identity and his role as a Greek leader.

As part of the technique used to indicate the Greeks' self-deception, Bond (contrary to what happens in *The Sea* and *The Fool*) does not allow the participants in the scene the knowledge or awareness of playing parts or putting on a performance. The inner dramatisation functions as a parody of the reality of the Greeks themselves. The 'air of theatricality' Bond requires for playing the scene means exaggeration and over-acting.<sup>31</sup> Through the air of theatricality, Nestor, who played Hecuba in Bond's production, travesties the queen as a whore 'whose histrionics are shrewdly calculated political moves to oust her son from inheriting crown and power'.<sup>32</sup> Encouraged by the ambience of exaggerated acting, it seems, the Son accuses Hecuba: 'You bully people by acting!', he claims and continues: 'She treats this city as if it was on a stage' (p. 176). The histrionic words are an indication of the mistrust between mother and son. But the employment of such words within the device of dramatisation enhances the theatricality of both.

As is the case with most of Bond's plays, the playlet in *The Woman* is mirrored in another scene which uses another theatrical device. Part Two of the play shows the village's festival through dancing and singing. Like the mummers' play, the dancing and singing are cultural expressions and signs that face invaders. The feelings of calmness and natural harmony are invaded by the aggression of the Greeks. The peaceful, simple world of the island cannot escape the 'reality' of the deceiving and corrupting culture of the Greeks.

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<sup>31</sup> 'In the course of the rehearsal', Hay and Roberts have noticed, 'Bond had encouraged the actors more and more to emphasise the element of caricature in Heros's view of {the Trojans} through a corresponding theatricality of expression and gesture'. See their *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 244. How the scene had developed depended, to a great extent, on Bond's practice as a director of the play. The question of illusion and reality is dealt with and looked at from the director's viewpoint. The published version of the play states that in the first production Hecuba was played by Nestor, Cassandra by Thersites, and the Son by Ajax. Bond has made some changes to fit Nestor acting out his impression of Troy. For more details about the changes, see Patricia Curran, 'A Study of *The Woman* and Interview with its Playwright Edward Bond', unpublished M. A. dissertation, Leeds University, 1979, pp. 32-3, and Part II, p. 4; Cave, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

<sup>32</sup> Cave, *loc. cit.*

#### IV) The Strength of the Dramatic Medium:

##### *"The Bundle" and "The Worlds":*

Bond's experiments with different dramatic structures and devices since his early plays have been observed, but towards the end of the seventies, he produced and published two important groups of theoretical writing. *The Bundle* witnessed the introduction of 'dramatising the analysis' of the story, which flourished also in *The Worlds* and its 'public soliloquy': the device of the (group) public soliloquy encapsulates the method of dramatising the analysis produced earlier. 'What becomes a clear approach in *The Worlds*', Roberts has noticed, 'is seen very fundamentally in *The Bundle*, scene seven'.<sup>33</sup> This scene is structured as a play-within-a-play, as a dramatic rendering of the protagonist Wang's abstract analysis of his society. It functions as an acid test of Wang's ideas and of how he relates them to society. Bond considers the play-within-the-play in *The Worlds* also as a demonstration of the group public soliloquy in which the process of achieving understanding is recognised when concept is applied to experience.

At such moments of dramatisation, the spectators are superior to the actors because they are on the real stage: the world, to Bond, is a real stage. It seems that Bond's application of the metaphor of the world as a stage in 'A Note on Dramatic Method' means that the spectator understands the whole situation on the stage before the characters do, as they gradually become aware of their own situation. The discrepancy between the spectator's and the characters' knowledge creates an ironic distance that is only gradually bridged as the characters undergo their education. In this process, the spectator, and not the exploiter onlooker, are superior to the actors. Their superiority springs from the similarity of their experience to that of the characters on the stage (see Part Three).

In such employment, the question of thematic correspondence has no relevance at all. The question of overt or covert similarities should not be raised because the raw materials of the inner play are not even taken from the reality represented: reality is dramatised through the interpretation of some of the characters. Heros' depiction of the reality inside Troy proves false: it even seems that the inner play is designed to falsify his imagination. But in *The Bundle* and *The Worlds*, the device is used by the characters to dramatis

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<sup>33</sup> 'The Search for Epic Drama', *op. cit.*, p. 461.

the themes of the plays from a revolutionary point of view in order to explain how oppression works, how morality is used, who is the real terrorist. The characters' knowledge of their roles as playwrights, directors, and actors is not open to the question. They, consciously, use the dramatic medium to illustrate, explain, and concretise their experience. The participants are seen during the process of achieving their understanding of the motivation behind the causes, and the forming of the wholeness of their consciousness through the device of the play-within-the-play.

### 1) *The Bundle*:

It is Bond who draws the appropriate distinction between two characters who offer their form of understanding the past and presenting it to their audience in artistic forms. Both Tiger and Wang play specific roles to their viewers, but Bond states the difference between them in the process of the play:

I don't agree with the view that says that Wang has been turned into someone who cannot act and Tiger is someone who can act. The antithesis is not right. Wang does act. He has become an actor. He has become a creator of his society through his experience. He combines action with concepts and when that happens then things can become truly creative. Tiger really only has actions and a form of opportunism. So that he is not really an actor. There is very little he can do. He doesn't have concepts that interpret his experience in the way that Wang has, and in order to show this I cut off his hand.<sup>34</sup>

The theme of interpreting experience through artistic forms, and consequently learning from it, is central to the play. In Scene Five, Tiger offers his audience an image of his past life that led him to be the leader of this group of outcasts. The band of robbers now live by stealing whenever they have the opportunity and whatever comes to hand, but their theft, as the scene shows in detail, is worthless. Wang's 'story' is his form of narration which he combines with imitation to illustrate the story. Tiger feels no remorse, only pride in bringing the corpse of his exploiter into the market place. In doing so, he loses his hand, but shows the town a truer form of justice. Tiger's fragmentary thought-pattern makes his personal story of past exploits tiresome and ineffectual. Although the terrible story and the aggressive reactions against him keep his audience/followers in line, he is not able to move from the realm of the immediate perception to conceptualisation and to action. Because he lacks a long-term strategy, his story appears as a self-appreciative device to influence his audience. The one-man 'show'(repeated four times in his story) lacks any fundamental possibility of conceptualising the experience necessary for active commitment. He is not, according

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<sup>34</sup> An interview with Peter Hulton, *Theatre Papers*, Second Series, No. 1, 1978, p. 22.



to Bond, an actor even if he had experienced the events, because he lacks the ideology with which to interpret them.

It is Wang's re-enactment of the villagers' catastrophe during the flood (the theme of scene three) and the landowner's manipulation of power that offer the robbers explanation. Persuaded, maybe, by Tiger's use of artistic device to describe and shape his own experience, Wang uses allegory to demonstrate and clarify his experience, attitudes, and understanding of the society's mechanisms. Furthermore, he explores the dramatic medium to transfer his knowledge and consciousness. Wang's educated imagination, his moral concepts, his encounters with the poet Basho, and his life experience stand clearly behind the playlet's orientation. The playlet, according to Lappin, 'interprets the world and suggests the means to redress its inequities'.<sup>35</sup>

As Wang notices the robbers' panic and uncertainty about the verse written on a sheet of paper they find in his pocket, he shows them his identity as an outcast. He faces them with their childish behaviour and their inability to comprehend. Contrary to them, he continues, is the 'great' thief, Basho, who employed other thieves to guard his theft, but who behaves kindly to people at the same time. Basho's power, as Wang explains, does not come from the uncontrolled river only but from using charity as well as force.<sup>36</sup> At this point Wang assigns roles. His favouring of drama to embody his experience indicates that it becomes the unblemished medium for illustrating his ideas.

Wang nominates roles in a direct manner, and the nominated promptly agree to play for the rest of the group. The selection of players and their prompt agreement support the assumption of togetherness which has been generated by playfulness. The starting point of the playlet is a diversion of Wang's prior allegories, a diversion which indicates a mistrust of their absolute capability. Sheoul plays the poor woman, Wang the great thief, Basho, and Tiger the river. When the river floods, the reasonable thing, for the woman, is to protect herself from it, and Sheoul reacts spontaneously by taking refuge on the master's

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<sup>35</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 104. Wang's capability of clarifying his attitudes towards his former mentor, which the device of the play-within-the-play facilitates to Wang, as Lappin says (p. 103) is debatable because Wang's attitudes towards Basho are clear before he ventures out looking for outcasts to join. He rejects Basho's offer to stay in his service for reasons obvious in the playlet.

<sup>36</sup> Coult observes that the river's flood has 'a political meaning in that the landlord uses its natural power as a threat which he can appear to encounter with paternalistic care. Only when the peasants take his power from him and control and direct the river's power are they safe'. See his *The Plays, op. cit.*, p. 39. It seems that Wang wants the robbers to understand the political as well as the material power of the river.

hill where he steals her bundle. When Sheoul takes refuge, she takes with her the bundle that contains the robbers' theft. When they discover the theft of their theft, they revolt. Their revolt could be attributed to both their real and their imaginary characters. They feel what a person would feel when what he owned was stolen. Wang/Basho seizes the opportunity to make them understand that they should pay for protection.

It seems that Kaka-the-player understands the situation as he suggests the building of a wall round the river and dispensing with the protection of the master. Wang has put the players in a position to question and to contemplate answers. To this emerging knowledge, Wang advances another element/character to clarify the situation and to show what factors are at work. The new character plays the force that obeys the owner. The owner uses conventional morality to enshroud the plain power/the soldier. He charges the daring one who thought of avoiding the destructive power of the river, with stealing the woman's innocence. Tiger's 'Ha...' indicates that he has grasped the essence and complexity of the situation: the use of morality as a threatening weapon. Wang's operation of the device proves successful. As a creator, he assigns parts that relate to the experiences and environment of the participants-robbers. During the enactment, as Biddle says, he is 'at every point actually provoking them to respond'<sup>37</sup>

Besides transferring consciousness, the playlet also functions in the demystification of the artist. As well as indicating the form of drama necessary to revolutionise and the raw materials for it, it also shows the qualities and consciousness necessary for the so-called artist figure. Basho, the official artist, is depicted as having no consciousness, and instead it has been transferred to the revolutionary figure Wang, who possesses the ability to combine experience with concepts for the demolition of the unjust political system. Bond does not distinguish among the professions involved in Wang's operation of the playlet (playwright, director, actor...etc), but simply calls him a creator of society. In that way, Bond's unifying term stresses the unmysterious nature of the artist (Wang is a commoner) and the talents required for a role of guiding the actors/builders of justice (as is quoted at the beginning of this section). He is a figure who is always involved in shaping society not the isolated, self-appreciative figure who invents myths about his

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<sup>37</sup> Op. cit., p. 246. Biddle's judgement on Bond's operation of the play-within-the-play in *The Bundle* goes so far as to suggest that Wang successfully manages to direct a piece of epic theatre. Wang, to her, has grasped the principles underlying Brecht's *Lehrstück*: participating in actual performance; bringing the participants to the point of recognition; arousing their capacity for action; and forcing them to take decisions and to face something. See also Shiasta S. Hussain, 'The Relationship between Dramatic Form and Political Attitudes in the Plays of Edward Bond', unpublished M. Litt. thesis, Oxford University, 1982, p. 129.

craftsmanship.

Bond's enthusiasts appreciate the method of audience participation employed in the inner dramatisation. But it is significant to observe that to date Bond has not structured any of his plays within the tradition of participation and open discussion. The dramaturgical strategies he uses are more inclined towards theatricality, but it is theatricality which is created in the written text rather than by the encounter with the audience. Bond has not yet employed the method he offered as capable of achieving (immediate) political change.<sup>38</sup>

Again, the play-within-the-play is not the only conscious use of art in *The Bundle*. In the same scene, Bond puts Basho's poetry on Wang's tongue to end the scene. The immediate comparison between Basho's poetry and Wang's playlet is more likely to happen. As is the case with *The Sea* when Rose and Willy were able to make use of an art that was not intended for learning, Wang makes use of one of Basho's poems that 'dialectically expresses an image of Basho's own consciousness as well as the consciousness that he criticizes'.<sup>39</sup> Another use of art in the play occurs in the last scene. As his comrades lay Tuan's body on the stretcher, Wang becomes a story-teller. He narrates his story, according to Bond's stage directions, 'as if the story were the funeral oration'.<sup>40</sup> The fable of the man who carries a king on his back without realising the King's death indicates that the man's submission of his thought enslaved him with the burden of the past. The fable could be considered as an answer to Basho's screams for the way to the deep north, for enlightenment, in the same scene. But Basho fails to recognise the real answer; he fails to make use of Wang's art.

## 2) *The Worlds*:

Few differences occur between Bond's depiction of the play-within-the-play in *The Worlds* and *The*

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<sup>38</sup> Bond has always been cautious of audience participation because the method, though he considers it aesthetically and politically valid, could be fairly reactionary for various reasons. The play within the play in *The Worlds* and *The Bundle* 'dramatise the way to use the play: they show the structure of plays and their relation to audiences, to the audience'. Private correspondence 3 February 1990. He stressed this point to me in my interview with him on 9 March 1990. He underlined that the play-within-the-play in these two plays are the means of theatricalisation which he often uses. But he rather prefers to confront the audience with the issues without allowing them evasion of responsibility or 'democratic' participation which is absent in the society outside the theatre building.

<sup>39</sup> Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>40</sup> Bond, *The Bundle*, Methuen Modern Plays, 1978, p. 78. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.



*Bundle.* At the picket line the workers try to represent their argument to the sceptical Ray, whose inclination is to yield to the 'weight of public opinion' that takes into consideration 'common humanity', and abandon the strike because of the emergence of the terrorism factor in the situation. He, fundamentally, has no wish to save Trench, but his moral stand ('don't fight for money while some bleeder's fighting for his life'(p. 29)), makes him reluctant to continue the strike. He expresses desire to help the police to maintain social stability, and to avoid having Trench's blood on his hands. His colleagues argumentatively try to persuade him to understand that the real opposition occurs between the two sides who have got the guns: the terrorists and the police who support the rich. But when the theoretical discussion fails, John tries to make a diagram. When the diagram does not work, when it cannot illuminate what every antagonist is doing, John finds the appropriate solution in another device. Recognising the static nature of the diagram and its inflexibility to represent the dynamic subjective self, he switches to the device of playing. The play-within-the-play is the dramatisation of the immediate issue experienced in the reality of the outer play. The device is considered more appropriate to illustrate experience and also to make it possible to represent the four antagonists in their conflict together.

John assigns roles and proceeds with his own as the worker to bring to the surface the internal dialogue that made him take the decision to strike. As a worker, he has nothing to do with the parties who use violence or play gunfighters. But Ray still forces his question of using violence against Trench and bringing the law into it. Terry/the law has another dimension in the picture: he protects the established social order. He allows picketing as long as it does not overthrow the system. But Terry drops the part of the policeman and becomes Terry to crystallise the essence of the balance and to comment on the dramatisation: the law is always there.

To demonstrate the struggle between the workers and Trench, Terry diversifies his and John's roles: instead of the law he plays the thief, and instead of the worker John plays Trench. Terry picks a concrete object, Beryl's purse, to show the difference between the overt, unlawful charge of 'nicking' the purse and Trench's covert, lawful nicking in the form of profit. In essence, Terry/the worker is law-abiding: he asks for his rights and the refusal of them makes him strike. The action of striking, however, has its consequences which every side tries to manipulate. When the struggle reaches a specific stage the law shows up

against the worker. Both the terrorists and Trench use violence but the difference, Terry explains, is that Trench depends on the covert violence, the law and order that is designed to keep the ruling class on top. The introduction of the terrorists and their use of violence have caught Trench at his own game.

The way John or Terry assigns roles is simple and similar to that employed in *The Bundle*; it involves no illusion: 'I am' or 'you are' the character played. And within the dialogue of the character Bond inserts the 'stage directions of the dramatised piece'(e.g. I wait quietly and say:); and an 'externalised monologue'(e.g. So I work it out. I say: I'd better make this strike hurt.). Such insertion brings the character's hidden thought and its process to the surface and minimizes the emotional involvement of the player with the character and the spectator with the player. These insertions work as alienating devices within the enacted playlet. But John allocates the role of the terrorist to Ray who cannot adequately represent the character, since they think Ray has no understanding or sympathy for the terrorists' stance. Furthermore, Ray does not participate in the enactment but argues with them according to his own viewpoint as Ray throughout the inner play. The enactment of the playlet succeeds, according to Roberts, in achieving its intention as 'Ray is forced on to the defensive and produces a stream of hatred against all like Trench who rule by violence'<sup>41</sup> But, as mentioned above, this is Ray's stand from the beginning: he hates Trench before, during, and after the enactment, and if he changes at all, it is a negligible change. The interaction of the three players fails to produce an effective enactment on the level of the opposed viewpoint. The terrorist, though not John/the worker's concern, has no role to play and does not actually participate. Even 'Ray's humanitarian objection to which John is replying has been neither challenged nor played out; he has not been allowed to discover anything new about the situation'.<sup>42</sup>

But *The Worlds* makes one improvement over *The Bundle*, namely the changing of roles after assigning them: John plays the worker then Trench; Terry plays the copper then the thief. The variety of roles they play and the changing and/or dropping of these roles and the characters' comments on their roles widen the theatricality of the whole presentation, as it creates discontinuity of illusion. Beside the histrionic words, which are likely to be taken in their technical sense as role playing is stressed, another techni-

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<sup>41</sup> 'The Search for Epic Drama', *op. cit.*, p. 463.

<sup>42</sup> Biddle, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

cal matter is used to stress this theatricality: it is the interruption of the flow of the enactment with unrelated behaviours by Ray and Beryl. Though that eases the tension of the situation by jokes, it functions in stopping the spectators being carried away by involvement. This interruption is another way of dropping the character.

### Summary:

1) In *The Sea* and *The Fool*, Bond employs familiar cultural materials for the play-within-the-play, though he re-formulates their actions to suit his own purposes. In *The Bundle* and in *The Worlds* he uses the device differently to allow his characters to 'write' or 're-write' and 'perform' their instantaneous situation. Therefore in all four plays, the planes of reality and illusion remain separate and distinct. *The Woman* occupies a unique position because although the playlet is a re-writing of the reality inside Troy, it is written as occurring inside Heros' head: the planes of reality and illusion mix. In *The Woman*, there is no enactment of dramatic works, as is the case with *The Sea* and *The Fool*, nor an obvious dramatisation of the current activities, as is the case with *The Bundle* and *The Worlds*, but, rather, an enactment of the reflection of Heros' imagination of the supposed reality behind the Trojan walls, his vision of the invisible.

2) There are no formal actors in all the five plays although some of the characters (Mrs Rafi) know and articulate privately that they are more talented and professionally skilled than the rest. In all cases, except *The Woman*, the players know about the innerness of their playlet. This depiction of the characters makes it clear that the spectators can attribute a real life to these characters participating in the play-within-the-play beyond the confines of the stage. By the same token, the function of the inner play is to stress and illuminate the reality of the outer one.

3) The inner plays do not offer themselves as just plays or scenes preaching no other ends than themselves. They illuminate the kind of reality of the outer play and inevitably contain Bond's judgement on the societies in which they take place. The aesthetic device, then, stands as an ethical procedure with which the spectator can judge these societies and the pressures they put on individuals.

4) Bond has moved from showing the illusion of life in the society of *The Sea*, through putting the device of the play-within-the-play to purposes of learning and teaching (dimly present in the earlier plays)

in the later ones. His employment of the device has become more determinate as a theatrical device the more he moved towards an obvious theatrical structure. The more his structure becomes theatrical the more the device is employed for didactic purposes; the more he ventures with new and different types of dramatic structures the more the play-within-the-play is used to clarify and explain. The inner play in *The Bundle* is an example of dramatising the analysis by and through which the playwright (Bond and Wang) achieves the wholeness of consciousness by combining concepts and experience. In *The Worlds*, the device is considered as a group public soliloquy to analyse and conceptualise the experience of the characters not by stepping out of character but from within it.

5) The only playful atmosphere that is portrayed in and by the device occurs in *The Fool*, but is nevertheless interrupted by invaders. As is the case with the horseplay sequence in the other plays, here the atmosphere changes rapidly to reveal to the players the end of their merriment and joy. The new artistic form of the invaders, in many cases, structurally parallels the old one, but Bond's depiction leaves no doubt about its aggressiveness and inhumanity. The mummers' playlet is paralleled with an approximation of the device in the poet-fighting scene. The pastoral atmosphere that starts the second part of *The Woman* also parallels Heros's vision, in the first, but this atmosphere of singing and dancing is interrupted by Heros and his militarists.

6) The relationship between the actor and character in the inner play in *The Fool*, *The Bundle*, and *The Worlds* is purely theatrical. But in the outer play Bond keeps both the players and the played characters within the confines of the stage. Within the five plays discussed in this chapter, no character in the outer plays who partakes in an inner play ever departs to inter-relate with the theatre spectators. The inner play constitutes an immediate theatre experience which occurs primarily in real time and space. And although Bond allows the protagonists of *The Bundle* and *The Worlds* to participate in the inner dramatisation as actors and dramatists, he has never worked within the method of audience participation.

## Chapter Five

### Dramatic Lyrics and Songs

Bond's growing interest in lyrics and theatre songs has been shown in his publication of two collections of poems. The first is called *Theatre Poems and Songs*. The first collection of poems, some of which treat the same subjects as his theoretical introductions, provides an illustration of an activity that had followed or accompanied the dramatic undertakings. Besides the poems from some of his dramatic works, there are, in the first place, poems that were written after the drama had been finished and that constitute commentaries on or a guide to them. Printed in theatre programmes for the plays, these poems function as part of Bond's elucidation of his dramas. Secondly, there are poems that were part of the creative process of writing some of the plays. These function in showing the self-reasoning process of writing the dramatic. The second collection is called *Poems and Songs 1978-1985*. Not only that but Bond forwards his recent publications with poetry which means that he attributes some importance to poetry in connection to the dramatic work, as he did with the Swan edition of *Restoration*.

Paul Merchant has assessed the relationship between the poetic and the dramatic in Bond's progress up to 1979. He concludes that the distinction of prose, poetry, and drama started to disappear after *The Fool*, and that 'may suggest a drawing together of the visionary and programmatic in Bond's work, and increasing confidence in the poetic mode throughout his writing for the theatre'.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Bond's latest plays show how songs and lyrics occupy a central position in his plays to express political and critical ideas. But this conjunction between the dramatic and the poetic and Bond's preoccupation with lyrics and songs goes back to his earlier plays, though they are used for different signification.

The two main and opposite functions of using the songs are the diegetic and the alienation device. The song is diegetic when it occurs within the corpus of its own diegesis or narrative, within the immediate

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<sup>1</sup> 'The Theatre Poems of Bertolt Brecht, Edward Bond and Howard Brenton', *Theatre Quarterly*, 9, 34 (1979), p. 51.



and apparent universe of the narration. It is diegetic in the sense that it sums up the play or its denotation: the narration itself. In this respect, the song might express feeling, anticipate action, induce or control emotions, or depict an irony. The alienation device might also function as the diegetic, but its essential feature is that it is a detached/detaching entity. It has its autonomy from the rest of the dramatic action. Through it the actor, and not the character, adopts a different posture because he openly shares and expresses the views of the physically absent dramatist. In essence, this is the song as Brecht uses it in his plays.

Brecht did not only use the song to contain his themes, but designed them to achieve the *gestic* character of the play, as the music makes the fusion of words and gesture more compelling. Eric Bentley has noticed the seriousness and the central importance of Brecht's Zonk (Bentley's term): it is 'a sheer interruption of dialogue, but it would perhaps be less misleading to say that in Brecht's plays the dialogue is an interruption of the Zonk -- in other words, that the Zonks are the heart of the matter'.<sup>2</sup> The Zonk expounds a theme, universalises a statement, or comments on a character's behaviour. The song in Brecht isolates and focuses the spectator's attention on the characters' attitudes, on the political meaning of otherwise personal behaviour. Martin Esslin has explained that Brecht's songs are the means of externalising the inner behaviour of characters, as *gestus* does.<sup>3</sup>

Through the song also the dramatist practises and stresses another fundamental feature of the epic theatre: role-playing. In Brecht, singing means acting: the underlining of the actor as actor. By simply having the actor separated from the character or come to the front of the stage to address the audience directly, the dramatist diverts the audience's attention to hear his own interpretation of the dramatic events. In this kind of practice, the actor functions not only as a character but also as an actor whose commentary could be explicitly or implicitly ironical on the character he portrays. The song helps the actors to distance themselves from the characters they portray.<sup>4</sup> The changed aesthetic distance makes the relationship with the spectator more theatrical as it connects both the stage and the auditorium in an occasion of playing roles. One of the functions of switching Azdak's role from a singer to judge in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, for

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<sup>2</sup> *The Brecht Commentaries*, Eyre Methuen, 1987, p.114.

<sup>3</sup> *A Choice of Evils*, fourth edition, Methuen, 1984, p. 124. See also Michael Patterson, *The Revolution in German Theatre 1900-1933*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981, p. 159.

<sup>4</sup> See Esslin, *A Choice of Evils*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

example, is 'to theatricalize the production by stressing role playing as role playing'.<sup>5</sup>

Alienation, however, is not just a matter of technique: it is the method of exposing reality used to throw light on the different political meanings of exploitation and thus it helps the spectator to alter his social environment. As it is the dramatist's interpretation of reality, the the song is not a technical device but one of the carriers of meaning through which the dramatist addresses a specific issue. This meaning is carried out by the singer in the plays. But Bond has employed the song in its diegetic and alienating functions, passing through a shifting period of collaboration with the German musician Hans Werner Henze, in which Bond wrote two operas.

### I) The Diegetic Song:

In *The Pope's Wedding*, Scopey's frightening interrogation to discover Alen's reality and his subsequent accusation to him as a 'fake', is met with a spontaneous and defensive reaction of singing a hymn. The facts that Alen sings to prove something to Scopey and that the hymn is not directed to the audience make a difference. It is an expression of his psychological mood and a defensive device he improvises to express his uniqueness to Scopey. The song is the playwright's means to show the inner constitution of the character. In this usage, the connotative values of the hymn, as well as the spectator's empathic participation, all round out the total illusion of the action.

The act of singing itself becomes the centre of Scopey's attention, a centre which manifests all Alen's hidden capabilities and powers: if the latter can sing, the dialogue between the two implies, then Alen possesses something to offer. Singing the hymn becomes the object around which all Scopey's dreams and ambitions can go either way:

Alen. I sing sometime.  
 Scopey. Sing?  
 Alen. Sometime.  
 Scopey. All right --  
 Alen. No.  
 Scopey. Sing! What sort a singing? What sort a song?  
 Alen. Hymns.  
 Scopey. Sing a hymn.  
 Alen. No.

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<sup>5</sup> John Fuegi, *The Essential Brecht* (Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1972), p. 148.

Scopey. Sing it mate! Sing it. By Chriss I'll rip this junk shop up if yoo don't sing! (p. 295)  
 Under the fierce threat Alen sings. But what is significant is that Scopey discovers Alen's limitations as soon as the latter finishes his hymn. The hymn, it seems, exposes his reality as impotence. Though the hymn is not diegetic in the sense that it sums up the dramatic events, it remains as such because it sums up both Alen's abilities (or inabilities) and Scopey's search for something hidden in Alen's life. The song constitutes a decisive turning point in the life of both figures. After the song Scopey decides the unworthiness of Alen's way of life: 'alf the junk in 'ere could be burnt'(p. 296).

But even so, the content of the hymn has an alienating mood about it. In the hymn, Bond infuses fresh and strange content in what seems to be a traditional hymn. In stark opposition to the traditional components of a hymn, Alen's shows a monstrous god, not a merciful, loving one. Alen's hymn, to Scharine, exemplifies the Christian ritual murder that permeates the play. The religious component of the hymn 'suggests incomparable barbarity rather than a god of love'.<sup>6</sup> As foreshadowing depends on the content of the song, the hymn signifies another function: the foreshadowing of Alen's physical death as well as anticipation of Scopey's metaphorical destruction. However, Alen's hymn is a methodology of characterisation, and not for emotional effect on the spectator, in the first place. Doubtless Alen aims at affecting Scopey's emotion as well as expressing his own fear, but Bond's employment of the hymn emphasises the strangeness of the content through which he stresses the unfamiliarity of the situation and an anticipation of the subsequent events. Through it, Bond implicitly formulates the spectator's response to the characters involved.

In his next play, *Saved*, Bond uses a song which is word for word the most common English language lullaby. The familiar words of the lullaby form a specific connotation to the audience until Bond diversifies the tack of the verse sharply. As soon as Pam angrily leaves the park, the rest of the characters take sides of the stage, waiting. Barry starts to push the pram around and sings a song to the child, a song which constitutes another opportunity for their jokes. The song signifies part of the social orientation of the characters, as it does for Alen in *The Pope's Wedding*. They laugh at the song, but it actually sets the tone for the killing to come; it exposes their concealed violence. Bond suddenly switches the tack of the famous

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<sup>6</sup> Scharine, *op. cit.*, p. 42. See also Donahue, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

lullaby into savage and brutal words as he switches the tack of playfulness into an aggro-effect. In this, the song anticipates the fate of the 'object' of the song, the child, which become the 'object' of the aggro-effect in the scene. It contains the first hint of violence in the scene, it verbalises death. In this, the song sums up the scene's and the play's denotation.

Rock a bye baby on tree top  
 When the wind blows the cradle will rock  
 When the bough breaks the cradle will fall  
 And down will come baby and cradle and tree  
 an' bash its little brains out an' dad'll scoop  
 'em up and use 'em for bait. (p. 73)

The added verse momentarily interrupts the interplay between signifying words and signified meaning usually associated with the lullaby; it switches the tack to foreground the opposite meaning. The opposite meaning counters the dominant ideological usage which the spectator posited as *natural*. Here, Bond changes the *given* meaning and *makes* it afresh by suppressing the content of the device of the production of meaning and imposing a different content. He builds upon a given text just to deconstruct its significance and meaning near the end.

The atmosphere the two songs mentioned above generates is similar and even the words almost match each other, especially the opening verses. In these two early plays, the singing is an expression of emotional states. It is also a means of expressing the components of the characters involved, and it connotes a wider implication of the social and cultural deprivation in which they live. The song shows the cultural inheritance of the characters and how it affects them. Changing the given meaning to its opposite creates the theatrical effect intended to awaken the audience to the potential possibility of violence in the characters that only need to focus themselves on a weak object in the community of *Saved*.

The hymn in *The Sea* is a well-known Anglican hymn; it witnesses the rivalry between Mrs Rafi and Mrs Tilehouse. Whether or not Mrs Tilehouse's failure to echo correctly the singing of the group is intentional, Mrs Rafi, as the stage directions state, *unconsciously beats time against the urn* (p. 153) in order to keep her within the rhythm of the congregation. Hymns, the scene connotes, are meant to coerce people within *one* 'pattern' and what Mrs Tilehouse does disharmonises the collective singing of the community under the leadership of Mrs Rafi. The song shows the disharmony between classes and Mrs Rafi's attempt

to control her community. The song corresponds to another device, the play-within-the-play, as both are artistic devices which are used to show the shallowness and pretentiousness of the participants. Significant in this respect is Mrs Rafi's 'few words' for the occasion which are introduced in verse: she is also a poet. Her words express her fondness for pompous speeches and grandiloquent gestures, rather than her saddened mood at Colin's tragedy.

The three songs discussed above are part of the dramatic events, they are not bracketed off from the dramatic experience. They might underline, anticipate, or explain the dramatic happenings, but they occur within the fictional world, and it seems that Bond, to a great extent, depends upon received lyrics. The song of 'Hunting the Wren' in *The Fool* is also functionally diegetic, but the words are chosen to resemble the traditional words. The song is Bond's 'version'; it pretends to be historic. It is, like the play-within-the-play, an element of celebration, but more than the inner play, it expresses the peasants' desire for the redistribution of the national wealth. The wren embodies everyone's hope and desire in a good and just life. The song ends thus: 'We pray yoo good people to give us a treat'(p. 87). As Donahue observes, 'in a non-technological society, the "prayer" has more the force of a threat'.<sup>7</sup> Some critics have actually indicated that Clare's verse lacks the vitality of the song and its 'radicalism' in discussing the relationship between the poor and the rich, and the injustice the poor suffer.<sup>8</sup>

The same diegetic function is also present in *The Woman*. The song accompanies the primitive dance performed by the village girls and boys. Here, the song is also an element of celebration that indicates the harmonic relationship between people and nature. The second song in the play is different in tone because the harmony has disappeared after the occupation of the island by the Greeks. The song's words 'are not god-like but mock the Divinity reducing him to a ridiculous mortality ending with death'.<sup>9</sup> As is the case with *The Fool*, the song is an expression of emotional states but equally, they are all intended to induce the cultural components of the age. In *The Woman* the cultural element will be demolished as the invaders come and the new state of oppression is shown in another song.

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<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 126

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Biddle, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-2.

<sup>9</sup> Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

The verdict of *Human Cannon* is a diegesis in the fullest sense as judiciary recital or discourse of facts, or rather 'the meaning of facts' in a verdict of a revolutionary courtroom, voiced in verse. The verdict sums up the facts about the pre-revolutionary regime and the process of justice observed in the trial. The verse creates theatricality as it is in sharp contrast to the prose the peasant judges themselves use throughout the trial, and stresses the theatricality of the courtroom as a device. It also eases the shift from character to actor and consequently emphasises role playing throughout the play.

The songs discussed above are the most obvious examples of Bond's ability to use the song for diegetic purposes: to sum up the dramatic situation by a device that occurs within the dramatic world itself. But he has started to consider the song as a detached/detaching entity which contributes significantly to the play's meaning by carrying his own explanation, comments, and clarifications. The songs are clearly bracketed off structurally and stylistically in order to introduce the dramatist's political comments; his employment of the songs, like many other things, started to be more and more Brechtian, but his collaboration with Henze was a shifting point and an important element in this change. He has written the librettos for *We Come to the River* and *The Cat*.

## II) The Shifting Point:

The opera inclines towards enhancement: exaggeration through music, song, gesture, and costume make the opera's world one of high relief, magnification and escalation. One of its most characteristic features is 'its divorce from artistic naturalism, its gestural mode and its stylisation. The unreality of opera is an old complaint'.<sup>10</sup> The operatic form is theatrical, that is, its musical framework formalises the events and distances the spectator from the illusion of the naturalistic stage. Peacock has also indicated the exaggerating nature of the opera by saying that it is 'notoriously productive of theatrical effects, so much so that "operatic" is sometimes used as a disparaging synonym for theatrical'.<sup>11</sup>

Using the opera house and genre for political ends has been assumed by Bond and Henze when they produced *The River* at Covent Garden, London. The content of the opera has been clearly and obviously political to the extent that it produced a hostile accusation of being politically over-simplifying.<sup>12</sup> However,

<sup>10</sup> Gary Schmidgall, *Literature as Opera* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> See, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Jack, *op. cit.*, p.89. Jack comments: 'It is easy to quote chapter and verse in order to show that

studying the songs of *The River* apart from their musical score is ineffectual. Hay and Roberts have stressed this point when they said that this opera 'cannot be assessed independently of Henze's music'.<sup>13</sup> According to them, Henze's music offered Bond's words a sheer theatricality on many occasions and pointed, commented on the action. They have also offered some examples, such as the Doctor's informing the General that he is going blind, which is anticipated and accompanied by music that showed the Doctor as a messenger in a Greek tragedy; the Assassins' arrival to put the General's eyes out.<sup>14</sup> They, therefore, have avoided studying the opera except in two features: the character of the General and the simultaneous action.

Nevertheless, it is appropriate to examine the text published by Methuen because of the formal changes Bond has made to be included in this edition.<sup>15</sup> This edition requires the indication of some preliminary notes:

- i) Bond has titled one part formally as song and added another short song for the children, which is inserted within the first song.
- ii) These songs accompany the dramatic action. Although Bond does not use the divided page for simultaneous action as in the German edition, this is the only occasion on which he divides the page to indicate the simultaneity of the songs and the action.
- iii) Bond has added a comment which shows that the songs occur from the victims the General sees as he is blindfolded. There is no blindfolding in the German edition. The blindfolding emphasizes the songs as a hypothetical entity, sung by dead characters seen by the blind, blindfolded General.
- vi) There are some minor alterations, some of which are in the songs.

These revisions, and others, are meant to facilitate reading the opera as a playtext. And thus, the songs are treated below as dramatic songs occurring in a playtext.

Bond has formally specified two parts in section Sixteen as songs. The first is 'Song of the Victims'

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Bond's text sinks no deeper than messages like "forward with the workers" or "nothing ventured, nothing gained".

<sup>13</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>14</sup> For more details see *ibid.*, pp. 169-70.

<sup>15</sup> Bond, *We Come to the River (with The Fool)*, Methuen Modern Plays, 1976. All subsequent references to the play in this chapter will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

that includes within it the 'Song of the Dead Children'. The occurrence of these songs immediately after blinding the General makes them fictitious, and being sung by dead characters heightens their fictitiousness, as occurring in the General's mind, who, at the same time, is being killed at the hands of the inmates.<sup>16</sup> As soon as the blindfold is put on the General's eyes, his dead victims appear, obviously, only to him. These two elements, their occurrence in the General's head and the victims being dead, theatricalise the event within an already theatrical medium.

And as the events unfold the emotional impact is deepened because the atrocities of the war are shown upon the traditional image of innocence; the Child which the Young Woman has found in the middle of rotting legs, buried soldiers in section Nine. The blind General recognises every character that joins in on the stage, and confesses the bloody crimes he committed against them, in tonal contrast to the dreamy, rosy world the other characters draw for the Child. Instead of diversifying the tack of the song from innocence-describing words to aggression-exposing ones in *Saved*, Bond puts the two worlds simultaneously in *We Come to The River*. The General's recognition of his victims and his confessed crimes is crudely balanced when the stage divides the imagined from the actual; victims from victimisers; song from action, with the device of the simultaneous action: two different planes of reality. On one side, the Old Woman seems to start her song to the Child by stressing that his power lies in his innocence. On the other side, the reality that the General helped to create surrounds him, and as soon as he recognises his guilt, the mad people, another sort of victims, start to attack him.

Earlier, the General refused to support the option of those mad people (as he refused to support the emperor or the revolutionary Second Soldier) in escaping to a utopian island through an imaginary route-escape. They start their aggression against the General while the 'Song of the Victims' almost starts. In the song, the Child constitutes an abstract value through an exaggerated purity: the two planes of birth (the child) and death (the General) are put simultaneously.

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<sup>16</sup> Such simultaneity of action increases the sense of poetic justice in the opera. The songs themselves are an expression of the General's regret for his atrocities, but more importantly, they occur while the general is being killed. That tells the audience that the price of his atrocities is being paid. In the Covent Garden production, the General was played as a melodramatic, sometimes romantic, hero approaching the scaffold. In the preceding moments of his blindness, the General summarises and engraves the horrors of war he has been awakened to. See Harold Hobson's objections to such interpretation in his 'Troubled Waters', *Sunday Times*, 18 July 1976, p. 29. Hobson's main objection to such interpretation is that any sympathy with the General is not justified by his actions and is in real opposition to Bond's text.



Child from the river  
 The water has rocked you  
 The reeds kept the wind from your head  
 The wind has sung to you (p. 120)

The 'Song of the Three Dead Children' functions in showing a humanity devastated unreasonably at its most innocent level: the children. The song might be added in this edition to emphasize the poetic justice as it is simultaneously accompanied by the act of killing the General who constituted a prime cause in their death. The 'Song of the Victims' comes back to stress the hope in the future:

We stand by the river  
 If there is a bridge we will walk over  
 If there is no bridge we will wade  
 If the water is deep we will swim  
 If it is too fast we will build boats (p. 122)

The last image of the play juxtaposes two ways of life: the innocent Child's and the General's, and it is left to the spectator to compare and choose.

The second opera in collaboration with Henze avoided the complications of *The River* and its simultaneous actions and violent atrocities of war with a more subtle and deliberate melodramatic exaggeration in a simple animal fable.<sup>17</sup> In this opera Bond uses a variety of formal songs, ensembles, trios, duet...etc, which are used to ridicule, comment on, and analyse the dramatic events. The formal titles of the songs intimate the characters' attitudes which Bond hopes to convey. The analysis of the dramatic events, however, is the substance of the opera which is 'contained within the songs, all of which speak directly or by implication to the causes of the narrative'.<sup>18</sup> Bond's employment of the songs in this opera has indicated the significant position lyricism started to occupy in his dramatic world. As he wrote in his notebook while writing this opera, the lyricism is required for fresh treatment of human experience: 'I must find a new and comprehensive lyricism which enables me to deal with simple human experience, but isn't a re-creation of an already hackneyed past'.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The opera's frame of reference is so clearly human affairs, see Roberts, 'The Search for Epic Drama', *op. cit.*, p. 466. But the very practice enhances the theatricality of the opera.

<sup>18</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> *Loc. cit.* Seeing a performance of the opera in the Edinburgh Festival, 1987, proved to me that Bond's contribution to the genre took him a step further towards Brecht's concept of the epic in the opera, and his collaboration with Henze rendered strength to his practice: when the epic theatre's method begins to penetrate the opera, according to Brecht, the result is radical separation of its elements: 'Words, music, and setting must become independent of one another'. See Brecht on Theatre, *op. cit.*, p. 38. This separation of the elements was stressed by Henze's music which worked sometimes in contrast to the events in order to alienate both the music and the dramatic action.

Two, the first and the last, of the opera's four songs retain its diegesis: the struggle between the cats and the rats. The first song shows the pretence of the cats, the members of the Royal Society for the Protection of the Rats. It shows that the natural animosity between the two sides has changed to affection by a sound 'from on high' that persuaded the cats to recognise the 'similarity' between both of them. The song sarcastically ridicules the cats' pretence of being kind and loving and able to suppress their natural needs for the sake of metaphysical orders. In different circumstances, however, the cats cannot bear the look of the rat Louise when she appears later repeating the first two verses from the same song. This behaviour proves that what they have sung, the abstract hollow words, mean nothing in reality. The words were for mocking the two sisters, Minette and Babette. For such exploitation, Louise revolts at the end, which is the subject of the last song.

The song shows Louise's revolt against the cats' injustice after seeing them conspiring and killing Tom, another cat. Louise's opening her collecting box and stealing the money is a deconstruction of the unjust social system from within. She lived with the cats and learned their tactics and ways. Her song confirms the return of the natural order of things, and that her, and her race's survival depends only on their strength:

I have become mouse again  
 I'll steal the milk and rob the grain  
 My teeth are sharp and I can bite  
 I'll give the ladies such a fright  
 They'll stand upon their chairs and yell  
 I'll be a little fiend from hell  
 Screech! Screech! (p. 167)

The 'Ensemble' is another form of songs Bond has used to show a private dialogue between two or more opposite sides on the stage without any of them over-hearing the other. The ensemble illustrates the characters' conspiratorial or mistrusting attitudes towards the involved characters. The first ensemble (p. 115) shows the naive country cats, Babette and Minette, expressing their distrust of the town cats and their way of life. They separate themselves from the current discussion of the coming marriage to verbalise their loneliness and fear in their helpless situation in the city. On another side of the stage, we see Arnold and other members of the RSPR, trying to stop the marriage in order to inherit from his uncle. The second ensemble (p. 120) occurs at the end of the same scene between the Moon and Stars and Minette to reflect

the contradictions between the beauty of natural order and the social elements that stain it. This ensemble reflects the case between Minette and Tom, whose opinions on love are in contradiction. Tom's natural love of and joy in the opposite sex are in deep opposition to Minette's opinion, which is strained by traditional morality. The third ensemble (p. 127) shows the different reactions to Arnold's accusation of adultery to Minette. Another ensemble (p. 151) shows the private reactions of every one of the participants to the unmasking of the disguised Tom. It exposes everyone's fears, happiness, bewilderment. It shows the character's real self without allowing others to hear or know about it. In my judgement, the ensemble is equivalent to simultaneous action.

The Duet expresses an exchange of ideas of two mutually affectionate sides. Though these sides might be in opposition, the duet does not expose a conspiratorial behaviour, as the ensemble does. The first duet (p. 119) exposes two opposite ideas of the relationship between man and woman, and reflects the contradictions between the town and country manners, personified in Tom against Minette. With the voices of the serenading lovers heard from a distance, Tom, who melodramatically falls in love with Minette at first sight, presents the male's joy of female. Minette presents the opposite: the waste and disappointment of the male's labour when he tries to satisfy himself. Although Minette appreciates Tom's good looks and likes the serenading voices off, she is afraid of listening to them or to Tom's invitation to love, she is softened by neither. Her attitude shatters the traditional mood of the duet, and by such treatment Bond avoids the traditionally sentimental treatment of the courtship song which ends with happiness and consonance.

In another duet, she expresses her belief that the undoing of her shoelace is a heavenly sign of intention that consecrates her love.<sup>20</sup> The joy of love between Tom and Minette dissolves in sharing their duet:

Minette *and* Tom: I promise you  
 When men and women love they are in paradise  
 What man would leave that place  
 What god would drive him out?  
 For it is paradise when lovers love  
 And joy is found in heaven on the ground (p. 140)

In contrast to this atmosphere of love and joy, and earlier in the scene, another duet (pp. 136-7)

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<sup>20</sup> Bond, in this incident, satirizes the sensationalism and implausibility of melodrama as he puts one of its most striking characterisations to humiliation. *The Cat* contains several melodramatic incidents that contribute to its theatricality.

between Minette and Babette shows the former's inability to help her sister and her mother, despite her living in wealth. The sister and the mother ask Minette to help them as they live homeless and in loneliness. Minette's economic capability is limited because she lives a contradictory life with Lord Puff; she has neither love nor money. But the duet between Babette and Tom in scene six (p. 159) is the peak of melodramatically depicted events, in which they vow to love each other after the execution of Minette. But as the dramatic events unfold, Tom is assassinated at the hands of the members of the RSPR. In his last minute, he encounters Minette's ghost. The duet between them in Scene Seven (p. 165) ridicules the idea of achieving love in the afterlife. They are forced to part as they did in life. Either one gets love and justice in life, the duet seems to say, or one never gets them.

The hymn constitutes an occasion that shows how Bond progressed in devising his own words for hymns since *The Sea*. The words in *The Cat* look like a hymn, embodying Bond's analysis of the role of man and woman, and the essential relationship between them as religion sees it. The hymn also constitutes a remarkable opportunity to show the power of deception the histrionic words have, and the words of the hymn are full of histrionic words that define role-playing. As cursed creatures, religion advocates, man and woman play roles (pp. 123, 125) that are enforced upon them by the Lord after the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden. The intimate relationship between man and woman, thus, relies on mistrust, and is essentially deadly. He is cursed to lie on maid, and she is cursed to be the knife on which he lies. This written, unchangeable fate, is caused by original sin, and the implication, which Bond ridicules, is that the fate of human beings is unalterable.

### III) The Alienation Device:

The opera genre has allowed Bond to practise different sorts of structures in which the songs played a specific role. The flexibility of the form encouraged Bond to consider the song as a means of analysing and introducing comments on the dramatic action. Thus, the collaborations with Henze proved to be important in changing the use of songs from diegetic to alienation functions in his other plays. The operas proved to be a good rehearsal for using the song for political ends in the next play *Restoration*. But this tendency to use the song as an alienation device comes also from Bond's own ideological and dramatic progress. His ideological progress necessitated the use of the song as a device through which he can introduce his own

version of analysis for the dramatic action depicted on the stage. Bond has moved from the latent political employment of the song as a Brechtian device in *Passion* to the full scale use in *Restoration* and after.

The song in *Passion* is one of the elements which takes Bond 'further into Brechtian methods than he had before ventured'.<sup>21</sup> The Bondian elegy 'A Dead Soldier's Thoughts', strikingly extends the parallel with Brecht beyond the employment of the song as an alienation device. One of Brecht's early ballads is entitled 'The Legend of the Dead Soldier'. The rottenness and stink of Brecht's soldier and 'the determination to shock' the reader or the spectator, the will 'to be as coarse and crass as possible'<sup>22</sup> is much in evidence in Bond's elegy.

The anti-war character of the occasion, the CND Festival of Life on Easter Sunday 1971, necessitated showing the atrocities the dead soldier committed in comparison to his futile wish to be as free as a bird. The elegy is voiced by the dead soldier whose mother rests him against her 'and as she did so', the Narrator tells us, 'he seemed to speak. It was only gas escaping from his decaying belly and passing out through his teeth'.<sup>23</sup> Structurally, the elegy has been put as a final comment after the dramatic events end. It concludes and frames the dramatic experience, showing the devastating effects of the war. Bond brackets the elegy off to focus the spectator's attention on the soldier's regrettable attitudes and behaviour:

Madmen, peace!  
 You who bend iron but afraid of grass  
 Peace!  
 The dust on my wings shines in the sun  
 I have learned to sing in winter and dance in my shroud  
 I have learned that a pig is a form of lamb  
 And power is impotence  
 Madmen, you are the fallen! (pp. 252-3)

But what makes the elegy clearly marked off from the short play is not only its structural positioning

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<sup>21</sup> See Scharine, *op. cit.*, p. 180. This viewpoint of Scharine's is almost echoed, among more fundamental incidents, in Donahue's *A Study, op. cit.*, p.148.

<sup>22</sup> Esslin's, *A Choice of Evils, op. cit.*, p. 8. The ballad is on p. 8. Bond's updating of Brecht's *Roundheads and Peaked Heads* around 1969-1970, after which Bond produced the Brechtian elegy at the end of *Passion*, was a process of learning German. Bond also chose, translated, and read Brecht extracts for 'Brecht: Prose, Poems, and Songs' which were performed for Tyneside Theatre Company, Newcastle upon Tyne, November 1976, as part of the 20th anniversary of Brecht's death. On 15 February 1978, Bond chose, translated, and read work by Brecht for 'A Brecht Evening', given with Bettina Ionic and Janet Suzman, at the Roundhouse, London. These encounters with Brecht's songs make it more likely that Bond read the ballad in its original language.

<sup>23</sup> Bond, *Passion in Plays: Two*, Methuen, 1978, p. 251. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

at the end of the dramatic events, but its linguistic foregrounding as well as its consciousness. It is written, contrary to the dramatic dialogue, in verse. The consciousness that penetrates the 'thoughts' is not the dead soldier's, but Bond's. In this elegy, the dramatist introduces his own comments on war and peace. The dramatist's peace wish, for example, is effective when compared to what emerges from the thoughtless atrocities of the war committed by the soldier. The playwright assumes the character and his experience in war and death and interprets and introduces them to the actor-soldier.

Critics have observed the increasing similarities between Brecht's techniques and subject-matters and Bond's *Stone*. As far as the songs are concerned, they reflect the political vividness and directness in the writing, which are the marks of the political theatre. The songs of the piece 'comment on and clarify the process Man goes through'.<sup>24</sup> Hay and Roberts even specify that two of the songs have a marked Brechtian flavour, these are 'Stone' and 'Song of the Seven Deadly Veils'. A preliminary note has to be taken into consideration before analysing the songs and their function in *Stone*:

1) Three songs are formally called such in the published text, these are 'David and Goliath, or Song of False Optimism', 'Song of the Seven Deadly Veils', and 'Help, or Song of Experience'.

2) From the published text also, the first two of these songs could be sung by Man and Girl respectively. The text states that Man sings the third song. That the songs could be sung by the actors playing the Man and the Girl makes the distinction between actor and character obvious because the ideological contents of the three songs and their political consciousness are in sharp contrast to the constituents of the characters. This method clarifies and underlines the theatricality of the performance as the songs are comments by the actors on the very characters they portray. When these are sung by singers other than the actors, the political impact might be as effective but they would function as exterior comments on the characters on the stage: theatricality of the performance is lessened because the separation between actors and characters is not operated.

3) The other three songs are not labelled so: 'Stone' is prior to the dramatic action (and even to the 'Author's Note' to the published text). It is likely to be treated as a song because in *Theatre Poems and*

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<sup>24</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 229. See also Hirst *op. cit.*, p. 39.

*Songs*, 'Stone' is called 'First Chorus', and Hay and Roberts state that it was one of six songs in the play's first production.

4) 'Merlin and Arthur' could be sung by Man and Tramp because the constituent of every one of them is in accord with his legendary counterpart. It could also be sung by an accompanying singer(s). It is unequivocally stated that the 'The Cliffs, or Bad Dreams' is sung by Man, though it expresses a consciousness he lacks.

5) With the exception of the 'Song of the Seven Deadly Veils' and 'The Cliffs, or Bad Dreams', the song occurs between the scenes in order to stress them as detached/detaching entity.

'Stone' questions the irrationality of the predetermined orientation of man to the requirements of a 'square world'. The song states in abstract terms the methodology used to achieve that orientation, to repress man's freedom and choice. The repression and exploitation degrades man to a mere tool, which the song defines as 'a space that exactly fills its prison'(p. 306). The song approximates the theme of the play: man's, (and the protagonist's name is simply Man), journey in life to gain freedom by fighting his exploiters. In this way, the song sets the tone for the audience's perception of the action, and underlines the mood of resistance the play invokes.

In opposition to Man's underestimation of the real weight of the stone and as antithesis to his 'false' optimism, the song of David and Goliath shows the real power of a stone that killed the giant Goliath. In contrast to Man's naivety and inability to weigh the real implications of burdening himself with the Mason's stone, David was able to avoid Goliath's mighty power and kill him. David was able, the song explains, to use his senses to avoid Goliath's menace. In the form of a parable, the song warns the audience of the obstacles Man would undergo with his acceptance of the burden of the stone. These obstacles, to some extent, are similar to David's, but their fates are not comparable. In one sense, the song foreshadows Man's fate as he submits himself to his exploiter. The song, then, warns the spectator not to behave like the Man. It clarifies the meaning of the dramatic action by showing its counterpart.

'Merlin and Arthur' takes the function of clarification in the form of a parable a step further: it shows the real meaning of Man's actions in accepting delivering the stone to the Mason's house, and his generosity in giving his coins to the Tramp by comparing these actions to the wizard Merlin's actions. Both kinds

of action do not make the world a better place, as Man thinks his actions will do. This result is confirmed by putting Merlin's actions against Arthur's. They mean something quite different to Arthur; the corpse that Merlin made smile had been king Arthur's worst enemy, and therefore he 'hanged Merlin for treason'(p. 322). The song, thus, allegorises the actions of Man by putting similar actions in a historically different perspective. When it is sung by the play's characters, it functions as a direct comment on the characters' attitudes by the actors themselves. The didactic purpose is evident: understand the implications of your actions for they could cost you your life. Your behaviour means something different to a different person.

The 'Song of the Seven Deadly Veils' poses a massive question about 'how is society organised?', and answers such a question simplistically: it is organised so that profit can be drawn at as many points as possible. One of these points is the inn in which the events of the dramatic action unfold. It is called 'The Dance of the Seven Deadly Veils', which is the name given to the corrupting dance of life in the song. In both:

Bad turns to good  
Homes turn to jails  
Can turns to should  
A corkscrew is straight  
Saints turn to whores (p. 323-4)

The unfolding of the dramatic action shows how Man turns to be a killer in such a 'dance'. But although the song has some links with the dramatic situation, it philosophises about a major question that concerns the strategic subject of examining the machinations of organising society, it loses the functional simplicity of the parable mode and the immediate links with the drama. The loss is caused mainly because of the huge irrelevant parts that contribute little to elucidate the action. The song also strongly and repeatedly warns the audience that the unjust society victimises not Man but the audience himself. It also clarifies Bond's own opinion that the way out of the compass of injustice is by throat-cutting.

'The Cliffs, or Bad Dreams' is much simpler than the 'Seven Deadly Veils', because it allegorises in abstract terms. The 'Cliffs' is a direct comment on the dramatic action in order to decipher it. It is a direct analogy between the Girl's pretentious action of helping Man to alleviate his burden and the black water that tortures the cliffs in the dark. The comparison unmasks the Girl's real intentions of exploiting Man to serve her own ends. The song makes the audience aware of the real nature of her behaviour. The 'Song of



Experience' takes the unmasking a step further when it concludes the dramatic action and shows the inevitable consequences of Man's submission. It opposes kindness, helpfulness, and good intentions with exhaustion, weakness, and the guarded means of progress. Good intentions cannot be put into practice unless they have power. The song, thus, comments on the uselessness of Man's journey and his unawareness of his situation. It provokes a thesis, that struggle and bloodshed are unavoidable in the way to freedom, and therefore it anticipates Man's violent encounter in the last scene when he discovers that he, and others, have been exploited for the benefit of one man, the Mason.

As a short piece of theatre, *Stone* has proved useful in employing the song in the drama for political ends. It contributed, with other factors, to sharpening Bond's pencil so that his lyrics took on a sharp political edge with his writing of *Restoration*, immediately after finishing *The Cat*. The marking off of the songs has become obvious and the direct political authorial commentary has become clearer, as was the case with Brecht.

The technicalities of marking the songs off vary in *Restoration*: in his production of the play at the Royal Court Theatre, Bond made the exclusion simple by placing a band on a high scaffold above the scene at the back of the stage. It was rolled forward for the songs which closed each scene, all in rock style. Linguistically, the songs are distinguished by their modernity, in opposition to the 'historical' and colloquialism of the dramatic discourse. They are foregrounded and verbalised as a Brechtian 'quotation' when compared to the dialogue. The songs constitute a much deeper foregrounding technique than, say, the artistic words. In *Restoration*, the songs' language is alien to the characters' discourse but correlates to the actors' and to the spectators' experiences. This modernity credits the songs with a formal unity and identity as well as helping in communicating with the audience through a common idiom. The songs, on another level, carry Bond's explanations, opinions, and generalisations of the meaning when the dramatic events are put in different contexts.<sup>25</sup> The modernism of the songs is also achieved on the level of consciousness and awareness of the modern world's problems. The functions of the song in *Restoration* can be grouped as follows:

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<sup>25</sup> Bond's revision of *Restoration* for the Royal Shakespeare Company's revival, 1989, contained a substitution of the Falkland Song (p. 27 of the Swan edition) for the 'Legend of Good Fortune' between scenes seven and eight. The substitution proves the device's flexibility and transformability, its ability to carry new insights and comments on the dramatic action from a different temporal perspective formulated by a changing reality.

## 1) Communications with the Audience:

It is easy to recognise that the function of the song in *Restoration* is not for psychological characterisation, but to communicate directly with the audience. Putting the same, or similar, experience in a different light might be diegetic, but the main function is the direct address to the audience. The first song in the play, for example, falls in this category. The spirit of resistance infiltrates the song. The consciousness of the exploited 'guys' would resist the 'bastards' and 'sods' who wage wars and thus the song functions in establishing the base on which the spectator would receive the unresisting characters in the play. It is a yardstick Bond puts so that the spectator can use it in measuring the characters' actions. Its occurrence before the dramatic action, however, emphasizes its theatricality as it is directed to the audience in a direct manner of communication.

## 2) The Explanation of the Dramatic Action:

Bond uses three overlapping arrangements to underline this function of commenting and explaining. The first is the generalisation of the individual's experience by putting it in a much wider perspective. That generalisation, by widening the focus of the immediate personal experience means, for Bond, an expression of the importance of the problem shown in the drama. The song, in this case, represents Bond's own understanding of the historical event, his own synthesis. The second is the contradiction of the outcome of the dramatic happenings with that of the song. The song counterpoints the meaning of the dramatic events and functions as antithesis. The synthesis, in this case, is left open to the audience, although the song makes the choice clear. The third is to explain the real meaning of the dramatic event by either putting the subject matter of the dramatic event in a different context in the song or by commenting ironically on the dramatic event by the song. And, of course, the result is always the introduction of the authorial commentary through the song.

The obvious example of generalisation and contradicting the outcomes of the song and the dramatic action is Frank's 'Song of Learning', which generalises Frank's experience as a worker to show *the* worker's experience. It puts Frank's complaints of the conditions of work in connection with other jobs and other workers. The song shows different workers: the mansions builder, the cook, the printer, and the libraries' builder. The worker, in the song, served for fifty thousand years, which widens the immediate

implications of the worker's experience by adding a historical depth to it. He, as Frank, is exploited but *the* worker fought the masters' wars: thus the implication of exploitation is taken to its ultimate consequences.

The difference of the outcomes appears in the fact that the soldier's experience in the song leads him to gain class-consciousness, contrary to Frank. The worker in the song learns from his slavery how to revolt and use his energy to protect himself from the dehumanising reality. Although Frank steals from his master, Lord Are, the theft remains an opportunistic and separate incident, without real understanding of the collective nature of the necessary struggle. The song advocates the possibility that the modern worker may learn from experience and resist his own exploitation.<sup>26</sup>

For fifty thousand years I fought in their wars  
I died so often I learned how to survive  
For fifty thousand years I fought battles to save their wealth  
That's how I learned how to know the enemy myself..  
I learned how to blow up your hell (p. 20)

The 'Wood Song' introduces unmistakable antithesis to the Mother's character: the song instigates a spirit of revolt against exploitation, in contrast to her attitude as a character. Although, or because, death is cast, the song concludes, one has to resist his 'written' fate. Bond's characters in the play are unable to achieve class-consciousness, which the songs introduce to the spectator. The songs invite the audience to transcend the conditions of the characters by commenting on the latter's behaviour. A clear example of that comment occurs in the 'Song of the Calf' which satirizes Bob's inability to comprehend his social circumstance, by comparing him to the calf's inability to escape the butcher. His naivety as a character is commented upon by the song, and the comparison with the beast's fate is a political comment on Bob's behaviour in tying up Frank, his fellow worker. The comment, nevertheless, transcends the immediate situation of the servants, and involves the audience in a direct question:

The morning is over, the work is done  
You eat and drink and have your fun  
The butcher is sharpening his knife today  
Do you know -- do you care -- who will get away? (p. 37)

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<sup>26</sup> Worth considers this learning as 'false' because 'it expresses an idea which the servants cannot realise, being too trapped in the thought of their time'. She also considers their singing as a 'compensation to them for the restrictions they suffer in the inner world of the play'. See her 'Bond's *Restoration*', *op. cit.*, pp. 484, 483 respectively. But Worth confuses the character and the actor. The song's stance and ideas are Bond's, and not the characters', and not even the actors.

The 'Song of Talking' introduces a different aspect of the song's function. It is an ironical comment on Bob's decision to play the man instead of his usual role as the sheep. The real meaning and implication of the decision spring from putting the decision to the test in a different context. The song parallels that decision with another one taken by the worker who dropped a coin and unscrewed the safety rail to get it back. It is impossible in both cases, the song implies, to regain what is lost. The dehumanising industrial system does not allow the machines to stop because of the dead worker, and thus the song does not only satirize Bob's decision but also anticipates his fate. Bob's acceptance of Lord Are's protection springs from his inner submission to the dehumanising system. This submission, the 'Song of the Conjuror' indicates, is like tying oneself with an illusionary invisible robe, as the conjuror does. But as is the case with the conjuror, the invisible robe turns out to be real to him: in time, one's invisible self-tying becomes concrete, the illusion becomes reality. Bob does not realise that his long submission made it part and parcel of his character:

One day when he turned in his invisible sack  
 He could not get free  
 He screamed like a man stretched on the rack  
 When no one could see  
 His mouth was gagged with invisible rags  
 More more! roared the crowd and waved their flags  
 As he writhed in the air  
 And fought for his life in unseen snare (p. 79)

The conjuror's fate is Bob's, and the indication that Bob's fetters are interior is obvious, and the song shows the fate of those who tie themselves interiorly.

### 3) Emphasising Role-playing:

As we have seen in the first chapter, Bond's characters, with few exceptions, do not comprehend their roles as actors on a stage, and Bob's unfettering of himself, claiming that the fetters are 'only for show' (p. 77) is not exploited for theatrical use. However, another device is used to expose the actors as actors, which is the song. Beside the technique of staging that makes the separation manifest, the modernism of the songs, the accommodated political consciousness, make it necessary for the actor to drop the character. Wendy Salkind, among others, has reported that all twelve scenes of the play's first production 'end abruptly with music: one or two actors drop character, step downstage to microphones and sing directly to

the audience'.<sup>27</sup>

The actor, in some of the songs, is not only devoid of character but comments on and analyses its behaviour, showing the extension of its attitude. What underlines the separation is that some of the songs are not in accord with the character's current situation as 'Roses', but the language and technique of staging make it difficult to keep the character while singing. Some of the songs might be considered as expressing the character's dissatisfaction with his duties, but it remains an expression of the worker's dissatisfaction, in general. Frank's 'Song of Learning' is a case in hand, but the clearest example of the underlying separation between actor and character is the 'Song of Talking', by Frank and Bob. Bob's late and dim understanding that his complete submission to the unjust social system, by playing the role of the sheep that will lead to his hanging, makes him yearn for another role: the man. But the song shows the futility of the decision to play the man at such a time. The song is directed towards the audience to warn it of the consequences of Bob's delay in playing his role in real life.<sup>28</sup> It is clear that the actor is commenting on the character he is portraying. It is clear also that Frank, who has been in a horrible condition in his chains, drops his character to analyse and comment on the character's decision. The song is a warning that the press-hammer will strike anyone's head who delays his revolt against the unjust social system.

Bond has continued using the song to carry his own political analysis of the dramatic action. Even when the lyrics are not included in the dramatic world, his comments come across from outside the drama to comment on the action on the stage, as happened in his production of *Summer*. Pete Mathers has reported that the German's speeches recounting how the occupying forces behaved when they inhabited the islands 'achieved their full effect in performance when they were heard alongside a reading of Bond's angry, accusatory tone in "What Sort of Morality Is That"'.<sup>29</sup> This obviously introduces an element with which to judge another, a Brechtian practice of judging an action in the light of another action.

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<sup>27</sup> 'Theatre Review: *Restoration*', *Theatre Journal*, 34, 1 (March 1982), p. 116.

<sup>28</sup> The song also emphasizes the metaphor of the world as a stage as it connects role playing in life to that in the theatre. The final song, 'Man Is What He Knows' also analyses Bob's role in the play as a sacrifice to the social injustice and a victim of his lack of consciousness. The difference in consciousness between Rose and Bob is underlined in the fact that she only is saved. The main reason is explained in the song: Bob could not differentiate between the dawn and the burning house, and despite being warned, he waited till the fire reached his own house. Contrary to nature's other elements, man is specified with consciousness. But Bob lacked it and therefore he died. He did not play his role in life properly: he did not revolt against his pre-written role.

<sup>29</sup> 'Edward Bond Directs *Summer* at the Cottesloe, 1982', *New Theatre Quarterly*, 11, 6 (May 1986), p. 144.

The song in *Derek* differs little functionally from the other alienation songs in Bond's plays. The linguistic foregrounding of the song (standard English is used in opposition to the idiomatic vernacular of the dialogue) underlines role-playing, especially when the song comments on or explains the character's motivations. The separation between actor and character becomes greater when the dramatist abandons the suspension of disbelief. This is obvious in many cases in the play, especially the last song when the 'dead' Derek joins Biff and Julie in singing. The class opposition between Biff and the other two characters makes the operation of singing more inclined towards theatricality because what joins them is not their position as characters but as actors. The first three songs of the play occur within scenes, the second three between scenes, and the seventh at the end of the drama. All seven songs, however, have two sides to them: the first is directly or indirectly linked to the immediate dramatic situation, the second widens the perspective and universalises the specific and personal experience in the drama.

The 'Doctor's Song' exposes the character's motivation in allying himself with the rich and abandoning the poor. The song itself seems an answer to a question raised in the drama, and to engrave its connection to it, it ends with two questions to another character. The 'Foreman's Song' is the most connected song to the dramatic event. It exposes the reasons behind the exploitation of the submissive character and the reasons for his lack of class-consciousness, which he shows in his dialogue with Derek. The 'Owner's Song' is also dimly connected to the dramatic, but it shows Biff's readiness to use violence if Derek does not submit to Biff's desire and sell his brain.

The last three songs, though occurring between scenes, contain links with the drama, the strongest of which is their anticipation of Derek's fate. The latter's willingness to sell his brain makes him a sort of metaphorically dead character, a death the Girlfriend's Song hints at in its use of 'You' at the beginning. Derek's willingness will inevitably lead to his death in the inevitable journey through the army of the upper classes. The Mother's Song explains this fact: that ownership and its consequent result of dehumanisation are human foolishness. The Soldier's Song emphasizes the fact that submission to that reality unquestionably leads to the soldier's death. Derek becomes a soldier in Scene Six and is actually dead in Seven between which the song occurs.

But even the first three songs which occur within the dramatic enactment and have great links to it

function in commenting on the characters' behaviour and in universalising the specific by widening the perspective to include a much wider context for the action. The Doctor in the first song is just a case, he symbolizes all similar doctors. He is, furthermore, a representative of a specific social conduct, a fact which is emphasized by including other professions whose members conduct themselves similarly: the teacher, the upper class job holder, and any believer in inequality in general. Even the Foreman's Song constitutes an *occasion* to unveil a worker's lack of class-consciousness. The third song, entitled the Owner's Song, is linked with Biff's class position as an owner who is ready to use violence against the 'underprivileged' if they threaten his class position.

If 'You' in the Girlfriend's Song identifies Derek as the soldier who might be said to have died for his country, it certainly specifies all the underprivileged who owned nothing in their society before their death. By the end of the song, 'You' indicates *anyone* who sheds tears for the dead's sad situation and advises him to stop crying for the same reason: he does not own the tears in his eyes. Until he owns the thoughts in his head and the means of production in his society, the song emphasizes, the individual lacks freedom. The Mother's Song explains the contradiction in human life itself in a comment on Derek's situation but also on *anyone* in a similar situation. The Soldier's Song also widens the individual's case (the dead soldier) to include *all* who obeyed the laws of the dehumanising society: the worker, the soldier, and even the ones who live in its cities.

The universalising of the cases of the individual and the political explanation they give to these cases in the songs are Bond's attempt to include consciousness in the dramatic action. The songs constitute the didactic part in the play, but they are not completely separated from the dramatic, they remain diegetic in their summing up of the narrative. The strength of the songs' political function actually springs from the links they have with the dramatic. The last song, though an alienation device in every respect, is diegetic as it sums up the moral of the whole dramatic action; it is the moral that explains the deadly effects of the class-divided society on the individual, which is the target of the drama.

In *Human Cannon*, the song is used to achieve political comment on the dramatic action, and to stress role-playing as role-playing, the same function for *Stone*, *Derek*, and *Restoration*. 'The Curse' is Agustina's; the woman who is turned out of her house curses those who set Jose and Maria against her. But

it is also the Revolutionary Activist's because of the song's wide perspective and generalising nature. It expresses political consciousness and fierce reaction to the ruling classes who exploit the working class to manufacture their guns. 'The Chorus', another song, is divided into three parts and functions as the dramatist's comment on the dramatic action. It has the same agitating and cursing nature of 'The Curse', but 'The Chorus' is more specific in defining the cursed as the 'clothed and fed' who 'smile and live well'. In both incidents, the singer is not involved in the dramatic action, a method that underlines the theatricality of the songs and the presence of the players as players.

The 'Song of Agustina Ruiz Known as The Human Cannon' does not specify its singer. And although it praises the fighting and struggling human being, and supports the laws of change, and the impossibility of defeating the singer/fighter, it risks contradicting the depiction of Agustina, if she sings it. The song has a mythical element to it: it shows a miraculous figure who will 'ride the world with my two talking horses/Till the generations of the earth are free'(p. 37). This mythical figure also has the power of the seed that when it falls on a stony ground shall turn the stone to 'fruitful earth', making it a garden in the 'wastes of tyranny'. The unconquerable figure even equates her womb to mother earth's power of giving birth to liberty. These features, powers, and attributes make the figure a legend: something the play, and Agustina herself, objects to.<sup>30</sup>

*The War Plays* have a vocal theatrical element in every single part. 'The Army Song' is the vocal element in *Red Black and Ignorant*, a song which has the traditional features in Bond's song as an alienation device. It is sung by the Son who joins the army, but the song implicates the army itself by its subject. The Son personifies the army, and therefore the human organs are employed to incorporate the military weapons. The song also articulates the atrocities *the* soldier commits throughout the play and the social reasons behind them. The song thus connects the objective and the subjective: the character's behaviour is explained by the dramatist, who incorporates his own political viewpoint in the song. The chorus is also employed in the Trilogy as a means of characterisation and as an alienation device (see Part Three).

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<sup>30</sup> See her objections pp. 33-4.



**Summary:**

1) From the very beginning of his career, Bond employed the song to perform specific functions. In some of the early plays, the song occurs within the narrative and its function is diegetic, that is, it sums up the narrative at specific points of the action. In the first three plays, Bond uses well-known songs and hymns, but at one point in *Saved*, he shocks by contradicting the famous lullaby. The added verse anticipates the violence to come, depicts the characters and indicates that violence is a potential in their life that needs an object on which to vent itself. This diegetic function of the song persists in other plays like *The Fool* and *The Woman*, but in these plays, as in others in the second and third period of plays, Bond does not rely on received verse. He creates his own to resemble the original or the 'historical'. The creation allows Bond the opportunity to include a sort of comment on reality and the dramatic situation reflecting it.

2) Bond's collaboration with Henze in two operas helped Bond to develop the practice of using the song as an expression of political understanding; the dramatist's.

3) This practice of including comments on the dramatic action has progressed to its ultimate effect in the plays of the third period, especially *Restoration*. The employment of the song to comment on the dramatic action has developed to be a use of the song as an alienation device. The song as an alienation device, as a detached/detaching entity has appeared in plays like *Passion* and *Stone*. But in *Restoration*, the song has become a plainly theatrical device: it is recognised as the means of directing the spectator's attention to the political meaning of the dramatic action, to universalise a statement, and to expound a theme. The songs have become the political analysis of the dramatic events. To achieve such a purpose, the song is foregrounded by different means whether in Bond's own production of the play or by linguistic differentiation in the printed text. Such an employment of the song makes role-playing as role-playing obvious and the separation between the actor and the character undoubted and thus the song contributes to and establishes the play's theatricality. Such a usage has continued to appear in Bond's latter plays like *Derek*, *Human Cannon*, and *The War Plays*.

## Part Two

### The Theatricality of Characterisation

## Chapter One

## Wise Fools and Artists

One aspect of Bond's schematic characterisation offers a relationship between father figures who are expected to guide the other half of the relationship, the young sanity seekers. The experience of the old is supposed to benefit the young, but the very experience, as often as not in the plays, causes the dehumanisation of the younger generation. The downfall of many young protagonists in the plays of the first period happens *because* of the corrupted/corrupting father figures, any of them who transcends the elders' experience succeeds by depending on his own efforts to escape. Only Lear shows the young how to act authentically, and only Evens in the last play of this period explains his limits and gives definition to the role of the father figures as 'wise fools'. Evens explains to Willy that without their knowledge the younger generation might die, but it is insufficient knowledge. The young must, Evens continues, leave the town, look for answers and change the world.

The extension of the mentor or father figure in the first plays is the artist. Although the artist appears in *Narrow Road*, he is taken to be a cultural father figure. It is in the plays of the second period that Bond concentrates on the theme of the artist as extension of his characterisation of father figures. The introduction of the artist in *Narrow Road* is a culmination of Bond's interest on the father (and mother) figures in *Early Morning*, the play that is essentially about the making of a 'good citizen'. Although the artists are supposed to be the cultural father figures of their nation, all of them prove in need of education and enlightenment. Instead of the failure of the father figure, the wise fool, Bond extends the implications to contain more generalised fatherhood in the failing artist.

By employing an artist figure in drama the dramatist objectifies the subjective: s/he shows herself or himself, to a degree or another, at work on the stage. In some instances the dramatist reorders (sometimes famous) materials from his own experience through the dramatic medium in order to express how the artist/character grasps the experience of life and how he puts it in art. In other cases, the artist is a figure completely independent from the known real figure, an assumption which carries the dramatist's argument

about artistic creation and its function in life. In the first instance, the artist figure is a self-reflection of the dramatist which makes the theatricality obvious, according to the dramatist's fame. In this case, the onstage artist is the offstage one, to varying degrees in practice. In the second instance, the artist is an image created for specific purposes which are inescapably artistic. In both instances, however, the artist remains theatrical in the sense that he becomes an embodiment of the image of *the* artist: an archetype. By employing artist figures, the dramatist puts a character similar to himself or his (sometimes negative) image of the artist on the stage. In any case, it is the artistic experience which becomes the focus on the stage: art becomes the object and the subject.

For two reasons, it is hard to determine exactly how the artists in Bond's plays reflect the dramatist himself: the first is that Bond rarely talks about his own personal life, and the second is that Bond concentrates on showing the corrupting power of the artist, an image which is difficult to think of as reflecting its own bestower, Bond. But it remains reasonable to believe that in each case where the dramatist uses historical artist figures he is embodying some of his anxieties or, more importantly, he is thinking about how his art should function in establishing the rational society. Bond's own image, or at least his 'passive image', exists behind the artists in his plays, and that is part of the theatricality of characterisation.

For Bond, and for any dramatist for that matter, the artist has an important place in society and in affecting the human consciousness. In this respect, the artist is, or is supposed to be, the mentor of the young. This relationship between the artist and the young is part of Bond's schematisation of the function of the father figure, a theatrical schematisation because it embodies the thesis element in the plays. That explains why Bond avoids writing about moments of artistic creation or the psychology of the artist and avoids even mentioning the artistic products of the artist figures and, instead, concentrates on the artist as a guide, a mentor. With the exception of Basho's verse, there is no other artistic product in Bond's plays, and even this poetry is *used* for the purpose of exposing it as a false means of education. Bond's interest in art and artists lies in their epistemological function: how the artist contributes to the creation of human consciousness.

Bond's introduction of the artist into his plays coincided with his putting emphasis on the father figure mentor in relation to the Siamese twins. The emphasis on the twins occurs in *Early Morning*, a play

which also witnessed the underscoring of the elder generation's role in producing either part of the twins. The father figure becomes essential to the younger one in *Narrow Road*, and Bond's making the father figure an artist illustrates the importance which he attributed to art as a shaper of society and culture. The influence of the artist-father figure on the younger couple becomes decisive in the journey of learning. The artist becomes, or should become, the cultivator of being to becoming. Art is understood by Bond to be the most efficient embodiment of fatherhood/guidance/teaching. The existence of the artist in Bond's plays occurs in the distance between the false artist Basho in *Narrow Road* and the rejection of the same artist by a younger artist in *The Bundle*. The artist as part of the establishment is rejected and as an 'actor' in establishing the new humanist society is preferred. Between *Narrow Road* and *New Narrow Road*, the subtitle of *The Bundle*, the artist exists in Bond's plays.

Art, to Bond, 'isn't about itself, it's about how men relate to the world and each other; it's not a private or even individual experience, but one of the ways society creates its identity'.<sup>1</sup> Art becomes the tool of creating human awareness, but this is not peculiar to specific individuals: it is part of everybody's imagination. Failing to fulfill this necessary process of developing human consciousness, the individual goes mad: if imagination, consciousness, and art do not operate in society, madness is inevitable. The creation of consciousness, however, is not an 'artistic' operation which occurs in isolation, away from the social process, it is essentially political. In Bond's plays, art and politics are strongly connected and many of his artists are linked to authority figures in order to make the connection obvious. Other artist figures appear as *only* authority figures. The histrionic words as well as the courtroom scenes underline the connection between power and art in Bond's plays.

Not strange, then, to find that Bond allocates the standards of judging the activity of the artist and his role in society to a 'normal' character in *The Worlds*, not to an artist.<sup>2</sup> *The Worlds* starts the plays of the third phase in Bond's progress, and although there is no artist figure in it, it is the play in which the revolutionary characters know their ideological stand *before* the start of the dramatic action, they do not develop it

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<sup>1</sup> As recorded by Hay and Roberts, *A Companion*, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Although Wang is capable of defining the role of art in society in *The Bundle*, his definition could be considered subjective. In *The Worlds*, the objectivity of the procedures with which to judge the artist are in no doubt because the poem is Bond's as well as Anna's.

from within the drama. Anna's speech in *The Worlds*, which is entitled 'A Poem' is, in my opinion, the standard with which the artist's activity should be judged. The device of the poem sets the artist's mission in his society and the role he must play in creating its rationality. I choose this poem: 1) because it is the only device in the play which carries an artistic title, 2) because it is voiced by one of the terrorists who carry Bond's own argument throughout the play, and 3) because it is, contrary to the device of the public soliloquy of the play-with-the-play, which must be considered as an art-in-the-making, a ready-made device.

Anna voices a paradigm for action: the creative individual cannot live like a heron 'wandering about in the sky', it should come down to eat in the frozen winters. The act of 'coming down' is the inescapable course of the individual's imagination if he is to see things as they really are. Consequently, the individual becomes able to change his circumstances, to change the world. Visions or any detached overview of things cannot change, 'coming down' can. 'The struggle in the dirt' is the paradigm for action if the creative self wants to live rationally and humanely.<sup>3</sup> This sort of struggle, the artist's involvement or detachment from the action, is the standard with which to judge his value and the effectiveness of his art in changing the dehumanising reality. Which artist makes this coming down in Bond's plays? What is the embodiment of this coming down? What is the result of the artist's refusal to come down? This is the subject of the discussion below, but it is worthwhile to glance at the embryo of the artist: the mentors-father figures.

## I) Mentors-Father Figures

In Bond's first play, *The Pope's Wedding*, following in the footsteps of the father figure Alen proves disastrous for the younger Scopey who metaphorically dies. It is the fascination with the father figure in the play which causes the tragic end of the young Scopey. A strong reason for Scopey's interest in Alen is that the latter unintentionally becomes a permanent reality in Scopey's life; an inheritance he has to sort out. Alen's isolation induces Scopey to investigate the old man's almost mythical power to survive, and that might explain the stream of questions Scopey poses to Alen. This interrogation does not, however, make

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<sup>3</sup> See Bond, *The Worlds*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

Scopey see the isolation as it is, he carries on trying to find any hidden answers to explain the old man's independence. The search for answers involves Scopey, he abandons his work, friends, and wife. Scopey lacks the consciousness with which to understand the reality of the father figure.

This sort of characterisation, a father figure and a young seeker, reappears almost typically in *Saved*.<sup>4</sup> From the first encounter with Pam, the young Len shows curiosity about old Harry whose presence interrupts Len's intercourse with her. Len, however, shows every intention of not repeating Harry's experience, but the reality is that his life turns out to be worse than Harry's. Harry's endurance and his ability to survive despite Mary's treatment of him puzzle Len, and the father figure's silence encourages Len to the near seduction of the mother figure. Here only the father figure seems to bother: contemptuous of women, he interferes not because of jealousy but to protect the young Len. The protection aims at letting Len take over the lordship of the house, and he feels that the mother will strangle the offspring. Mary's obvious guilt at her sexual seduction of Len is what actually starts the quarrel between the mother and father figures after twenty-something years of silence. The mother figure almost succeeds in physically repeating the Oedipal pattern when father and son fight with a knife. But although Harry does not physically die, he becomes a *corpus*, a metaphorically dead character. His need for Len becomes greater, and he visits Len to stop him going out of the house. From the beginning, there seems to be a silent agreement between the mentor Harry and the follower Len to let the young take over, and by avoiding the repetition of the Oedipal tragedy, the young *and* the old men survive. But the triumph of the young is undeniable.

Scene Twelve spells out the agreement between the male figures in the play. From this encounter, the first and last, the silent communication stops and a straightforward one occurs to define the conditions upon which the females of the house are going to be governed. Not only does Harry succeed fully in persuading Len to stay, but he also exposes to Len the Golden Rule he must follow: the women have had 'their say. They'll keep quiet now'(p. 125). The quarrel, from Harry's point of view, was necessary to 'clear the air', it was the final sign before the settlement of the new order. As the scene progresses, the long exchanges between the young and old man become more and more obviously a rite of succession; one can feel that the old King is sad because he is leaving the throne, but also his joy because he has succeeded in

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<sup>4</sup> Scharine has indicated the similarities between Alen and Harry. See his *op. cit.*, pp. 73-4.

getting the young King on the throne:

Len. I don't give a damn if they don't talk, but they don't even listen t' yer. Why the 'ell should I bother about 'er?

Harry. It's juss a rough patch. We'ad t' sort ourselves out when you joined us. But yer fit in now. It'll settle down. (p. 127)

After the ceremony of succession, the men talk about women, war, the future, and, most important of all, the golden rules of practicing power: 'Don't speak to 'em at all. It saves a lot of misunderstandin'' (p. 130), and no further meetings between the ex- and coming kings because 'They listen all the time' and 'They won't stand for it' (p. 130). The last scene illustrates the extent of Len's enmeshment in the death around him, though he is the one who orders, without much success, the fetching of a hammer. He mends the chair which has been broken in the battle between the sexes. The socially moralized father succeeds in getting himself a son instead of the one he lost in the park during the war, and it seems that Len might gain a son instead of the son he loses in the park during peace time.

In *Early Morning* the father figures prove dehumanising also, but it is significant to realise that the role of the father figure in the play is not embodied in a male figure only, it is embodied in Queen Victoria also. The play itself is a 'look back in anger and disgust' at the sacred era of the Victorians who embody a light many believe the young Bond, among others, must follow. Victoria is a tyrannical manipulator of events: she possesses absolute power over her subjects with an added power of resurrection (see pp. 178, 180) and with incredible luck (see p. 181). These powers are complementary to her authorial power and dictatorial capacity as the 'head' of the state. This position, however, is used to socially moralise her subjects: she presides over a world of metaphorical and/or literal cannibalism because she is obsessed with law and order. George and Florence are examples of her devastating powers. As Niloufer Harben has observed, 'Victoria stalks the stage like some monstrous predator. With George as her stooge, she fights to preserve the supremacy of her position'.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, she is determined that her line has begun at Stonehenge and shall not fall till Stonehenge falls.

Such qualities and attributes make the Queen the father figure of *Early Morning* not only to her Siamese twins, but to the whole nation. She defines roles and presides over courts, she decides the fate of

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<sup>5</sup> *Twentieth-Century English History Plays: From Shaw to Bond*, Macmillan, 1988, p. 224.



souls for the benefit of fiction (p. 152) and educates Arthur. Educating Arthur is Victoria's prime concern: the efforts she makes to fashion him according to her creed, however, find some resistance from the instinctively good son. At some stage, Arthur submits to her powers, but this submission is considered by Bond as complete madness, and Arthur discovers it. Only when he abides by her rule does she take Arthur to be her son. In her heaven of cannibalism, she claims her motherhood to Arthur. But something remains alive in him which helps him to transcend the dehumanising reality of his fathers, a transcendence which happens in spite of Victoria's endeavour to keep him in his coffin.

The blood father figure, Albert, is indistinguishable from Victoria in his longing for perpetuating the devastating reality. In heaven, they play the prosecutor and defender of Arthur, but the mother's defence aims at getting an admission of guilt in order to admit Arthur to the heaven of cannibalism. The only difference between Victoria and Albert is that Albert is inferior to Victoria, who possesses absolute power. But Arthur succeeds in transcending the heaven of cannibalism, a transcendence which is embodied in his gaining of the wisdom of understanding the reality of his society, of the devastating power of the father figures. At some stage he grows a beard and resembles a father figure when he eats his mentor/father.

The second half of *The Woman* witnesses a disciple who almost forces her mentor to 'open' her eyes and see the tragic reality in order to be able to face and transcend it. On the shore of an island, like that of *The Sea*, and in an isolated and remote place, like that of the Gravedigger's Boy in *Lear*, the events of the second part unfold. Hecuba and Ismene are the only figures who are reborn in a water spout in a storm after leaving Troy.<sup>6</sup> The 'distancing' puts the irrational events of part one in a calmer atmosphere and allows them a slow pace.<sup>7</sup> Significantly, Hecuba and Ismene, as some critics have mentioned, develop a mother-daughter relationship in order to survive.<sup>8</sup> A mindless figure and a mentor are 'saved' in order to allow Bond to investigate the irrationality of the stance of resignation, of the mentor's choice not to guide her

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<sup>6</sup> This is another instance of Bond's dramatisation of Jaspers' example of the people who resign themselves, who become 'shipwrecked'. See Jaspers, *op. cit.*, p. 34, and Bond's *The Woman*, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>7</sup> Jaspers considers the questions of the Greek tragedies as philosophical in substance and aesthetical in formulation, 'they have not reached the rational method of philosophy'. The worlds of these tragedies, to Jaspers, are of endurance, unquestioned steadfastness, and calm defiance in the face of destiny. See his *op. cit.*, pp. 34-5. Bond's opinion on the irrationality of the Greek world is recorded by Coult: 'I wanted to go back at that world, re-examine it, and see what was real about it and how moral and rational it was, and whether or not it would be a valid example for a society like ours. I came to the conclusion that it wasn't'. See, 'Bringing Light Back to Earth', *Canadian Theatre Review*, 24 (Fall 1979), p. 96.

<sup>8</sup> For examples, see Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 157; Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

daughter. This schematic characterisation and the melodramatic redemption of the two mother and daughter figures underline the theatricality of depiction.

To establish the stability of the rural community, Bond uses song and festivity in the opening scene. In this community, Hecuba hides away, mythologising her character as a prophetess. She settles in her tragic pose of complete withdrawal: her other eye is also covered. This isolation indicates that her tragedy, like that of Evens, is shrivelled to a mere aesthetic detachment which Jaspers defines as that of the one who thinks himself safe or escaped participating in the tragedy. Hecuba looks at the tragic as 'something alien' to herself. She does not 'act', but 'watch': an inauthentic life. But escape, for Bond as well as for Jaspers, is impossible: before Hecuba finishes telling her 'mad' disciple, Ismene, the 'story' of their lucky escape, the sound of tragic past battles appears. The Athenians come to the hidden sanctuary looking for the very statue that caused all the previous devastation. Participation seems inescapable: 'now there's a storm blowing up. Millions of drops of rain, each one with a human face'(p. 232) is her expression of feeling the impossibility of escape. She feels the 'futility of playing the tragic victim'.<sup>9</sup> The 'mad' disciple, however, proves wise compared to Hecuba's pose: the former recognizes the existence of the tragic, the impossibility of escape. Because Hecuba's blindness is willful choice, Ismene's enforced madness is more rational, and their 'ideological' stand is literally depicted: a blind woman who depends on the help of a mad one, exactly as Lear depends on the Ghost.<sup>10</sup>

In order to regain her sanity, Ismene almost forces Hecuba to 'see' the past. The dialogue of opening the eye (pp. 242-4) should be understood in its literal sense, but its ideological implications must take priority. The dialogue expresses the need to comprehend the new reality of the invading soldiers, and Heros. Although Hecuba sensed earlier the Greeks' return, she felt her inability to 'change the world'(p. 237). Accordingly, she is punished as she discovers her blindness in both eyes, and with the discovery of blindness comes the discovery that earlier she made the wrong *choice*. She is literally as well as ideologically back to where she chose blindness, as Lear is led back to start his journey from the Gravedigger's Boy's house. The moment she discovers the unproductiveness of the past twelve years, she discovers the

<sup>9</sup> Irving Wardle, 'Classical Demolition Job', *The Times*, 11 August 1978, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> This depiction is a repercussion from Shakespeare's *King Lear*: the blind Gloucester who depends on the mad offspring, Edmund disguised as Poor Tom.

inevitability of participating in the tragedy that is going on. This knowledge means her readiness to transcend the tragic. And because tragic knowledge makes everybody 'face each realization of his ultimate limits with a new restlessness that drives him beyond them',<sup>11</sup> she immediately recognizes the destined Dark Man's role in the action. Her knowledge that her awareness exceeds her power makes her associate with another political force (unlike what happens in *Lear*).

The alliance between the intellectual Hecuba and the seemingly deformed working-class man is given a historical dimension. Jaspers' philosophy could illuminate this. Hecuba's knowledge contains an element of history through the recognition of the possibility of transcendence, of the victory of the Dark Man with his, to use Jaspers' expression, 'ultimate limit' of crippledness. The conversion of the Dark Man is exactly what gives him the power to appear undeformed at some points in the action.<sup>12</sup> Hecuba tricks the dehumanising Greek leader, Heros, into a race, which she literally 'supervises', between Heros and the physically handicapped Dark Man. She succeeds in protecting her youngsters, and she uses her experience to help the Dark Man execute the Greek leader. She works upon her enlightenment and transcends Evens's role as a wise fool. Playing the role of the mentor does not only result in killing Heros but equally in freeing the slave Dark Man and helping Ismene to regain her sanity. By using her experience to advance the revolutionary struggle, Hecuba transcends the tragic and becomes an element of nature in her death.<sup>13</sup> This depiction of the mentor as succeeding in helping the younger generation to achieve a rationality, or at least in putting them on the first step towards it, is followed by the complete rejection of the irrational cultural father figure with which the artist's existence started in Bond's plays. In *The Bundle*, the young man proves that the young can use their experience to change the dehumanising culture of Basho.

## II) Some Mentors are Artists:

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<sup>11</sup> Jaspers, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

<sup>12</sup> Jaspers: 'Man seems truly awake only when he has such knowledge. For now he will face each realization of his ultimate limits with a new restlessness that drives him beyond them. Nothing that is stable will endure, for nothing that is stable will satisfy him. Tragic knowledge is the first phase of that historical movement which takes place not only in external events but in the depths of man himself'. See his *ibid*, p. 31.

<sup>13</sup> Hecuba's role as a mentor is comparable to Nestor's to Heros and the Greek soldiers, though his supervision is similar to other dehumanising father figures in the plays. He furthers the inhumanity of the Greek political system which depends on exploiting the likes of the Dark Man.

### 1) The Artist in "Narrow Road":

Bond has explained the motivation behind writing about Basho: 'What particularly incensed me about Basho was that everybody says, oh, what a marvellous poet. I think that is absolutely phoney. I mean that is bad poetry, that's academic phoney poetry, all the things he said. But I really am only talking about his actions'.<sup>14</sup> It is worthwhile to state that Basho's role in shaping his community might be the main relevance *Narrow Road* has with the occasion for which the play was written: the International 'People and Cities Conference'.<sup>15</sup> Basho's abandonment of the baby was the incident from which the play sprang. The writing of Basho, however, coincided with Bond's progress when it came up as an expression of the relationship between the younger generation and the old mentor. In Basho's case, the implications of the father figure have widened: he is a cultural father figure. The artist of *Narrow Road* opens the Introduction of the play in which he shows his pride over perfecting the haiku form. The 'example' he gives of this perfection evidences a desire to improve the capacity of language to be used as a tool, but his vocabulary implies a 'static and quasi-mystical poetic form which Bond shows during the play to be an inadequate means of helping to create a human society'.<sup>16</sup> The tone of irony is immediately established through Bond's humorous translation of Basho's most famous poem. *A standard translation of that poem was available to Bond, but he chose to ridicule the original. As Scharine explains, Basho's poem 'is intentionally bad and intentionally funny. The pretentiousness of Basho's poetry is intended to prepare us to reject his philosophy'.<sup>17</sup>*

But more than the artistic merit of Basho's poetry is his social status as a cultural father figure, a status which is almost simultaneously revealed with his artistry. As cultural father figure, the Introduction implies, he is supposed to act in accord with humanist assumptions. *Before* Basho encounters the audience and informs them about his poetic ability, he passes a crying, abandoned baby without committing himself. Basho's social attitude is strongly connected to his artistic achievement: judging one aspect of the poet would be insufficient without the other. If this link escapes the audience, the rest of the Introduction

<sup>14</sup> See 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> The Conference was held from 25 June to 2 July 1968 to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the restoration of the Coventry diocese after the first world war.

<sup>16</sup> Biddle, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 157.

underlines Basho's detachment from the social issues and emphasises his search for poetical purity. His art, furthermore, offers no help in understanding or solving the social problem clearly depicted in the exchanges with the Peasant and his Wife. By placing the cause of suffering in the hands of the 'irresistible will of heaven', Basho exposes his belief that man's position is unchangeable and unchanging. In this ideology, there is no place for human endeavour to better society. Basho chooses to abandon the social crisis for the sake of perfecting his art, and he withdraws from the socio-economic challenges of his society. He chooses to avoid 'coming down'. This stand is further underlined in his encounter with the young Kiro.

The first scene shows how the 'enlightened' artist responds to a request from some one who is eager to learn. He refuses Kiro's request to benefit from his knowledge, a refusal which decides the fate of the young man. Kiro abides by Basho's advice to join the local seminary to learn, a learning the effect of which appears in the horseplay sequence in the play. The physical absence of the poet in the deep north is reflected in his intellectual 'contribution' to shaping the city: acts of atrocity, which Bond makes him face as soon as he comes back from the deep north, have increased. The encounter with Kiro and Basho's refusal to admit him to learning are immediately echoed in the devastation the other dehumanised/dehumanising half of the Siamese twins, Shogo, has caused to the city. The absence of the artist, the scene implies, creates a dehumanising reality which prohibits the individual from becoming a better person. The histrionic word 'watch' emphasises Basho's stand when a file of Shogo's prisoners passes him. A complete refusal to come down is embodied in this word.

The 'artistic' and political detachment of the artist is also evident in Scene Two: Basho has moved away from the disturbing suffering of other human beings. He has moved his hut farther down the river to prevent the victims' friends and relatives from crying behind his hut and trampling on his 'vegetables'. The artist's isolation becomes almost total and necessarily, as the events prove, disastrous. The poet's garden becomes his 'refuge against the corrupt ways of the world, a means of ensuring his innocence amidst human suffering'.<sup>18</sup> But moving farther down the river for purity of art (or for artistic vision by flying as a heron) will not, as Basho himself realises, make him escape the sordidness of the social change: the soldiers come to take him to Shogo's court. To arrange an encounter between the twins and the older artist-mentor,

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<sup>18</sup> Pauner, *op. cit.*, p. 61. See also, Coult, *The Plays, op. cit.*, p. 28.

Bond schematically makes Basho pass Kiro on the way to Shogo's court. In the horseplay sequence, Bond establishes both the innocence and playfulness of the natural self and also its vulnerability and corruption by the dehumanising mentor, Father Abbot of the local seminary. Father Abbot is not different from Basho: both teach the young priests to appreciate an artistic object over human life.<sup>19</sup>

The artist takes Kiro to Shogo's court as an object with which to challenge the figure of authority's ability to solve the puzzle. Feeling that he, the enlightened, and almost god-like figure, is above Shogo's social system, Basho takes Kiro to challenge the system.<sup>20</sup> Kiro becomes fascinated by Shogo's character: face to face with Shogo, Kiro chooses the dehumanising character because Shogo elevates human life over the vessel. The intellectual absence of the artist and the absence of guidance make Kiro's choice inevitable: he commits himself to the dehumanised/dehumanising half. It is a choice which inescapably leads to the death of both at the end of the play. When Basho discovers the extent of Shogo's atrocity, that he destroys men as well as hope, he decides to *act*, but it is an action of supporting another dehumanising system, British imperialism. It is a choice which proves to be more destructive than his previous detachment. The nursery scene illustrates Basho's importance as a moral centre of the play: even Shogo needed him in order to function. For Shogo, Basho is the sole emancipator: he keeps shouting his name before he reaches complete exhaustion and kills the offspring.<sup>21</sup> His desperate screams for Basho illustrate his need for the enlightened man/artist/father figure to show him the correct path to follow. But as usual, Basho does not appear.

In his attempt to free himself, Shogo pushes Basho aside and Basho's poems are thrown in the air in the last scene. The act establishes the connection between an art without moral commitment and its consequent act(s) of atrocity. The poems, full of images of death, destruction, and barrenness, provide Kiro also with his wrong assessment of the situation and with his negative answer about the moral justification of life.

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<sup>19</sup> Biddle takes the holy pot as an example of Bond's depiction of how art is used by society in a damaging way: the young priests never think of breaking the pot. Biddle cites other examples in Basho's poem at the end of the play and the Queen's poem in *Passion*. For more details see her *op. cit.*, p. 188. Rademacher has spotted the link between teaching values and the status of the individual in this teaching, as it is depicted in the horseplay scene. See his *op. cit.*, p. 263.

<sup>20</sup> Being a god-like figure is also underlined in p. 177 of the play. Pauner states that Basho thinks himself to be above death itself. See her *op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>21</sup> See Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 97. Scharine attributes Shogo's downfall to the result of two failures to follow Basho's early examples of putting his own interests before human life. Saving Kiro's life and sparing the life of the emperor's baby were lessons in societal controls which Shogo fails to follow. See Scharine *op. cit.*, p. 124.

Without moral commitment, Kiro takes his life and Shogo's life is taken. The poet-politician, the important member of the *status quo*, causes not only the debasement of man but also the perpetuation of dehumanising reality which negates the fulfillment of human needs. He does not participate in the creation of consciousness or the elimination of human suffering, but in the elimination of human beings: both Siamese twins die. As Lappin observes, 'Basho is so self-centered that we barely consider his ability to formulate culture'.<sup>22</sup> When he does engage with the mainstream activity, his involvement causes not only Shogo's physical destruction but the corruption of truth itself. When he does not play the role of the artist-cum-mentor for Kiro (or Shogo for that matter), the dehumanising reality is perpetuated.<sup>23</sup>

Basho constitutes one of the three moral centres in *Narrow Road*, but it must be emphasised here that being responsible for Shogo's orientation or disorientation, and being responsible for getting Georgina's regime involved in the destruction of the city make Basho *the* moral influence in the play. His choices, whether artistic or political (it comes to the same thing) radiate outwards into the life of the characters, although he is keen to preserve his detachment. His choices do not only affect Shogo (and Kiro) but also Georgina. Georgina's atheism matters little to him as long as she helps destroy Shogo, he does not revolt against her social oppression, he does not even explain his Japanese proverb: people who raise ghosts become haunted. By the end of the play, the two other moral centres, Shogo and Georgina are dead or haunted.

## 2) The Artist of "Lear":

Bond's *Lear* is an attempt on his part to play the mentor of his society: if Shakespeare's *King Lear* teaches people to bear suffering and the horror of social injustice and therefore they do not change the system, Bond's mission as an artist is to correct this reading of the play. *King Lear*, to Bond, fails to be a proper mentor for the modern audience, it becomes a false aesthetic experience in the theatre. His *Lear* does not only teach the audience but also its protagonist how to act and change the social causes of suffering and dehumanisation. *Lear*'s final gestural act of digging up the wall he created is taken by critics to be

<sup>22</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>23</sup> See also Esslin, *Brief Chronicles: Essays on Modern Theatre*, Temple Smith, 1970, p. 177. Esslin wonders what would have happened if the artist had not indulged in his selfish search for enlightenment and self expression? The message, to Esslin, is clear: Bond's purpose is to show the artist as responsible for teaching the younger generation its values: art should not reinforce or be part of the dehumanising reality but must teach how to revolt against it.

an expression of the individual's creative imagination which challenges the irrationality of the social system.<sup>24</sup> Lear's understanding of the causes of dehumanisation, an understanding which is reflected in his undoing of the wall, is taken to be a critique of Shakespeare's play.

One of the means through which Lear achieves consciousness is his relationship with the Ghost of the Gravedigger's Boy who, as a Ghost, takes over the mission of teaching the old man Lear how to live. Part of Lear's learning process is conversations with the Ghost, but this is discussed elsewhere in this thesis. What is significant here is the fact that Lear expresses his consciousness in artistic forms. When he reaches a specific stage in his life, he believes in handing down learning to the younger generation, his followers. Lear becomes an artist, a storyteller who understands that parables are sufficient means of explanation in a violent age. The Ghost, contrary to Lear, is eager to get rid of these followers because at this stage he takes over the role of the destructive father figure. Lear's teaching method proves false: contrary to many instances in *Lear* in which the language of teaching and learning is firmly connected to the concrete and specific, as Marion F. O'Connor has commented, these parables of Act Three of the play are examples of failure in achieving communication because the parables depend on Bond's (according to O'Connor, anyhow) private mythology.<sup>25</sup>

### 3) The Wise Fool of "*The Sea*":

Evens in *The Sea* comes closer to Bond's depiction and image of the 'wise fool' who is aware of his characteristics. His guidance, however, is not positive, he comes closer to teaching by negatives: to avoid his own fate. Evens is depicted as an artist-father figure. Beside his critical evaluation of the necessity of 'tragedy' for human beings, Evens is a poet. The first encounter between Evens and Willy witnesses the introduction of a piece of poetry apparently his. But Evens's limits are also apparent in the fact that he has chosen not only to live away from the social activities, but also to aestheticise the same destructive sea that causes the tragedy. However, Evens remains successful in stabilising Willy's thoughts because he is well aware of his limits: he does not participate in either changing society or supporting it. He does not believe

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<sup>24</sup> See Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 23

<sup>25</sup> See, 'The Adaptation of Shakespearean Tragedy in Twentieth-Century English Drama', unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of London, 1979, pp. 440, 455.



that life is absurd, only that *his* life is: 'it wouldn't help *them* if they lived here. We all have to end differently'(p. 168).

The other father figure is Mrs Rafi who starts off as the most histrionic character in the play. But experience, especially her confrontation with Hatch, makes her believe that the fate of her disciple, Rose, must be different from her own fate. She warns her niece to leave town and to avoid becoming like her. Hatch is a third father figure who tells his followers stories to convince them of the dehumanising invaders. The falsity of this assumption is obvious even to the dehumanised half of the twins, Billy. Billy has his own doubts about his mentor's stories because he is conscious that it is human beings who make him suffer. Evens succeeds in neutralising Billy and he also advises Willy to abandon the role of the 'wise fool', to go away to find more satisfactory answers and to change the world.

Evens is a figure with which Bond ends the relationship between the old man and the young one on a note of advice for the younger to avoid the foolishness of the old, but to use the knowledge of the artists in them. So Evens succeeds in avoiding the fate of all the father figures of the plays of the first period, his artistic ingredients help Willy to avoid the fate of Scopey and Len and even the instinctive part of the Siamese twins, Billy, to escape unharmed. Evens explains to Willy that the knowledge of the wise fool is essential, a knowledge without which the young die, but it is up to the young people to 'act' upon their experience and understanding of the social circumstances. The young must read critically the experience of the wise fools.

As Bond goes back to history in order to examine the cultural and ideological father figures in the plays of the second phase, the artist occupies a central role, but his treatment of the figure remains the same. Bond concentrates on the artist as a father figure, as a 'wise fool' whose knowledge and experience affect the younger generation. To simplify the issue, *Bingo* and *The Fool* are two aspects of examining the artist's role: the intellectual, deliberate withdrawal in the first play, and the enforced one in the second. These two 'options' are examined to prove the human being's need for a humanising culture: the two 'old' cultures and figures are doomed to failure because they do not provide the necessary guidance for the individual. The artist, though creator of these cultures, is the first to suffer this dehumanisation, unawareness brings disasters upon him as well as upon the younger generation which he is supposed to guide and guard.

#### 4) The Artist and "Bingo":

Bond takes the author of *King Lear* to be an example of resignation and withdrawal, an example of the dramatist's refusal to or incapability of playing his role: to 'come down' and help shape his society. Bond has chosen Shakespeare's last days for an assessment of the wisdom of the fool in his detachment, and a judgement upon the act of detaching himself and the consequences of this detachment. The choice of depicting the last days enables Bond to avoid depicting Shakespeare's art: he is already an established artist and his reputation is beyond doubt. The play tries to answer the question of how such a figure responds to his discovery that he failed his nation and offspring. The choice of Shakespeare as a protagonist is deliberate as an extreme example of a 'cultural' father figure. Bond's choice 'has the effect of subverting a popular literary stereotype with its associations of serene humanism, which Bond demonstrates as teetering on the edge of bland inhumanity in certain social conditions'.<sup>26</sup> From the first scene, Shakespeare detaches himself from the struggle in the dirt, he is silent. His silence is of his own choice, he is not a passive spectator. It is a silence which springs from a fear of 'dialogue'. Here lies the irony: the dramatist does not communicate through language because he lacks the common grounds that link him to his society. He is alienated because of his involvement in ownership and he is silent because of fear of other people's 'readings' of his action of joining the owning classes: 'You read too much into it'(p. 21), he addresses Combe.

The end of Part One witnesses most of Shakespeare's 'visions' of the consequences of connecting himself to the owning classes, he aesthetises and broods. This is a clear example of the artist living as a heron, not involving himself in the sordidness of life embodied in the long-hanged Young Woman. Like the swan, he did not see the hanging and like her he had 'the view'. The long monologues in this scene underline Shakespeare's inability to provide answers for himself or even to find the correct questions about the situation. All that he discovers is that he was stupefied at the suffering he has witnessed. He arrives at complete bewilderment concerning his role in society: he knows neither where to go nor the sordidness of a death he, to a great extent, created. His 'view' is useless to him as well as to changing the dehumanising reality. But it remains obvious that soliloquy, not dialogue, is the medium for the expression of his vision,

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<sup>26</sup> David Ian Raby, *British and Irish Political Drama in the Twentieth Century: Implicating the Audience*, Macmillan, 1986, p. 110.

a device which underlines his inability to communicate.

Shakespeare realises the outcome of his detachment, of his non-participating attitude to life and the consequence of this attitude. Hay and Roberts observe that Shakespeare 'out on the heath, virtually re-enacts one of his own characters. He rages like King Lear at the injustice and cruelty of the world'.<sup>27</sup> He makes the connection between his previous actions/art and their consequences:

Shakespeare. When I go to my theatre I walk under sixteen severed heads on a gate. You hear bears in the pit while my characters talk. (p. 40)

And according to these partial discoveries, Shakespeare starts to condemn himself because he occupied the position of the mentor/artist who used his art for his own benefit rather than creating consciousness. He realises that his art did not play the essential role of eliminating, or trying to eliminate, suffering or death (the gibbeted Young Woman is simultaneously permanent in sight). His detachment from the social 'sordidness' rendered his art impotent.<sup>28</sup> With his discoveries, Shakespeare goes to meet what Bond offers as the opposite to a completely withdrawn artist, the completely involved one: Ben Jonson.

First, the opposition of the detached and the involved artist figures, Shakespeare and Jonson, is shown simultaneously with the very surroundings they were/are supposed to stand for or against. The peasants, at the peak of their activity against the enclosure and their struggle against the ruling classes, are simultaneously shown in connection to the artists to show the distance between art and reality. As Christy Lynn Brown observes, 'the juxtaposition of the dialogue between Combe and the peasants and Jonson's reverie shows how far art can remove itself from reality, and how the artist can withdraw from life into an aesthetic ideal'.<sup>29</sup> But the main purpose of the encounter is to play two artistic 'stands' against each other: the reality of the peasants is the yardstick with which to measure each stand. Jonson is depicted as 'tougher, earthier' and the scene 'makes for a lively conflict of values and attitudes'.<sup>30</sup> Jonson's 'involvement' with the life of his age is not, however, different from Shakespeare's detachment: Jonson perpetuated

<sup>27</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 191.

<sup>28</sup> Shakespeare, according to Pauner, becomes aware of 'the irrelevance to man's physical and spiritual needs of the existing social structure and institutionalised religion. The dedication to economic pursuit and to a wrathful god exclude men from positive relationships; their lack of understanding, or at worst their indifference to human suffering, always at the service of supra-human purpose, are examples of this'. See her *op. cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>29</sup> 'Alienation versus Commitment: The Role of the Artist Figure in Contemporary British Drama', unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1982, p. 191.

<sup>30</sup> Raby, *op. cit.*, p. 110. This purpose of depicting the two opposite faces of the artist necessitated Bond's changing of Jonson's known image. Bond's interest in the cultural father figure who teaches values and ethics also required him to change the fact that Jonson killed an actor and made the victim into a 'fellow writer'.

the unjust system by uncovering the gunpowder plot. He also has a death wish. And in his idyllic view of the peasants' life, he does not realise the difficulties they encounter a few inches from where he sits.

In short, Jonson is involved in the sordidness of life, but has no moral responsibility and he lacks visions with which to change the unjust social system. He is able to give a far more realistic picture of London life, its competitiveness, materialism, and poor living conditions. But his lack of moral commitment perpetuates this life: he is too cynical, full of hatred, and, as he himself realises, inhuman. And the scene contrasts Jonson's cynicism with the 'serene' Shakespeare. But rather than detaching himself from the social as Shakespeare does, Jonson wastes his life and artistic energy in petty quarrels and hatred. The encounter between the two artists proves the falsity of their attitudes: one, the scene implies, must have visions and practical attitudes to deal with the sordidness of life.<sup>31</sup> Neither artist is able to solve the social problem: Shakespeare, apart from being literally unconscious for most of the scene, realises that he stands in Combe's camp, the peasants have to lie to him in order to protect their interest. And Jonson thinks of solving the problem as if it were a quarrel with a 'fellow writer': 'Only way to end a literary quarrel. Put my sword in him: like a new pen'(p. 45). Killing Combe, to Jonson, could end the class struggle.

What emerges from the encounter is a clear-cut definition of what the artist *should not* do: to have visions a degree of detachment is as necessary as involvement in the sordidness of life. Shakespeare discovers that his detachment is not different from Jonson's involvement and Shakespeare's moral judgement on his own behaviour appears in the fact that by the next scene he possesses Jonson's poison, idiom, hatred, and that he *is* dead. In this scene, Hay and Roberts note, 'Shakespeare recognizes his similarities now to Jonson and when Judith enters he uses Jonson's definition of hatred in an attempt to explain what he has done to his daughter'.<sup>32</sup> He realises the contradiction between means and ends, that he used his art to 'collect' for Judith, the young figure, who is now full of hatred and cynicism. More fundamentally, he reaches the answer to his question about what made Judith speak so badly: 'I made you vulgar and ugly and cheap. I corrupted you'(p. 56).

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<sup>31</sup> The meeting takes place, Brown perceives, 'between two spent writers, equally repelled by their society, yet not exactly able to put their finger on what is wrong'. See her 'Alienation versus Commitment', *op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>32</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 194.

By the final scene, Shakespeare realises the connection between art and reality, and his failure to match both in a moral way throughout his life. He despises his art and the act of writing, using Jonson's definition of the act as a 'white worms excreting blank ink'(p. 62). This particular image about the act of writing is firmly connected to the act of writing his will, his legacy. As if apologising to the Son, Shakespeare confesses the whole truth, that he maintained a life-long indifference towards the human condition, concerning himself instead with securing material comfort. He regrets the fact that he did not behave differently when it was possible. He even succeeds in forming the correct question about his whole writing and life, about his role as a cultural father figure:

Shakespeare. That is the right question: not why did I sign one piece of paper? -- no, no, even when I sat at my table, when I put on my clothes, I was a hangman's assistant, a gaoler's errand boy. If children go in rags we make the wind. If the table's empty we blight the harvest. If the roof leaks we send the storm. God made the elements but we inflict them on each other. (p. 63)

In a gesture of final despair, the mentor Shakespeare answers the question of moral justification of life, of moral responsibility towards human life, negatively and he commits suicide. He discovers the 'absurdity' of his life and attitude. 'Nothing', Judith replies concerning her search for a new will, but the word has its additional, figurative meaning concerning the legacy of the cultural father figure. The comment implies that Shakespeare did not make sense of other people's lives, did not forge the younger generation's consciousness. Shakespeare's art (a method of teaching, as the play implies) fails because his method of living contradicts it: the inevitable result of such a contradiction is the heartless search by Judith for a new will while her father is dead on the floor, and the Son's feeling no guilt towards the killing of his father. The connection between art as mentor to the younger generation and the method of living which must be an example for them is strong in *Bingo*. Both Jonson's and Shakespeare's attitudes are equally wrong, a bit of both is the right balance. This balance is achieved by Wang in *The Bundle*. Before him, however, comes another failing artist, one whose art is almost forced upon him, who does not choose to be an artist: Clare.

##### 5) The Fool of "*The Fool*":

One connection between Clare and Darkie is their spontaneity, the first in his creation and the latter in his reaction against social injustice. The difference between the two characters appears in the first scene

in Darkie's revolt and objection to social injustice and Clare's involvement in his personal need. Clare is characterised from the beginning as more interested in his material needs: food, sex, and poetry. Throughout the play, his artistic activity is shown to reflect his spontaneous imagination. The play depicts the way this artist behaves in his society, and how society reacts to this very simple, though essential, need.

A fundamental point to start with is the figure of Lord Milton who is supposed to be a father figure to, first of all, Clare. His role as a lord is emphasised in order to stress the fact that his guidance is not up to the mark, to say the least. He introduces the economic and social dilemma to the lower class 'to think about', inviting them to submit their labour to his own advantage. In such a society of Lords and Slaves, the forest seems to be the only place suitable for poetic creation. The second scene shows Clare as if creating something, but even then, the socio-economic circumstances reach him. This is to illustrate the twofold relationship between the personal and the social in determining the way the artist behaves: isolation in the forest is impossible, even if the choice was deliberate. This isolation underlines a separation between Clare and his environment, a separation which is indicated in the first scene. In the dialogue among Clare, Darkie, and Patty, Clare seems not only ignorant of what is happening around him but also unable to imagine the consequences:

Darkie. I wondered hev you heard? They're cutting the forest down t'make fields.

Clare. What boy?

Darkie. Milton want the land for corn.

Clare. Why's that?

Darkie. Sell t'the old factory boys. They on't grow corn.

Clare. But not *so* much!

Darkie. Ay. More. They'll drain the common fen an' turn off the river.

Clare. Thass a lot a old scare talk.

Patty (*nervously*). Thass true boy. They saw chaps goin' round the fields this mornin with chains an' writin' books. Thass how it all come out. Wrote the river down in the books.

Darkie. An' the forest.

Clare. *You* heard a this gall? (*She nods.*) How'd you git rid of a river -- (*Laughs.*) turn the river off!

Patty. Dam her up an' pump her out boy! (p. 93)

This passage, among others, indicates the lack of intellectual awareness in Clare, he lacks even Darkie's spontaneous revolt. His own sexual obsession follows the above passage when the Keeper leads Darkie and Patty out, and Clare remains to be joined by Mary later. Clare's isolation is further stressed when he is shown as romanticising his first meeting with Mary and romanticising about living in the forest. He is shown as already absorbed in his 'memories' of this encounter, not recognising the difficulties he

caused her by the very encounter and the impoverished reality of living with the gypsies which is going to be her sort of life. She rejects his attitude, and disappears for ever. The revolt in Scene Three indicates the hardening of material circumstances around Clare. Within these circumstances, he is shown as chasing his Mary. His obsession with her underlines his isolation in the revolt against injustice, and consequently he does not 'share' with Darkie and the rest of the peasants their experience in the prison,<sup>33</sup> misses Darkie's interrogation of the Parson, a learning experience which could have taught Clare a lot as well. With his 'ignorance', he goes to encounter the literary activity of the capital.

Scene Five shows a cultural father figure, Lord Radstock, who is the backer of the spontaneous artist Clare. The simultaneous action shows the relationship between the artist and his cultural supporter, a relationship which is not different from that between the boxer and his backers: both relationships are exploitative. Prior to encountering the Lord, Clare meets another 'fellow artist' who has suffered the effects of the culture of competition, Lamb. Mrs Emmerson explains Lamb's circumstances to Clare: 'No money -- he works as a clerk. He can't support his sister *and* marry -- so he drinks'(p. 119). And although a drunkard, Lamb explains the laws governing art which are, he says, in deep contrast to the laws of supply and demand under which that society operates. He warns Clare of submitting to the latter laws and to be careful if he is to get the god of wisdom, the owl, out of its cage. It is a fool who possesses the ability to do this, but it is another sort of fool who can get his hands hurt. Lamb's words prove prophetic and the unfolding of the events of the play prove what kind of fool Clare is.

The literary father figure-Admiral expresses his 'critical' opinions of Clare's art, a criticism which is a reminder of Lamb's warning. As a commodity, art, to Radstock, must have 'Nothing mawkish -- (*Turns back to Clare.*) a sailor or christian may read it with profit'(p. 123-4). He defines the conditions of acceptable, readable art because he is the one who demands, he is a potential subscriber: he is both a sailor and a Christian. The serious charge the Admiral makes against Clare is that his art 'criticizes the landowning classes'(p. 124), and thus the conditions of 'backing' Clare become obvious: unless Clare's art is divested of this 'smack of radicalism'(p. 124), the cultural father figure is not going to support Clare. But, as I

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<sup>33</sup> In fact', Lappin comments, Clare 'seems rather indifferent to the social protest that surrounds him'. See his *op. cit.*, p. 74.

explained earlier, Clare's art has been depicted by the dramatist as spontaneous: in practising it, he is filling an instinctive need. Clare can almost certainly do nothing about his poetry, his dilemma is solutionless because he cannot 'bargain'. By the end of the boxing match, Clare's similarity with the boxer who is unable to give up and who succeeds only in getting himself hurt is established: Clare's case parallels the boxer's. Clare cannot stop writing poetry and he gets hurt.<sup>34</sup>

Clare, however, is unable to perceive the cause or the solution for himself and the boxer. At this stage, Clare cannot comprehend the responsible figures for his own dilemma, a responsibility the play-within-the-play allocates earlier in the play. Nonetheless, when Mrs Emmerson brings back the unsold copies of Clare's poetry, he realises that the cultural father figure, among others, 'caused' his predicament. Significantly, when Mrs Emmerson specifies the required process for making Clare's poetry readable, he names Milton and Radstock. The naming implies that these father figure are responsible for Clare's failure: the Lords' power in the city and in the village made Clare's art impossible.

When faced with the ultimate power of society, Clare finds it inescapable to defend himself. His aggressive tone with Lord Milton is an attempt to keep his integrity, but he refuses to step in line accepting the price he has to pay: 'I've eat my portion of the universe an' I shall die of it. It was bitter fruit'(p. 139).<sup>35</sup> Clare's protests go unheeded, and he is forcibly taken away to the asylum but not before he makes a final gesture of resistance in the image of the boxer. Society and its representatives succeed in their attempt to take the life-blood and the sanity out of Clare's art.

## 6) The Way out of the Swamp: "*The Bundle*":

*The Bundle* depicts the wise fool and his offspring in a much more strong way than even its *raison d'être*: *Narrow Road*. It presents two artist figures: the characteristic old father figure and a new young artist. The generation comparison between the two is inescapable. Basho's art in *The Bundle* functions in supporting the metaphysical and/or the *status quo* while Wang's art functions in changing the sordid real-

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<sup>34</sup> For further details on the censoring of Clare's art by his backers, see Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 80; Cave, *op. cit.*, p. 284; Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, pp. 110-11.

<sup>35</sup> Brown has explained that Clare's speech and approach indicate that he has 'joined the ranks of Darkie and Mary in his insistence on independence and his refusal to come to terms with his oppressors'. See 'Alienation versus Commitment', *op. cit.*, p. 228.



ity.<sup>36</sup> These opposite perspectives of art's function are embodied in generational representatives: the relationship between the old Basho and the young artist Wang is more apparent as between cultural father and son figures. At some stage in the play, Wang becomes a son figure to Basho: he is educated and raised in Basho's house, as a slave. This different class position produces different results than those Basho wished for.

Basho's journey to the deep north is to contemplate enlightenment in order to make a better judge of him. This is a new dimension Bond adds to the artist Basho, to *be* one of, and not to *represent* the ruling classes. From the beginning of the play, Basho is shown as obsessed with self-dramatisation, apparent in his diction and ceremonial utterance which he uses throughout his daily life. The poet's self-appreciation appears on many occasions, but most important of all is that he equates his Word to Bless (p. 2). With these qualities and talents, Basho is made to disclose his attitude to human beings by the encounter with the abandoned baby. Because the baby is not big, Basho does not consider it to be god-sent to carry his bundle. He offers the baby what his namesake offers the baby in *Narrow Road*: an absurd counsel to be patient. This encounter becomes the yardstick with which the audience measures Basho's artistry and his action throughout the rest of the play. The link between art and the reaction to human suffering is emphasised by the fact that Basho's introduction of himself as the great poet coincides with his reaction to the abandoned baby. That link facilitates judging Basho by what he does rather than by what he says about himself.

In the first scene also, Basho is depicted as a strong supporter of the *status quo*, and a believer in human beastliness: 'I have seen the darkness of human life -- murder theft death -- The *truth* when it is dark corrupts. First I must find enlightenment. Then I will judge'(p. 1). His art mirrors the human condition and misery, and does not advocate enlightenment in order to change them. 'The indirection of his verse', Lappin observes, 'and its conservative rejection of anything but the status quo imply a belief in human destiny that resists man's participation; the sordidness of the world, according to Basho, is the result of the intrinsic viciousness of human nature'.<sup>37</sup>

The self-centred artist goes in circles in his search for enlightenment: he comes back to where he

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<sup>36</sup> 'By *The Bundle*', Lappin explains, 'Basho embodies the "myth" of the ruling class'. See, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>37</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 101.

started. The schematic characterisation appears in this scene, Two, when Basho, after fourteen years of absence comes back to the same spot, and, still more melodramatically, encounters the same Ferryman and the baby whom Basho abandoned. Bond exposes the falsity of Basho and his enlightenment in this scene: Basho continues shouting pretentiously 'I must go back', and repeatedly asks the Ferryman 'Where'. He thinks the comforting voice of the Ferryman 'a vision sent by the devil', a remark which exposes Basho as a superstitious, not enlightened, man; he faints twice; he takes the water with which the Ferryman tries to awaken him as to be a sign of enlightenment; his answer about the nature of this enlightenment is a mixture of the trivial and the exaggerated which defines nothing specific or concrete.

The baby left by the river is, melodramatically, sold to the same artist who abandoned him in the first scene. And although the baby grows up and is educated in Basho's house, the whole experience creates a different character of Wang because of his class position. Although he is taught to write and to study the classics and is accustomed to stand behind Basho's judicial chair and to listen to the poets' singing to the Koto, he experienced these from a specific perspective which makes him refuse them. The conclusion of this long encounter in Scene Four with Basho persuades Wang to reject him as a mentor. The experience with Basho seems to provide Wang with the necessary tools of understanding, of how to have visions. The test of Wang's approach is another baby left by the river. Basho uses the incident to blackmail Wang in order to keep him in his service, but Wang refuses the humanistic approach which he was taught by the Ferryman. His throwing of the baby in the river is a refusal of both Basho's and the Ferryman's approaches. The experience makes him look for a third approach to solving the problem of justice in general, not only just *this* problem of the abandoned baby.

Wang leaves looking for outcasts, an expression of his readiness to get involved with the sordidness of life, and he uses art to attract these outcasts. Art, this time drama, is used as the means of applying theoretical attitude to practice in order to change others and transfer knowledge. The playlet he improvises to gain the support of the bandits illustrates the functionally different requirement of art in order to change society. Art, the playlet implies, can explain the mechanisms of society and empower the participants/audience to conceptualise the required solutions. Through art, information flows and questions are asked and answered. The different purpose of employing drama makes Wang arrive at specific tactics

with which to change the dehumanising reality. He even uses Basho's poetry, which is not designed for didactic purposes, to advocate knowledge of how the ruling class thinks and executes power and control.

To illustrate that Wang is the real artist who does not live as the heron but the one who comes down to get involved with the sordidness of life, Bond makes Wang tell a story as a conclusion to the play. The story is another example of the function of art to demonstrate the weight of the past, while simultaneously Basho is still looking for the road to the deep north. The connection between the weight of the past and the old Basho is clear, but the moral of the story is a warning to his comrades not to carry the dead on their back, to get rid of the burden of the old values, mentors, art, etc. The conclusion of the play *The Bundle* is given to Wang who summarises the way to establishing the humane society: 'To judge rightly what is good -- to choose between good and evil -- that is all that is to be human' (p. 78).

In *The Bundle*, Bond demystifies the artist by transferring his role to a non-artistic figure whose primary 'talent' is the ability to combine experience with visions. Lappin observes that

It is not Basho who functions in the spirit of creativity or who possesses the efficacy of imagination in the play. In *The Bundle*, Bond has sufficiently demystified the artist to the extent of transferring the elements of the imagination from the exclusivity of the 'artist' to a non-artistic figure. Though not precisely an artist, Wang comes closest in the play to mediating Bond's definition of the writer's function.<sup>38</sup>

Wang combines visions or methods of understanding with his experience, he does not live up there as a heron, but comes down to the swamp, to the most victimised group of people in his society, and uses his visions to change them and his society. Through art, he succeeds in using his visions to find solutions to the sordid reality which the cultural father figure has created. Art, for Wang, is not an end but a means of change. As Bond arrives at defining the real artist and his role in society and, furthermore, at opposing this to what is usually taken to be the 'perfect' artist, there remains no need for the appearance of the artists in the next plays, the father figure artist proved a failure, and the young one proved successful by depending on his artistic efforts to change his society.

#### Summary:

1) Throughout this chapter, Anna's 'A Poem' in *The Worlds* has been taken to be the guide for exa-

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<sup>38</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 95.

mining the function and practice of the artist in society. The artist, the poem confirms, cannot play the role of the heron wandering around in the sky, but he has to come down to eat in the frozen winters. The implications are obvious: the artist has to get involved in shaping the process of change in his society. The artist who detaches himself from the social process, the artist who plays the observer, as many of the historical artists in Bond's plays do, do not function in looking after the young nor do they educate or empower them.

2) The use of the artist figure in Bond's plays makes the characterisation theatrical not only because it is schematic as an extension of Bond's characterisation of the relationship between father and son figures, but also because it puts the creator of art himself in the focus of the theatre experience. In employing the artist, the drama becomes its own object. The artists are employed for schematic, illustrative function, a method of characterisation which emphasises the theatricality of the figures.

3) In his schematic characterisation, Bond depicts a father figure(s) in his plays in relation to a young figure(s). The experience of the mentor of the first two plays, *The Pope's Wedding* and *Saved* proves to be dehumanising to the young men. The young man's fascination with the father figure leads to the further dehumanisation of both figures, and the result is death, although in *Saved* the young man does not physically kill his mentor. All father (and mother) figures prove to be dehumanising in *Early Morning* as well. Queen Victoria is given an absolute power and potentials which facilitate giving her the title of the father figure of the nation, and not only a father figure to her Siamese twins.

4) Basho, the artist of *Narrow Road*, is of primary importance as a father figure to all the young figures of the play. He also proves incapable of producing a humane society because he separates his visions from his experience. He uses life to serve his art and uses art to serve dehumanising political systems. The relationship between the young and the wise old man is rather more sophisticated and dialectical in *Lear* because the young figure of the Ghost of the Gravedigger's Boy leads Lear to regain his sanity. But the events prove to Lear the necessity to dismiss the passive, isolationist part in the figure of the Ghost.

5) The play that ends the series of the first cycle of plays, *The Sea*, witnesses the best possible example of this kind of father figures, Evens. He is the character who defines his role, ability, and the way for the young man out of the island. Evens introduces himself as the wise fool whose knowledge is essential but not enough. By understanding his position and treating the dehumanised half of the twins in *The Sea*,

Evens succeeds in advising Willy and in avoiding the fate of his predecessors. Billy does not batter the wise fool, and Willy goes away looking for answers different from his mentor's.

6) The plays of the second period are a sort of historical research for a viable political system and therefore art and artist are heavily involved in defining the kind of culture in which the individual can live. By showing the artist in society, by showing the sociopolitical circumstances which generate the artist's dilemma, Bond creates a degree of detachment from the psychology of the individual: he creates theatricality. Most of the cultures Bond shows, especially in *The Fool*, prove to be dehumanising because of their lack of real cultural father figures. Only Hecuba of *The Woman*, although the play contains no artist figures, is capable of supporting her disciples, the Dark Man and Ismene, and therefore they succeed in defeating, however temporarily, the Greeks' irrational system. But it is worthwhile to observe that it is the young figure Ismene who virtually forces Hecuba to see the tragic reality around them and proves to her the impossibility of non-participation in the tragedy.

7) In *The Bundle*, Wang breaks the deadlock of the conflict between the old and the young when he transfers his knowledge and experience to his followers through art. He proves that the young are capable of playing the artist and the revolutionary, and that they can establish the rational society despite the reactionary regimes of Basho, the poet and politician. With the re-examination of the relationship between Basho and his society, and of stating the possibility of the younger generation to build his future without reliance on the father figure, the artist disappears from Bond's drama.

## Chapter Two

# Oppositional Configuration

## Siamese and Other Twins

The nineteenth century's interest in psychology gave the characterisation of the split character in Western drama a decisive turn as an expression of good and evil within the same character. This interest appears in the comedy of identical twins which descended into melodramatic as well as expressionistic plays. As J. L. Styan observes, Strindberg's *To Damascus* exhibited his expressionistic tendency towards 'splitting a single personality into several characters, each representing a facet of the whole'.<sup>1</sup> In this depiction, expressionism used characters as agents who stand for a condition of mankind. In another Strindberg play, *Dream Play*, the personality is split into four principles: the Officer, the Lawyer, the Quarantine Master, and the Poet. Within this tradition of characterising a specific tendency within the individual comes Brecht's dramaturgical strategy. Brecht employs the same method but in a different way, a way which persuaded some critics to consider his characterisation the opposite of the expressionistic tradition.

Many examples can be found in Brecht's plays which use the technique of the split personality: *Man Equals Man*, *The Seven Deadly Sins* and, most notably, *The Good Person of Setzuan* and *Puntilla*. Brecht has used the device of showing the contradictions inside the character, but he made the contradictions transparent to the audience. The Brechtian technique aims at showing the conflict inside the human personality, or its moral dilemma in a specific kind of society. *The Good Person of Setzuan* is taken to be Brecht's most obvious depiction of the split personality, the split between the requirements of a competitive, dehumanising society and man's good instincts. In this play, Brecht extends the normal expressionistic exposure of the contradictions within self to a full examination as Shen Te splits off Shui Ta herself. Through the characterisation,

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<sup>1</sup> *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice*, vol. III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 25.

Brecht has in fact transformed that method of special pleading which insists on the spectator seeing the world through the actions and tensions of a single mind. He achieves this transformation by deliberate generalisation and by the appeal to impersonal judgement, he transforms the traditional conflict between good and bad to be between goodness of humanity and badness of social system as alternative expressions of single being.<sup>2</sup>

But as a reminiscent of psychological interpretation, it seems that Martin Esslin's famous analysis of the play has urged many critics to defend the play, and especially its split character. Needle and Thomson observe that 'in the western psychological tradition, the mask of Shui Ta would be a mask of evil. But Shui Ta is not evil, he is *respectable*. That is Brecht's ironic masterstroke'.<sup>3</sup> Other critics recognised that the two characters cannot be taken as psychological split because they are in fact one: Shui Ta and Shen Te exist as two distinctively separate characters without drugs or Schizophrenia to facilitate the exchange of roles, an exchange which would offend the common notion of psychological plausibility, if regarded naturalistically. Speirs also observes that Brecht

was given considerable freedom to overstep the limits of probability by the genre in which he was working: because the audience is aware of the "make believe" element in the parable, it will tolerate a considerable degree of simplification, exaggeration or implausibility. Within this convention the "character" is treated as if it were a psychological whole, and the "hinge" that holds together the two halves of the character is an *emotional* one.<sup>4</sup>

In the fact that the dramatist pays little attention to illusion, or 'make believe', lies the theatricality of characterisation of the Siamese twins. The characterisation contains a certain simplification of characterisation; it is a sort of schematic characterisation which is intended for illustration and demonstration.<sup>5</sup> Part of its theatricality as a schematic characterisation is that it shows two (or more) oppositional viewpoints, it is a method which is used to persuade the audience to compare and not to get involved in the psychology of the individual or its emotions. This schematisation leads to melodramatic touches at many points, and at other points, the characterisation is 'totally incredible in terms of fourth-wall style theatre'.<sup>6</sup>

The genre of the parable gives a considerable freedom in avoiding the restrictions of plausibility, a freedom which takes the method of characterisation in Siamese twins further into the theatrical as 'make

<sup>2</sup> Raymond Williams, *Modern Tragedy*, Chatto and Windus, 1969, pp. 197-8.

<sup>3</sup> Brecht, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>4</sup> Brecht, *op. cit.*, p. 147. See also Samar Attar, *The Intruder in Modern Drama* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter D. Lang, 1981), 1981, p. 82; Walter H. Sokel, 'Brecht's Split Characters and his Sense of the Tragic', in *Brecht: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Peter Demetz (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), pp. 126-133. Although Sokel is not specific about the nature of society which leads to splitting the personality, his study is useful especially when he correlates the split character to tragedy.

<sup>5</sup> See Styran, *Modern Drama, III, op. cit.*, p. 162.

<sup>6</sup> Fuegi, *The Essential Brecht, op. cit.*, p. 133.

believe' is not necessary. The freedom the dramatist feels with the parable encourages him to use 'exemplary' characterisation to illustrate his point. This freedom is part of a wider freedom the dramatist enjoys with the parable when he allocates some of his 'realistic' figures the power of legendary characters, as Bond does with Queen Victoria in *Early Morning*. The dramatist can extend this freedom to configure opposing characters each embodying a principle or a tendency for the purpose of demonstration. Bond uses even names to illustrate the opposition: Bodice (that which covers the heart) and Fontanelle (that which covers the brain) in *Lear*, and Clare (that which indicates clarity or light) and Darkie (that which connotes darkness) in *The Fool*.

Critics have studied Bond's employment of the characterisation of the split character, but the main fault in these studies is that they followed Bond's own pairing which confused twins with doubles. Bond's pairing considers the conflict to emerge between Scopey/Alen in *The Pope's Wedding*; Fred/Len in *Saved*; the Siamese twins in *Early Morning*; and Kiro/Shogo in *Narrow Road*. To Bond, 'they are attracted and repelled by one another -- and they all involve the other in death.'<sup>7</sup> However, neither Fred nor Len dies in *Saved*, and if we take Bond's evaluation of Len's position at the end of *Saved* at its face value, his claimed optimism of the play becomes meaningless.<sup>8</sup> Hay and Roberts have been cautious in following Bond's pairing. They consider the central figure as tied in some way to 'another figure who is both the protagonist's opposite and also part of the main figure's own makeup'.<sup>9</sup> This mechanism of pairing the plays crosses over the barrier of age: part of the pairing occurs as between an old and a young protagonist. This pairing has led to some confusion. Besides, the pairings even in this sense disappear by the end of the first phase of his plays.

In my judgement, Bond's use of the split character must be approached differently: there are split characters *in the younger generation only*, and there are mentors to this divided self, always from the older generation. The generational approach is useful because it exposes the schematic nature of the structure in Bond's plays, a schematic structure which depends on the characterisation of the split character, among

<sup>7</sup> As recorded by Hay and Roberts, *A Companion*, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>8</sup> See 'Appendix' to *Plays: One*, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

<sup>9</sup> See Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, pp. 100. For other followers of Bond's pairing see, Christopher Innes, 'The Political Spectrum of Edward Bond: From Rationalism to Rhapsody', *Modern Drama*, 25, 2 (June 1982), p 191; Castillo, *op. cit.*, p. 79. Castillo is more inclined to study the Other as part of the pair in the characters in *Saved*, *Early Morning*, and *Lear* as existing outside (society or authority figures), within (ghosts), or beside (identical) the protagonist.



other means, to investigate and demonstrate his issues. Many plays in the first and second phases are schematically structured to explore the relationship between the young men, sometimes embodied in twins, and the older mentors, sometimes embodied in artists. The appropriate method is to look at the younger generation apart from the old one but in relation to them as mentors. The essential difference between the twins is that they are schematically shown as to represent the half that submits to the dehumanising reality, and the half that yearns for understanding and changing or at least trying to transcend this reality. The pairing is not always as clear as I make it sound, but it remains the essential method of characterisation throughout the plays, especially the first phase. Bond believes that most human beings are bifurcated, and his opinion of the causes of the split is that it lies in the way the human consciousness progressed in history: what society has repressed is the half that is socially moralised, while the half that tries to become is what he called the 'natural human being'.<sup>10</sup> Here is one of the ideologically similar motivations between Brecht and Bond in considering the dehumanising societies to be the reason behind the split of the individual.

Avoiding the psychological interpretation (or misinterpretation) which Brecht's depiction of the split character has suffered, Bond shows both halves *simultaneously*. In this characterisation, the twins are less of a split and more of two different agents for the purpose of illustration. The coexistence of the twins manifests the way society represses the instinctive goodness of one of them and the result of that repression on the other. The former half is always an observer of society's methods and of the way the rift between the individual and society (and the world) is created. The method of characterisation, in one sense, equals the device of simultaneous action or juxtapositional structure: both are meant to show the audience the events in relation to other events, or the character in relation to his ego. This is the essence of the theatricality of the characterisation in some of Bond's plays, and specifically *Early Morning*: it invites the audience to compare, a comparison which causes the detachment from observing the character emotionally and, instead, be critically able to judge.

### I) The Pairing in "*The Pope's Wedding*":

According to my pairing, the division in *The Pope's Wedding* is not between Alen and Scopey but

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<sup>10</sup> See 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', *op. cit.*, p. 12.

between the latter and Bill, although the division is not distinctive as in other plays either because the method of characterisation was not adequately formed in Bond or, more likely, because the conflict was not intended as to be between these two but rather between the younger Scopey (and Bill, in a sense) and the older mentor Alen. It remains obvious, however, that the main rivalry in the play occurs between Scopey and Bill, a rivalry which is embodied in their endeavour to integrate themselves in their society, to become better persons and which is evident in their sexual relationship with Pat. It is not strange, then, to find that the play's first 'rough' encounter in the horseplay sequence occurs between these two figures.

Bond's depiction of Bill concentrates on showing him as the most dehumanised character. Although, or because, he is the best player, he is victimised by the farmowner, and deliberately pushed away from playing the cricket match. He submits to the circumstances. The other half takes the opportunity, even if he is the player number thirteen: the cricket match is the first opportunity for him to transcend being. Bill's absence from the cricket match constitutes Scopey's opportunity to integrate himself within his community and to gain significance within it. His awareness of the importance of the opportunity motivates him to train hard, and he succeeds in getting into the team. The rest of the youths, begrudgingly but appreciatively, speak about Scopey's effort to get into the match:

Lorry. They reckon 'e's been out trainin' on the common early mornin's for months.

Byo. Rum boy.

Ron. 'E must a been countin' on gettin' in the team some time.

Lorry. Chriss 'e knocked owd man Bullright all over the place, ent 'e? (p. 256)

The discriminating experience of the cricket match provides Scopey with its rewards, embodied in his new social position which attracts even the girlfriend of the very player he substituted, Pat. His becoming a significant figure in his community motivates him to continue his search, and he is fascinated by discovering the place in which the mysterious, almost mythical, figure Alen lives. The end of Scene Six witnesses Scopey's first wondering about the possibility the place possesses, and his discussion with Pat and June in Scene Seven illustrates his eagerness to keep up with his dreams. Whether or not the postcard-lined room he dreams of is 'symbolically womblike',<sup>11</sup> his day-dreaming shows his frustration at the economic obstacle and an eagerness to overcome it. Further difficulties arise because of his marriage.

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<sup>11</sup> This is Scharine's interpretation, see his *op. cit.*, p. 37.

The fear of returning to being part of the social monotony, embodied in his collapsing marriage, motivates Scopey to look for another victorious moment similar to that of the cricket match. The mysterious Alen appears again on the horizon, and Scopey almost forces Alen's door open and an unending stream of questions starts. Some promising things are in the air for Scopey, or thus he thinks, and consequently Scopey becomes part of Alen's hut, a permanent figure in Alen's world. The mentor, however, proves 'fake', and Scopey's disappointment is almost complete. The mentor, unintentionally, victimises the young man, and Scopey loses even his first prize, Pat, back to the boyfriend she abandoned. When Scopey senses the impossibility of even returning to his position previous to encountering Alen, he tries to become the old man/mentor by killing him. But this is, as the title suggests, a pope's wedding. The dehumanising power of the mentor reaches devastation for various reasons, one of which is the young man's 'pope's wedding' to become somebody else, and because his inability to correctly evaluate the mentor's value and potentials. For these reasons, Scopey becomes more dehumanised than even his rival Bill.

## II) The Pairing in "*Saved*":

The same pattern is repeated almost typically in *Saved*, with the exception that the young man does not *physically* kill his mentor. The mentor's wider resources and endeavour in *Saved* make that difference. As far as the young man is concerned, another differential reason arises. Len, contrary to Scopey, is aware of the mentor's deadliness from the beginning of his encounter with Pam. Len even predicts a fate for himself different from Harry's and a relationship with Pam different from that between Mary and Harry, he is eager to become: 'I won't turn out like that. I wouldn't arst yer if I didn't know better'n that. That sort of carry-on ain' fair' (p. 34), he tells Pam. But after a period of happy affair with Pam, the other dehumanised half, Fred, wins over Pam, and Len is relegated to the role of the observer. However, his eagerness to help creating better circumstances is in no doubt throughout the play. His loss of Pam refers to the fact that she is more dehumanised than any one in the play because of the same father figure, Harry.

The horseplay sequence in the play, like that in *The Pope's Wedding*, proves that the youths are dehumanised because of various social pressures, and Len, like Scopey, is distinguished from them in the degree of dehumanisation. The difference between the two halves, Len and Fred, appears in their long encounter at the beginning of the famous Scene Six. In this encounter, Fred's sexuality is mentioned as the

reason for his winning over Len, but it is a sexuality which is used as a means of suppressing the female, his victims. The participation in stoning the baby also illustrates the extent to which both are dehumanised. Throughout the play, Fred's cruelty to Pam and Len's sympathetic approach to her are apparent and the contrast illustrates that Fred is the being half and Len is the becoming half.<sup>12</sup> Len's desire to become explains, for example, his staying in the house for a long time after the death of his putative baby. Fred's attack on Len in Scene Ten illustrates the difference between the two halves of the character and their approaches to life:

Fred. 'Er ol' people still alive? If yer can call it that.  
 Len. Yeh.  
 Fred. Yer ain' still livin' there?  
 Len. I'm goin' soon.  
 Fred. Yer're as bad as them. (pp. 112-3)

Len's active approach to becoming appears in his continuous questions, his curiosity to change, and his willingness to create better circumstances. These make him the active half. What he lacks, which proves disastrous in the event, is guidance, a father figure to indicate the rational method of change he needs. The lack of guidance takes Len, as it takes Scopey, into the very fate he tried to avoid. By the end of the play, Len is part of the uncommunicating cycle around him, he is another copy of Harry. At some stage, Len even repeats Harry's reluctance to get involved in the action. The play shows the slow downfall of Len, of his turning out to be another Harry.

### III) The Pairing in "*Early Morning*":

In the first two plays, then, the conflict is not between the two halves of the character but between the young and the old man. In *Early Morning*, however, the oppositional young characters struggle against each other. Bond characterised Arthur and George as Siamese twins, the first representing man's instinctive goodness and the latter the half submissive to socialised morality. The presentation of the split character in *Early Morning* is an extension of the previous method of depiction in the *The Pope's Wedding* and

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<sup>12</sup> Fred's sexuality, as Castillo explains, 'is a weapon for the victimization of female bodies; his penis and the stone he throws at the child are parallel mechanisms for revenge on society. His rupture of moral conventions (seducing women in church) and his defiance of Law (the murder of the child) are equivalent gestures demonstrating the intolerable limits on human behavior and the grotesque actions that result when speech fails to voice its outrage. The sexual and industrial modes of exploitation have a common result – the reduction of man from a complex being, a healthy animal, to an interchangeable sign'. See, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

*Saved*. The importance of oppositional characterisation in *Early Morning* is not illustrated through or exclusive to the Siamese twins, for other indistinguishable pairs persist in the play. Disraeli and Gladstone are depicted 'as virtually indistinguishable power-hungry gangsters, vying for supremacy of position'.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, they are close enough as to share one bed in Florence's brothel, and they die together in her bed. Victoria's effort to win over Florence has its significance in this respect: wearing one of a pair of earrings will make them 'blood brothers'(p. 158). But it is the handcuffed Len and Joyce who underline the phenomenon of the split character. The revelation of their position, according to Hirst, 'has the most marked effect on Arthur who sees in their condition a parallel with his own'.<sup>14</sup> The significance of their handcuffing appears throughout the play, especially at the end of Scene Fifteen as discussed below.

As I am arguing, the image of the Siamese twins is the ultimate instance of a pair of characters to represent being and becoming, and the difficulty of reconciling self and the world, a depiction dimly present in the early plays.<sup>15</sup> The influence has been identified by the critics as to lie in Brecht's split characterisation in order to represent man's eagerness to live humanely but which being thwarted by the immorality of competitiveness.<sup>16</sup> But for two reasons I think the influence of *Camino Real* has been immense on Bond's method of characterisation. The first is that Bond uses the same dramaturgical principle as Williams's. As Downing Cless observes, the characters of *Camino Real* 'are trapped within contradictory, alienated identities. For instance, Kilroy is champ/clown'.<sup>17</sup> The degree of the image's physicality in *Early Morning* might have come from the physicality of *Camino Real*'s.<sup>18</sup> The second reason is that Brecht's influence on Bond has never reached imitation: Bond was claiming at that time that Brecht was out of date. However, Brecht and Williams share a similar vision of man's alienated self in society. Be its source Williams or Brecht, Bond's depiction of the image is divided in two halves: 1) the half that accepts the

<sup>13</sup> Harben, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

<sup>15</sup> Bond: 'Well, I was quite literal-minded about these because they represent the reality which in a sense you can't see. I think it is true that most people are not one person, but a composite of two selves that are pulled in different directions. In *Early Morning* there is a set of social mores, social conditioning, imposed on Arthur which works not only to his disadvantage but ultimately to that of every member of society. George is the bad half, the socialized self, socialized in a bad way, which Arthur must get rid of'. As quoted by Matherne and Maiorana, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

<sup>16</sup> See Harben, *op. cit.*, p. 238; Dohman, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>17</sup> 'Alienation and Contradiction in *Camino Real*: A Convergence of Williams and Brecht', *Theatre Journal*, 53, 1 (March 1983), p. 44.

<sup>18</sup> Bond: 'I saw *Camino Real* very early -- probably before I'd written *The Pope's Wedding*. I like its plasticity'. Private correspondence, 3 February 1990.

established norms of society, and 2) the half that questions these norms in order to become something different.

Arthur's need to live authentically is apparent from the beginning: he is bewildered by the political plots and counter-plots, but remains uncommitted to the older generation embodied in his father and mother. He does not abide by Victoria's authorial power nor does he participate in his father's coup. His instincts lead him to look for justice, an inclination he shows in the first trial. But becoming different needs a corpus of intellectual principles, and throughout the play he is eager to find them. His questioning of Len's reasons for killing Mr Hobson in the cinema queue shows his pursuit of understanding. Arthur remains alive throughout the play, even in heaven, and society cannot kill him completely. Contrary to that is George whose death early in the play signifies his interior condition as deteriorating. Society's power to 'frame' the individual into a restricted, final 'product' appears in his condition, and the fact that he moulders makes him a 'dated' product. George's deterioration and Victoria's resurrection of him, which produces no difference in him, emphasise that he is a mere puppet animated by the promptings of his dehumanising society and its 'head' Victoria.

George's deterioration parallels Arthur's maturity. The latter's freedom could only be achieved through transcending society's immorality, and his freedom is connected to the physical separation between himself and George. 'Disraeli urges him', Hay and Roberts comment, 'to cut himself free from his dying brother, so that the coup can retain its "appearance of legality"'.<sup>19</sup> Even George himself shows eagerness to be cut off from the 'living' Arthur because freedom to him could only be achieved in death: living is a damnation to that society. Arthur is unsure of the correctness of society's answer to his moral bewilderment. His repeated question about the reason for killing Hobson signifies, as I stated above, the search for authentication to the assumption that people live in order to kill or be killed. He keeps his brother and protects what remains of him even if he does not believe completely in George's assumptions. Arthur is also bound by the social orientation of the same dehumanising society, an orientation which leads to his madness.

This questioning of the norms and mechanics of society takes the form of an argument with the 'skeleton' of George in Scene Eleven, a scene which witnesses the culmination of Arthur's madness.

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<sup>19</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 73.

Arthur's madness itself is employed as an expression of his search for sanity. In his 'intellectual' progress, Arthur converses with the skeleton and he reaches the conclusion that man is innately destructive, there is no moral justification for living. Scharine has commented:

Society always struggles against those who would dispute its power. Nevertheless, Arthur cannot cut off George. He persists in seeing the problem from within the social order in which he was raised, and he still believes in the need for a system; therefore he cannot eliminate the socialized part of himself.<sup>20</sup>

In his madness, he reaches the ultimate limit of the Victorian morality. But the solution proves wrong, the handcuffed figures at the end of Scene Fifteen are not free, they are bound by the same conditioning which Arthur suffered. The falsity of the solution is confirmed when George fastens himself to Arthur.

Even in heaven the desire to become does not desert Arthur, he still shows eagerness to 'live'. In heaven also, the physical division of the body between the two halves of the character becomes clear: Arthur's actions affect George's because the human organs are divided between them. To the last moment in the play, Arthur keeps his 'intellectual' organ alive; he is reduced to a head, an expression of his insistence on his questioning attitude and search for a more humane system. The rivalry between the two halves reaches a peak when Arthur 'dies' after being reduced to a head: when George eats the head, he feels free. The implications are clear: the existence of the becoming half is painful to the socialized one and the freedom of the latter is achievable only at the expense of the humane half:

George. I'm free! I'm free (*He runs out.*)

Victoria. He won't grow again.

Albert. Why not?

Victoria. He's dead.

Albert. How?

Victoria. If George's pain is gone, Arthur's gone. (p. 219)

But being 'dead' in a heaven of cannibalism means that Arthur becomes the most distinguishable member of his 'society'. He grows again and transcends the conditioning of society. This is the significance of Arthur's Ascension at the end of the play, the Victorian society fails in determining Arthur's conduct. Within this context, a female is the prize for the triumphant half of the fighting twins. Although the sexual implications of the female body are reduced in *Early Morning*, the same characterisation persists in Bond's plays: Florence is the object of struggle or, rather, she is made to embody the conflict between

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<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 99.

the Siamese twins. At the beginning, she is 'given' to the Victorianised half, and because of her submission to the Victorian power, she is sexually assaulted by the symbol of this Victorianisation, Victoria herself. Florence loses her gender and disguises herself as a male. She, furthermore, literally prostitutes herself to the agents defending the Victorian regime, the soldiers.<sup>21</sup> She also opens a brothel in order to earn her living. But at the end, it is Arthur's love and care which humanises her. She starts to wonder about his condition, and her kiss indicates the return of her natural feelings. The 'thing in the eye'(p. 223), even if she pretends it, is a sign that the heaven of cannibalism is not what Victoria thinks: at least two human beings feel it otherwise.

#### IV) The Pairing in *Narrow Road*:

As far as being and becoming is concerned, Kiro is *the* most important figure to exemplify Bond's persistence in depicting the connection between being and the question of enlightenment, of becoming. The split here, as elsewhere, is in the younger figure who becomes Shogo and Kiro. And although the depiction lacks the physicality of the Siamese twins of *Early Morning*, other means still strongly express the link between the two halves. The confusion about the fate of the baby abandoned by the river bank in the play's Introduction signifies more important issues than the origins of the adult characters. Attempts have been made to resolve the fate of the baby, but to no satisfactory answer because Bond himself has not been decisive about that point.<sup>22</sup> Coult was cautious in his hypothesis: Shogo, to him, 'almost certainly was that baby'.<sup>23</sup> But this suggestion is correctly abandoned by another critic, Duncan, who has indicated that Shogo could not be the baby since Bond himself specified his age as only twenty-five while Basho spent thirty years in the north, and Bond, claims Duncan, is usually precise.<sup>24</sup> The dialogue of the play itself leaves Shogo's origins mysterious. Saying that he left his parents' home as soon as he could does not specify that these parents were his *blood* parents.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> To illustrate the extent of Florence's submission to the Victorian dehumanising society, Bond, to my judgement, interrupts the flow of the story by introducing Scene Thirteen to show what the Victorians could do to the 'Nightingale'.

<sup>22</sup> Bond once said that the baby 'was actually left there, probably fell into the river and drowned. So this is a play about a non-existent child', but at other times Bond wanted a critic to emphasize that Shogo 'was the child Basho had abandoned in the Introduction'. See 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', *op. cit.*, p. 10; Hay and Roberts, *A Companion*, *op. cit.*, p. 43 respectively.

<sup>23</sup> *The Plays*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>24</sup> See his *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> The fate of the baby is not the only 'mistake' Bond has made in *Narrow Road*: the short period of time in which he wrote the play might be the reason. At the end of Scene One, Kiro tells Basho, who has just come back from the deep



The confusion about the baby's age is simply an indication that Bond thought of the two young characters in terms of Siamese twins figures. The fact that Scene One occurs in the same locale of the Introduction must also be considered: in the same place Basho left the baby, we find Kiro lounging half asleep. This connection invites the audience to take Kiro as the abandoned baby. The fact that Kiro tells a different story about his life than that which the audience sees in the Introduction does not matter because it is the story Kiro was told by the priest who fostered him. These points confirm that the two young protagonists must be taken, as Scharine took them, as 'aspects of the same personality'.<sup>26</sup> Both have a specific relationship with the cultural father figure Basho as well as having a specific relationship with each other. But even this latter relationship depends to a great extent on their relationship with Basho, or, at least, on his actions. Naming them the man of meditation and the man of action, as Scharine did, might be helpful. But the naming hides half the truth because it must be stressed that Kiro's meditation springs from his burning desire to become: he is a knowledge-searcher more than Scopey or Len, and he is a questioning character as much as Arthur.

The question of 'enlightenment' is central to *Narrow Road* not only because of Basho's claim that he travels to gain it but because of Kiro's (and inescapably Shogo's) relentless quest for it. The mentor/artist fails the test of enlightenment as early as the Introduction of the play, and if any doubt occurs in the audience's mind as whether he gained it in the deep north, the first scene answers unambiguously no:

Basho. For twenty-nine and a half years I sat facing a wall and staring into space. Then one morning I suddenly saw what I was looking for -- and I got enlightenment.

Kiro. Yes?

Basho (*smiles*). I saw there was nothing to learn in the deep north -- and I'd already known everything before I went there. You get enlightenment where you are. (p. 176)

It remains then that an essential part of Kiro's function as an enlightenment-seeker is to test Basho's claimed enlightenment, the enlightenment he got where he was. The first encounter between Basho and Kiro witnesses the latter's burning desire to become a disciple, and he starts a stream of questions about his position in the world. But the horseplay sequence illustrates the extent of the mentor's power of corruption over the innocent youth. The teaching Kiro and the priests get in the seminary proves the insufficiency of

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north, that Shogo overthrew and killed the old emperor and built the new city two years earlier (p. 178). By the beginning of Scene Two, Basho has been back for two years; four years of Shogo's regime have elapsed. But Shogo himself has a different account: he says that 'Two years ago, when I killed the old Emperor, his wife was pregnant'(p. 190).

<sup>26</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 276.

the knowledge they get when it comes to solving any practical problem, and the repression of natural instincts they suffer in the seminary. They have been taught to value the vase above the human being. One of the mentors, the 'enlightened' Basho, takes Kiro himself to be a useful object in his encounter with the head of the city, the other youth, Shogo.

But *because* Shogo is the most dehumanised character in the play, he accepts the mentor's challenge forthwith, and breaks the pot. He might be practical: 'There isn't some political skill or trick called taking pots off priests' heads'(p. 192), but he, like any other socially moralised half of the Siamese twins, is dehumanising. Almost simultaneously with breaking the pot, he pushes a peasant into a sack and closes it. He even knows that the peasant is innocent of the attempt on Shogo's life. Kiro is attracted to Shogo's capacity for solving puzzles, and he becomes fascinated with the practicality that fearlessly 'destroys religion' in front of the enlightened/father figure Basho. This fascination appears also in the form of unending questions which Kiro poses to Shogo about the city and its social organisation. Shogo's influence on Kiro constitutes the most important feature in illustrating how Kiro becomes socially moralised, or the way power without moral responsibility affects the instinctively good figure.

Kiro's compassion and his eagerness to 'become' attracts Shogo as well, the repressive and dehumanised/dehumanising half is fascinated by Kiro's innocence. The normatives of every half affect the ethics of the other, especially in the long run. There is a telling point in the dialogue between them, however, which exposes their essential schematic characterisation as being and becoming as roles which almost forced upon them: 'I can't help shaping history -- it's my gift, like your piety'(p. 196). The dramatist, it seems, had a clear idea in allocating each half of them a special tendency (or gift), to illustrate and embody a function. This dialogue exposes the theatrical orientation behind Bond's characterisation. This 'gift', however, causes the destruction of both halves, they involve each other in death. Shogo even anticipates Kiro's fate when he indicates that the line round Kiro's neck will 'stay'(p. 196), the power of religion over the individual, the hint implies, is unerasable. Becoming, Shogo almost voices, is almost impossible, and *Narrow Road* is really one of Bond's most pessimistic plays.

Kiro's method of becoming keeps him 'alive'. He is not completely dehumanised, even by Shogo's dehumanising influence. From the first encounter between them, Kiro shows reluctance to Shogo's inhu-

man methods. Consequently, Kiro does not fight for Shogo, but the latter's fate remains in Kiro's mind as an indication of the connection between the two of them.<sup>27</sup> Kiro even saves Shogo's life at one stage in the events. But the dehumanising effect of Shogo on Kiro is undeniable: Kiro's humane image of god changes into an image of a monster with ten hands, six feet, three ears, one eye, seven tongues, two noses, etc. Kiro's way of thinking, as Part Two, Scene Two shows, is astonishingly repetitive of Basho's: the locale is even the deep north to which Basho travelled, a direction which was suggested by Kiro himself. And to illustrate the doubt about the possibility of gaining knowledge in the deep north, and also to indicate that Shogo is dimly aware of the quest for knowledge, Bond makes Shogo furiously question Kiro: 'How can you get enlightenment here?(p. 210). Kiro unintentionally follows in the footsteps of the cultural mentor. He even stares at the water, as Basho stared at a wall. But it is indicative that Shogo expresses, for the first time, a feeling of guilt at something undefinable. It is an indication that the becoming half has left its traces on the dehumanised being. The two halves confess to each other and each gains some knowledge of the nature of the other. It is an encounter which is similar to that between Len and Fred in *Saved*, and Arthur and the skeleton in *Early Morning*.

Shogo's short lived victory, which brings Kiro back from the deep north provides an example of the irresolvable problems of which Kiro has kept talking throughout the play (pp. 195., 211). Seeing that Shogo is going to be tortured, a fate Kiro himself predicted (p. 212), Kiro finds himself facing the irreconcilable choice of the Siamese twins: to kill (like the mentor and the English barbarians) or to be killed (like Shogo). The trial in the last scene provides Kiro with quasi-enlightenment, he believes the mentor:

Kiro. I understand now. Shogo was left by the river when he was a child. The upturned boat  
knocks against the pier. (p. 221)

Kiro assesses the situation and finds the violent action of suicide to be the only solution to the question of moral justification of life. Even if Basho was correct about the baby, Kiro's violent action is not introduced as exemplary. Bond situates it alongside a Man who saves himself.

## V) The Pairing in "*Lear*":

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<sup>27</sup> See the opening lines of Scene Six.

*Lear* does not operate the split character on a generational level. It does not distinguish between the young and the old: the Ghost of the young Gravedigger's Boy functions as a mentor to the old Lear at some stage. Thus, the characterisation of the opposite figures of the old and the young is more sophisticated and dialectical in *Lear*. Bond closes the gap between the twins, and even makes the role of the mentor alternate between the young and the old figures. It is the double function of the Ghost which, I think, caused the closing of the gap and caused the slight modulation in Bond's characteristic schematisation of pairing the young figure with an old one. On the part of Lear, because Bond saw Lear as the strongest manifestation of withdrawal, he has depicted him as both the most dehumanising and the most dehumanised protagonist in his plays. He is even depicted as the architect of his own victimisation. His dehumanising power as a father figure reaches him, and he suffers the consequences of his actions. By the end of Act One, Lear's victimising power is fully established, and he appears to be more destructive than Shogo of *Narrow Road* for the very reason of being a father figure.

Lear's destructiveness, furthermore, impinges on the Boy. The Boy unmistakably possesses the humane features of the becoming half of the split character, and he also possesses the features of being. He is satisfied with being alive in an age of violence with accepting the social morality of escapism and not participating in changing the reality. The political 'message' or 'thesis' of the play stresses the inadequacies of this method, though the instinctive compassion of the Boy is basic to any change. To emphasize the dehumanising power of the mentor, Bond makes the actions of the mentor annihilate the life of the most instinctively compassionate character. The mentor causes the death of the son figure.

The second part of the play illustrates the modulation Bond makes in his characterisation when he allocates the role of the mentor to the Ghost of the Boy. Because the Boy possessed instinctively good qualities, his Ghost takes over in the journey for Lear's sanity. The Ghost teaches Lear the traits of a good father figure: he literally teaches Lear how to walk, beg, and be compassionate to strangers. But despite the modulation, the pattern of being and becoming works in this part of the play: Lear has to get rid of the negative aspects in the Boy (being) if he is to regain his sanity and become politically effective.<sup>28</sup> Although the Boy's instinctive compassion is necessary, it is incapable of changing a violent reality. This is a

<sup>28</sup> See Bond's interview with Mathers and Maiorana, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

variation on the wise fool of *The Sea* whose knowledge is necessary but not sufficient. Because of this political ineffectiveness of the Boy's attitude, the Ghost is introduced as decaying. The decay manifests that being compassionate in a violent age means the fixation that necessarily leads to death.

The decay of the Ghost parallels Lear's maturity exactly because Lear gets rid of the 'bad'/being half in the Ghost. In this part of the play, it is the old man who becomes an enlightenment-searcher. Lear moves in his journey of learning from blindness to immortality, depending in a great part of it on the Ghost. It is a journey which corresponds to that in *Early Morning*: the lifeless and the mindless twins. The difference here is that there is a useful element in the Ghost which Lear must possess before getting rid of it. The supervision of the good half in the Ghost makes Lear a visionary, compassionate character, but the nagging half makes Lear learn how to get rid of it. As Lear reaches maturity, the Ghost has no function after passing the Boy's compassionate attitude to Lear.

In *Lear* also Bond adds another dimension to his characterisation of the relationship between the young men and the mentor. Between the Boy's isolationist attitude and Lear's final, active participating solution, Bond creates a middle stage: the secret resistance in which Thomas believes. Thomas is the 'advanced copy' of the Boy, he retains many aspects of the Boy's compassionate attitude: he befriends Lear, and many others, in the hope that this action might change the dehumanising reality. Thomas believes in secret resistance, an attitude which Lear does not only reject but also to which he shows an alternative. Thomas, however, is as important a figure to Lear as the compassionate part of the Ghost. It is Thomas who is in Lear's mind when he decides to act and dig the wall up. He wants Thomas to understand the necessity of care, but also the need to act. Thomas thus is part of Bond's schematic characterisation of pairs.

## VI) The Pairing in "*The Sea*":

The degree of eagerness to become reaches its peak in *The Sea* with Willy, depicted as a substitute for the drowned Colin and made to 'explore' the grounds of an unknown society. Willy starts his journey of becoming almost from scratch, but retains many features of the drowned youth: they were of the same age and were together at the moment of tragedy. But Willy and Colin, in my judgement, are not the split character; rather Willy is a surrogate Colin. The split figure materialises in Willy and Billy (notice the

rhymed names). The connection between Willy and Colin is made to give the former the necessary detachment/connection to the society of *The Sea*. Bond himself had claimed that Willy and Colin are aspects of the same person.<sup>29</sup> But it was Bond also who has claimed that Willy and Billy are 'both parts of the same character, in a way'.<sup>30</sup>

Willy's attitude to reality changes from full absorption in his friend's tragedy to full rejection of society. Like his predecessors Scopey, Len, Arthur, and Kiro, he progresses through the play by means of questioning. He goes from wondering what is happening in Mrs Rafi's drawing room, the venue for the play-within-the-play, to challenging the sea itself and transcending his tragedy and fear of death. What differentiates Willy is not only his will, but that he finds a wise fool to guide his way out of the dehumanising reality. The wise fool's influence might not be immense on Willy's decisions, but he is wise because he intentionally does not repeat the destructive role of the father figures on the young man in other Bond plays.

Billy Hollarcut is introduced as the most dehumanised and victimised character amongst Hatch's followers. Following Hatch, expresses a degree of Billy's desire to become, to escape the dehumanising process practised upon him by Mrs Rafi, but the figure of the mentor illustrates the fault in this effort. Billy is literally uneducated, in need of wholesale enlightenment, and linguistically hard to talk to, as Evens says. Language here is used to explain the extent of Billy's instinctiveness as he depends on voice rather than language. An important reason for Billy to follow Hatch is that the mentor took him as a human being and does not treat him badly. And the reason that pushes Billy to batter Evens is that he thinks Evens caused his mentor's madness. But Evens 'talks sense to him',<sup>31</sup> and avoids his destructive power. Feeling that Billy is not that dehumanised character, and that the influence of his mentor is minimised because Hatch is locked up, the wise fool succeeds in avoiding the fate of many father figures in the plays of the first period. Evens succeeds in stopping the dehumanised half becoming a victimiser, and this is the minimum requirement in the father figure. The act of following Hatch illustrates that Billy is seeking advice from the man who treated him humanely. The problem is that Hatch's madness provides Billy with fantasies of which

<sup>29</sup> See, Bond's 'The Sea: The End of a Series', in *A Companion*, *op. cit.*, p. 54. Brown, among others, builds on Bond's claim and explains that Colin drowns instead of Willy (!), he is also stabbed instead of Colin. See her 'The Problem of Individuality', *op. cit.*, pp. 1, 52. In this respect, one can add that Willy gets the female that was bound for Colin.

<sup>30</sup> As quoted by Glenn Loney, 'The First Cycle', *Performing Arts Journal*, 1, 2 (Fall 1976), p. 45.

<sup>31</sup> *Loc. cit.*

Billy himself has doubts. Billy is aware of the dehumanising power of, say, Mrs Rafi. He abides by her authoritarian power: he might dig in her garden, but he is aware that nothing will come of it.

The function of the last scene is to illustrate the relationship between the young men (Billy and Willy) and the father figures (Hatch and Evens). As it is explained elsewhere in this thesis, Evens reinforces the thoughts of the becoming half, and, to some extent, pacifies the being half, at least temporarily. As Dohman observes, Willy's pilgrimage to Evens' hut on the shore 'is simultaneously being enacted by Willy's alter ego, Billy Hollarcut, another dissatisfied and confused young man, but less philosophical and more angry than Willy'.<sup>32</sup> The wise fool Evens understands that Hatch's humane treatment of Billy makes the latter follow Hatch. This understanding makes Evens's mission of stopping Billy's destructiveness easier: Evens also treats him rightly. Billy's anger cools down, his destructiveness does not surface, but remains as a potential. For the first time in Bond's plays, a possibility arises for both halves of the character to be saved; all it takes is a suitable mentor. And this is one of the facts which make *The Sea* an optimistic play: one of the mentors succeeds in persuading the twins to avoid destructiveness.

Where the plays of the first period investigate an instinctively compassionate character and a socially moralised one, by means of Siamese twins, and establish the need correctly to comprehend the mentor's experience, the plays of the second phase avoid the pattern of being and becoming but retain the schematic division of characters, in one way or another. In *Bingo*, for example, Bond divides the father figure, making Shakespeare the cultural father subdivision. The importance of Shakespeare lies mostly in this 'function'. Shakespeare's alliance with another father figure, Combe, results in the death of a third father figure, the Old Man. The characterisation of the Old Man and Shakespeare functions, among other things, in showing two different ways of guiding the younger generation: the Old Man represents the spontaneous, instinctive, and compassionate half as opposed to Shakespeare's intellectualism, detachment, and hatred.<sup>33</sup> The Old Man's spontaneity is touching: he is the only one who is able to make Shakespeare behave spontaneously in the horseplay of the snow balls in Scene Five.

More importantly, the two figures involve each other in death: one of the important characteristics of

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<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>33</sup> See Gross, *op. cit.*, p. 72; Brown, 'Alienation versus Commitment', *op. cit.*, p. 173.

Bond's Siamese twins in the first period. In Scene Five, they do not only feel their approaching death, but exchange their knowledge of it, that the snow they see is 'the last snow'(p. 65). Significantly, when the dark figure appears upstage crying and whimpering weakly after the shot that kills the Old Man is heard, though the audience knows about the killing later, Shakespeare starts talking about his own death in the past tense as if he is already dead. Shakespeare feels that he is a *corpora*, a metaphorically dead person. The connection between the death of the two father figures is more significant than the death of the Siamese twins of being and becoming because the former indicates that the cultural father figure causes the death of the compassionate one.

Shakespeare is not only a symbolic father figure to the Son, he is almost a real one: he supports the family financially and the Son seeks his influence to prevent the enclosure. But it is a support he does not get. The extent of Shakespeare's lack of educational power appears strongly in Judith and her inhumane behaviour. Both father figures, and they are simply called 'fathers' at many junctions in the play,<sup>34</sup> are important in illustrating that neither spontaneity nor commitment to capital can be sufficient guide to the younger generation. The result of their guidance appears in Judith, whose sole interest is her father's wealth, and in the mad Son, whose sole interest is the metaphysical, not the human. The Son's madness is the result of his lack of consciousness, consciousness which, the play implies, must be socially oriented. Judith's greed and the Son's religious fanaticism are the results of Shakespeare's 'ideological' orientation, more than the result of the instinctive goodness of the Old Man who also dies because of Shakespeare's detachment from his society. As the young figures are dehumanised, they dehumanise and cause the death of the Young Woman.

The names of Darkie and Clare in *The Fool* seem to signal the main characterisation of the Siamese twins in the younger generation, though to a limited extent. The implication of the names is that the function of the artist Clare (bright) is to enlighten the dark (Darkie) of the spontaneous and instinctive rebellion against injustice. The two figures are close in age, but their experience and interests divide them: Darkie without Clare is hanged and Clare without Darkie becomes insane. But the main reason for the failure of

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<sup>34</sup> During the first encounter between Shakespeare and Combe in which the enclosure is discussed, Bond makes the Old Woman shout 'father' as a leitmotif throughout. Although the Woman shouts for her husband, the implications are obvious: Shakespeare's action must be measured against this 'motif', against his responsibility as a father/mentor. Judith also shouts 'father' throughout Scenes Three and Six.



the two youths remains their lack of guidance from the father figures of Milton, Radstock and the like. The father figures' responsibility is apparent in the simultaneous action of Scene Four which concludes that the father figures will support Clare as long as his art does not criticise the owning classes. Throughout this scene, Clare wears Darkie's coat, the coat that Darkie refuses to wear when he was going to hang. He refused to be their clown, or fool. Clare, the action of wearing the coat implies, *is* acting throughout the scene as a fool.

One of the theatrical characterisations in *Derek* is the dramatisation of interior thought, embodied in the form of dialogue among the Siamese twins Derek 1 and Derek 2. The dialogue spells out the reason behind Derek's decision to join the army, to submit to socialised morality. The dialogue shows the instinctively good Derek 1, who understands that courage is necessary to see the real predicament the soldier Derek is in, as opposed to Derek 2. Derek 1 invites Derek 2 to become a different person while the opposite Derek show reluctance because he has been dehumanised at the hands of the ruling classes:

(Derek 2.) Who are you?

(Derek 1.) Yer best friend. Now get out of this bloody clown's gears. Yer only put me in it because they took yer 'ead. First they put me in a uniform! Next they'll put in a wooden box! Derek, I'm a peaceful bloke but I'll kick the bloody daylight's out of yer! Yer don't deserve someone like me.

(Derek 2.) It's too late. The military cops would arrest you.

(Derek 1. *Shrugs.*) Fair enough. Then they'd put me in a cell. I'd be a bloody sight safer there than where you're takin me! (p. 16)

#### Summary:

1) Characterisation by means of Siamese twins is theatrical in that its simplification makes the element of 'make-believe' apparent to the audience. Further theatrical dimension to this characterisation is the schematic 'development', struggle, or conflict of the twins, to demonstrate a point. The double figure illustrates two opposite methods, or embodies two different tendencies, in order to persuade the audience to compare the two methods or tendencies. Thus, the dramatist generates a degree of detachment from the psychology of the individual. The characterisation, as some critics have observed, is totally incredible in terms of fourth-wall style theatre and therefore it has been used by dramatists who are not concerned to create illusion. Strindberg and Brecht are among those who employed the characterisation because they gave little attention to the character's illusory credibility.

2) Bond has employed this device in various degrees of physicality in the two figures. The pairing of the characters by Bond himself does not take account of the age-barrier between father figures or mentors and young protagonists. In my opinion, the split figure occurs within the young protagonist, who to a degree or another, is in conflict with the father figure. The main element in Bond's characterisation is that the twins are schematically shown as representing two halves: the first is instinctively good and the other is socially moralised. In the long run both figures, in some cases, affect each other, but it is always the dehumanised figure who mortally affects the good half. In the first two plays, *The Pope's Wedding* and *Saved*, the division between the two halves is not very clear, but it is possible to spot the connection. In *Early Morning*, Bond concretises the image and names it the Siamese twins. In this play, the twins struggle against each other because George embodies the society's tendency to perpetuate death. George finds complete freedom in death, a stand which Arthur takes to its final end in his madness.

3) Other relationships between the characters in *Early Morning* enhance the phenomenon of the twins, especially that of Len and Joyce whose handcuffing together reminds Arthur of his own predicament. Other characters use the image, but the connection between the two halves, being stuck together through thick and thin, is the core of their mutual struggle. Arthur succeeds in transcending the conditioning process of social morality, but the ascension from the heaven of cannibalism is symbolic.

4) In Bond's other plays of the first period, he uses the same principle but in a less physical way than that in *Early Morning*. In *Narrow Road*, the younger figure is divided into Shogo and Kiro. Kiro's search for enlightenment reflects his wish to become a different kind of character, but the enlightened artist fails him and therefore he is attracted by the dehumanising/dehumanised Shogo. The two figures involve each other in death. In *Lear*, the image is complicated because the division is not between young or old figures, Lear and the Gravedigger's Boy alternate the roles. At one stage, the Boy is the example of being, and at another his Ghost takes over the role of mentor to guide the old Lear to sanity. *The Sea* also employs the same characterisation as the split occurs between Willy and Billy, although the former has some similarities with the drowned heroic figure Colin. Billy, the dehumanised half, does not batter the old mentor Evens because Evens talks sense to the youth. The play emphasizes that the old man's knowledge is essential, but not enough to lead the young protagonist.

5) As *The Sea* proves the point, the necessity of rejecting the dehumanising reality and the importance of finding answers and changing the world, the young protagonist looks for answers in history in the plays of the second period and the phenomenon of the Siamese twins disappears from Bond's plays. However, repercussions of it appear in other Bond plays. In *Bingo*, the Old Man is introduced as the spontaneous and compassionate half in opposition to Shakespeare's intellectualism and detachment. Both father figures, and the word 'father' is simply used throughout the play as a signifier of them, are incapable of giving adequate guidance to the younger generation. The two father figures involve each other in death, the main characteristic Bond attributes to the Siamese twins. In *The Fool*, the connotations of the names of Clare and Darkie are embodied in their attitudes to society: the artist does not support the instinctively rebellious Darkie. Clare plays the clown to the ruling classes in the same coat Darkie refused to wear when he was going to be hanged. The separation between the artist and the rebellious causes the perpetuation of the unjust society. In *Derek*, Bond uses the dialogue between Derek 1 and Derek 2 to externalise the interior conflict in Derek: his socially moralised half discusses the situation with this instinctively good half who demands courage to understand and overcome the dehumanising army.

## Chapter Three

### Ghosts and *Corpora*

The theatricality of ghosts springs from the fact that their origins lie beyond the realistic; they materialise specific abstract notions for the purpose of illustration. As figures for demonstration, ghosts are not subject to the mechanics of 'make believe' in the theatre, the audience is not persuaded to question the probability or plausibility of the existence of these figures on the ground of their existence in real life. The ghosts' existence is poetic, autonomous of their actuality. In this sense, they are functional figures. The credibility of ghosts in drama and literature was confirmed long ago. Both Styan and Northrop Frye, for example, assume that ghosts represent hypotheses, a representation which has nothing to do with whether ghosts exist or not in reality. To them, the spectator who queries the existence of ghosts in drama on the grounds that ghosts do not exist in real life has no business in literature or drama.<sup>1</sup> Ghosts, therefore, are considered amongst the most theatrical devices because the presence of a ghost in a play, 'constantly reminds us of the mechanics of the theatrical profession'.<sup>2</sup> Ghosts constitute an apparent departure from realism: the dramatist who pays no attention to illusion would employ non-existent figures. As Styan observes, 'non-illusory theatre not only takes liberties with place and time, but is also of a kind that will put ghosts and witches, demons and fairies on the stage without a qualm. Absolute belief was unimportant to the success of the image',<sup>3</sup> in the Elizabethan period, and it is surely less important to the modern age. The suspension of disbelief is not necessary in this kind of theatre theatrical, and the inclusion of ghosts creates a suspended time when it parallels figures from different temporalities, one of them, the ghosts', is open to interpretation because of its ambiguity. In any case, the dramatist creates a timelessness by coordinating two temporalities, each with its specific laws.

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<sup>1</sup> See Styan, *Drama, Stage and Audience*, *op. cit.*, p. 71; Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (New York: Atheneum, 1968), p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Harold Fisch, *Hamlet and the World* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1971), p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> *Drama, Stage and Audience*, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

Across his career, Bond has depicted a group of characters who are ghosts or ghost-like figures. As early as *Saved*, he himself linked the alive Harry to a ghost. Since then almost every play has contained a real ghost, that is, a dead/living character, or a metaphorically dead character. What specifies Bond's ghosts is that they are unashamedly made of flesh, submitting to the fundamental law governing the physical: they deteriorate. Bond makes the function of his ghosts clear by employing them to embody one tendency or another, an embodiment which enhances the theatricality of these ghosts. Bond leaves no doubt that his ghosts are dead figures who are possessed with or concretise an ethic. Being dead is Bond's ethical judgement on them, but that is another matter. In many instances, Bond uses ghosts as a means of characterising submission to socialised morality. If a character with such characteristics is presented as still alive, Bond's judgement on him/her is lighter: he or she might change. These characters abandon their responsibility for society, or for humanist ethics. They are *corpora*: metaphorically dead characters. This metaphorical death remains theatrical because of the functional employment of them to demonstrate.

In the course of writing *Lear*, Bond defined in his notes that ghosts are the figures who are emotionally dead and whose emotion becomes aggression. To him, they constitute the anti-life tendency in his oppositional configuration, the half of the Siamese twins who submits to socialised morality.<sup>4</sup> In the play's rehearsals, Bond objected to playing the Ghost too sympathetically: 'Ghosts are always nasty and corrupt'.<sup>5</sup> In 1973, Bond explained that 'individuals are formed on different levels and they hand over responsibility to their society. This is very often the ghost that appears in my plays. This is people who hand over responsibility and cease to exist and their life goes into society.'<sup>6</sup> The characterisation is an expression of the social conditioning of the individual, and this conditioning, as I explained above, is embodied in two shapes: the first is the overt ghost, whose physical laws are similar to those of the living whose life is 'fixed' at specific point in time, and the second is the living who are metaphorically dead, or *corpora*. In 1978 Bond gave a definition of those latter figures as the reactionary self which is only a 'neurotic or opportunistic parasite on the past'.<sup>7</sup> The *corpus* is a configuration of the same principle but takes the opposite

<sup>4</sup> See Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>5</sup> Reported by Gregory Dark, 'Production Casebook no. 5: Edward Bond's *Lear* at the Royal Court Theatre', *Theatre Quarterly*, 2, 5 (January-March 1972), p. 27.

<sup>6</sup> 'Bond Is Out to Make them Laugh', an assessment and interview with Ronald Hayman, *The Times*, 22 May 1973, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> 'A Note on Dramatic Method', in *The Bundle, op. cit.*, p. x-xi.

materialisation of life-in-death, whose life is 'fixed' to a 'dead' creed.

In a recent article, Bond showed consistency in his characterisation when he returned to the same mode of characterisation he employed in *Early Morning* which is the materialisation of the image of death-in-life to create the effect of society's conditioning on the individual. On the Monster of *The War Plays* Bond said:

I created a character who in fact never lives: he is burned in the womb in a nuclear war. His 'ghost' comments on the people who, to preserve freedom, condemned him and millions of others to the perpetual imprisonment of death. He argues that a society that invests and labours to make that possible, and gambles on having to do it, ought not to be called civilisation. That would be the greatest double-think. It should be given its proper name: barbarism.<sup>8</sup>

This last Bondian comment makes the theatricality of ghosts undeniable because he uses them as figures of illustration, especially when some of them articulate their knowledge of being dead, as *Lear's Ghost* and the Monster.

## I) Ghosts:

The first ghost appears in *Early Morning*, a play which also contains *corpora* of the citizens of both modern and Victorian societies. To emphasise the fact that George is a ghost because he is the figure who submits to socialised morality, Bond makes him the 'dead' half of the Siamese twins. Bond also takes every opportunity to show Victoria's power over George and her success in forming him according to her authoritative power. The main struggle between the Siamese twins and between Victoria and Arthur concentrates on the way the individual reacts to social morality. It is Victoria's success when Arthur submits to her laws, then she expresses her admiration of him as her 'son'. The connection of the twins illustrates the journey from manhood, George's marriage, to maturation and transcendence of the corrupting socialised morality. Because George is dead, he travels an opposite path to Arthur's: he deteriorates. His deterioration reflects his 'fixed' identity as 'undeveloping' ethic. Contrary to that is Arthur who passes through different stages until he reaches transcendence.

Bond's mode of characterisation owes much to Frank Wedekind's dramatic strategies in *Spring Awakening*. The employment of ghosts in Wedekind's play illustrates the contradiction and struggle

<sup>8</sup> Bond, 'Imagine Owen with Knife and Blowtorch Showing the Effects of a Nuclear Blast on a Child...', *Guardian*, 16 January 1984, p. 9.

between the pro- and anti-life powers, a struggle which left its influence in Bond's play. A forerunner of Expressionism, Wedekind characterised this struggle in the last scene of his play, and Bond, it seems, was fascinated by this characterisation. He translated and adapted the play for the stage.<sup>9</sup> The correspondence between *Spring Awakening* and *Early Morning* (apart from the corresponding titles) is significant, especially between the churchyard scene and Bond's employment of ghosts, especially George's. Arthur's encounter with the ghost of his father also shows a great many similarities between the two plays.

As is the case with *Spring Awakening* when Melchior stumbles on the grave of his friend Moritz, Arthur also stumbles on his father's grave. Escaping from the reformatory and the chasing 'pack', Melchior finds Wendla's grave and there suddenly Moritz *comes stamping across the graves*.<sup>10</sup> In a similar manner, Arthur reads the gravestone and finds out that it is his father's grave and immediately Albert comes out of the grave. To indicate that both Moritz and Albert are dead, unrealistic figures, the two dramatists employ similar strategies. Wedekind characterises Moritz as carrying his head under his arm, a characterisation which pays little attention to realism, while Bond dresses Albert in a brown shroud. Both characters are materialisations of the idea of ghosts: life-in-death, or the concretisation of the death tendency. What causes the resurrection of both characters is roughly similar: Moritz comes out from the place by the wall because Melchior knocked his cross down, while Albert comes out from the pit because Arthur tramps round and round on top of him.

In this scene, Moritz tries to persuade Melchior to die when he asks Melchior to shake hands. The invitation/temptation to suicide is very precisely and physically represented in gesture. After the Masked Man intervenes and Moritz has lost, he admits that he had been asking Melchior to die. In Bond's play Albert tries to persuade Arthur to kill the Queen and George and proclaim himself king. Both invitations are destructive: Moritz committed suicide and his invitation is an attempt to make his friend 'live' in the same state of 'existence', and Albert continues his long-life argument of perpetuating death and a dehumanising reality. While the Masked Man exposes the ghost's lies and frustrates his attempts upon

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<sup>9</sup> It was Bond's translation which the National Theatre staged in 1974. A different translation of *Spring Awakening* had been staged at the Royal Court Theatre in April 1965 when Bond was a scriptreader there.

<sup>10</sup> Frank Wedekind, *Spring Awakening*, translated by Edward Bond, Methuen, 1980, p. 53. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

Melchior, Bond's treatment takes him to Shakespeare instead. Bond lets George frighten the ghost by the cock crow (and 'Ding-dong', 'Bells') which plunges the scene in Hamlet's world. The short parody of *Hamlet's* ghost, however, stresses the ghost's wickedness and fondness of living in the dark.<sup>11</sup>

According to Bond himself, Wedekind's treatment of the churchyard scene was 'truly original'.<sup>12</sup> The function of employing the device of the ghost in Wedekind's play was to show the conflict between the powers of good and evil inside the young protagonist Melchior. Wedekind materialised the power of evil in a forceful and direct manner in the form of the ghost and the power of good in the shape of the Masked Man: the two conflict for the soul of the young protagonist. This characterisation, Esslin comments, 'goes further than mere symbolism. The writer is trying to embody the essence of the event: the forces struggling for the young hero's soul, his death wish and his desire to live on, are being made explicit'.<sup>13</sup>

The most important conflict in *Early Morning* occurs inside the protagonist, a conflict of which the evil side is externalised in the form of George's ghost, while Arthur's goodness is instinctive because he finds no guide from the wise fool, not even in the shape of a Masked Man. It is the rivalry between life (with its bewilderment and uncertainty) on the one hand, and death on the other embodied in, among other things, George's ghost, and this is obviously the core of the last scene in Wedekind's play, and this is also Melchior's dilemma in it. George in Bond's play represents a society's desire for perpetuating death, or a kind of living similar to death: he always asks Arthur to separate from him, to let him die and 'live' in peace instead of haunting him. That is because Arthur is not instinctively anti-life, and therefore he persists in searching for an alternative to the anti-life tendency, a tendency which is created by the Victorian (and other) system. Most of Arthur's search is accompanied by the burden of the ghost which literally resides on Arthur's shoulders. The ghost's function is similar to that in Wedekind's play, he delivers the tendency which the protagonist tries to avoid and, at the end, succeeds in transcending it. Most of Arthur's journey of learning and the relationship between him and George are materialised in the image of the Siamese twins and discussed elsewhere in this thesis. What remains to be stressed is that it is beyond illusion to depict a

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<sup>11</sup> Some critics have observed the parody of Shakespeare and overlooked the influence from Wedekind. See, for example, Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 42; Demling, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>12</sup> Bond's Introduction to Wedekind's *Spring Awakening* (in collaboration with Elisabeth Bond), *op. cit.*, p. xxi.

<sup>13</sup> *An Anatomy of Drama*, Abacus, 1976, p. 63.



character who appears as deteriorating and appears at some stage as a skeleton or as a skull and a few bones, like a ragged epaulette on Arthur's shoulders.

Bond utilised a ghost to greater advantage in his play *Lear*, a manipulation that requires a closer examination:

### 1) The Origins and Identity of the Ghost:

The appearance of the Ghost significantly occurs after Lear's suffering in the second trial. In his imprisonment, Lear shouts regretfully 'I must forget', and the Ghost immediately appears. The Ghost itself confesses that it appeared in response to Lear's shout. The circumstances of the Ghost's appearance make it an expression of Lear's desire for justice *and* an expression of a guilty conscience that tries to forget. The outlook of the Ghost, however, leaves no doubt that it is the Grave Digger's Boy's: the only difference is that the Ghost's skin and clothes are faded and the blood staining him is old and dry. The red stain is a reminder of the violence that penetrates society and that peaks at the end of the last scene of Act One. But the idea of the Ghost as a 'dead' representative of the Boy emphasises the latter's method of life in isolation: a sort of death-in-life. The re-appearance of the Boy in the shape of the Ghost is a reminder of the reality of the Boy's isolationist method of life. As a *corpus* he lived and as a ghost he lives. Even the way Bond depicts the death of the Boy, shrouded in white sheets stained with blood, is a way of turning the Boy into a ghost. This depiction is a 'strange, fantastic image of a living man turning into a ghost before our eyes, preparing the way for the continuing presence of the boy as a ghost accompanying Lear for much of Acts II and III'.<sup>14</sup>

Bond, however, allows the spectator no time to question the Ghost's identity or origins. Contrary to the famous archetype of ghosts, *Hamlet's*, whose ambiguous nature allowed various critical interpretations, Bond exposes his Ghost's nature as soon as it emerges: it is the dramatist's extension of the character of the Boy if he had managed to live. It is a theatrical figure that illustrates the tendency of living in isolation and believing in the possibility of living away from society's violence which requires full participation from the responsible individual. Bond establishes the Ghost's theatrical identity in a very short and effective

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<sup>14</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

exchange between Lear and the Ghost:

Ghost. I heard you shout.

Lear. Are you dead?

Ghost. Yes. (p. 51)

As soon as the exchange ends, a parallel temporality is added to the 'realistic' one of the play: the Ghost's.

The conditions of the underworld, as the Ghost conveys them, are frightening and very similar to the image Moritz conveys in Wedekind's *Spring Awakening*, though Moritz is decisive: 'It's terrible under there'(p. 56). The Ghost's theatricality is also established by the fact that it deteriorates like George's ghost in *Early Morning*. He undergoes the same physical changes a 'fixed' identity undergoes: it rots, withers, and shrivels. Significantly, the existence of the Ghost ends at the very spot at which the Boy was buried: back to where he started, a fact which underlines the illustrative function of the Ghost.<sup>15</sup> The Ghost's first confession of being dead at its very first emergence is repeated and explained in this scene also because of its relationship to the question of politics, or, in other words, of living. The Ghost mourns its premature death, claiming that he knew how to live, but the Boy's death and the Ghost's prove the opposite. The Ghost's death, the Boy's second death in one sense, is the proof of his inadequate ethos of living while not participating in society's problems. The Ghost is an embodiment of an ethos, an embodiment of a function.

## 2) The Functional Significance of the Ghost:

The Ghost in *Lear* characterises a 'dying' political principle, the tendency to escape to a more secure way of living, a way of living the Boy lives at the beginning of the play. The relationship between the Ghost and Lear springs from the relationship between the Boy and Lear: the Boy lived an appealing pastoral existence which Lear glimpsed, and the Ghost's existence is Lear's nostalgia for that life. As many critics have explained, the Boy is a hospitable, and compassionate character.<sup>16</sup> He helps Lear in his madness, but Lear, as Perry Nodelman explains, 'admires the Boy's life for the wrong reasons; he thinks it will prevent suffering, just as he believed his wall would prevent suffering'.<sup>17</sup> The Ghost's emergence constitutes Lear's longing for that sort of life: it comes to life when Lear reaches his ultimate distress. While it

<sup>15</sup> But this is not a matter of physical existence, it is a question of politics because the Ghost dies only when Lear, who when the Ghost came was thinking about something to tell Cordelia, reaches the decision to participate in the political struggle for justice. The question of political action is linked to the Ghost's death in one Bondian stroke.

<sup>16</sup> See Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 49; Donahue, *op. cit.*, p.82; Pauner, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>17</sup> 'Beyond Politics in Bond's *Lear*, *Modern Drama*, 23, 3 (September 1980), pp. 271-2.

forms Lear's nostalgia for the Golden Age, by the same token, it helps Lear achieve some awareness of his responsibility for destroying it. And the Ghost remains a yardstick with which to measure Lear's progress and understanding: its death signifies the birth of Lear's political consciousness. The long journey of Lear accompanying the Ghost is the grief for losing the pastoral life. As Bond expresses it: 'Some things were lost to us long ago as a species, but we all seem to have to live through part of the act of losing them. We have to learn to do this without guilt or rancour or callousness -- or socialized morality'.<sup>18</sup> But the Ghost is a *necessary* component in Lear's political consciousness and an essential stage in his journey to sanity. It is the pity the individual must have, but also the the inaction one has to avoid. And that is the Ghost's double function.

i) In conformity with the Boy's kind and compassionate nature, as Bond chronicles it in Act One, the Ghost behaves compassionately to the man who befriends him, Lear. In a series of actions, the Ghost tries to win Lear over; a process which signifies Lear's need for compassion. The Ghost appears 'when Lear needs aid to retain his humanity or to understand his duties as a human being'.<sup>19</sup> As it appears, it proves capable of calling visions from Lear's past: Lear's innocent daughters. The juxtaposition of the daughters' ghosts and the Boy's in one scene eventually persuades Lear to 'father' the Ghost of the Boy who becomes a comforting 'voice'. The theatricality of juxtaposing three different times, that of Lear, the Ghost, and the daughters, is obvious for Bond pays no attention to creating a realistic time. When Lear becomes literally blind and daughterless, the Ghost functions as his guide. The Ghost's goodness to Lear takes the form of teaching him how to overcome his helplessness. The Ghost, at this stage, swaps functions with Lear: it becomes the 'father figure' as Lear *needs* the Ghost. Following Lear's blindness:

Lear. You. (*The Ghost starts to unfasten Lear.*) Tell me the pain will stop! This pain must stop!

O stop, stop, stop.

Ghost. It will stop. Sometimes it might come back, but you'll learn to bear it. I can stay with you now you need me.

Lear. Wipe my mouth. There's blood. I'm swallowing blood.

Ghost. Stand. Please. (*Lear stumbles to his feet.*) Walk as if you could see. Try. We'll go back to my house. It's quiet there, they'll leave you in peace at last.

Lear (*Stumbling forward*). Take me away! This pain must stop! Ah! (*Stumbling out.*) Take me somewhere to die! (p. 78)

<sup>18</sup> 'Author's Preface' to *Plays: Two*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> Scharine, *op. cit.*, p. 206. See also Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 60; Nodelman, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

In his need to heal his physical and mental wounds, Lear goes back to the Boy's house. The choice of the house has two meanings: it is a place a) to escape to as well as b) to escape from. In the first sense, the choice signifies an unconscious escape to, in the terms of psychoanalysis, the womb. It is a logical step in Lear's regressive process from a daughterless man to blindness to childhood and back to the protective womb. But although this is a valid interpretation, it is the second which is the core of the return to the house as a starting point for any political action. The house is a necessary foundation from which Lear must take off. In accord with the Boy's characteristics, the Ghost delivers the choice of the locale and the support for the journey, and the schematic characterisation becomes obvious. It becomes the 'wise fool' for Lear the king. The Ghost becomes the moral guide, but this moral guidance is a function that is contradicted by another destructive one most apparent in Act Three of the play.

ii) The Ghost, although compassionate, introduces an invalid reality, a reality that no longer exists: the daughters as children, a house that is more dilapidated, and most important of all, the Ghost itself is no longer the Boy. Noticeably, the Ghost accompanies Lear in his madness, and to regain sanity, Lear must comprehend *and* transcend the reality the Ghost introduces. To illustrate the destructiveness of the Ghost, Bond emphasises the true nature of the Ghost as a tempter to political escapism. The Ghost, to the play's first director William Gaskill, 'represents Lear's desire to escape from identification with suffering humanity and the responsibilities that go with it. As long as the Ghost is there like a succubus Lear is avoiding the action he must take'.<sup>20</sup> To balance the seductive nature of the Boy's simple life, Bond extends the escapist nature of the Ghost to become regressive in a physical way: the Ghost deteriorates. In their companionship, the Ghost concentrates on showing Lear the negative aspects of life: its cruelty and the wickedness of human being.

From the first encounter between Lear and the Ghost, the former's instantaneous belief in the Ghost can be attributed to Lear's desire to free the caged animal, Lear himself. But contrary to Lear's belief that the banging on the other side of the prison wall is the caged animal's, the Ghost introduces the harsh reality that 'it's other prisoners'(p. 51). And discovering that the Ghost has no access to the animal, because the Boy had no access to pain, Lear becomes dismissive to the Ghost but remains within the boundaries of

<sup>20</sup> *A Sense of Direction*, Faber and Faber, 1988, p. 120.

escapism: he demands the help of another vanished reality from the past: his innocent daughters. Lear's unrealistic encounter with the ghosts of his daughters is interrupted by the harsh reality of the prison life and the Ghost reminds Lear of the impossibility of hosting the visions of the past for a long time. The Ghost also counsels Lear and prevents him from feeling pain at Fontanelle's autopsy, but it advises Lear to escape, and it is here that the Ghost's nagging function starts to be serious. Lear, contrary to the Ghost, wants to 'see' the results of his political action when he was powerful. He refuses the Ghost's invitation to escape and faces the ultimate price of seeing: blindness at the end of the scene.

One reason for the Ghost going back to his house, as has been indicated above, is to escape from the harsh reality that caused his death as a Boy. This escapism becomes obvious alongside Lear's encounters with the real people who show him the effects of his political activities. In the encounter with the Farmer, the Wife, and the Son, an encounter which the Ghost advises Lear to avoid, Lear is forced to recognise his mistakes. He confesses his crimes at the bottom of his shrine/wall and decides to act differently: to write to Cordelia. The decision to use the talent of writing makes 'the Ghost realises that his role as part of Lear's range of options is coming to an end'.<sup>21</sup> It even objects to Lear's action of writing, and hereafter its destructive effects become greater. To expose the real meaning behind the Boy's way of life, and thereby to emphasise the impossibility of returning to the Golden Age, Bond schematically lets the Ghost take Lear back to the Boy's house, to investigate the Boy's choice.

At the house, Lear re-enacts the Boy's compassionate attitude, he befriends dissidents, as the Boy used to befriend strangers like Lear himself. But this is a safe political action which springs from afar, from the base of the Boy's house/political isolation. As Lear becomes more and more aware of the impotence of this attitude, the Ghost becomes aware that Lear is moving away from the Boy's (and the Ghost's) way of life. It becomes more and more nagging and destructive. It objects to giving the Small Man sanctuary and expresses its unhappiness about Lear's involvement in this risky kind of action. It immediately suggests that Lear must 'get rid of the lot of them'(p. 83). III. ii witnesses more of Lear's political actions of hiding more refugees, and the Ghost feels helpless and insecure. It starts mourning its way of life as if it sensed its death. In III. iii, it seems that the Ghost has no hope that Lear might get rid of the people around him.

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<sup>21</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 133.

Furthermore, Lear shows that his frustration in the previous scene was momentary. The stage of consciousness Lear arrives at stands in profound opposition to that of the Boy's to the extent that Lear and the Ghost must part. Lear transcends the 'ideological' limits of the house/the Boy which depend on compassion and endurance. Lear's newly acquired ideological awareness brings the Ghost's existence to a halt: the Boy's way of life must die. The Ghost becomes alien even to its environment: the pigs are frightened when they see it.

### 3) The Yardstick of Learning Process:

The antithetical stances at which Lear and the Ghost arrive by the end of the play signify a process which starts earlier in the play. The Ghost's and Lear's methods are the culmination of two different ideological ways of living. Lear abandons the Boy's nostalgic stance, and settles on an alternative course of action to change the world. But although Lear refuses the escapist solution, he absorbs the Boy's values, compassion, and, above all, pity, and in doing so, Lear becomes sane. It is clear from this summary not only that the identity and origins of the Ghost make it a theatrical existence for the purpose of illustration, but also that its function emphasises this theatricality. Its functional existence in the play constitutes an important part of the play's thesis of the necessity of participation. Facing the powerful Cordelia, Lear states:

Lear. Listen Cordelia. If a god had made the world -- we'd be spared so much suffering. But we made the world of our smallness and weakness. Our lives are awkward and fragile and we have only one thing to keep us sane: pity, and the man without pity is mad. (p. 98)

The change in Lear from the authoritarian figure he has been to this humanist stand can be attributed to his observation of the physical decay of the Ghost alongside the events of the play. 'Since he is dead', Scharine observes, 'he cannot continue to mature as Lear does, he can only decay'.<sup>22</sup> The decay of the Ghost emphasises the Boy's, and the Ghost's, ideological incapability of preserving their existence in a reality governed by different standards. The physical decay is a materialisation of a principle which is out of touch, out-of-life, to which the physical laws might be appropriately applied: it dies. Lear comprehends the lesson the Boy could not. The Ghost is the dramatist's designed yardstick, a theatrical embodiment with

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<sup>22</sup> *OP. cit.*, p. 211. Scharine continues his observation that because of the physical death of the Boy, the Ghost's moral maturity travels a path parallel to Lear's but in the opposite direction.

which to measure Lear's learning process.

## II) *Corpora*:

As one critic has commented, 'the theme of rebirth is inseparable in Edward Bond's plays from the characters' quest for knowledge and self-definition'.<sup>23</sup> This means that the plays are full of deaths, and, on many occasions, of second deaths. But if the physical ghosts of *Early Morning* and *Lear* are a configuration of a dead or dying creed, it is with the second sort of configuration that Bond embodies the sort of character who *lives* without committing himself to humanist creed or without attempting to change the dehumanising reality. This *corpora* figures are expressions of death-in-life attitudes. The *corpus* is a theatrical presence for the purpose of illustration, its existence is functional because a degree of impersonality is involved in the figure. The metaphorical deaths of *corpora* illustrate the fact that they abandoned their responsibility for society or, as is the case with some, they have submitted to socialised morality. Some of these characters physically die at some point in the play, or events make it clear that their deaths are inescapable. From this death, they, and sometimes the protagonist, learn a great deal about avoiding the causes of this moral death and about committing themselves to humane action.

The first instance of creating a metaphorically dead character, a *corpus*, occurs in *Saved* in Bond's depiction of the youths who are shown as to be culturally as dead as the baby who physically dies at their hands. The encounter between Harry and Len in Scene Twelve illustrates the conclusion of the process of transforming one of these youths into a *corpus*. But the father figure himself is a *corpus*, or, as Bond himself put it, a ghost.<sup>24</sup> Harry is depicted throughout the play as having completely handed over his responsibility to society without questioning.<sup>25</sup> The most important sign of Harry's submission is his pride of killing somebody in the war, a killing that he wishes Len could go through. 'Yer never killed yer man. Yer missed that. Gives yer a sense a perspective. I was one a the lucky ones'(p. 128), Harry confirms to Len. As a sign of his unwillingness to participate in family life, Harry is introduced as having never even talked

<sup>23</sup> Pauner, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

<sup>24</sup> Bond has explained that Harry comes in as a ghost, 'a killed person, dressed up as a ghost'. 'Appendix' to *Plays: One*, *op. cit.*, p. 310. See also, 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', *op. cit.*, p. 16. Bond's characterisation of Harry, among other things, contradicts his famous claim at the beginning of the 'Appendix' that '*Saved* is almost irresponsibly optimistic'(p. 308).

<sup>25</sup> The interpretation of this ghost-like figure is shared by other critics. See, for example, Hay and Roberts *A Study*, p. 55; Dohman, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

to his wife. And he also does not participate in life, he depends on the luck that might come his way one day: he keeps filling in the coupons.

It is important to realise that Bond uses a Shakespearian sign of the 'bad' ghost to illustrate the 'ghost's' power of corruption: he appears to Len at almost midnight (see p. 128). The struggle with the knife in the previous scene, although it leaves Harry physically unharmed, is a proclamation of his metaphorical death. As is discussed elsewhere in this thesis, Harry's defeat appears in the fact that he makes a deal with Len, a male conspiracy against the females of the house. At the end of the scene, it is apparent that the males agree on hiding their friendship and that Len is going to replace Harry because the latter is going to leave. The last scene shows the extent of Len's corruption: he becomes an integral part in the death around him, but the one who demands a hammer, though no one supplies it.

As is indicated elsewhere in this thesis, *Camino Real* has some similarities with *Early Morning*, one of which is the depiction of society as a dead-living entity, a sum of *corpora*. The community of *Camino Real* consists of 'dead' legends and 'dead' historical figures against the 'alive' protagonist. But that is the superficial correspondence. On a much more fundamental level, the two communities of the two plays consist of *morally* dead characters. Dehumanised and dehumanising, they are *corpora*. Bond's materialistic characterisation in *Early Morning* engraves the image of living-in-death society and characters. The cannibalism in heaven is an emphasis on the single incident on earth, a concretisation of the real state of the society, as Bond depicts it. The immorality of the dehumanised individual makes even the accusation of cannibalism in life meaningless and a self-evident crime. It is not only the lower classes which are cannibals: the play makes it clear that this state of living has been created by the ruling classes.

Within this community of *corpora* stands one individual as the live element, alive because he does not participate in the dehumanising process. This is also the main theme in *Camino Real*. The essence of inter-relationships in the communities of both plays is competition, conspiracy, and aggression, even Kilroy's body is exploited for the benefit of the community. As Scharine explains, the ghosts 'do literally in heaven what their competitive society has forced them to do metaphorically on earth. They consume one another, a horror made doubly tragic on earth because there is nothing inherent in the human condition that requires such competition and mutual destruction'.<sup>26</sup> They are destroyed and destructive because of the

<sup>26</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 105.



social conditioning the individuals undergo. They become worse than ghosts, haunting the dead, a fact of which Albert is aware. As Arthur learns it, he explains it to Florence in detail:

Arthur. Most people die before they reach their teens. Most die when they're still babies or little children. A few reach fourteen or fifteen. Hardly anyone lives on into their twenties.

Florence. Thank God.

Arthur. Bodies are supposed to die and souls go on living. That's not true. Souls die first and bodies live. They wander round like ghosts, they bump into each other, tread on each other, haunt each other. That's another reason why it's better to die and come here – there *must* be peace when you're dead. Only I'm not dead. (p. 209)

It is significant here to realise that Florence herself is not only a ghost living in the afterdeath, but also a *corpus*, like the rest of her community, because she is socially moralised. The image of heaven is beyond the realistic, and the ghosts of that heaven are theatrical illustration of their real state on earth. But even on earth, the *corpora* are functional as they demonstrate a tendency for perpetuating death, for living by eating the flesh of others.

Shogo's power of dehumanisation is evident throughout the play, and if he is the child Bond says he is, it is appropriate to insert that Shogo is a *corpus*. As Bond has explained, 'In fact you could say, Basho didn't save the child and so the child grew up dead'.<sup>27</sup> He is the baby who grew up dead-alive, a dehumanised figure and therefore he dehumanises all those around him, especially Kiro. His lack of guidance and its consequent devastating effects appear in the five children scene: despairing of finding Basho to help him, Shogo kills the children.

The theatrical method of characterisation through ghosts and *corpora* persists in *Lear*, a play that investigates the question of moral commitment to life. The play is an attempt to examine some solutions to this question, to solve the puzzle of how to act in society.<sup>28</sup> The examination of the question of moral commitment in *Lear* indicates that the introduction of the naked Man at the end of *Narrow Road*, an introduction which has been taken as Bond's optimism,<sup>29</sup> has been insufficient. *Lear* is an examination of Kiro's choice to commit suicide. It is an examination of why and how one should die if death, as one song in *Restoration* puts it, is cast. As Bond explains in his 'Author's Preface' to *Lear*, Arthur answers the question:

<sup>27</sup> 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> As 'solving puzzles' was an important motivation in Bond writing plays, the protagonist who tries to solve puzzles could be directly linked to Bond.

<sup>29</sup> Bond seems to be implying, Brown claims, that the 'Natural Man, or at least man cleansed from the damaging effects of unjust society, rather than civilized man, has the capacity to save himself'. 'Alienation versus Commitment', *op. cit.*, p. 162.

does the human race have any moral justification for its existence? negatively, and consequently 'he tried to kill himself'.<sup>30</sup> It follows that Kiro answers similarly and commits suicide. *Lear* is an investigation of the moral justification of suicide, inaction, resignation, as a solution to social problems.

Bond's 'Author's Preface' to *Lear* is an extended study of the subject of death, substantiated in answering the relevant questions of the human motivations and execution of violence. It concludes that the social structure, and not anything innate, causes aggression and death. The Preface has little directly to do with *Lear*, the play, but it is an inquest of the 'subject matter': the motivation to violent actions (aggression, suicide), or reaction against violent deeds (isolation, withdrawal). Bond thought of *Lear*'s starting point into his journey of achieving consciousness as a death point, from being a ghost or having one.<sup>31</sup> But *Lear* ends his journey in a physical death, a death of which he is almost sure. The difference between the two deaths is that the latter happens because of *Lear*'s choice to participate in the action, a participation which is levelled with the proof of the reality of life.<sup>32</sup> His sane action of participating in the political problems takes him beyond, to use Ruby Cohn's terminology, Nothingness.<sup>33</sup> To Bond, *Lear*'s action of destroying the social and political system he initiated amounts to accepting responsibility. He compared the meaning of the action to the (Hegelian) Egyptian concept of man which would consider the action as sordid and futile, and to the Greek concept which would consider it as heroic. Bond qualified the Greek understanding that physical death matters little when it comes to honourable life.<sup>34</sup> The action leaves its 'mark' on others who might follow in his footsteps.

In *The Sea*, the corpse of Colin is stabbed when it appears on the shore, the stabbing is his second death. This death polarises different attitudes not only towards Colin as a heroic figure or even to his unheroic death, but towards life itself. The corpse is actually resurrected to allow the characters' attitudes to appear. The dead body brings to life the reality of the characters. It brings out Hatch's madness to its full manifestation, not knowing its identity. But whatever its identity, it makes no difference in exposing Hatch's attitude to life. On the other hand, seeing that the dead cannot save themselves, and seeing that the

<sup>30</sup> 'Author's Preface' to *Lear*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup> See Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>32</sup> See 'Author's Preface' to *Lear*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>33</sup> See *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 266.

<sup>34</sup> See Hay and Roberts, *A Companion*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

mad cannot save life, Willy clutches at his newly formed awareness of man's limits and the necessity to overcome the tragic. He confirms that although the horrific action is deplorable it remains an 'innocent killing'. He clutches at life by the end of the play. Colin's second death affirms the rebirth of his surrogate counterpart. It is a rebirth despite the wise fool who isolates himself from people's way. At the end of the play, Willy reaches the conclusion that Evens's detachment and attitude of not participating cannot save life. He discovers the deadliness of the wise fool if he is to stop at his knowledge.

In the plays of the second period, the strategy of characterising through *corpora* is linked strongly to the learning process of the protagonist. But the main aim of employing this characterisation remains the same. A play like *Bingo* is a study of the question of moral responsibility and moral justification of life, and therefore death is the most important theme in the play. And the presence of death, especially the metaphorical death, is nowhere stronger than in the last scene, which also squares the learning process.<sup>35</sup> From the beginning, death appears in a metaphorical sense in the state of enclosure in which Shakespeare lives. He realises his ignorance and his participation in creating an inhuman society when he is put against the gibbeted Young Woman. Her death brings in to the open his self-contempt, and against the corpse he starts re-assessing his whole life. He articulates his awareness of his detachment from the social process of creating a just society, and that his artistic activity has revolved around money, activity that led him to live in silence as a *corpus*.

Shakespeare's re-assessment leads him to recognise some facts: 'There is no higher wisdom of silence. No face brooding over the water'(pp. 40-41). His greatest discovery is of his position in his society as an artist who 'usurped the place of god, and lied'(p. 41), that he did not fulfill his moral responsibility as a cultural father figure. But because Shakespeare does not yet inform his own death, his 'conclusions' are expressions of self-pity which do not lead to action. And although his conclusions revolve around death, he is still aestheticising it. Shakespeare, therefore, is not only unable to reach the correct answers but also the correct questions, at this stage of his progress. He does not know his next step, or

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<sup>35</sup> Because of this strategy of clarification, Bond has been attacked by the critics. Irving Wardle, for example, has stated that 'Bond himself, I think mistakenly, does spell things out towards the end, as he also did in *The Sea*. Perhaps it is in despair at getting his message across by straight enactment, but theatrically, there is less force in the scenes where {Shakespeare} comes clean with Judith and with himself, than in the first three-quarters of the play when one has to deduce his hatreds and despair from evasion and silences'. See, '*Bingo*', *The Times*, 15 August 1974, p. 9.

what to do with his life: 'Where shall I go? London? Stay here?'(p. 42).

Jonson's speech is full of death, killing, poison, and hatred. He is another *corpus*. He realises that Shakespeare is 'dying'(p. 48), and that Shakespeare himself knows 'it's time to die'(p. 48). Jonson produces the instrument with which Shakespeare kills himself, he is the 'clown armed with a knife'(p. 48). But the knowledge of dying does not motivate Shakespeare to act. When he is faced with the snow that looks like a white page, Scene Five, he does not write. Therefore, the snow becomes his metaphorical coffin, and he strongly feels the presence of his own death. He uses the past tense to describe his life as a dead figure, all that is needed now is the child that will lead him to the grave. He realises his mistakes which destroyed the being he loved most: Judith. He becomes 'sane' when he realises how 'mad' he was, and how his uncertifiable madness was destructive on the collective level. Suggestively, his realisation of the cost of writing (p. 57) comes after the shot that kills the Old Man: another father-figure in the play. The spontaneous, kind figure dies, and the other is made to learn. Thus, Shakespeare's realisation seems to come as a confession of his responsibility in 'killing' the good part of himself, a confession similar to Lear's for what he does for the Gravedigger's Boy.

As soon as the Old Man dies, Shakespeare recognises his own death. He starts his monologue by stating, in the past tense, his reluctance to die. He continues: 'I am dead now. Soon I shall fall down. If I wasn't dead I could kill myself'(p. 57). The monologue ends also with death. This recognition is followed by the most important question he addresses to himself, noticeably, in the past tense also: 'Was anything done'(p. 57). Shakespeare seems to have reached (negative) answers to the questions which bewildered him and which made him the *corpus* he is. The real action, though it means the refusal of any moral commitment, comes in the last scene. In this scene, the Old Woman describes how she found her husband 'lying in that snow'(p. 59), a sentence that echoes Shakespeare's desire which is expressed earlier: 'to lie in this snow a whole life'(p. 57). But the significant happening in the scene is the falling down of the already dead character Shakespeare. By that time, there is no question or doubt that he is dead. The question is about 'How long have I been dead'(p. 65). He arrives at considering his life a mistake, an 'Absurd' life, and without moral justification he, like Kiro in *Narrow Road*, commits suicide.

In the *The Bundle*, Bond rounds up the question of moral responsibility, and the reasons of what

could be taken as almost physical rebirth of the protagonist whose learning process is linked to the question of life and death. Many critics have analysed the Ferryman's dilemma in scene six of the play in how to choose between being revolutionary like Wang and being loyal to his own humanist principles. Some of these critics also commented on Wang's incapability of love, which motivated Bond to give the Wife a more sympathetic treatment.<sup>36</sup> But although critics have mentioned the premature death of the Wife as a consequence of the Ferryman's choice of saving Wang, they have not realised the unusual presence of death in the scene. For the Ferryman to arrive at being 'the most articulate spokesman of Wang's revolutionary politics',<sup>37</sup> and to emerge as its heroic martyr by disavowing his assigned role as ,to use Basho's words, 'the emperor's eyes and ears'(p. 43) needs more convincing reasoning. This is to be found in his recognition of guilt towards his 'dead' Wife. At some stage, the Ferryman realises that his kindness to the baby has caused the death of his beloved wife: what remains of her in this scene in which she appears for the first time is a *corpus*.

The scene balances many elements on the personal, social, and political levels. It purposefully discloses the even political powers of both Wang and Basho. Both revolutionary and reactionary troops seem equivalent in strength, both are in need for the support of the 'instinctively good' Ferryman. In the long-run political struggle, the Ferryman is the decisive factor in achieving victory. It is not arbitrary, then, that the scene starts with one side of the struggle: Basho with his stick and carrot tactics. The stick is the First Soldier who, to the incomprehension of one critic, voices the tactics of using power and violence against the Ferryman and his likes.<sup>38</sup> Basho also has a 'small payment' and 'honey' for the Ferryman if he join forces with the governing class. Eventually, the second, opposite force arrives after a long *monologue* about death by the Wife in which she describes her present condition. It is a description that leaves no doubt that she is a *corpus*, a death-in-life figure. The Ferryman's choice has made Wang the man he is. But in the process, she continues: 'I died in his slow childbirth. He fed me later. But the damage was done. Inside'(p. 44). The Ferryman's choice caused the death of the being he loved most, his Wife.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 173; Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 282.

<sup>37</sup> Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>38</sup> Donahue thinks that the First Soldier 'makes an unexpected speech'. See her *op. cit.*, p. 172. The speech is obviously the threatening stick of the reactionary power.

*pora*. The characterisation is also linked to the characters' responsibility for their moral action. The place in which the events take place is characterised as a place of dying; a notion mentioned lightly in the first scene of the play. It is also a place of illness: Xenia's mother moved into that room 'whenever she was ill'(p. 9). But the very room has the power to cure. Within this syntax, the human reaction to death, or, as David puts it, how to 'choose how to live -- even though the end is inevitable'(p. 16) could be either a sign of 'tragic readiness' or an intimidating factor that spoils life. Marthe's reaction at this stage is not the former choice. She, like Lear, wants to kill herself (p. 16), to escape responsibility and moral action. David's long scientific account of the cause of her death (three pages of the published text) physicalises death, so Marthe would not be spiritually blackmailed or intimidated. It is an attempt to make her believe that death is the final exit.

Marthe is aware that she is dying, but she is also aware she has 'lived a second life for forty years'(p. 27), and that she is approaching her 'second death'(p. 27). In Bond's canon that means she *lives* as a *corpus*. It is a state worse than being a ghost: the Gravedigger's Boy's Ghost is aware of being dead. Marthe is not. She is even eager 'to live nine lives'(p. 27). Her confession also shows her fear of death, and that she has not achieved tragic readiness despite her struggle to achieve justice. She regrets having lived while others died in the camp. She has lived in the shadow of death for forty years. She informs Xenia:

Marthe. I saw a photograph of my death. I lived my second life in a new way. I listen to them not you. (p. 44)

Her recognition of being dead and having no other chance to live again, as David proves it to her through his long scientific monologue, stands clearly as the reason for facing her ex-mistress courageously and strongly.

But Xenia is also dead, and the bitter encounter between her and Marthe in Scene Five seems to take both of them to the recognition that they are really dead. Xenia recognises her defeat, and her recognition takes the form of recognising she has been dead all along: 'I've spent years pointing at my dead body -- and no one sees it'(p. 45). Realising her death, Xenia leaves the place for the hotel she hates. She perceives the house to be 'a grave' to which she 'shan't come back again'(p. 44). In her desperate situation, she yearns for physical death. The peak of the confrontation with Marthe is the carrying out of the spit. Through it,

Marthe *acts* her moral stance against Xenia, an action she could not act for forty years. Significantly, Marthe does not spit when it was more appropriate, when she was telling the story of her imprisonment with the woman who wanted to spit at Xenia's face. She spits only when Xenia confesses her death. Thus, Bond creates a moral judgement on Marthe.

It is only when Marthe realises that 'in the end death is a friend who brings a gift: life. Not for you but the others. I die so that you might live'(p. 49) that she transcends the tragic. By accepting her limits she transcends her status: she 'uses her death to show the meaning of life'.<sup>39</sup> In transcending the tragic, she becomes another Lear or Hecuba in whose action they achieve immortality.

From start to finish, *The War Plays* is about 'dead' people, in real and metaphorical senses. The whole trilogy seems as an enactment of hypothetical characters who exist as dead people after a hypothetical nuclear explosion. The trilogy thus is one of Bond's most theatrical plays because of his great dependence on the strategy of characterising through ghosts and/or *corpora*, some of which die for the second time in front of the audience. For these reasons, the theatricality of the trilogy is the peak of the plays of the third period. A few examples would illustrate the importance of this characterisation in the trilogy:

i) The Mother of *Red Black and Ignorant* introduces the play while she is 'dead'. She passed into death in the nuclear explosions, without knowing it. She introduces the Monster as the baby her womb threw into the fire. The rest of the play shows how the Monster could have grown up in society. The process the Monster undergoes is similar to the process any individual undergoes in our modern society and therefore death here is a metaphorical characterisation of the real state of modern society, a repetition of Bond's strategy in depicting the society of *Early Morning* and its heaven. The Monster, as a figure from our times, according to Bond's judgement, lives his life as a *corpus*. As the Monster grows up he breeds a crueller generation: harder social circumstances push the Monster's Son to kill his 'unborn' father at the end of the play. The non-existent baby is killed a second time.

ii) The characters of *The Tin Can People* confirm that the death of the human species was so complete as to make even the saved individuals dead. Death was so massive that it could only have left corpse-shaped

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<sup>39</sup> Hirst, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

people. The characters of this Part think of themselves as dead, living deaths or *corpora*. Even the only 'alive' person they encounter becomes the reason, they think, of their death.

iii) The Woman of *Great Peace*, one of this group of people of Part Two, explains that everyone was dying and that the first opportunity to establish a living community failed because of the very man they thought of as alive. Before the vanishing of this community, the Man puts his seeds in Woman 1, but she dies and her baby is abandoned in the wilderness. But the real reason for the vanishing of this community is their possession of the tin cans. Here Bond is connecting nuclear politics to the politics of consumerism that puts everything in tin cans. The surviving people are possessed of the cans as were before the nuclear destruction. This possession makes them metaphorical ghosts possessed with the old ways of life.<sup>40</sup>

iv) The soldiers in *Great Peace* think they are dead and try to convince the Woman that even she is dead. The horror of the war, which they depict in detail, made it impossible for them to feel otherwise. In their state of obvious madness, they turn against the only object that is described as alive: the baby. Some of the soldiers eventually believe it screamed when Soldiers 2 and 4 tear the cloth apart. Their doubt that the baby is alive leads to their attempt on the Woman's life to prove she and they are dead. And in their hysterical situation, they believe that freedom is possible only in death. The bickering over death leads to their physical death.

#### Summary:

1) It is apparent from the ease with which one could work out the schematic movement of some of Bond's plays that some figures are functional: they are theatrical presences to embody the tendency to accept social morality in the figures of ghosts or the abandonment of committing oneself to humanist action to change the dehumanising reality in the figures who are metaphorically dead or *corpora*. The ghost in the plays is an expression and materialisation of a concept which started to appear in *Early Morning* on which Wedekind's *Spring Awakening*, especially its ghost scene, has left its mark. George is the socially moral-

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<sup>40</sup> The image is a little obscure for those who are unfamiliar with Bond's strategies of materialising the abstract. Mal Cawood, for example, has complained about the obscurity of the image: 'it is only those familiar with Bond's ideas and previous work who will be able to make much of it. The tin cans appear to be an attempt by Bond to make the truth physical; yet all they do is serve as physical symbols of Bond's personal notions, and without a concrete context they become abstract and simplistic'. See 'Whistling in the Wilderness: Edward Bond's Most Recent Plays', *Red Letters*, 19 (May 1986), p. 19.



ised half of the Siamese twins. The struggle between the two halves takes different stages until Arthur, the pro-life half, transcends the heaven of cannibalism by refusing to participate in the dehumanising reality of Victoria's social system.

2) But the Ghost of *Lear* is the weighty figure in Bond's canon of ghosts. It represents an extension of the figure of the Gravedigger's Boy and his method of living away from the violent society. Bond allows no doubt about the origins and the identity of the Ghost, and therefore its characterising function becomes apparent. The Ghost appears only to Lear, it is his own invention to create a compassionate reality, and therefore it is an expression of Lear's guilty conscience over the killing of the Boy. The Ghost's existence is linked strongly to Lear's maturity: when he reaches sound political conclusions about his role in society, the Ghost dies. But the Ghost seems to have left its compassionate attitude to Lear, for whom it is the partial basis of subsequent political action. In their companionship, the Ghost shows the Boy's usual friendship and kindness, but it also shows an aggressiveness and destruction alien to the Boy, to reflect his desire to live separated from others. This negative characterisation of the Ghost is a condemnation of the Boy's anti-social way of life. It is a kind of exaggeration to underline the real meaning of the Boy's way of life, which appeals to many. In a violent age, the characterisation of the image implies, the strategy of non-participation is no different from being dead: a ghost.

3) Bond employs a variation on his characterisation of the ghost in his depiction of the metaphorically dead characters, *corpora*. If the ghosts are life-in-death manifestations, the *corpora* are death-in-life figures: as ghosts, they abandon their moral responsibilities and live without commitment to human life. In some cases, the *corpora* are symptoms of metaphorically dead cultures, such as those of *Saved* or *Early Morning* with its heaven of cannibalism. This kind of characterisation is linked to the idea of a second, physical death. This second death, in some cases (*The Sea*) exposes different attitudes towards life. But in *Bingo*, Shakespeare's metaphorical death and his living as a *corpus* is materialised in a second, physical death. His silence throughout the play expresses the way of life he chooses to live without participation. It is a death which is articulated even by himself. In the snow scene, he articulates knowledge that he is dead, all that he needs is the hand of the child who will lead him to the grave.

4) As Shakespeare's moral (or immoral) choice transforms his beloved Judith into a monster, the

Ferryman's choice in *The Bundle* creates a *corpus* of his beloved Wife. His early choice to act in a humanist way to Wang destroyed the Wife's life because, as she herself articulates in the contest between father and son, she died in the process of fostering Wang. The contest between the Ferryman and Wang in Scene Six of the play shows Bond's squaring of the image as different attitudes to living struggle to prove their correctness. In this contest the Wife appears for the first time, and her movement during the confrontation underlines the fact that she is the object of the struggle between the young man and the old one. Wang makes the Ferryman realise that his humanism and kindness caused the metaphorical death of the Wife, and with her persuasion the Ferryman participates in Wang's revolution. The inevitable physical death of the Wife, though the audience do not see it, gives (almost physical) rebirth to Wang the revolutionary. Her choice to take on her moral responsibility makes her life meaningful.

## Chapter Four

### Possessed Figures

In medical terms, the reasons for and manifestations of madness differ widely.<sup>1</sup> Even 'mental illness' has no definition which adequately specifies precise boundaries for the concept itself.<sup>2</sup> It is safe, then, to assume that drama does not necessarily work in accordance with any specific psychoanalytical theory, but it uses some aspects, discovered by the method, to differentiate the insane. Madness is one of Bond's major themes and preoccupations since his early plays. One fundamental reason for his rewriting *King Lear* was his objection to Shakespeare's expression of the King's insights 'as madness or hysteria'.<sup>3</sup> In the long history of Bond's characterisation of madness, it is significant to realise that madness, as often as not, leads to sanity and recognition. The moments of recognition and re-assessment are the real target in Bond's plays because they signify full recognition or the beginning of enlightenment. In the re-assessment of the cultural circumstances that lead to madness lies Bond's interest in the subject.<sup>4</sup> The connection between madness and recognition indicates that Bond, the social critic, employs the characterisation of madness as a critique in order to expose the dehumanising systems.

*Lear* introduces the idea that lack of pity is the main cause of madness, a pity which the social system prevents. Hatch's madness in *The Sea* is an expression of the lack of democracy in his society. The competitiveness of trade makes him a hostage, vulnerable to others' economic power. As Bond explains: 'I think the pursuit of profit -- in the way the draper pursues it -- is bound to lead to some sort of madness ...

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<sup>1</sup> D. L. Rosenham, for example, maintains that it is almost impossible to define madness. See his 'On Being Sane in Insane Places', in *Health, Illness, and Medicine: A Reader in Medical Sociology*, edited by Gary L. Albrecht and Paul C. Higgins (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1979), pp. 167-86.

<sup>2</sup> See *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, third edition (Washington, D. C.: American Psychiatric Association, 1987), p. xxii.

<sup>3</sup> 'Introduction' to *Plays: Three, op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Lappin explains the reason for Bond's interest in the subject and the method of characterisation as to be a reflection and response to the fundamental issues confronting the modern English society such as the threat of nuclear destruction, ecological disasters, and the seeming impossibility of a rational political action against the fierce competitiveness of social economics. Madness, therefore, is an image of decline and decay that crystallises a culture in crisis. For more details, see *op. cit.*, p. 2.

He's not really responsible for his own livelihood. It is not in his own control. It's dependent on other people'.<sup>5</sup> Bond's introduction to *The Fool* formulates his analysis of the reasons for madness, and the relationship between it and culture. In it, Bond makes a distinction between organisation and culture: the former is concerned only with efficiency while the latter is concerned with the method of living. Culture ensures that whatever is possible is done to make the method practical. Culture, to Bond, means the 'rational creation of human nature, the implementation of rationality in all human activity, economic, political, social, public and private'.<sup>6</sup> It is the way a society meets its fundamental needs, and when a society fails to live rationally, it causes the division of self: madness. Men who live in an irrational society are driven to a kind of madness because society fails to fill the 'gap' inside the human nature, the gap left by our freedom from the captive nature of other animals, from the tight control of instincts. The neglect of social institutions, according to Bond, 'doesn't just divide individual against individual, it divides the individual against himself and tears him apart inwardly'.<sup>7</sup>

The absence of humanist cultural norms to which the individual attaches himself leads the individual to become self-parasitical: he goes mad. His madness takes the form of entering a 'state of false inventiveness' which enables him to imagine and make reality bearable. Another form it takes is by attaching his passions and emotions to substitute objects. Bond's depiction of the possessed characters makes it clear that mental illness does not exist independent of social circumstances. By such a dramatic strategy, Bond adds an explanatory 'comment' to the emotionally disturbing phenomenon of madness. This comment is the means of alienating the action<sup>8</sup> because by showing the sociopolitical circumstances, Bond prevents the audience from getting emotionally involved with the psychology of the individual on the stage.

## I) Mad Cultures:

Bond's characterisation of madness is in accord with some psychoanalysts who consider that 'the separation of the members of a society along the axis of sanity and insanity is largely a product of social

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<sup>5</sup> Quoted by Loney, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>6</sup> 'Introduction' to *The Fool*, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>8</sup> Bond: 'Alienation isn't the removal of an emotion, it is the adding of a commentary'. Quoted in 'Exercise for Young Writers', Hay and Roberts, *A Companion*, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

rather than medical or scientific selection'.<sup>9</sup> For Bond and Scheff, the labelling of madness is a culture-bound phenomenon which indicates the societal reaction to the rule breakers: any deviation from social expectations is taken to be a threat to the *status quo*. Judgement on mental illness, for Bond and for Scheff, is not culture-free; it is the result of the violation of explicit norms or 'violation of residual rules'.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of depicting madness in Bond's canon emphasises the possibility that the reality that the so-called schizophrenics are out of touch with is so appalling that their view of the world may be more supportive to life than conventional reality, especially when the schizophrenics arrive at re-assessing the so-called 'sane' reality.<sup>11</sup> Bond depicts madness in order to illustrate the extent to which a specific society censors the individual's critical imagination. Even the individual's personal failure of imagination which leads, among other reasons, to his inescapable moral or mental collapse is given social reasons. The social orientation of the individual, to Bond, forms the basis of the human personality. His consistent presentation of societies in which people suffer mental deterioration addresses a much wider phenomenon because it brings the sanity of these societies into question.<sup>12</sup>

In *The Fool*, Scene Six, Bond emphasises that Clare's madness is socially constructed: he demonstrates that subjectivity itself is evolved by social conditioning. The scene reveals the socioeconomic codes of the society that originate Clare's madness, it is caused by the dehumanising social system.<sup>13</sup> The scene implies that Clare's art was a threat to his 'sane' society. They stamp Clare as mad. The vital connection the scene makes is that between the social and the personal: how and why society considers the individual

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas J. Scheff, 'On Reason and Sanity: Some Political Implications of Psychiatric Thought', in *Labeling Madness*, third edition (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> Scheff, 'Schizophrenia as Ideology', in *ibid*, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Coult introduces a useful division between well-defined madness in the plays and other sorts of clinically uncertifiable ones. When a character, e.g., Shakespeare or Kiro, discovers the truth about himself or his society, he goes mad or commits suicide. The plays, to Coult, are battlegrounds between sanity-seekers and corrupt cultures which are shown as insane, e.g., Cordelia and her ministers, the mad heaven of *Early Morning*, and the world of *The Swing*. Coult concludes that madness results from the confrontation between the individual and the collective insanity. A play such as *Bingo*, Coult maintains, shows the insanity of a culture embodied in the play's characters, including Shakespeare. See, *The Plays*, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-8.

<sup>12</sup> In *Narrow Road*, Coult observes, Bond's characterisation reflects the whole colonial and imperialist experience of Britain: the Imperial Adventure was a sociopolitical consequence of economic growth that sought new markets overseas. Coult asserts that in Victorian Britain, of which Georgina is an offspring, politics and religion became horribly mingled and were raised to a bizarre level of national fantasy. See, *The Plays*, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>13</sup> Bond's view of madness as a response to an irrational society, as Brown comments, 'coincides with the vision of many twentieth-century writers. The sympathetic view of the madman, who is usually sensitive and often an artist, usually pits a conformist society against the individual who does not fit in. Bond goes beyond this analysis to show the economic and political basis for the irrationality of society which is clearly based on class oppression'. See, 'Alienation versus Commitment', *op. cit.*, p. 234.

as insane. In this scene especially, Bond examines 'the failure of an entire society by showing the contradiction between the positive and necessary activity of writing and the social conditions which make that activity impossible'.<sup>14</sup> In using Clare's poetry as a marketable commodity, Bond classifies that culture as insane. A culture that evades the recognition of moments of disturbance or penetrating poetic vision is, to Bond, a culture that compartmentalises a state of experience into a formally reduced type of 'illness', which is then logically disposed in the field of curing even against the will of the 'ill' individual. Ironically, Clare's patrons are the ones who put him in the asylum.

Greta's madness in *The Swing* exposes the insanity of her cultural environment which necessitates the double-standard behaviour of the individual. Within the male-dominated culture, social morality forbids her her natural sexuality and, furthermore, makes her feel guilty at having such sexuality: a brief encounter with a male unleashes this contradiction inside her and she goes mad. She is put in the position of the 'bad' woman, the prostitute. The trial scene exposes the extent of this society's madness when the whole town participates in lynching a White man for his humane treatment of a Black man. This society's aggression impinges itself on anybody who does not abide by the rule that prohibits the Blacks any human rights.

Marthe, in *Summer*, introduces the lack of social justice as the sole reason that causes madness, she verbalises the definition of a mad society and the need for social justice:

Marthe. You can live without kindness, you can't live without justice -- or fighting to get it. If you try to you're mad. You don't understand yourself or the world. And then nothing works. You and everyone else suffer the consequences of your madness. Whole generations bleed for it. The state of injustice is always a state of madness. (p. 20)

By this critique, Trench's madness is caused by his discovery of the falsity of his definition of the term 'character', and by the betrayal by his think-tank of the very definitions they introduce to him at the beginning of the play, *The Worlds*. As the fall signifies a lack of cultural foundations on which the individual might build his character, Trench goes mad. In these two plays, *The Worlds* and *Summer*, and others in the third period, Bond adds to the need for compassion, love, and care the need for social justice as the necessary ambiance to live sanely.

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<sup>14</sup> Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 100.

## II) Possessed Figures:

But madness remains a theatrical method of characterisation in other senses. In Bond's plays, one sort of mad figure is the one who possesses ghosts. If the ghost figure in the play is an expression of the individual's submission to socialised morality, the mad figure is one who, though not purely submitted to socialised morality, is touched by it. The mad figure is bound by this morality, but the figure's instinctively good part remains in him which allows the figure to look for an alternative, more humane social system. This instinctively good part is what keeps the mad from turning to a ghost, or at least to a *corpus*. When the individual stands midway between abiding by the rules of the past and seeking alternatives, he is possessed. This 'middle ground' signifies insanity but not submission to social morality. In this 'middle ground', the protagonist is mad and his madness appears in the fact that ghosts are connected to him whether literally (as in *Early Morning*) or figuratively (as in *Lear*). The way to sanity is open to the possessed, contrary to ghosts or *corpora* whose physical or metaphorical death makes it impossible for them to come back to humanity. When the individual, such as *Lear*, reaches the 'sane' conclusion of the inevitability of participating in changing the repressive regimes, the Ghost dies.

Madness is theatrical in another sense: it juxtaposes two different, almost autonomous, realities by linguistic or visual means. This theatricality involves the sort of possessed figures mentioned above and/or another sort who possess no ghosts, but are haunted by them. The two realities are the mad's and either the other characters' in the play or the spectators', whose 'sane' norms are used to judge the reality of the insane. The mad's reality, or condition, can be created by visual indications such as torn clothes, disordered hair, and restless gestures to reflect the inner incoherence of the character. Madness, with its 'other reality', constitutes a pretext for the dramatist to show the spectator the oppositional relationship between reality as it is lived by the 'sane' characters and as it is lived by the 'insane' figures. It is not difficult to see that the stage representation of madness must inevitably lead the audience to question the nature of the former reality that led the insane astray. The premises upon which the possessed figures base their world may be not different from those of the supposedly sane persons. But a degree of difference between the two realities makes the spectator wonder which reality represents the truth in the situation. The representation of madness on the stage suggests that the ostensible theme is tightly linked to the major problem of

reality, illusion, and the reliability of human perception.

In general, the reality of the possessed is used to parallel the outer reality of the other characters, and that affects the aesthetic distance which swings between two different ends. But the distance is not completely cancelled because the possessed remains within the confines of the narrative, fictional world. The possessed is neither more nor less illusory than the other characters, but the paralleled realities interrupt the continuity of the dramatic illusion, creating a theatrical world. Madness here serves as a foil to the supposed reality of the other characters which it momentarily puts in doubt.<sup>15</sup> The phenomenon of madness inevitably juxtaposes two realities each with its own autonomous fragments and constituents, a juxtaposition which creates a theatricality similar to juxtaposing different 'sane' realities in other Bond plays. The two realities are created when, to put it simply, the individual's unconscious takes over his conscious mind to create a liveable reality.

The juxtaposition of two realities generates two juxtaposed temporalities: madness on the stage generates a theatrical, divided time instead of a 'unified', linear time. The rhythm of insanity is out of joint with chronological time, almost by definition. The ambiguity of the unencumbered imagination not only suggests a separation from reality and incongruity with reason but, more importantly, dramatically suspends the realistic, linear time. In madness past, present, and future fuse into one moment of theatrical time. As it is an 'out of joint' time, madness facilitates the dramatist's freedom of imagination to flow freely with the possessed figure, from past to future and from locale to locale. Madness is a possible means to overcome the restrictions of the stage's limited abilities to move from one temporality to another. Taking Bond as an example, we find his depiction of Arthur's monologue in *Early Morning* (p. 185) gives him an opportunity to move freely in time in order to give the monologue a generality. Arthur's questions about the current fight between Victoria and her opponents includes Napoleon's presence in the battlefield and Hitler and Einstein. By having Arthur talk about figures who are anachronistic, Bond widens the implications of the presented situation to extend beyond the Victorian era: madness functions in maintaining a universal time.

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<sup>15</sup> Foucault places madness in the modern age, as he tracks its course in history, halfway between its Renaissance position as some sort of reality beyond 'normal reality', and its later seventeenth-century position as an isolated segment of reality, walled off for fear of contaminating 'normal perception'. See, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, translated by Richard Howard, Tavistock Publications, 1967, pp. 53-64.



### 1) Physical Possession:

Arthur's physical possession of the ghost of his Siamese twin George illustrates the former's madness: he is in search for an alternative political system but still bound to the old Victorian one. The ghost represents the kind of culture that forms the individual. Arthur's madness is an illustration of his submission to the dehumanising reality, he is literally stuck to George's ghost. It is a ghost that will remain there as long as Arthur's mind is linked to social morality. Arthur's madness occurs in the middle phase of his progress, where he believes in the values by which the Victorian society lives. His bewilderment at what happens around him in the first phase is followed by a slow movement to illustrate the stages his mind goes through. The positioning of this phase immediately after the Bagshot scene gives it, as Hirst maintains, 'the force of a reflective slow movement in the hectic symphonic structure of the drama'.<sup>16</sup> The whole middle phase is a demonstration of the conflict between good instincts and socialised morality.

During this phase, Arthur evaluates the strength of George's commitment to death, death which gives the individual, George claims, peace of mind. The companionship of the dead George emphasises the theatricality of the characterisation of madness: the other reality the mad creates is literally present throughout. Even Arthur's expression of thought takes the form of conversing with the physically dead George, who remains a residing and devastating power on Arthur's brain. Moreover, this picture illustrates the timelessness created by floating over different times by the device of anachronism. Arthur's time is out of joint, a fact which is reflected in the creation of theatrical time. The picture he draws of the unbearable suffering of human being is of his own making: the world as he practices it. He introduces the ultimate effect of the Victorian method of life. As Pauner explains, 'the impact of endless conflicts and their sequels of suffering and destruction makes him recreate the world as he experiences it, through his recurrent dream of mankind crushed to the last man by a mill in a movement of senseless annihilation':<sup>17</sup>

Arthur. I talk too much -- D'you dream? -- So do I. D'you dream about the mill? There are men and women and children and cattle and birds and horses pushing a mill. They are grinding other cattle and people and children: they push each other in. Some fall in. It grinds their bones, you see. The ones pushing the wheel, even the animals, look up at the horizon. They stumble. Their feet get caught up in the rags and dressing that slip down from their wounds. They go round and round. At the end they go very fast. They shout. Half of them run in their

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 89.

sleep. Some are trampled on. They're sure they're reaching the horizon...Later I come back. There's a dust storm. White powder everywhere. I find the mill and it's stopped. The last man died half in. One of the wooden arms dropped off, and there's a body under it. (*He looks off right.*) We're being watched. (*Slight pause.*) Some of my dreams are better. In one, each man slaughters his family and cattle and then kills himself. (p. 185)

In this apocalyptic monologue, the mad Arthur is unable to grasp the real reason or explanation of man's destructiveness except as a hatred of life itself, a reflection of George's commitment to death. He despairs of civilization itself because 'the civilized kill more than the savage'(p. 186), and even Hitler 'had his limitation' as he pretended, even to himself, that he killed for the sake of something else. Arthur arrives at the inevitable Final Solution of playing the ultimate destructive role. This is his complete submission to the morality of the Victorian society: man is innately destructive. He, according to Bond, 'swallows the Victorian line, that's the law and order bit, completely'.<sup>18</sup> He accepts as necessary the moral constraints of society, he accepts the other characters' reality, and prepares himself to play the role of the 'Great Traitor', to take that morality to its ultimate conclusion. He submits to the dehumanising reality, and the extent of his submission appears in his confession to Victoria: 'You were right and I was wrong'(p. 189). Furthermore, he adds other descriptions and features of man's inhumanity to those fostered by Victoria.

After taking over the mob, he proposes to Victoria a tug-of-war with which both sides could, he believes, end their lives. The tug-of-war is the materialisation of his dream of the mill, the machine that grinds everything. But by the end of the war, he discovers the futility of his efforts because, bleeding, he sees the dead rise up as a line of ghosts who are joined together. He is haunted by more ghosts, the ghosts of all those who died, and not only George's. And that is how he discovers that nihilism and a belief in social morality are not the answer to his predicament. The end of Arthur's madness witnesses his arrival at specific conclusions: most important of all is the fact that the reality of the characters reflects the social system with which they 'live' as *corpora*.

The Gravedigger's Boy's Ghost is another example of the physicalisation of what haunts the individual who submits to the dehumanising society but is still searching for an alternative social system. Because Lear is the creator of this inhumanity, the Ghost takes on a more essential role in Lear's life. The Ghost is a visualisation of Lear's possession, of his creation of a liveable reality. The companionship of the

<sup>18</sup> 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', *op. cit.*, p. 14.

Ghost and Lear reflects the contradictory realities of both characters and generates the theatricality of juxtaposition. The existence of the Ghost from another 'reality' parallels two temporalities on the stage, that of Lear, who possesses the Ghost, and that of the other characters. But before the encounter between Lear and the Ghost, the encounter between Lear and the Boy witnesses Lear's first stage of madness which results from his agony of losing power. Madness at this stage reflects the mad 'culture' Lear has created and its effects upon him. At this stage, Lear's madness is depicted as half-real half-pretence. Bond:

I think that in his first madness, there is an element almost of pretence ... he is saying I have been a great king, now I'm going to be a great madman... so that in a way he acts his madness, but because I believe he is a person of real integrity ... he can't make do with a pseudo-madness. He has to go on to a real madness.<sup>19</sup>

To prove the falsity of following the Boy's method of life, Bond makes the mad Lear examine three connected ideas, one of which is the Boy's method of life. Lear's encounters with the Ghost teach him the impossibility of living in isolation away from the violent reality. His journey in madness makes him perceive differently and reformulate his ideas about the Boy's method of life which the Ghost persuades Lear to foster. Lear's sanity, an expression of his belief in participation, means the death of the Ghost. Thus, Bond implies that Lear is mad when he attaches his emotions to ghosts, and he is sane when he abandons the appealing life style of the Boy.

## 2) Haunted Figures:

Georgina's sanity, in *Narrow Road*, relies on a fusion of the promotion of religious faith and actual power, power without moral commitment. She is not religious, and she is conscious of it. She reveals her insincerity in an encounter with Basho (p. 208) in which she exposes her tactic of promoting Christian doctrine in order to establish her political control. In explaining her political method of running the city, she exposes her exploitation of religion as a way of creating socially moralised citizens. She uses religious belief to

persuade people in their hearts -- that they are sin, and that they have evil thoughts, and that they are greedy and violent and destructive, and -- more than anything else -- that their bodies must be hidden, and that sex is nasty and corrupting and must be secret. When they believe that they do what they're told. They don't judge you -- they feel guilty themselves and accept that you have the right to judge them'. (p. 208)

<sup>19</sup> Bond, 'Scan', BBC Radio 4, 30 September 1971. Stated in Hay and Roberts, *A Study. op. cit.*, p. 123.

As Scharine explains, 'Georgina's fanaticism is merely a mask for her social reform. Unlike Basho, she has no real interest in religion except as a tool with which to control people'.<sup>20</sup>

Georgina's speech quoted above exposes another dimension in her madness: sexuality. She appears as unable to place her sexual relation with the Commodore in the context of a mutual relationship of respect. She accepts her inferior position as a female whose individuality is defined and oriented by males. She is objectified as, according to the Prime Minister, an 'obviously over-sexed'(p. 198) woman who could be passed on to another man when the Commodore/she is finished with her/him. Her sexuality appears as shameful and needing to be hidden behind the appropriate social code: although she is the Commodore's mistress, he 'calls her his sister out of courtesy'(p. 198), as Basho explains.

As she raises ghosts, she is obsessed with them: according to Basho's Japanese proverb, 'people who raise ghosts become haunted'(p. 208). But she fails to understand the implications of the proverb, or she pretends she does not understand it. The Victorian standards have left their effects on her morality. That explains why she appears from the beginning of the play as haunted. With her tambourine permanently in her hand, her requests of Basho are bizarre and arbitrary. The first requirement she asks Basho in return for her military support is 'Love Jesus, give up bad language, forswear cards, refuse spicy foods, abandon women, forsake drink and -- and stop singing on Sundays ... except hymns and the authorized responses'(p. 198). Basho immediately recognises 'she's possessed'(p. 198). But if her first request of Basho seems confused and arbitrary, her second emphasises the core of the first: the manipulation of education in order to achieve her goals. She takes over the post of the Minister of Education to guarantee that the younger generations will be appropriately taught the principles of Christian morality, which will guarantee their loyalty. In essence, this operation means the transference of, to use Scharine's expression, 'her own phobias to her charges'.<sup>21</sup>

On a background of 'three cheers for Jesus', she fires the opening shot on the city: her imperialist mission is shrouded in religious fanaticism. When the cannon fires its first shot, she claims 'I saw an angel hovering over it with a Union Jack!(p. 201). Occupying the city makes her exploit the naivete of the Bud-

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<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 148.

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 149.

dhist priests to boost Christian morality. Heigoo's praise of Buddha means that he is 'possessed by the devil', and she purges him with methods of Hallelujah and tambourine.

Georgina's possession comes to complete madness with the murder of the children at the hands of Shogo. Seeing the physical violence against her 'dear' subjects unleashes her madness. Her desire to create a different reality in the shape of the children clashes with Shogo's desire to undermine it. She escapes from facing Shogo's reality to the unencumbered imagination of madness. The children are the cornerstone of her political power, and as this power is destroyed, she goes powerlessly mad. But to the end she insists on the ritual proprieties with the children, and when they are killed, she becomes obsessed with the same rituals. She falls victim to her own (and her social) attitudes of raising ghosts. The murder of the children uncovers the complications behind her political, sexual, and social life as a female: in her speeches images of rape prevail parallel to images of death. The last scene illustrates the visual indications of Georgina's madness, and her reactions expose the real reasons behind her madness. And although she is not made to re-assess or reach conclusions, Bond's dramatic strategy makes the reasons for her madness obvious to the audience.

Hatch's possession in *The Sea* has been widely analysed by other critics. His madness, however, could be interpreted in the light of Jaspers' tragic knowledge, a subject which illuminates many other elements in and about the play. This new light correlates to Bond's desire for the human being to overcome the tragic in life. Jaspers' differentiation between tragic reality and tragic pose becomes, in the words of Deutsch, 'a devastating criticism of Nazi ideology and its present-day offshoots'.<sup>22</sup> And to my judgement, Hatch corresponds to this ideology, he is the embodiment of one of its offshoots. He is a materialisation of 'the average so-called man of determination', the man who shows eagerness for law and order, discipline, and submission to social morality.<sup>23</sup>

The most important feature of Hatch's madness is his possession with ghosts, creatures from outer-space. He lives in fear of them, a fear that is embodied in his determination to protect what he takes to be the weakest spot on earth, his city. His possession shows a determination to protect the city from the

<sup>22</sup> Introduction to *Tragedy Is Not Enough*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>23</sup> Bond has indicated that Hatch is a 'Hitleresque concept' and called him 'the fascist'. See *Bond on File*, compiled by Philip Roberts, Methuen, 1985, p. 30; his interview with Loney, *op. cit.*, p. 38, respectively.

invaders for the city lacks 'leadership', 'authority', and 'discipline'. Much of his action reflects his attempt to take responsibility to deliver those qualities, and to underline his possession, Bond makes him appear as defending the human race itself, defending the 'offspring'(p. 133) of the race. To illustrate the militarist nature of Hatch's obsession, Bond makes the army play a decisive role in Hatch's defence strategy. His first reaction to Willy's predicament in Scene One is his joyful hailing to the gun firing. He triumphantly salutes their awakening to the dangers: 'Hurrah the guns! The army knows you're here'(p. 106). The guns' rattling convinces him of the truthfulness of his fantasy: 'The guns', he tells his followers, 'You can't get round that. They opened up the moment he came. Oh the army knows what's going on. That new range's not for practice. They mean business'(p. 133).

Hatch's madness is caused by his submission to the unjust, competitive social system. His morality is highly socialised: he certainly knows and does what society expects of him. He represses his natural feelings in order to fulfill his customers' needs: he puts on a mask during business hours. Because his morality is socialised, he is unable to comprehend the reasons for his unhappiness, as the action unfolds. But he creates a different reality of a circle of people who will defend his 'civilized' reality. He lives the story of the invaders and creates a parallel reality: he invents a story which is built upon actual 'facts' about the invaders. This story is, as Biddle asserts, 'perhaps an attempt to assert his own freedom, to deny the situation where he is someone else's economic puppet'.<sup>24</sup> Within his story, Hatch also dramatises the dialogue between himself and the invaders: 'Send me to the workhouse! Begging like a skivvy-worker. Picking rags. Cleaning drains. "Here's a crust, my man, here's a mug. Draw yourself some water from the pump." No!'(pp. 138-9).

As Georgina's madness is released when she sees her children slaughtered, Hatch's madness is released when his goods are rejected despite his submission to social morality. Mrs Rafi's rejection of his goods becomes bewildering to him exactly because he submits to the limits she authorizes and she still rejects his goods. Under the severe pressure of competitiveness, he collapses. He 'fails to understand clearly the nature of the mad irrational society in which he finds himself; he senses dimly that someone like Mrs Rafi is something like a dehumanized vampire'.<sup>25</sup> He tells his followers: 'You get a fair indication

<sup>24</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>25</sup> Brown, 'The Problem of Individuality', *op. cit.*, p. 55.

from the way they pay their bill. That shows if they respect our way of life, or if they're just out to make trouble by running people into debt'(p. 134). The definition is more than a businessman's jargon because, to him, 'paying bills' characterises a way of life. To him, it manifests the degree of social harmony, as he understands it. It indicates whether an individual is 'insider' or an 'outsider'. But more importantly, the sentence indicates that he 'senses' the coming 'economic' storm, in the shape of Mrs Rafi. And it is an immense storm that leaves him defenceless. This illustrates how economically insecure he is, a weak point Mrs Rafi is well aware of. Her refusal to purchase the velvet curtains equals the dismissal of his sort of character. Paranoia finally overwhelms him, and he attacks the symbol of the society, Mrs Rafi.<sup>26</sup> The wise fool Evens explains the reasons of Hatch's madness and the need to create a humane culture.

Greta is a character who embodies the hollowness and hypocrisy of American culture. Though learned, she 'uses her learning as a buffer between herself and the world outside'.<sup>27</sup> This very buffer is an attempt to avoid changing the violent and racist reality in the street. She concentrates on studying old cultures, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, she is haunted by them. She attempts 'to keep up the old ways'(p. 52) in her room. But reality forces its presence in the shape of Skinner who is buying their theatre lease and turning it into a store: a cultural venue is to be changed into a commodity shop. She is asked to use her knowledge to assist this new industry, to 'educate' Ralph to attract new customers, the 'class of citizens' coming to the prospering city. She is put in the position of the woman who is asked to serve her customer with the most sacred thing in her possession. Her social morality makes her feel guilty at having her good instincts; the encounter with the real flesh and blood Ralph causes her collapse.

Greta romanticises about Ralph as being 'a young soul yearning to be touched, opened, freed. I went in every week with my shopping list -- and never saw! How blind we intellectuals can be! Of course I had noticed the sensitive white face, so shy and yearning. Not unlike the dying Keats'(p. 42). The father's requirements are clear: all he wants Greta to do is to enable Ralph to be a better seller of goods. That means that her romanticising indicates her own yearning soul to be touched and freed. Nevertheless, the

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<sup>26</sup> In this scene, Hatch uncovers an important aspect of his submission to the upper-classes, his customers. In his externalised monologue, images of sexual repression float, a repression which resulted from his 'understanding of feminine temperament': 'they stamp on you but they wipe their little boots first'(p. 139), an action to which he directed no objection. But he also uncovers a sense of pride in his industry and finesse, which make the situation pathetic for he is an individual who first was dismissed from a career as an artist and is now being dismissed as a draper.

<sup>27</sup> Coult, *The Plays, op. cit.*, p. 231.

encounter with Ralph allows a vibrant current of sexual tension to flow in the room. And as she continues her reading of Virgil, she uncovers one of her breasts as a sign of her fondness of Ralph. This action exposes the contradiction inside her: on the one hand she likes to be touched by Ralph, but on the other she is unable to avoid her society's image of the action, a prostitute. The juxtaposition of Greta's calm, pretentious rationalisation of the exposure of her breast as an educational experience with Ralph's growing sexual excitement as he tries to read the *Aeneid* passage, though it heightens the comic, shows the discrepancy inside Greta. The contradiction between natural need and social code of behaviour causes her madness.

One source of her guilt towards her natural need is her mother's profession which undoubtedly influenced Greta: the rule in vaudeville was to watch but not to touch. But more important is the social attitude towards women and sex where women are expected to be ignorant and passive in sexual matters while other women are expected to provide sexual entertainment for men. The exposure of the breast, as I explained above, is a materialisation of her real position as a provider for the customer because she is aware of the difference between the two types of women, though the connection might not be conscious on her part:

Greta. There are women Ralph -- men go to. I understand them too. But can't speak of them.

We must be as silent as this book -- (p. 52)

She obeys the social rules and lives in accord with them, and that is the extent of her submission to socialised morality. But the encounter with the young male leaves deep anxiety in Greta: 'the tension between Greta's natural feelings and her guilt at having them leads to what for Bond is an inevitable outcome -- she goes mad'.<sup>28</sup> She claims an assault has been made on her in the yard, and images of rape penetrate her speech. The nature of this assault is not clear, if it happened at all. But her madness exposes the madness of the whole society. Greta's quiet possession functions to expose the deeply rooted insanity of the 'sane' Skinner and his whole racial society.

*The Fool* is exemplary in connecting the madness of culture to the individual's. Clare's madness is not the only case in the play that connects the two, Mary Lamb is another example. She constitutes a characterisation of the lack of culture to which the individual attaches himself, she embodies the option

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<sup>28</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 232.



which is enforced upon the individual: she attaches her passions and emotions to commodities. Like many of Bond's possessed characters who attach their passions to objects, Mary Lamb attaches her passions to vegetables. Her speeches are full of images of degeneration: 'In this hot weather the vegetables are covered in dust. It's oily as soot. The water goes black when you wash them. They're going off before you get them home. I complain to the shopkeepers --'(p. 122). From her ornamental bag which, according to Mrs Emerson, contains her strait jacket, Mary Lamb gets out the rotten vegetable. She lives with her damnation. Her brother Charles attributes her madness to two different reasons: the first is that she might be living in fear of starvation. And it is known that hunger is the primary human appetite and surrogate for other appetites. In this light, her thoughts of degenerating food are an attempt to fulfill her hunger, but also indicate the separation between nature and culture in a society that is unable to fulfill her needs. What enhances this interpretation is that Lamb explains that truth, a characteristic of Clare's poetry in his opinion, is not governed by the laws of consumption: supply and demand. The censoring of Clare's poetry by the upper classes is a manipulation of the cultural and a separation between it and the natural. The result of this manipulation in Mary Lamb's case is madness, and in Clare's case, the beginning of his moments of false inventiveness to escape the dehumanising reality. Mary Lamb's concomitant preoccupation with decayed food metaphorically shows the effects of the 'sick' culture on the individual's imagination.

Lamb's other reason for his sister's madness, that it is a punishment, confirms the above interpretation. It is a punishment the individual suffers in a society that lacks real culture. But in this latter case, the individual is more likely to blame for his submission to such dehumanising culture. The connection to Clare's case is obvious: Mary's submission which found its punishment anticipates Clare's submission and his punishment. Clare's submission to the polite society's requirements of repressing his 'radical' poetry leads inevitably to a madness which is a variation on Mary Lamb's. Clare, at this stage, does not realise that the truth in his poetry is a spit on the face of all idols, e.g., God. Clare is unaware of Lamb's characterisation of the 'Fool', unawareness which is reflected in his unawareness of the real meaning of what is taking place simultaneously on the other corner in Hyde Park: the fighting. Clare's fate is similar to Mary Lamb's: she will be the only person who can translate his signs in the last scene.

The long sequence between Clare and Patty at the beginning of scene six shows the powers of the

necessities of life over the artist whose art comes out 'naturally', and the result that conflict leaves upon him. Patty's hostility towards him reflects the hostility of the society in which nobody is interested in his poetry, that left him in pain: 'No grip left in my hand! Pain in my head! Gut burn! Thass terrible gall'(p. 132).<sup>29</sup> The two accusations that indicate Clare's madness show the kind of reality he created and in which he lives: Mary, his 'real' wife, who becomes almost synonymous with his poetic life; the other is that he is the boxer, who defends his needs against others.

The arrival of Mrs Emerson carries with it the 'cultural' evidence of madness, but whose madness? The publisher's decision to stop publishing Clare's poetry means Clare's loss of his living. Furthermore, the publisher is sending him back the unsold copies of the published poetry. The action indicates that Clare's poetry has become unacceptable to polite society and that he himself has become a rule breaker: his reaction is to accuse the world of madness. Clare's submission to the regulations of polite society, a submission he is forced to accept, leaves Clare, as Patty puts it 'atwix an atween', not committed to either world. At that moment, Clare verbalises his awareness of being a scapegoat of both polite society and the publishing business: the powers to which he submitted. He pronounces the names that caused this predicament: Lord Radstock and Lord Milton, a specification which Mrs Emerson fails to grasp. Instead of giving his own performance (to tell the truth, as Lamb would say), Clare discovers that he was the other sort of fool who is not wise enough to avoid the god of wisdom's savaging his hand (see p. 121). The ruling classes have 'cultivated' his words, they made a show of him, a boxer who is not even paid for his labour. The 'power of the press', as he says when he sees the three bags of unsold books, has transformed him to a clown, or a fool: hence one of the implications of the title.

Further evidence of madness comes in with Lord Milton and the Parson: three bags full of unsold copies. Clare actualises the image of the boxer as a last resort to defend his life. He confesses that Darkie was right in defending his life against the Lords. Bond materialises the representatives of the dehumanising powers in society: polite society in Lord Milton, religion in the Parson, armed force in the Keeper, literary

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<sup>29</sup> Bond's dramaturgical strategies retain a sympathetic treatment of Clare by concealing the stages he goes through in madness. By showing the objects of his madness, Bond makes the spectator know more than the characters who stamp Clare with madness. He appears saner than them, and even the laughter in the prison scene is difficult to take as a sign of madness. Many critics have had difficulties in situating Clare's laughter. Some critics, however, saw that the laughter anticipates Clare's madness, see Lappin, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-9; Brown, 'Alienation versus Commitment', *op. cit.*, p. 217.

establishment in Mrs Emerson, family in Patty, and science in the Doctor. The Doctor embodies an ideological function by reaffirming the current cultural, and thereby the political, status quo in society. In wondering 'Shall I step in line now?(p. 139), he verbalises his knowledge of his disparate situation against these representatives. He prophesies his inevitable fate: dying of eating his portion of the universe. The Doctor's function of 'distinguishing the truth from the poetry' is a prevention of the critical part of creative imagination': the result is a nodding puppet, a voiceless poet, shown in the last scene.

In Scene Seven, Bond follows Clare to show the effects the insane society has left on the poet, but mainly to show Clare's failure to comprehend the social and his lack of a guiding ideological principle. That is not to say that Bond sees the blame as residing completely with Clare, but at least he contributed to his mental possession. The scene is an example of the moments of false inventiveness. Four years after attending the asylum, and having walked for ninety miles, Clare's head 'git mix up'(p. 148), according to Clare's observation. In this hallucination, Clare encounters ghosts: a Mary who is 'totally unlike the free angel Clare has imagined -- but something in her face is the same, enough for Clare to know her immediately'.<sup>30</sup> Clare also encounters the dead Darkie. These are the individuals who challenged the social system, each in his own way. Denied access to legitimate employment, Mary rejected conventional society altogether by joining gypsies, and Darkie turned to active, but instinctive, rebellion which led to the stripping of the Parson. Therefore, Clare's encounter with them constitutes a mourning of his error of not joining them in revolt against polite society.

The encounter illustrates the theatricality of madness when it parallels the vanishing reality of Mary and Darkie and Clare's. Although the two imagined figures represent the mounting pressure on Clare's mind, they also embody a different reality, the reality of Clare's eagerness to live sanely with them. The juxtaposition of two realities generates a theatrical time as the scene occurs midway between the real and the fantastic. The scene, in one sense occurs inside Clare's 'mixed' head, with the possibility of floating freely over the boundaries of realism. But the scene soon comes back to the harsh reality from which Clare 'escaped' and imagined he encountered those whom he loved. The strains of reality appear in the form of the three Irishmen to whom Clare is forced, because of his starvation, to sell Mary for some 'bread and

<sup>30</sup> Bond, 'Letter to Louis Scheeder', in Hay and Roberts, *A Companion*, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

cheese'. The momentary disappearance of social constraints facilitated for Clare creating a refuge from the depressing reality. The appearance of the Irishmen proves that the episode does not follow the linear time of the narrative. Even within Clare's world, the episode is merely invented moments. The moments of hallucination lead to Clare's re-assessment of his whole life and his recognition of what should have happened if he was to live sanely.

At the beginning of the second half of *The Woman*, the spectator learns that for twelve years, Ismene lived in a peaceful, primitive 'half outside the world' island, and also half outside her mind. It is her experience in Troy which left her half-aware of happenings around her. Her madness embodies the effects of the Greek culture on the individual who tries to live rationally. But it is also the result of Ismene's submission to Heros and the morality he stands for when she accepted representing the Greeks. Although the blind Hecuba provides protection for the mindless Ismene, the protection seems insufficient for Ismene, who longs to comprehend the reasons for her madness. Contrary to Hecuba, who refuses to remember or consider the past, Ismene is rational enough to understand that their escape would not last forever.

Ismene's need for compassion as a way back to sanity becomes greater. In the next scene, II. ii, she finds a substitute object of happiness in the form of a doll. The same object resurfaces when the Dark Man mentions her sexuality, and at this point, Donahue has commented, 'Ismene runs back to her hut to fetch her doll; she is not a woman, she wants to be a child -- men are frightening'.<sup>31</sup> Care and protection become the objects of the deal between Hecuba and the Dark Man. But the wise fool, as is discussed elsewhere in this thesis, is forced by the mindless Ismene to realise the facts.

In *Great Peace*, Bond continues to employ the same characterisation of the possessed to indicate the social causes that force the individual to behave inhumanely. This is embodied in the character of the Woman, whose wandering from scene nine onward seems to be caused by her inability to comprehend the death of her baby at the hands of her own son. On many occasions, she nurses, feeds, washes, and tries to protect a bundle that represents her baby to her. She even talks to the bundle when they are alone on the stage. The bundle becomes the object to which she attaches her emotions. In the wilderness of the nuclear void, the Woman finds consolation with this imaginary baby. Her own guilt of persuading her son to kill

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<sup>31</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 197.

the neighbour's baby instead of hers surfaces when she meets the Mother and her nineteen year old daughter. She loosens the bundle and flattens it into a pillow for the sick Mother. For the first time, she sympathises with someone other than her bundle, and on the expense of it in the gesture of turning it into a pillow. The considerate gesture helps the woman to remember the past, but she does not recover completely because she still suspects that the Man is her son who killed the baby. She retreats into madness again, hoping that the bundle would speak again to comfort her.

The Man confronts her in a last effort to make her join the New Community. One of the signs of her madness, to the Man, is that she spoke to her bundle. But unexpectedly, the Woman shows him unusual sanity and intelligence. The Man's opinion of her as possessed actually surprises her, and she is amazed that the man took her conversation with the bundle seriously. She expresses her knowledge of the object as a piece of cloth. She tears the bundle open to prove it to him:

Woman. (*Opens the bundle.*) Empty  
 Nothing in it  
 I kept it in case it comes in 'andy  
 Rags are useful out 'ere or at your place  
 Empty nothing  
 (*She drops the cloth.*) My baby's dead<sup>32</sup>

The allocation of the Woman's madness becomes difficult and many questions arise about it: Has she been pretending all the time? For how long did she pretend? When exactly did she realise the death of her baby? Did the gesture to the mother make her recover her sanity completely?, etc. Madness here seems unconvincing theatrical characterisation, and the Woman's gesture of compassion, usually a sign of sanity in Bond's plays, loses its significance in this context.

### III) Method in the Madness -- or How to Get Rid of Ghosts:

In many of Bond's plays disintegration leads to re-integration, and if not to action based upon the new awareness, it leads to a sort of understanding. Madness provides the method of characterisation of relative submission to dehumanising reality, but madness also provides the method by and through which the protagonist learns and comprehends. As often as not, madness is the passageway through which the possessed arrive at consciousness. At the peak of his madness, the protagonist discovers the reality of his

<sup>32</sup> Bond, *Great Peace*, part three of *The War Plays*, Methuen-- New Theatrescript series, 1985, p. 61. All subsequent references to the play and to the trilogy will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

society, and his madness in submitting to this dehumanising reality. In one sense, this characterisation of madness through which the protagonist achieves sanity is an extension of the tradition which suggests that the insane person see the truth more clearly than his society. It is also an extension of the theme of the mad artist whose madness reflects his visions to which society must submit if it is to live sanely.

In the plays of the first period, it is obvious that compassion and care for others constitute the basis for sanity. 'By particularizing the conditions of madness and by showing the possibilities of re-learning despite mental damage', Biddle comments, 'the plays suggest that even evidence of madness could foster hope rather than despair'.<sup>33</sup> Madness in these plays becomes connected to the learning process the protagonist undergoes. In some cases, the mad figures themselves produce 'wise' comments on their society. Elsewhere, the madness of the possessed is an expression of his escape from the cruel reality and a creation of another liveable reality.<sup>34</sup> This created reality becomes his way of creating care and compassion for himself because during this period of madness, the protagonist is always accompanied by one ghost or another. The function of these ghosts is to quieten the possessed until he/she comes back to his/her senses.

In *Early Morning*, Arthur's journey in madness is an expression of his submission to Victoria's opinion of humanity as aggressive and in need of control. Moreover, it is in this madness that he formulates his thoughts and discovers that there are no evolutionary reasons for Victoria's opinion. Arthur's madness is designed to test the assumptions of inhuman reality by taking them to their ultimate conclusions. Arthur arrives at the conclusion that there is no evolutionary reason to preserve the human race itself, if freedom could only be achieved in death. He devises a plan to put his conclusion into practice by the tug-of-war plan. But at what Bond called 'the supreme moment of his madness', he discovers the impossibility of living in death.<sup>35</sup> Arthur's madness provides him with the recognition of his mistakes in submitting to socialised morality, that Victoria's assumptions are mistaken. As all die, they rise up, joined together, and Arthur is to go into another stage to achieve his complete ascension.

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<sup>33</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>34</sup> R. D. Laing attributes episodes of madness to the individual's purpose of restoring order and sense to the world. To Laing, there is always a method in madness: 'it seems to us that *without exception the experience and behaviour that gets labelled schizophrenic is a special strategy that a person invents in order to live in an unliveable situation*'. See *The Politics of Experience and the Bird of Paradise*, Penguin Books, 1967, p. 95.

<sup>35</sup> Bond: 'at the supreme moment of his madness he has this illumination and everybody rises up and yes they're all joined together, you see he realises that they are all in the predicament that he was in'. 'A Discussion with Edward Bond', *op. cit.*, p. 14.

In his complete collapse, Hatch, in *The Sea*, offers some observations on his society. His observations are meant to expose the corrupting society around him by his own corrupted personality. Although he appears as possessed with the ghosts of the invaders from outer space, he accuses the individuals of his community of being ghosts. 'In his delirium', Hay and Roberts explain, 'Hatch offers a piercing observation on the town's inhabitants: they *are* all ghosts, as Mrs Rafi admits to Willy later in the scene, living a dead culture, exercising a morality which consists of stock responses and pious faces'.<sup>36</sup> As Hatch expresses his opinions, he is locked away and his submission to socialised morality proves useless. In this scene also, Willy tries to cure Hatch by showing that he is a real human being and not an illusory invader from outer space, but Hatch remains in his madness.

*The Fool* provides a good example of Bond's method of employing madness in which the possessed verbalises his awareness and his new knowledge of his predicament. Clare becomes self-conscious and self-critical of his own failure to comprehend what he could have done, and arrives at the correct account of his role as a man and as an artist and the possibilities that were open to him. As Bond has indicated in the midst of the scene's madness and irrationality, 'Clare makes it logical. He argues his way through the scene, he seeks out reasons and understandings, he doesn't just say it's all fantasy, illusion, a madhouse: he explains why things went wrong and what will happen next'.<sup>37</sup> In his hallucination, he recognises, among other things, that the loss of Mary, i.e., his poetic freedom, was the permanent pain in his head.

But the main illumination appears in his re-assessment of his role as an artist and as a man. He discovers that he lived inauthentically to his environment and to himself. He realises the foolishness he could not grasp earlier in his life. Even at present, a blind man arrived before him: 'the blind goo in a straight line' (p. 148). He laments the loss of Mary and Darkie, regretting his dissociation from them, and also the teaching power of art that could have guided the three of them:

Clare. We should hev come t'gither, She git the bread. He crack the heads when they come after us. An' I -- I ld teach hum how to eat. I am a poet an' I teach man how to eat. Then she on't goo in rags. He on't blind. An' I -- on't goo mad in a madhouse. (p. 148).

Out of his madness, Clare produces a challenging observation about the relationship between the mad)

<sup>36</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted by Hay and Roberts, *A Companion, op. cit.*, p. 66.

artist and his environment: without art bread is unswallowable, love is unobtainable, and life is unliveable.

This recognition of what should have happened indicates that the whole hallucination episode is the dramatic uncovering of Clare's failure in sanity to realise his role in society. To Clare, the physical presence of Mary and Darkie might be doubtful, it is the principles they worked for, or longed to achieve, which are of primary concern to him now. 'No one there. Never was'(p. 148), they were the materials of which he made his songs, the subject of his art. Had he chosen to participate in the peasants' uprising, he could have understood correctly his society and his position in it. Clare, the scene implies, was unrelated to the struggle for social justice and therefore he was unable to challenge the upper classes. It follows that although Clare 'draws a rational conclusion about the way he should have lived',<sup>38</sup> Clare's assessment is limited in that it is not followed by an action. He does not act on the conclusion, but accepts his conditions and waits quietly till they come to put him back in the asylum. It is left to the audience to assess the outcome of a society without culture.

Hay and Roberts have observed that the confrontation between the two resigned females, and Ismene's attempt to strip the mask of self-deception Hecuba wears is a reverse of their roles in Part One of *The Woman*: 'it is Ismene who forces Hecuba to face the facts'.<sup>39</sup> They also realise that in this half, Hecuba becomes the female Lear, and in this context, it seems appropriate to add that Ismene provides Lear's madness and his living with ghosts, and the method of recognising the facts. Ismene refuses to be content with the role of 'an animal who gets two meals a day for being house trained and taking {Hecuba} round in a lead'(p. 241). Therefore, the confrontation concentrates on 'opening the eye' which Hecuba pretends to be *blind*. *The action itself has been imagined by Hecuba: 'once I thought I would open my eye ... I imagined the scene. Some great occasion'*(p. 242). The confrontation is an expression of the possessed's desire to see reality as it is in order to face the invaders whose 'culture' caused her madness. She wants to overcome her imprisonment in Troy, a fact of which she is dimly aware, and her imprisonment in Hecuba's 'prison'. Ismene: 'You frighten me more than the Greeks! They put me in prison you're my gaoler!'(p. 242). They discover Hecuba's complete blindness, and consequently Ismene's inability to remember.

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<sup>38</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258.



The appearance of Heros and his encounter with Ismene prove that he wants her to regain sanity, though for different reasons. He madly persists in looking for the Statue. He offers to take her back to Athens, but to her this would be another sort of imprisonment. She refuses to be imprisoned again even if the prison was 'bigger than the whole of this island'(p. 249). Despite her madness, Ismene is rational enough to reject Heros' offer of a home in Athens because the offer lacks that essential element she longs for: freedom and justice. She prefers to stay in the island with the people who do not build walls in which to bury others. In this encounter, Ismene refuses the role of the prostitute for Heros, a role she previously sustained when she carried his wishes to the Trojans knowing he lied to her. Rejecting his offer of money for sexual intercourse, she insists on having the object of her passion: the doll. She even persuades him to enter her sandcastle, an allusion to a place of defence, in which she leaves access open to Heros: a drawbridge and a door. He fails to satisfy her great need for love and compassion.

Heros threatens the destruction of the island and the razing of the village if he does not find the Statue. At this moment, Ismene pretends to remember, in order to protect the island and its inhabitants. The horseplay that follows is an expression of the love and compassion among Ismene, the Dark Man, and Hecuba, horseplay through which Ismene shows some signs of recovery. She later crystallises the process through which she recovered her sanity as springing from compassion, she tells the Dark Man: 'since you've loved me my mind's begun to clear'(p. 268). History, i.e., Hecuba, succeeds in joining her power to the 'more advanced' proletarian Dark Man and the half-rational Ismene to subjugate the reactionary Greek general.

*Lear* remains the essential play in which Bond depicts the learning process of the protagonist in relation to madness. As I have explained, the Ghost is Lear's escape from living in a violent world, a false invention which Lear dismisses at the end of the play as a necessary step before he can gain complete sanity. The Ghost and his method of life constitutes the first idea Lear is allowed to examine during his madness. When Lear formulates his thoughts, and reaches the conclusion that there is no alternative to action, he advises the symbol of compassion to die because compassion is only the base on which one has to build a political understanding if one is to survive in the world.

The second idea Lear examines during his madness is the innate physical destructiveness of man, a

fact in which he believes at some stage in his life as a part of his social morality. In his first cell, II. i, Lear cries for help from his daughters, which the Ghost summons. They appear, as one critic comments, 'not as the accursed monsters as he had seen them earlier, but as frightened children welcoming their father back from the wars'.<sup>40</sup> They constitute the other reality in the scene, and although their existence provides a variation on the Boy's method of life, vanishing innocence, they introduce the essential element of examining where Lear's own life went wrong. This familial encounter shows the way and the reasons for the daughters' corruption, how they lost their original innocence, and the impossibility of re-gaining that lost innocence. It is Lear's 'social' formation of them, though he does not realise it or confess it, that caused the destructiveness of the daughters. The Ghost proves capable of bringing the past to life, but the prison's reality proves stronger: the soldiers enter the scene. The decisive answer about man's destructiveness, however, comes when the family gathers again in Lear's second cell, II. vi.

In this scene, Lear is shown that the corruption and dehumanisation of the individual does not lie in his/her physical composition. His journey through madness takes him to experience the physicality and raw material of man's very existence: his body. He probes into the nature of the flesh and blood, and in wonder he discovers that he did 'make this'(p. 73) human body. The long scene of autopsy, and especially the detailed indications of the natural components of the anatomized body and Lear's putting his hands into Fontanelle's body and getting them out full of blood and viscera, makes Lear realise that his daughter's 'things are so beautiful'(p. 73) and that the human body is 'so sure and nothing unclean'(p. 73). Lear's repeated question 'Where is the...', which indicates the organ that caused Fontanelle's cruelty and anger, finds no formulation on Lear's tongue, as a shadow of doubt that it was the heart takes over Lear's mind. He starts to think differently, that her anger and cruelty (and she is made the more destructive and angry of the two sisters) were not caused by nature, but by his own orientation. As well as that he did 'make this' body of Fontanelle, he realises that he did 'destroy it'(p. 73). Lear claims his responsibility for his daughters' action, and for his own. His discovery that man's aggression is not innate leads him to wish to start his life anew, but the Ghost remains with him.

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<sup>40</sup> Pauner, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

Both the examination of the Boy's method of life and the question of physical motivation to violence are paralleled with a third idea which Lear examines, the political responsibility which the individual should bear if he or she is to live sane. In his madness, Lear is made to examine the reason for his building of the wall: social fear that springs from the belief that others are wicked and aggressive. The image of enclosure through the wall is reflected in Lear's image of the caged animal he imagines in his madness.<sup>41</sup> In the midst of the ambiguity of his unfettered imagination, Lear suffers what seems to be the consequence of imprisoning his subjects, embodied in the image of the caged animal. In his trial,<sup>42</sup> Lear looks in the mirror and instead of seeing his own reflection he describes with horror a mutilated caged animal. Lear's feeling for the suffering animal marks 'not madness but his progress to sanity'.<sup>43</sup>

In II i, Lear advances the image to the Ghost as he thinks the Boy is the only one who could emancipate it. But the Boy *had* no access to suffering for he used to be a compassionate character, and therefore the Ghost has no access to the image of the caged, suffering animal. The Ghost, however, provides Lear with another object of comfort, the ghosts of his daughters. The presence of the ghosts reflects Lear's relation to the animal: when they are there the animal will 'slip out of its cage, and lie in the fields, and run by the river, and groom itself in the sun, and sleep in its hole from night to morning'(p. 54), and when they leave 'The animal's scratching! There's blood in its mouth. The muzzle's bleeding. It's trying to dig. It's found someone!'(p. 55). And Lear falls unconscious. Hay and Roberts have indicated that at this stage, Lear 'still acts with selfish desperation to retain his daughters and his peace'.<sup>44</sup> But the experience advances Lear a step into his compassion, he also learns the impossibility of regaining the lost innocence of the young daughters.

The image resurfaces in Act Three in the form of a caged bird, and the full implications of the image are finally put in the form of a fable by Lear to his followers. The fable reflects Lear's progress to the

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<sup>41</sup> It seems that the image of the caged animal as well as the wall as representing security and imprisonment has come from Williams' introduction to *Camino Real*, a play which immensely affected Bond's dramatic strategies. See Williams's 'Forward' to the play: 'A cage represents security as well as confinement to a bird', Secker & Warburg, 1958, p. 9. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

<sup>42</sup> It is significant to note that the three elements of the caged animal, the ghosts of Lear's daughters, and the Ghost appear during and after Lear's trial in two successive scenes which constitute a unity. Bond: 'the secret of playing the scene is to consider 2.1 and 2.2 as one scene for Lear'. Quoted in Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>43</sup> Biddle, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>44</sup> *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 128.

extent that he becomes able to rationalise and narrate the essential cause of suffering. Imprisoning the bird reflects the foolishness of the king. What the fable demonstrates is the mutual relationship between the elements of nature: when one causes suffering, he suffers in return 'just as the bird had the man's voice the man now had the bird's pain'(p. 89). But events prove to Lear that the role of the story-teller cannot be sufficient in a violent society. The soldiers invade the sacred place, wanting to stop his narratives. And Lear understands that only participation could change the foundation of injustice, to free the caged animals, birds, and human beings.

Facing the powerful Cordelia, Lear specifies the wall to be the source of social injustice. He stops talking in fables:

Lear. Don't build the wall.

Cordelia. We must.

Lear. Then nothing's changed! A revolution must at least reform!

Cordelia. Everything *else* is changed!

Lear. Not if you keep the wall! Pull it down!

Cordelia. We'd be attacked by our enemies!

Lear. The wall will destroy you. It's already doing it. How can I make you see? (p. 98)

As Lear discovers that Cordelia is repeating his own old argument, he lectures her about the predicament of the human being: his fragility and smallness. Noticeably, at the end of his lecture, Lear defines pitilessness to be the cause of madness. This conclusion indicates that Lear has reached the correct formation of the three mentioned subjects under investigation. Lear becomes fully aware of his political responsibility, that he must participate in challenging the social morality. The Ghost dies in this very scene.

### Summary:

1) The phenomenon of madness is a theatrical method of characterisation because it enables the dramatist to expose the reality of the possessed in opposition to that of the other characters. Creating two realities alienates both of them and encourages the audience to think about and compare them. The most essential sign, which creates theatrical time, is the suspension of chronological time on the stage by simultaneously showing the two realities or by showing the reality of the possessed which has no chronological time.

2) In Bond's plays, the possessed figures are often accompanied by a ghost, a companionship which underlines the fact that the possessed is still affected by socialised morality. The mad figure, however, is

determined by his search for a more humane alternative system. The possessed is in the passageway to freedom, and some figures in Bond's plays make it and transcend the dehumanising reality.

3) Bond's depiction of the possessed figures concentrates on showing that the insanity of the individual is caused by sociopolitical dehumanising reasons. This demythologising depiction makes the audience rationally compare and comprehend the reasons for madness that lies with society: the audience is encouraged to detach themselves from the psychology of the individual. The depiction of sociopolitical circumstances around madness embodies Bond's understanding of alienation, to add a comment to the action rather than eliminate emotion.

4) The possessed figure is Bond's means of indicating the difficulties the individual faces in his irrational society which prohibits him his critical imagination. The madness of the individual reflects the madness of the culture and society. The individual appears as a case study. Madness, however, is linked to the learning process of the protagonist: it facilitates looking at the events from a different angle, and therefore most cases of madness end with a sort of awareness. The signs of reaching a rational conclusion are reflected in the protagonist's success in getting rid of the ghost accompanying him during his madness. When the protagonist gets rid of the irrational in his life, that is, when he abandons his submission to socialised morality, the ghosts die or disappear. *Lear* remains Bond's most successful play in investigating the causes of suffering, fear, and the choice of escapism as a way of life, and the most successful in showing the connection between ghosts and madness.

## Part Three

# The Theatricality of the Dramatic Structure

## Chapter One

### From "*The Pope's Wedding*" to "*The Sea*"

The structure of all Bond's plays is episodic, a panoramic movement throughout society. In his interviews, Bond has explained the reason behind his distinctive episodic structuring of his plays: keeping track of all happenings in the society he depicts.<sup>1</sup> The important element in his structure is to follow his protagonist whose journey and discoveries facilitate showing different aspects of society and teach the audience. In most cases, Bond does not work towards creating naturalistic illusion. Nor does he aim at the neat and tidy, linear structure of the well-made play, nor for the environment as a decisive element in its naturalist sense. Environment is important in showing the case in society and the issue he investigates. Bond, however, gradually moved from depicting the temporally modern society in *The Pope's Wedding* and *Saved* to the historical and allegorical in the latter plays of the first period, a movement which needed and was supported by different, and more extensive and obvious, theatrical devices. Scenic structure, however, remained the most persistent feature in his framework, to create a degree of emotional detachment. Other than the theatricality of the dramatic devices and characterisation, which have been studied in the previous chapters but which are indicated whenever necessary, the overall structure of the plays and lesser theatrical elements are discussed below.

#### I) Theatricality through Alienation:

##### 1) The Theatricality of the Temporally Modern:

a) *The Pope's Wedding* and *Saved* are the only plays in this period which are depicted in the modern English era. However, the plays are remote from a naturalistic account of working-class life because they are structured on the basis of selectivity. There is no successive building up or a culminating action, but

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<sup>1</sup> See Bond's interviews 'Drama and the Dialectics of Violence', with Roger Hudson, Chatherine Itzin, and Simon Trussler, *Theatre Quarterly*, 2, 5 (January March 1972), p. 11; with Stoll, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

rather unlinear events to explore the case in society and to follow the protagonists, indistinguishable members of their society, to their end.<sup>2</sup>

b] This selectivity is shown on a bare stage which leaves no doubt that creating an illusion is out of the question. It is useful here to discuss the strategy of the bare stage as it is used throughout Bond's career. The bare stage exposes the fabrics of the theatrical to the audience making itself a theatre stage. The production history of the plays of the first period proves that for the playwright, Bond's plays work best when staged in a proscenium-arch stage that facilitates breaking the continuity of the illusion. To have them performed on such a bare stage means not only exposing the theatricality of the stage, but also the foregrounding of other theatrical devices when they are presented. But as far as the setting of the plays is concerned, Bond seemingly overleaps the confines of the stage. The setting must shift at will the virtual world of the play on and off the stage, letting the stage stand for virtually the whole world: various places, few, but realistic, properties. Such a method of setting has been given various names: fluid, minimal, or semiological, where the audience is expected to make much of little, to develop an imaginative picture from a few signs'.<sup>3</sup>

The functional stage, which is a matter of the representation of certain privileges or relevant aspects of an object rather than the creation of verisimilitude, gives the dramatist a spatio-temporal freedom which enables him or her to reflect the world, and present a social interpretation of it. Bond shares Brecht's inclination towards the semiological (or fluid) stage, both use the setting to define the place, rather than creating verisimilitude. In his interviews, Bond shows a preference for the abstract, minimal, fluid setting for his plays. He tries to discourage the creation of realistic surroundings, an immediately recognizable background.<sup>4</sup> As often as not, Bond states his desire to have the stage as bare as possible, but also to have 'very

<sup>2</sup> Bond: *The Pope's Wedding* 'falls structurally into two halves: the first is a sort of folk story, it's almost Chaucerian in its sense of season, mortality, sport, lust, price ... and the second half of the play is like a series of short explosions, of very dramatic incidents, each with a barrier which lets the ground open at the characters' feet and shows them the world of the first half of the play; and then they have to make the myth practical, have to accept the consequences as initiation or starting points: *this has been -- and now you are*'. From a letter to John Chandler, 7 December 1989, kindly lent to me by Bond.

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Burns, *Theatricality: A Study of Convention in the Theatre and in Social Life*, Longman, 1972, p. 91. The aesthetics of the minimal stage (or the Epic) became a fashion in England after the Berliner Ensemble's first visit to London, 1956. Kenneth Tynan's reaction exemplifies others': 'the beauty of Brechtian settings is not the dazzling kind that begs for applause. It is the more durable beauty of use'. *Curtains*, Longman, 1961, p. 452. See also, Philip Roberts, *The Royal Court Theatre 1965-1972*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986, p. 32; John Fuegi, 'Meditations on Mimesis: the Case of Brecht', *Themes in Drama*, 2 (1980), p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> Bond, 'Drama and the Dialectics of Violence', *op. cit.*, p. 11, 13. The proscenium-arch stage, however, remains necessary for the plays, and for *Saved*, Scene Six, in particular to guarantee the illusion. The illusion is necessary to involve the audience emotionally in the event.



real objects on it' to create a degree of realism, a degree of involvement. It is, thus, difficult for the actors to work towards creating illusion. On such a stage, the spectator, uncaptivated by the illusion of a real scene, focuses his attention on the reality of the situation and of the characters.<sup>5</sup>

c] The choice of depicting characters at their lowest moments is another way of theatricalising them because the dramaturgical strategy is to put a degree of impersonality to the characters for the purpose of illustration. Identification with the characters is almost impossible. Needle and Thomson state impressively that *Saved* 'is the only play written in Britain in recent years that seems to come close to being genuinely in the mode of Brecht',<sup>6</sup> rather than copying him. They observe that the characters are distanced in two senses 1) the audience are not able to enter the minds of the characters and therefore the audience are not allowed to identify with the figures on the stage, and 2) they are distanced from most audiences by being 'denizens of a world normally contacted only through the pages of the more lurid Sunday newspapers'.<sup>7</sup>

d] All important actions (except the stoning of the baby in *Saved*) occur off-stage. The audience thus cannot be carried along on the surfboard of suspense since the structure does not give a continuous plot or line of action. Even the stoning is not a turning point in the characters' lives, and the plot does not build on it. Even the aggro-effect of the stoning could be considered as an alienation device, among a number of theatrical devices within the scene.<sup>8</sup> The action of *Saved* depends on what Gaskill called 'the psychology of the moment' which is 'a means of persuading the audience to watch with a degree of detachment what is created on stage, to concentrate on what is shown as another section of a series of enactments'.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The production history of the plays, especially the late productions, confirm the fact that the bare stage creates unmistakable theatricality. Hay and Roberts have reported that Bond's minimal setting of *The Pope's Wedding* encouraged Griffin in his design for the Northcott Theatre, Exeter, to be theatrical: 'his aim became to work for specifics, using Brechtian models'. See *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 34. Gaskill's 1965 production of *Saved* was called 'Brechtian', contrary to the later 'naturalistic' one of 1969. Stein's 1967 production of *Saved at the Kammerspiele, Munich*, indicates that Stein went a step further in theatricalising the performance. As well as using a bare stage and visible coloured lights, Stein added self-conscious devices such as exposing the actors by having them change the set and remain there throughout. See Patterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 5, 7. Philip Prowse, who designed *Saved* for the Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow, in 1972, was perhaps aiming for this sense of theatricality when he designed the play in an unnaturalistic setting. See 'Glittering in the Gorbals', an interview with Peter Anson, *Plays and Players*, 21, 7 (April 1974), p. 25.

<sup>6</sup> *Brecht, op. cit.*, p. 213.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>8</sup> Some details create the illusion that the baby exists in the pram: the darkness of the scene, a fact that is told repeatedly in the dialogue (and not only in the stage directions); the pram's hood is up, and it stays thus throughout; the aspirin is another 'explanation' of why the baby does not cry. Using sound effects would remind the audience of the artifact of the operation.

<sup>9</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 62.

e] The flow of time in the structure of both plays has the potentiality to be developed into theatrical time. The dramatic time is left unspecified, and the total time spans of the plays are almost impossible to predict. The depiction of this 'loose' time is meant to show its destructive effects, but more importantly, it creates a restrained enactment. The chronological, realistic time that could create illusion is dispensed with altogether. The dramatist does not aim at creating verisimilitude on the level of time, the authenticity of realistic time.

f] The most theatrical element in *Saved* is Fred's fishing over the stalls. The aesthetic distance is affected as the fact that we are in theatre is exposed. The spatial underdistancing shifts the scene's focus from the stage to the auditorium. The fishing actually lasts for a considerable time in Scene Six.<sup>10</sup>

g] The horseplay sequences in the two plays plunge the sequences into playfulness, the core of theatricality since Aristotle. This atmosphere of playfulness, especially in *Saved* leads to the violent action in a divided focus of attention: another built-in theatrical device.

h] The violent action in *Saved* interrupts the continuity of the illusion, not only because realistic violence alienates the audience, especially the moments after its occurrence, but also in the unlikeliness of its occurrence in reality. This fact has been observed by Bond himself and the critics. 'The violence', Colin Chambers and Mike Prior point out, 'is sudden, shattering and, of course, a slightly unbelievable dramatic device, with its unreality at a measured distance from the very specific and truthful life which surrounds it'.<sup>11</sup> The 'shock', 'astonishment', and 'curiosity' of the action has been compared to Brecht's alienation devices. 'As in Brecht', Needle and Thomson have pointed out, 'the immensely powerful emotional impact of the key scene -- in this case, the stoning to death of a baby -- is isolated and brought into harsh focus by its placing within the story'.<sup>12</sup>

i) The plays' dialogue, though it creates the illusion of authenticity, is theatrical in every sense, especially when it is introduced to the comprehension of a middle-class audience. The dialogue of the two

<sup>10</sup> Although one cannot rule out other possible ways of staging the fishing, as Bond himself confirmed to me, the fact remains that the Royal Court proscenium-arch stage was in his mind for this action and that he thought of the rod as to be suspended in the auditorium. Private correspondence with Bond 3 February 1990.

<sup>11</sup> *Playwrights' Progress* (Oxford: Amber Lane Press, 1987), p. 158. Bond himself stated that he has never heard of a baby stoned to death. See Hay and Roberts, *A Companion*, *op. cit.*, 9; Gaskill, the play's first director, adds that the subject matter, which includes the stoning of the baby, had never been seen on the stage before. See his *op. cit.*, p. 66.

<sup>12</sup> See *op. cit.*, p. 213.

plays in its fragmentariness, spontaneity, inconsequentiality, and unfamiliarity, works as a Brechtian 'quotation' when contrasted with the dialogue (text) of the middle class theatregoers.<sup>13</sup> D. A. N. Jones has observed that *Saved*'s masterly dialogue reveals a faultless ear for a style of London speech rarely captured in fiction.<sup>14</sup> This rarity is pointed at in *Saved* because it had all the 'bad' publicity, but *The Pope's Wedding* also operates similar practice of language as an alienation device.<sup>15</sup>

## 2) The Theatricality of the Temporally Historical:

From *Early Morning* on, Bond's plays (with the exception of *The Worlds*) are historically distanced either in the past or in the future and/or geographically alienated. This alienation entails examining the self-evident and familiar in the light of another social system, thus, a degree of emotional detachment is generated. Brecht called it historicity, theatricality is another proper name for it because Brecht's historicity was a synonym for *Verfremdungseffekte*. 'Historicity', he theorised, 'involves judging a particular social system from another social system's point of view'.<sup>16</sup> Bond literally puts the two modern and Victorian worlds, as he sees them, on the stage without either seeming anachronistic. Connecting both worlds together is, of course, Bond's judgement on them: that they are similarly cannibalistic. But this historicity, especially for the plays of the first period, is relative: one can easily cross over it. Bond's dramaturgy of *Early Morning* and his anachronisms in *Narrow Road* and *Lear* facilitate the effort.<sup>17</sup>

### A) "Early Morning":

I have indicated earlier that *Early Morning* corresponds to Williams' *Camino Real*, a correspondence that astonishingly, no critic had recognised. The enormous and undisputable affinities between Bond's play and Williams's 'most expressionistic play', *Camino Real*<sup>18</sup> need a closer look in order to illustrate the theatricality of Bond's play. Following Bond's categorisation of *Early Morning* as social realism, most

<sup>13</sup> For more details see Bentley, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>14</sup> See his 'Edward Bond's Parable of Duty', *Listener*, 81 (31 February 1969), p. 220.

<sup>15</sup> Bond: 'I think the language of [*The Pope's Wedding*] was more of a distancing device'. See 'Drama and the Dialectics of Violence', *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> The Second Appendix to *The Messingkauf Dialogue*, translated by John Willett, Methuen & Co Ltd, 1965, p. 103.

<sup>17</sup> The productions of the Yale Repertory Theatre, 1973, and Théâtre National Populaire, Paris, 1975, in modern dress are cases in point. For more details see Catharine Hughes, 'New York': a review of Yale's production, *Plays and Players*, 20, 10 (July 1973), pp. 62-3; Mike Ashman, 'Lear': a review of the T. N. P. production, *Plays and Players*, 23, 6 (March 1976), 39.

<sup>18</sup> Styan, *Modern Drama*, III, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

critical studies have linked *Early Morning* to Brecht, and although recent comparative studies have recognised the parallels between Williams and Brecht, it was the former who supplied the main employment of legendary figures connected to the present in characterisation, themes, especially the theme of the golden hearted, innocent protagonist, and the theatrical technique for Bond's play.<sup>19</sup> Both *Early Morning* and *Camino Real* constituted a release for both dramatists, and the uncompromising natures of the plays have been indicated by some critics.<sup>20</sup> There were notes that *Early Morning* needed 'footnotes'. And Bond sympathised with those who did not understand it. Williams discovered after the first performance of his play that it needed 'clarification'.

Similar to *Camino Real*, *Early Morning* is crammed with theatrical devices, most of them appearing for the first time in Bond's plays: mad people, second death, resurrections, after-life, ghosts, three courtroom scenes, legendary characters who are masters of using histrionic words, freedom from contemporary setting, a freedom from the 'historical' facts embodied in juxtaposing the historical and the modern; Siamese twins; scandalous subject-matter embodied in a lesbian relationship between Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale who opens a brothel at some point in the play, and many others. In this play also, the characters appear as grotesque, some of them, for the first time in Bond's plays, nameless. It has, exactly like *Camino Real*, dreamlike happenings and a structure very similar to Williams's *Blocks*. In *Early Morning*, as in *Camino Real*, the scenes, and not the acts, are the decisive factor in corresponding to the maturing moral visions of the protagonist. The traditional Expressionist technique of *Stationendrama* builds scene on scene to produce a slow, mounting climax in imitation of the pilgrimage to calvary.

On the part of the characters, Bond uses a simple variation on Williams's characterisation. In Williams, the characters are descendants of the original literary figures, assuming that they had reached the hypothetical temporality of the play. They represent archetypes of specific attitudes and qualities. The

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<sup>19</sup> The conventions of *Camino Real* 'ran parallel to or at least echoed the aesthetic and ideological praxis of Brecht'. Cless, *op. cit.*, p. 41. I suspect that the reason that prohibited the critics from seeing the affinities is the publicity that surrounded the play's first and second productions at the Royal Court which insisted that the play was about Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale. By the time the storm ended, Bond was already a self-confessed Marxist and as such unlikely to be seen as having been influenced by someone like Williams. Dr O'Connor has suggested to me that the fact that *Camino Real* is not one of Williams' commercially successful and/or critically celebrated plays in the West may also have obscured the affinities between it and any other play.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, Taylor, 'British Dramatists -- The New Arrivals: No. 5, Edward Bond/Beyond Pessimism', *Plays and Players*, 17, 11 (August 1970), p. 11; Gaskill, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

major historic characters in Bond are also legendary in name and, at the same time, contemporary abstractions. They are mere *Images d'Epinal* (primitive wood-cuts of historical figures sold at country fairs), as Esslin has put it.<sup>21</sup> In other words, these characters have many of the culturally determining essential properties that keep the historicity of the character while maintaining for them the 'power' of legendary characters: Victoria, for example is capable of resurrecting George. To establish their modernity, both dramatists use almost similar techniques. Williams requires that the costume '*of all the legendary characters in the play [except perhaps Quixote] [be] generally "modern" but with vestigial touches of the period to which [they are] actually related*'. Bond makes both modern and historic worlds accessible to each other to the extent that they live harmoniously, undistinguishable. By modernising the historic and depicting them in contrast to the audience's expectations, Bond alienates them. The 'discrepancy between expectations and appearance forces preconceptions about history and society into a new light'.<sup>22</sup> The alienation in Bond is more massive because, unlike Williams, these are not legendary characters from literary books, they are taken from English history itself. One of them is one of the most sacred of English cows: Queen Victoria.

#### B) "Narrow Road":

The structure of *Narrow Road* is marked by many theatrical features, which have been observed by other critics. The play, for example, shows a fast moving action which is accelerated by the changing fate of the characters. Scharine, among others, has observed that 'sides in the revolution change as quickly and as improbably as a music-hall version of Shakespeare's *Henry VI*'.<sup>23</sup> At many points in the action, the 'immediate' going off and on the stage reaches the farcical. The fast moving action is marked with 'hilariously comic vignettes (the priest's pilgrimage, Kiro's problem with the sacred pot, Basho's dialogue with the Colonel and Georgina, Shogo's near escape from the city)'.<sup>24</sup> The comic and the humorous formalise the action that has been spatio-temporally distanced. The plays also witnessed the introduction of the Brechtian device of Orientalism as an alienation effect, which would be more apparent in production than

<sup>21</sup> See *Brief Chronicles*, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

<sup>22</sup> Demling, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>23</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

<sup>24</sup> Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 163; see also Trussler, *Bond*, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

on the printed page.<sup>25</sup>

The first scene exemplifies the kind of devices employed throughout the play to create theatricality. The scene, and the play, opens with Basho's direct address to the audience in the manner of first person: 'I am'. This practice of direct address tends to reduce the aesthetic distance, to provide theatricality of connecting the stage to the audience and to emphasize that what takes place on the stage is an enactment. At such points, the addresser and the addressee take a step towards each other, they almost build a fundamentally amicable, even loving, relationship.<sup>26</sup> This theatrical technique of direct address is repeated at the beginning of many scenes (I. 1; I. 2; I. 6 & II. 4), despite the fact that the stage directions do not state them as such. The characters on these occasions talk to no one, summarize the past events for the audience in the form of storytelling, and are certainly in direct contact with them. On other occasions, many characters' dialogue functions similarly, to introduce the information of what happened previously or offstage to the audience (Shogo's I. 4, 188; Basho's I. 6, 200, and Georgina's II. 1, 205, 208). These speeches lack the self-introductory but not the self-descriptive features of Basho's direct address at the beginning of the play.<sup>27</sup>

In this Introduction also Bond establishes a covert, theatrical device: the choice of roles. Basho chooses to play the role of the 'great poet', the searcher for enlightenment who believes that man's suffering is caused by something greater and more massive than man's will or ability, 'the irresistible will of heaven'(p. 174). Basho's role is to 'watch' and his decision causes, to a great extent, the other characters to choose their roles: Shogo revolts against his environment and leaves home as soon as he could, Kiro is befriended by Shogo because of Basho's rejection of him as a 'searcher' for enlightenment. But more importantly for the whole events of the play is the fact that his decision brings the disasters they suffer and which the last scene shows. But the effect of the device falls short of the full, open theatricality of role playing in the theatre; the roles in the play are social, within the world of the characters, rather than roles

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<sup>25</sup> See Esslin, *Brief Chronicles, op. cit.*, p. 177. Gaskill has commented that Bond had written the play 'specially for me, knowing my love of Kurosawa and traditional Japanese theatre'. See his *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>26</sup> The function of the whole Introduction, like that of Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, is to directly pose a question to the audience which the play subsequently answers: What should be the relationship between a social system and its people? See Scharine, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>27</sup> But the theatricality of the device is not fully exploited in *Narrow Road* because Basho, and the other characters, introduces himself within the confines of the fictitious world, not as an actor who plays Basho.

within the world of the actors.

The theatricality of the last scene is established through two characteristic devices which appeared in *Saved* and *Early Morning* respectively: the multi-focused stage of aggro-effects, and the trial linking the play to the tradition of *Theatrum Mundi*. The events of the scene themselves are bizarre, from rape and madness to poetry and disembowelment. The bizarre nature of these actions functions as the equivalent to Brecht's mixture of styles and conventions. A closer look at the actions illustrates that:

- a) Although the stage directions do not state the nature of Kiro's dialogue at the beginning of the scene, it is obviously a direct address. The dialogue reduces the aesthetic distance with the audience.
- b) Shogo's physically quartered body nailed to a placard, ceremonially displayed as a scapegoat, is the object of the devastating playfulness of the crowd.
- c) Georgina's internally haunted self is externalised in madness with the implications of her creating a different reality than that around her.
- d) Basho's political experience, his cooperation with the colonial British system, has resulted in Shogo's trial and execution.
- e) Basho's poems themselves are read parallel to the trial and the atmosphere of playfulness. Basho's art is objectified as the cause of the death of the other half of the twins, Kiro. Basho's recital for the crowd is also a poem when rearranged on the page. That implicates even his 'normal speech' as an accomplice, emphasizing the devastating power of art and discourse.
- f) The crowd is roaring in exaltation around the nailed body.
- g) Kiro is represented as a quiet personality.
- h) The scene employs an anachronistic microphone, anachronistic to the modern audience.
- i) The last part of the scene depends on breaking the continuity of the melodramatic events with farcical ones: Georgina dismisses Kiro with her tambourine; Kiro's nakedness for disembowelment with Georgina imagining he is going to rape her; Kiro's suicide with Georgina's sexual feeling that he is coming; Georgina's illusory satisfaction with Kiro with the soldiers grabbing her; she thinks they are going to rape her too.

### C) The Short Plays "*Passion*" and "*Black Mass*":

These plays were written for the support of political causes, and their didacticism is obvious, but the theatricality does not only depend on the message. *Passion*, for example, was written for outdoor performance with all theatrical elements required to guarantee communication with the audience. A mixture of Greek performance elements and agitprop pieces are used, such as the exaggerated clothes and make-up, microphones, section titles to be given by the Narrator or shown before the events. Both pieces depend on the creation of suspended time by juxtaposing temporally anachronistic elements. *Passion* mixes Christ, Buddha, guns, and a Queen that responds 'to all communication in a manner suggesting an IBM computer ... she is merely doing as she is programmed'.<sup>28</sup> She is a verbal tautology of a role, the Queen's. In fact all the characters of the two plays are types or archetypes, most are nameless figures. In *Black Mass*, Bond also suspends the 'make-believe' by having the Christ who is nailed to the cross come down and poison the communion wine and then go back on to his cross. But *Passion* depends on emphasized theatricality by depicting the events in the manner of storytelling. A Narrator starts the play as thus: 'There was once an old woman'(p. 239). And it ends with the detached/detaching elegy of the dead soldier.

### D) "*Lear*":

The intertextuality between Shakespeare's *King Lear* and Bond's *Lear* generates the latter's theatricality as Bond capitalises on the audience's knowledge of the pre-text.<sup>29</sup> And although the two plays have common features, *Lear* comes as a natural step in Bond's artistic progress to the extent that it could be considered completely independent from *King Lear*.<sup>30</sup> As is explained elsewhere in this thesis, *Lear* is a study of the moral justification of life, a question Kiro answers negatively in *Narrow Road*. The answer to that question, in my opinion, has led to Bond's employment of many theatrical devices *to prove* the thesis of the

<sup>28</sup> Sharine, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

<sup>29</sup> For more details about the relationship between the two plays see, Oppel and Christenson, *op. cit.*; Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 122; Charles Marowitz, *Confessions of a Counterfeit Critic*, Methuen, 1973, p. 197; O'Connor, *op. cit.*, p. 449; Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 33; Sharine, *op. cit.*, p. 216; Brean S. Hammond, 'The Intertext of an Adaptation: Bond's *Lear* and *King Lear*', *Etudes Anglaises*, 40, 3 (July-September 1987), p. 287.

<sup>30</sup> The comparative approach, however, leaves many questions unanswered or, at least, unsatisfactorily answered by Bond about his desire to 'correct' Shakespeare's play. Why *King Lear*? Why did he want to correct it in the first place? Why at such a time? Why is the learning process in *Lear* complete and why does it result in action, contrary to all his subsequent plays up to *The Bundle*? Why would a self-professed atheist bother to create a ghost of such a weight? Why does it remain one of Bond's easiest plays to term a 'thesis' play?



play that man's aggression is not innate and that the political systems are responsible for it. For that very reason, the play, as one critic has noticed, 'leapfrogs' rather than builds.<sup>31</sup>

The Brechtian influence has been studied by other critics, and these influences are theatrical effects in every respect. For a critic like Hirst, it is the first of Bond's plays 'to beg comparison with Brecht in its subject matter and dramatic technique, both of which have much in common with the German dramatist's own definition and practice of Epic Theatre'.<sup>32</sup> Hirst gives examples of alienation effects in *Lear*: the first is the Boy's calling out of his wife's name. The second is the killing of the Boy which is, to Hirst, an outstanding and powerful image that sums up the escalating violence of the first part of the play, an 'aggro-effect' that is expressed with the precision of a complex *Gestus*'.<sup>33</sup> The trial of the Third Worker, Hammond has claimed, proves another Brechtian *gestus*: justifiable end, unjustifiable means. Although Lear builds the wall for valid political reasons (preserving the autonomy of his country), he builds it at a cost (endangering his subjects).<sup>34</sup> The execution of the Worker, Donahue has argued, embodies the *gestus*: Lear, ironically, seems to get the bow of homage he demands from all the world.<sup>35</sup>

Fitzpatrick sees that Bond's method is thorough and systematic in his use of the Brechtian innovation of juxtaposing or connecting a number of theatrical styles and conventions. An obvious example is the counterpointing of the Boy's easy-going colloquial rhythms with the distraction and self-dramatisation of Lear's speeches.<sup>36</sup> James C. Bulman sees that Bond's revision of Shakespeare was Brechtian. Structurally, Bond 'presents a series of scenes (equivalent to Brecht's *gestus*) that offer social and moral perceptions of the world: he disavows coherent psychological motivation of characters and eschews conventional notions of dramatic causality'.<sup>37</sup> Ronald Hayman has also indicated that the method of reworking and updating Shakespeare is Brecht's, shifting the focus away from the personal towards the social and political, as Brecht did in his version of *Coriolanus*.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Marowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 43-4, 137.

<sup>34</sup> See Hammond, *op. cit.*, p. 285.

<sup>35</sup> Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 70. For lesser instances of Brechtian influences see Brown, 'The Problem of Individuality', *op. cit.*, p. 43; Benedict Nightingale, 'Bond in a Cage', *New Statesman.*, 82 (8 October 1971), p. 485.

<sup>36</sup> See, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

<sup>37</sup> 'Bond, Shakespeare and the Absurd', *Modern Drama*, 29, 1 (March 1986), pp. 61-2.

<sup>38</sup> See his *British Theatre Since 1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 48.

Apart from the numerous theatrical devices studied elsewhere in this thesis, such as ghosts or second death, anachronisms or trial scenes, Bond uses asides. An abbreviated version of the direct address used in *Narrow Road*, the aside creates theatricality by exposing character and situation, and at the same time exposing the falsity of appearance and the reality of hidden intentions between the characters. It is a device that shows the characters as if they were acting to each other. He also uses soliloquy, mainly Lear's dramatisation and self-dramatisation, to show the characters as trapped with their own thoughts.

The thesis element is the most theatrical element in the play.<sup>39</sup> Because the learning process has been Bond's primary concern, some theatrical devices are stretched to their full implications. One of these devices is the employment of numerous aggro-effects. These are studied elsewhere in this thesis: what remains here is to emphasize the source of the aggro-effect of the autopsy of Fontanelle's body which does not come from Shakespeare's play, but from Williams's *Camino Real*. In a cool, 'scientific' voice, the Instructor makes the autopsy of Kilroy's body. The Instructor's words are so similar to the Fourth Prisoner's in Bond's play as to warrant extended quotation from Williams:

Instructor: First we will open up the chest cavity and examine the heart for evidence of coronary occlusion.

La Madrecita: His heart was pure gold and as big as the head of a baby.

Instructor: We will make an incision along the vertical line.

La Madrecita: Rise, ghost! Go! Go bird! "Humankind cannot bear very much reality."

*At the touch of her flowers, Kilroy stirs and pushes himself up slowly from her lap. On his feet again, he rubs his eyes and looks around him.*

Voices [crying offstage]: Olé! Olé! Olé!

Kilroy: Hey! Hey, somebody! Where am I?

*He notices the dissection room and approaches.*

Instructor [removing a glittering sphere from a dummy corpse]: Look at this heart. It's as big as the head of a baby.

Kilroy: My heart!

Instructor: Wash it off so we can look for the pathological lesions. (pp. 90-91)

The modernity of the language of the play is discussed below, but it is important to emphasize that the language of learning process at moments of discovery, as one critic observes, is not exclusive to Lear, and that it is theatrical because it:

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<sup>39</sup> The ease with which some critics could summarise the argument of the play are apparent in O'Connor's summary as follows: 1) Men are animals. 2) Animals *only* endanger their own species when they are kept in adverse conditions and forced to behave unnaturally – e. g., when caged in zoos. 3) Therefore the reason why the human species is destroying itself is that men are keeping themselves in adverse conditions and forcing themselves to behave unnaturally. See *op. cit.*, p. 430.

tends to be uttered under circumstances which are far removed as can be imagined from the conventions of naturalistic speech. Taking Lear's speeches of this order as the central line of "discovery and learning", one finds that they are variously soliloquies (with or without other figures on stage), asides, harangues which would be cut short in "real life", and conversations with ghosts.<sup>40</sup>

E) "*The Sea*":

As *Lear* examines Kiro's choice of self-imposed death, the examination that necessitated the numerous aggro-effects and the Brechtian 'thesis' element, *The Sea* examines another figure from *Narrow Road*, the naked Man. Willy can be viewed as the resurrection of that unnamed figure who remained a project to be examined *after* getting rid of the defeatist choice. And because *The Sea* is an examination of a rational choice, it remains one of Bond's calmest plays. Even Hatch's stabbing of Willy turns out to be stabbing of Colin's corpse. *The Sea* witnessed the establishing of his 'Rational Theatre'. It also constituted the end of a series and necessarily the beginning of another in that it shows his rejection of some dramatic forms and his search for others. While the play contains reminiscences of both the well-made play and Chekovian naturalism, the play 'rejects the structure of both forms, and with them, the world-view on which they depend'.<sup>41</sup>

The theatricality of schematic characterisation arrives at its ultimate conclusion. As well as including representatives of the upper classes, notably Mrs Rafi, the play shows the middle class in the figure of Hatch and the typical lower class in the figure of Hollarcut. Bond thus allows a greater interaction among almost all segments of society. The stark opposition between the classes is best illustrated in the upper class's interest in artistic activities and histrionic words while Hollarcut is, according to Evens, difficult to understand. The histrionic words are more frequent in *The Sea* than any other Bond play, even those that operate the play-within-the-play. The last scene of *The Sea* polarizes many theatrical effects and gives some explanation for their existence in that society:

i) The scene defines the reasons for madness, which alienates Hatch from his society. The theatrical device, which is discussed earlier in detail, finds its explanation: the inhumanity of the social system and the discipline which the upper classes impose on the lower. The 'stories' invented by Hatch are his means to

<sup>40</sup> O'Connor, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

<sup>41</sup> Spencer, 'The Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 10.

overcome the pressures of competitiveness in his town, to create a different reality into which to escape from the dehumanising reality of the bully Mrs Rafi.

ii) The scenic structure parallels many stories of the characters allowing every character in the play to tell his own story. The multi-threaded overall structure is more successful in *The Sea* because of the nature of the characters' activity in watching each other suspiciously and not involving each other in a healthy sort of life. The structure reflects more successfully the 'many individual plots which play off each other but remain essentially separate'.<sup>42</sup> The last scene shows the collision of some of the stories and the impossibility of conciliation for the characters, some of which believe tragedy to be the possession of the exalted few and some of which apathetically resign themselves to the fact that tragedy involves everything without any hope of transcending it.

The main theatrical device *The Sea* introduces for the first time in Bond's plays, then, is the play-within-the-play. As well as introducing and emphasizing the social orientation of the characters and showing the confusion between appearance and reality, the device builds up the theatricality of the play by showing a part borrowed from literature. It puts the theatre itself in the focus of activities. The last scene rationalises the need for tragedy in order to laugh. The element of theatre, supported by the characters' histrionic words, reflects and enhances another theatrical element: role-playing. As Pauner observes,

the characters in *The Sea* are not only constrained in their humanity by the absence of freedom and equality, but also by rigidly defined roles forced upon them by a class-bound society. Thus is effected a dichotomy between their personal aspirations and longings, and the social identity superimposed on them. Ultimately, trapped in their roles, their true selves remain hidden, often smothered behind their masks. Yet, the characters in the play, react, albeit differently, to this threat to their very nature.<sup>43</sup>

The last scene shows the outcome of such rigidity. Hatch's importance to Hollarcut is that he made him 'count'. Hollarcut's 'feigned' obedience of playing his role, i.e. digging in Mrs Rafi's garden, will bear no fruit: 'I dig for her -- but will anything grow?' (p. 165).

The rehearsal scene in *The Sea* shows the essential requirement of watching: a balanced detachment and involvement. The last scene shows a variation on that theme through the interruption of the spatio-temporal detachment of the play *The Sea* itself. As Evens predicts that Willy will live in a time when

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<sup>42</sup> Des Roches, *op. cit.*, p. 484.

<sup>43</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

people fill the world with 'bombs and germs and gas'(p. 168), the audience is bound to feel the immediate relevance of the play as it speaks about them 'here and now', not 'there and then'. So the scene keeps the real audience not fully separated nor completely involved with the dramatic action. The last scene emphasizes this relationship when it leaves its final sentence unfinished, presumably for the audience to complete.

## II) The Theatricality of the Learning Process:

Bond's dramaturgy for all the plays of the first period revolves around a very simple principle: taking the protagonist to wander in his society, experiencing different parts of it, in order to show different aspects of that society. The innocent figure who slowly learns about the nature of human society through a series of dramatic episodes is the keystone of the plays.<sup>44</sup> The main purpose of the episodic following of a protagonist is an attempt to come to terms with society. Coming to terms with one's environment is a common feature in the theatre. 'Most good plays', Tynan observes, 'when you boil them down, deal with the problem of coming to terms with life -- of adjusting, without surrender, to hostile and menacing circumstance'.<sup>45</sup> The point of focus in Bond's plays, however, is not the individual's psychological experience, but his (and the audience's) behaviour in specific, always depressing, circumstances, and his response to his situation and environment. The importance of the protagonist lies in the possibilities he allows for the the whole social mechanism to appear on the stage. Most of the plays in this period end in the protagonist's failure to grasp the social situation, but some of the plays offer a little hope at the end.

The structure of the learning process is theatrical in the sense that it shows the schematic nature behind the whole experience. The audience is bound to feel that the scenes are purposefully depicted for explanation that gives little attention to the dramatic development of character in the traditional sense. If the structure is executed for the sake of elucidating arguments, the audience should sit back, emotionally and intellectually alert, to observe the succession of episodes which constitute the play. Brecht's opposition to the theatre of plot and psychology of the individual appears in his use of what T. W. Adorno calls

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<sup>44</sup> Gross rightly compares this innocent figure to the theatre spectator because the figure observes the presented world as much as the spectator. See *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>45</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. x.

'theses', which constitute the most theatrical device in the plays. On the structural level, as Adorno says, "'theses" are not important for what they say but for what they do: they constitute the anti-illusionary nature of Brechtian drama'.<sup>46</sup>

This technique necessitated the exclusion of any superfluous information about the protagonists. Len literally comes from nowhere; the question of the fate of the baby in *Narrow Road* is marginal to Kiro's or Shogo's beings; Willy is 'dropped' into an environment of which he had a vague idea. The spatio-temporal distancing of some of the plays adds another dimension to this characterisation: Arthur, Lear, and Willy belong to another time, another place. The structure of the plays takes this half-known, half-knowing figure into a 'journey' in which he learns, or fails to learn. Bond's characterisation of Len fits all the protagonists of this period: all are 'naturally good' but 'not wholly good or easily good'. Some of them journey to discover or rediscover that goodness, which has been buried or burdened under social pressures and conditions which are apparent in the socially moralised half of the Siamese twins. The affinities with Brecht's dramaturgy are obvious, even at this early stage of Bond's career. Critics have indicated that Brecht's Epic Theatre has a tendency to favour an imperfect learning process of a character.<sup>47</sup> The plays of this period constitute an accumulative thesis: every play builds upon the intellectual foundations of the previous one.

*The Pope's Wedding* shows learning through the identification with the wise fool, the old man. The protagonist, the young man, travels towards self-annihilation, though he is not conscious of the consequences. The depiction of Scopey's learning process is concentrated on the subject he wants to know about, Alen. Scopey expects to find in Alen's life what he lacks in reality. Scopey's is a journey into regression as he wants to gain Alen's detached sort of life. Such a journey is bound to fail because the wise fool lacks any knowledge that profits the young protagonist or, at least, to warn him against full identification. Scopey does not recognise that Alen is not totally cut off from his community, Pat is his umbilical cord on whom he depends for his survival. Scopey, on the contrary, carries the process of isolation to its ultimate consequences, killing the old man and preparing himself with five hundred tins of food for his isolation. The process of supplanting Alen is therefore ironic, the more he relinquishes his ties with

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<sup>46</sup> *Aesthetic Theory*, edited by Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, p. 350.

<sup>47</sup> See Speirs, *op. cit.*, p. 54; Needle and Thomson, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-4.

society to attain a fully human existence the more he rejects the little chance he may have of attaining salvation in human terms. Scopey's learning process establishes the fact in negative sense: isolation means death. In searching out the alternative society, one has to avoid full identification with other people's experience: a workable foundation for Bond's next protagonist.

In *Saved*, the protagonist travels a similar journey to his counterpart's in *The Pope's Wedding*, in a not very dissimilar environment -- the play is a re-run of the first play except that the young man avoids physically killing the old. *Saved* goes a step further in blurring identifying the past of its protagonist in order to avoid the Ibsenite identification with the hero: Bond minimizes the origins, opinions, constituents of his Len. He comes from nowhere, with no relations or relatives, without any past. He is deliberately 'picked up' not only by Pam, but by Bond himself: he comes from one of the youths in *The Pope's Wedding*. Any question to which an answer would clarify him is quickly passed over:

Len. 'Ere, can I stay the night?

Pam. Ain' yer got nowhere?

Len. Yeh! -- Well?

Pam. No. (p. 26)

Len's function is to cue the audience throughout his movement to bring out the inherent conflict, differences, social conditions within the dramatic community upon whom he has landed in the first scene.<sup>48</sup>

As the dramatic action unfolds, Len is forced more and more towards passivity. Initially an outsider, he retains the dubious position of the rejected lover: 'As Pam and Fred spar with each other Len is automatically relegated to his role for the rest of the play -- the observer who continually tries to join in'.<sup>49</sup> The position of the watcher facilitates a degree of detachment necessary for inquiring, learning, commenting on the events. But his engagement in the family and partial engagement with the gang allow him a degree of involvement. The last scene shows how Len becomes integrated into his community. Contrary to his usual role, he becomes the center of activities. He is the only one who talks. He has found a family, a home, a chair to mend. He even thinks he fathered Pam with a baby who got killed in a park, like Harry's. The fate he feared in the second scene of the play is his: he has turned out like the father figure Harry. The last

<sup>48</sup> Attar takes Len as an example of the social intruder, without losing his credibility as a sexual intruder, who is meant to cue the audience. See her *op. cit.*, p. 10. Hirst also indicates that 'we are forced to see the harsh details of the world through the eyes of the protagonist, Len, and through those of Bond'. See his *op. cit.*, pp. 84-9.

<sup>49</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 45. See also Pauner, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-7.

scene shows the breed of the amoeba: four instead of two.

*Early Morning* shows what was happening in the world which led Len (the name of the protagonist of *Saved*) to commit cannibalism (e.g. watching the stoning of a baby). Arthur is divided into two to distinguish natural goodness, which stopped him participating in the stoning, from what prohibits him from being wholly good or easily good, the part that witnessed without interference. The play takes the two parts in a very long journey to discover what on earth (or in heaven) hinders the individual. The expressionist hero's revolt and his final emancipation appear in Bond's play.<sup>50</sup>

The expressionist hero was a man with a vision and a mission, aware of the spiritual bankruptcy of his time and the sterile suffering of his fellow human-beings. The Epic theatre was to inherit this radicalism without its emotionalism. Brecht was to falsify the spiritual idealism of the Expressionists, though many good Expressionist plays had completed the hero's visionary awareness with practical social purposes. What distinguishes an Expressionist play like *Camino Real* from Bond's *Early Morning* is that the dreamlike occurrences of the latter are 'rooted in the day-to-day details of experience', its 'dialectical arguments'.<sup>51</sup> The political analysis of the action is what gives it its 'realistic' force, the analysis is the learning process of the innocent Arthur. And for the sake of ideological clarification, he is not only depicted as alienated from himself theoretically, but the alienation is embodied, as in Brecht, in another character who represents the opposite features of the protagonist.

The inner unity of *Early Morning*, as is widely known, is supplied by the visions of the dreamer, Arthur. One layer of the structure follows this innocent young man in a literal learning process. Arthur retains many other traits of the expressionist hero, with his various dramatic statements, his journey of self-knowledge, his progress that depends on no spatio-temporal restrictions. At one point, he even passes through a state of madness from which he gains the traditional insight. Bond's protagonist is not the realist who exploits the situation to his own ends. He shares other traits with Williams's protagonist: Kilroy literally has a golden heart as big as a child's head, Arthur has the heart of the Siamese twins; both have unbearable innocence in their spirits.

<sup>50</sup> For Bond's opinion upon Expressionism, see his interviews with Curran, 'A Study of *The Woman*', Part Two, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>51</sup> Coult, *The Plays*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.



Jacques {*To Kilroy*}: You have a spark of anarchy in your spirit and that's not to be tolerated. Nothing wild or honest is tolerated here! It has to be distinguished or used only to light up your nose for Mr. Gutman's amusement. (p. 44)

The hopes of the two protagonists clash with nightmarish realities, realities that are concretised in Bond's heaven of cannibalism: an image of of 'a body from which the soul has departed on the Camino Real'(p. 35). It is an image which is worked and repeated over and over again in *Early Morning*. In heaven, Arthur sees the reality of what could be isolated incidents of cannibalism on earth -- an image of emotionally and spiritually dead society.<sup>52</sup> Arthur's first concern in heaven is not to eat flesh, but by Scene Nineteen he changes to be like God-the-Father after 'eating' his father -- the old man: 'My beard grew overnight. The night I ate my father ... When I woke up I was old. My hair was white and I had a beard ... I felt tired'(p. 209). Here Bond obeys the laws of expressionism where time refuses to follow the calendar.

Arthur's persuasion of Florence to escape heaven to an unspecified place is similar to Kilroy's desire: 'I was thinking of -- going on from -- here!'(p. 95). Both protagonists long to escape their hostile environments, and Florence's tears, as Esmeralda's, are the expression of new feeling, of passion and love of the only *sincere* person. To Arthur, she is alive, she can Ascend. Ascension is a central theme in both plays. The stage directions of *Camino Real* state that 'resurrections are so much a part of its meaning'(p. 12). Apart from the metaphorical resurrections, there is a literal one at the end of the play. Among the crying voice offstage 'Olé', La Madrecita resurrects Kilroy by the touch of her flower. This power is matched by Victoria's, though Arthur's resurrection happens despite her. The two big golden hearts come back triumphantly.<sup>53</sup>

This victory leaves the audience in emotional suspension at the end of the play, as does the ending of *Camino Real*. Arthur's resurrection is equivalent to Quixote's romantic 'curtain line' at the end of *Camino Real*: 'The violets in the mountains have broken the rocks!'(p. 96). The violet is the symbol of love between Marguerite and Jacques, but it is an alienated symbol in Marguerite's adjectives 'delicate, unreal, bloodless'(p. 65). The seemingly hopeful and happy ending is undercut: a technique repeated in *Early*

<sup>52</sup> The scenes in heaven are also inescapably comparable to Shaw's Hell in *Man and Superman*, a play for which Bond expressed admiration in my personal interview with him on March 9, 1990. He specifically admired its distinct scene 'Don Juan in Hell' because of its autonomous position in the play, and he gave it his latest tag of his scenic structuring: Theatre Event which will be discussed below.

<sup>53</sup> Styan tells us that Expressionist drama has used the Ascension as in *The Burghers of Calais*, in which Eustache's body rises up in ethereal light, symbolising his spiritual victory. See *Modern Drama*, III, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

*Morning*. The metaphorical, victorious ending with Arthur's resurrection is undercut by being a resurrection from heaven. To where?, one might ask. The place to which Arthur escapes is neither shown nor known, and the purpose to which Arthur will put his knowledge is an open question the audience has to answer.

*Narrow Road* shows another long journey of learning, from birth to death. Kiro encounters different spiritual and physical aspects of life (including art), but he arrives at a position in which he is unsure who won the day, therefore he commits suicide – a defeatist, escapist solution. Kiro's occupation throughout the play is precisely to learn. His first encounter with Basho underlines Basho's 'intelligent' qualities which he hopes will 'tell' him a way out. The legacy of the priest who looked after him was 'to find someone who'd got enlightenment and become his disciple'(p. 175). Kiro's simplicity and innocence fail to convince Basho of Kiro's worthiness to be his disciple. The 'spiritual' corruption of Basho is depicted in his absurd questions about the metaphysical. There is even an indication that Basho *is* a god who 'watches' man's suffering from a distance.

The play introduces two contradictory approaches to solving the innocent Kiro's problems in two successive scenes, I. 3; I. 4. The theatrical horseplay sequence (I. 3) ends with Kiro's literal predicament with a sacred object, and Basho's misfired attempted solutions to redeem Kiro. The scene, among other things, juxtaposes the priests' innocence with the saviour's failure. The intellectuality of this approach's capability is ridiculed by showing its impracticality and even opportunism. Kiro's dilemma, to Basho, is nothing more than an object with which he can test others' capability. Ironically, Shogo's disapproval (I. 4) of allowing people to obtain knowledge by travelling abroad, and his unwillingness to even hear about Basho's enlightenment produce Kiro's salvation. Shogo's approach is violence: he resolves the predicament by smashing the sacred pot. Kiro follows his socially moralised 'half'.

In the remaining scenes of the play, the conflicting attitudes are taken to show their ultimate destructive effects in a chain of violence and counter-violence. Basho's religious failure is linked to Christianity's failure, as Basho brings his 'allies' from the north. The question of teaching and learning is essential to the colonial system in order to establish morality. The Emperor's education is an important matter, and Basho is made the Minister of orphans. He virtually becomes the educator of the new generation, with the inevit-

able result of Shogo, who brought his violent allies from the north too, killing them all. The constant changing fate of the individual, his trivial place in a hostile society, makes Kiro answer the question of moral justification of life negatively. But Bond balances this pessimistic ending by paralleling it with another Man's successful attempt to save himself.

But is suicide really a solution? *Lear* answers that by examining this choice in a different embodiment. Lear discovers in his journey from king to dethroned king to child to socially committed animal, that resignation is a ghost, isolation is impossible. He acts upon his knowledge and undoes the myth he himself has created. This positive action guarantees him immortality. The third act of the play is a Hegelian examination of the solutions Lear arrives at, the most important of these being the Boy's. The play establishes the ideological meaning of the Boy's isolation, and that explains exactly why the nature of the Ghost changes from a loving, helping creature to one who starts the act by turning Lear against the Small Man. Although the Boy, unlike Kiro, is not a searcher for knowledge, to a great extent, he retains Kiro's kindness, naivete, and well-doing. The Boy is a case to study. He is a nameless extension of Kiro, whose life has ended with his choice of suicide. Both characters die prematurely. For the purpose of examination, the play moves back to almost the same *ideological* point at which the play left at the end of act one, the isolated refuge of the Boy's house. After discovering the natural innocence of man and the viciousness of the social system, Bond takes Lear back to where the action reached its peak with the killing of the Boy.<sup>54</sup>

Lear tries to 're-enact the goodness of the Gravedigger's Boy in the latter scenes of Act One and he realises the parallel. Since he was not turned away as a refugee, he in turn will accept whoever comes.<sup>55</sup> But soon he discovers his inability to sustain the choice to live isolated, the government's forces appear as soon as he takes the Small Man in. An officer and three soldiers (corresponding to a Sergeant and three soldiers in I. 7) appear and an expectation of another massacre of the innocents arises. The second scene shows Lear's inability to communicate with his followers. And further hindrance from the government (his old Councillor and the same soldiers of III. 1) appears to take Lear's *subjects* away. He discovers the

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<sup>54</sup> The re-run necessitated the creation of corresponding characters to those of the first act: Thomas is in a sense a 'reincarnation' of the Boy, Susan to Cordelia. They might be more social than the earlier couple but they are fundamentally decent and concerned as the Boy and his wife. Susan is, as Cordelia was, pregnant, and John (the name of the Carpenter) is in love with her as was the Carpenter with Cordelia. This schematic characterisation makes obvious the element of 'making up' and contributes to the overall theatricality.

<sup>55</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, pp. 134-5.

impossibility of agitating people without endangering his and their lives. Another trial seems certain, the Councillor informs him. The soldiers take Ben and the Small Man and at the point of collapse Lear announces: 'I know nothing, I can do nothing, I am nothing'(p. 94). The third scene shows Lear's refusal of Cordelia's choice, to live without conscience, that is, to keep hold of the wall, because it represents another form of isolation. Cordelia's morality, to Lear, is a form of violence that will have him killed. Therefore he decides to *act*. Lear's decision takes him to eternity, while the Boy's pigs kill the Ghost. It has become so unnatural a component of its own environment to the extent that another element gets rid of it. Ideologically, it is in conflict with its habitat.

It is with *Lear*, I suppose, that Jaspers' optimistic, positive philosophy started to influence Bond's thought. Contrary to all the plays of this period, Lear acts, and his action is built upon his tragic knowledge. Lear's lamenting self-dramatisation is a form of tragic pose, and he is led in a thorough journey from childhood to maturity and complete tragic knowledge, passing through a half-grown knowledge in the first three scenes of Act Three. At some point (p. 94), Lear links knowledge to action to being, of which he knows he lacks all. The principal change Bond makes to avoid Kiro's complete and final withdrawal is to bring Lear to complete tragic knowledge, to prove his courage, and to act upon this knowledge. In doing so, Bond rejects the Egyptian choice, in Jaspers's terms 'to live at any price', as opposed to the Greek choice of 'death where one is to be forced into a life without dignity and where only fear of death could make one cling to it'.<sup>56</sup> Bond assigns Lear a 'Greek' solution which proves the reality of the world itself.<sup>57</sup> Lear's encounters with the figures in authority, including Cordelia, prove Lear's steadfastness.

In *The Sea*, Willy is born on almost the same shore the naked Man was born on, in *Narrow Road*. Willy moves into society to reach the conclusion that transcending the tragic is necessary: the journey of the protagonists has reached a solution. He rejects his society with a Rose in hand. The introduction of Willy to the town has the characteristics of the rest of the plays of this period: a roleless character who performs as a commentator rather than participant.<sup>58</sup> As is indicated above, the last scene introduces the

<sup>56</sup> Jaspers, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>57</sup> See Bond's 'Author's Preface' to *Lear*, *op. cit.*, p. 12. Lear's courageous action is not, to the dramatist or to the philosopher, to use Jaspers's terms again, 'mere vitality, the energy of bare defiance', Lear is very old, it is, rather the 'freedom from the fetters of existence', it is the 'ability to die which to the intrepid soul reveals, together with its steadfastness, reality'. See Jaspers, *loc. cit.*

<sup>58</sup> The pattern of his arrival and departure encouraged reading his role as the 'handsome stranger who appears from the sea and carries off the beautiful young woman from the town of grotesques in which she lives'. See Brown, 'The Problem

explanatory element of the whole play. It answers most of the questions posed in the first cycle of plays. He learns the inescapability of the tragic but also the necessity to transcend it. He learns that life is not absurd, and that the dehumanising reality leads man into madness. Structurally, the scene is an epilogue which rationalizes the arguments. Bond makes the old man encounter the two young men of the Siamese twins. Evens persuades Hollarcut not to batter him (as Scopey did), then in Jaspers-like optimism, he encourages Willy to leave but change the world. The 'Wise Fool' uses his limited knowledge to persuade one half to escape the dehumanising reality, and the other to let him live.

### III) The Theatricality of Discontinuity:

Some of Bond's devices are designed to involve the audience emotionally in the action on the stage, while they are alienation devices by their very nature. To guarantee that double function, Bond inserts some contradictory devices some of which alienate and some of which involve the audience in the action. This dramaturgical strategy, in essence, means the interruption of the continuity of illusion, creating theatricality. Anachronism is an example that functions in shifting the alienated action into the midst of the audience. Aggro-effects are Bond's means to involve the spectators emotionally in the action depicted on the stage. His practice of the device, however, shows that the aggro-effects contain built-in controlling elements, and some of them occur within temporally distanced events, which reduce the required emotional involvement. Madness is an emotionally disturbing phenomenon but it is used to create a parallel reality to that lived by the other characters.

#### 1) The suspension of emotional distancing: Aggro-effects

The tolerance of realistic violence on the stage is relative: it depends on the spectator's 'experience' and his frequent theatre-going. Esslin, for example, has indicated that realistic violence for him, is improper in modern drama because he knows too well that the actors are taking every precaution not to hurt each other. Amongst the five categories of violence in modern drama, Esslin finds that physical violence is the weakest in effect on the theatre-goers.<sup>59</sup> Most of Bond's aggro-effects are physically violent actions, but

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of Individuality', *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>59</sup> See, *Brief Chronicles, op. cit.*, pp. 201-3.

realistic violence remains a 'very potent alienation effect'.<sup>60</sup> It is one of the means of the anti-illusory theatre. Ritualised violence allows the audience's imagination a room to grow in, while sharing the violent experience with the stage involves the spectators completely in the experience, as in Artaud.

The practice of modern drama turned increasingly towards showing violence on the stage in order to challenge the audience's morality and sensitivity. Up to the mid-fifties, Tom Milne has written, 'What Pinter, Arden and Whiting have done is to extend the responsibility for violence beyond the customary "What can you expect of Teddy-Boys?" (thugs/Reds/what-you-will) to "What can you expect of society?"'.<sup>61</sup> British playwrights of the 'second wave', including Bond, have felt the vulnerability of the Brechtian historical distancing, and therefore they searched for different devices to involve the audience emotionally *and* to respond analytically.<sup>62</sup> As David Edgar explains, the use of suspense and shock techniques in some modern English drama is a fundamental break with the Brechtian tradition. Plays like Howard Barker's *Claw*, Barry Keefe's *Gotcha*, David Hare and Howard Brenton's *Brassneck*, Trevor Griffiths's *Comedians* and Bond's *Lear*, Edgar continues, share Brecht's aim: 'As in Brecht, the aim is to force the audience to respond analytically; but instead of distancing the audience from the occurrences, these writers involve the audience, provoking them into thought by the very surprise and shock of the images'.<sup>63</sup>

Bond wants violence to be as authentic as possible in order to make the audience feel that they are involved, participant, responsible for it. What makes his violence unbearable is the content, the object of the violence, as well as the technique of driving the violence home to the audience. In *Saved*, it is a baby, the symbol of innocence, who is stoned. The old man, another weak creature, is subjected to battering in *The Pope's Wedding*, though offstage. The whole third part of *Early Morning* shows cannibalism, a behaviour normally considered to be unnatural to civilised man, as a common activity. *Narrow Road* contains a disembowelment, a dismembered body, and the execution of five children. *Lear* contains various

<sup>60</sup> See Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>61</sup> 'The Hidden Face of Violence', *The Encore Reader*, Methuen & Co Ltd, 1965, p. 119.

<sup>62</sup> Williams, for example, has noticed that Brecht, in *The Threepenny Opera*, 'was caught in his own paradox. The more people sat back and enjoyed this kind of action, the safer their ordinary view of life was'. *Modern Tragedy*, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

<sup>63</sup> 'Ten Years of Political Theatre, 1968-78', *Theatre Quarterly*, 8, 32 (Winter 1979), p. 31.

atrocities: against the innocent Boy; the torture of Warrington; the bayoneting of Bodice; the autopsy of Fontanelle; and the blinding of Lear. *The Sea* contains the stabbing of a corpse. In looking at the aggro-effects in the plays of the first period we will discover that they are as literal as the physical possibilities allow. If Bond can cover up the absence of the baby while maintaining its presence, he will allow a full scale violence. If dismembering or disembowelment endanger the actors' lives, he will ritualise the disembowelment and show the body ready-dismembered. If killing the Boy or all sorts of violent actions in *Lear* can be persuasively presented as authentic, he shows them.

Critics accused Bond of extraneous depiction of violence, but the problem with such depiction lies much deeper than the authenticity of *presentation*. It could reach the core of defining what is art and what is not. Edward Bullough determines that Distance is the formal aspect of creation in art.<sup>64</sup> According to Bullough's standards, authentic violence in Bond's plays risks falling under the average Distance. 'Illusion' is another name Adorno uses to define the implications of Distance. It is an inherent condition of art in the sense that art is an imitation of reality. Art, 'no matter what else it may be, is always a replica of this reality'.<sup>65</sup> Bond's violence could reach authenticity and thus lose the core of what defines art: being an imitation.

## 2) The Suspension of Dramatic Time

### A) Madness:

Madness shows the fragmentation of self against the apparent coherence of the repressive outer world. It is a way of showing the spectator the oppositional relationship between reality as it is lived by the Other and by the self. The paralleled realities affect the spectator's perception. Madness, structurally speaking, functions in suspending the continuity of the illusion by juxtaposing two dramatic times: the 'real' and the 'experienced'. The important result of such depiction of madness on the stage is the creation of a mad character who lives on what could be termed as borrowed time. The happenings in his world do

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<sup>64</sup> See *Aesthetics*, Bowes & Bowes, 1957, p. 101.

<sup>65</sup> *Op. tic.*, p. 152. These two interpretations could explain what a critic like Taylor meant when he commented on the risks of putting violence on the stage, in his comment on *Saved*: 'No doubt the author thinks he has something to say about arbitrary and unmotivated violence in modern society, but there are limits to the arbitrariness permissible in drama'. See *Anger and After*, Methuen, 1969, pp. 109-110.

not necessarily correspond to chronological time: unconnected events occur in one place, at the same time, or they could last for a considerably shorter time. Arthur's speech about the mill mixes Hitler, Einstein, and Napoleon together, though he is a Victorian figure.<sup>66</sup> Madness also could evolve around vanished subjects or persons because imagination moves unencumbered. Clare's imagination sees the dead Darkie as a boxer, and the 'absent' Mary, a reality he longs for. All these ways of employment, and many others, dramatically correspond to the suspension of chronological time and, in return, to the dramatic, linear time. By such a device, the spectator is asked to synthesize and re-allocate the meaning of the events. The options are open for the dramatist to show any related (or unrelated) occurrences asking the spectator to reassess their relationships. In so doing, the playwright distances and suspends the spectator's emotional involvement to critically see and judge both worlds.

But madness as a subject creates its own problem. One cannot escape sympathising with mad characters, even if they were repressive (as Georgina), or escapist (Greta). And although Bond does not want to prohibit sympathy with them, the spectator's sympathy is a form of involvement that lessens the theatricality of the play. Madness also is introduced with the other reality within the confines of the stage, which lessens the effectiveness of the device being completely anti-illusory. The illusion is not completely abolished as both worlds occur within the confines of the stage.

#### **B) Anachronism:**

As opposed to, say, the novel, which remains explicitly remote from the reader's immediate context, drama is a hypothetically actual construct, since it is seen in progress as here and now, without narratorial mediation.<sup>67</sup> Drama is a spatio-temporal elsewhere represented as if actually present for the audience, it takes place here and now. One technique that serves as an aggro-effect is anachronism: in the midst of 'historical', 'distanced' happenings comes an anachronism to shock and cancel the aesthetic distance from the audience to get them involved in the events. Such a technique means that the performance bounces between involvement and detachment; a bouncing that aims at avoiding Brecht's complete detachment.

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<sup>66</sup> Arthur's expression of his abhorrence of life: 'Live is evil spelt backwards. It is also an anagram of vile' (p. 189) resembles the Gipsy's rejection of human being in *Camino Real* as a 'guinea pig in the laboratory of God: 'The Camino Real is a funny paper read backwards!' (p. 73).

<sup>67</sup> For more details see Elam, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-111. I am particularly indebted to Elam's informative book throughout this section on anachronism.



The anachronism is a sheer interruption of the events, of the fictitious world of the play from within or without the confines of the stage. It functions in shifting the perspective suddenly to prohibit seeing the events as wholly self-evident. The accessibility of the fictitious worlds to each other establishes a degree of theatricality in the performance. Bond's structure is inclined towards self-containment, closure, and fixed identity. In this kind of performance, the spectator might view the dramatic world but not enter it. In Bond's drama, the two worlds of drama are accessible to each other, but both are inaccessible to the audience. That implies that in the course of the performance of a Bond play, the device of anachronism must call upon the spectator to *mentally* piece together the antithetical worlds to synthesize a unifying meaning/world. The spectator's success in synthesizing depends on the dramatist's subtlety in facilitating signs or codes to establish the relationship for the audience.

Anachronism is the deconstruction of chronological time for the benefit of the dramatic time: it functions in bringing together two distinct worlds into one 'here and now'. It is the structural means of juxtaposing two different worlds, two different eras, two different realities. It formally aims at breaking the continuity of the fictitious world. As past, present, and (sometimes) future converge into each other, time is suspended and autonomous temporal order exists for the audience. As the audience knows the impossibility of the co-existence of the two worlds in reality, a covert theatricality is produced. The very impossibility, I think, forced Bond to encourage the audience to believe that 'the events of this play are true', as Bond prefaces *Early Morning*.

In Bond's plays, anachronism is a literal device which is used to serve as an authorial explanation establishing associations between past and present, to discourage any view of the past as closed, and to prove that the past still shapes our present. The present can also re-shape the past through understanding and interpretation which, in turn, affects the reading of the present. Bond deals with history 'in order to understand where we are now. Unless you understand the processes that go to make up your present position, you don't know what opportunities are open to you'.<sup>68</sup> A play with conscious use of anachronism can build an argument on modern issues.

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<sup>68</sup> Quoted by Innes, 'Edward Bond: From Rationalism to Rhapsody, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

The first anachronism occurs in the trial scene when Albert's conduct of a revolution against Victoria is expressed in modern-day terms of reference: 'We close the ports and airfields, take over the power stations, broadcast light classics and declare martial law'(p. 147). The accessibility of the modern world to the Victorian figures is strongly established, and soon the spectator discovers that the whole Victorian world 'live' in the modern as if it was their natural environment, as equally as 'they' live in the historicity of the Victorian world. The 'mixture' of worlds, however, makes the first trial the strongest anachronism in the play: Victoria tries a couple brought from another world. One of the couple, Len, is actually brought from another play of the very author, Bond. The couple's presence constitutes not a context but a co-text because their action of cannibalism is repeated on a whole-scale level by the Victorian in the next scene, Five. In this scene, a picnic in Windsor Great Park, a picnic hamper doubles as a radio set for the modern characters, who are used to assassinate Victoria. The conspiracy fails because of 'tech trouble'(p. 161).<sup>69</sup>

The method of doubling the two worlds occurs throughout the play to equate them. But the use of anachronism in the over-all structure of the play is not integrated smoothly in a subtle co-existence. The effectiveness of the device is lessened because the two worlds inter-act within the confines of the stage. The characters have no access to the 'real' world of the spectators. Even in a play like *Camino Real*, some theatrical devices are employed in order to bring the stage to the auditorium: Don Quixote advances to the stage from the back of the house through a central aisle of the theatre, jostling the elbow of an aisle-sitter as he staggers with fatigue; Gutman leads the action into the Blocks as if showing the audience through, he also specifies the 'Curtain Line', and orders the curtain to be brought down. Bond's composition also leaves little possibility for the spectator's imagination to grow in, to piece them together, to hypothesize. Bond firmly connects the pieces together by introducing a fixed, completed relationship between the two worlds.

The coercive connection of the two worlds resulted in reducing the play's points of referentiality, it exists in no man's land, hence, Bond's need to preface the play to stress its truth. On a more fundamental level, the reduction of the play's points of referentiality has made the play a self-contained world, assuming

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<sup>69</sup> Cohn sees the revolutionary gymnastic as a parody of the configuration of gangster movies. See her 'Modest Proposals of Modern Socialists', *Modern Drama*, 25, 4 (December 1982), p. 461.

an independence Bond has never realised. The play undoubtedly shares with the dadaist, surrealist, and absurdist drama their autonomy. According to Elam, who believes in a considerable degree of overlap between all dramatic and real worlds, in these mentioned works, the logical principles and even, sometimes, the physical laws governing the world of reality 'are seen to be violated according to the "world-creating" principles of the fantastic'.<sup>70</sup> Contrary to Bond's theoretical claims, his employment of anachronism in *Early Morning* reduces the play's ability to refer to the real world. *Early Morning* is a play in which the laws governing the world of reality are seen to be violated according to the laws of the play: people in both the Victorian and the modern worlds eat each other without feeling pain; people die, then awake, then die again; a heaven of cannibalism, an Ascension, the end of the world in the tug-of-war game.

Bond objected to Gaskill's thinking of *Lear*'s anachronisms as 'mixed periods', which is the impression one gets, rather, from *Early Morning*. Bond said in the same letter to Gaskill that anachronism is his choice of binding the arbitrariness bound to the creation of any age on the stage.<sup>71</sup> *Lear* introduced an integrated anachronism to relate the narrative to contemporary issues, mainly through the play's language.<sup>72</sup> The integration of anachronism is subtler than that in *Early Morning*. Besides the clearly modern signs (rifles and pistols; soldiers who speak colloquially; the Fourth Prisoner's technologically advanced machine of torture), there are other signs *equivalent* to modern counterparts. The wall is linked to the Berlin Wall; Cordelia's forces are linked to modern guerrilla movements of freedom fighters; the opening scene is connected to 'a Soviet labour camp'; other elements of the Cold War period found their way into the play; it is even said that the second act of the play is influenced by the 1960s television newsreel coverage of guerrilla war.<sup>73</sup> Other critics considered the Old Orderly's speech (II. 2, 55) as evoking the very contemporary, 'Kafka-esque world, of the KGB'.<sup>74</sup> The anachronisms in *Lear* do not create a co-text of the two worlds, but create and express a concept of the modern world as primitive, unjust, as Lear's society.

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<sup>70</sup> See, *op. cit.*, p. 104. Elam gives the growing corpse in Ionesco's *Amédée* as a vivid case in point.

<sup>71</sup> In Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p.65.

<sup>72</sup> Cohn asserts that 'it is mainly through language that Bond conveys the contemporary relevance of *Lear*'. *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>73</sup> See Hammond, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

<sup>74</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

The problem with anachronisms is not how a dramatist uses them, but *why* he does. Two answers are possible: a) The dramatist distrusts the audience's ability to associate the historicity of his play with up-to-date issues, and/or b) the dramatic events are not capable of speaking for themselves to the extent that they should be associated with anachronisms. Bond, in my opinion, was motivated by both reasons when he was writing *Early Morning*, in which he employed anachronisms heavily and for the first time. It seems that the play contains Bond's reaction to the critics' and the audiences' reaction to his *Saved*. He was bewildered by that reception and his explanatory notes of the dramatic events are the anachronisms in *Early Morning*. After the hostile reception of *Saved*, Bond started to historically distance the events of his next play, *Early Morning*. To counter-balance the historicity of the play, he employed anachronism to, among other things, reverse the process of historicizing in order to be able to examine the modern political environment. In order to clarify, Bond distanced, and in order to express his interests in the present, he employed anachronism. The device serves to establish the 'unity' of the two worlds in timelessness.<sup>75</sup> This is to create the abstraction of time of the parable.

#### Summary:

1) Bond's structure follows an indistinguishable member of society in episodes in order to expose to him, and to the audience, the reasons of social injustice. This panoramic structuring facilitates tracking all happenings in society, modern society in the first two plays and temporally and/or geographically distanced in the plays up to and including *The Sea*. This structure generates a degree of detachment, a detachment which is enhanced by other alienation devices such as Siamese twins, ghosts and *corpora*, trial scenes, legendary attributes for the historical figures, artist, direct address, play-within-the-play, horseplay sequences, divided focus on the stage, etc. Bond's scenes are purposefully structured to follow the protagonist in a journey of learning process, of coming to terms with a hostile environment.

2) Bond does not concentrate on developing a plot or the psychology of the individual, but he investigates a thesis. The element of thesis, which started to appear strongly in *Early Morning* and reached a successful conclusion in *Lear*, is theatrical because it constitutes, as it does in Brecht, the anti-illusory nature

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<sup>75</sup> A good example of anachronism that creates timelessness occurs in *Camino Real* when Gipsy tells Esmeralda: 'You have been watching television too much ....' (p. 83).

of the drama. It is the motivation which necessitates the dramaturgical strategy. This purpose of investigation has meant the exclusion of any superfluous information about the protagonist. Every play of this period builds upon the 'intellectual' foundations of the previous play, culminating in the protagonist's rejection of the society of *The Sea*, and his attempt to find solutions and answers elsewhere.

3) As well as presenting his interpretation of the socially deprived reality, Bond's requirement of a bare stage defines the place without creating verisimilitude. Bond's semiological stage discourages actors from working to create illusion. On such a stage, the spectator focuses attention on the reality of the situation and of the characters. Later productions of Bond's plays stressed the theatricality of the plays by adding devices such as exposing the actors as actors.

4) Although Bond started to distance temporally with *Early Morning* in order to see the problem from another social system's point of view, he created other techniques to keep the audience alert to the relevance of the action to the modern society. He aims at keeping the audience emotionally involved and making them respond analytically. As one of the modern English dramatists who aimed at 'correcting' Brecht's dramaturgical strategy of alienation, Bond uses some devices to keep the audience involved. Anachronism is one of them. In *Early Morning*, he juxtaposes the modern and Victorian cannibalistic worlds, stating the similarities in the political systems of dehumanisation. Although none of them feels anachronistic, the audience does. This anachronism appears in different embodiments: juxtaposition of temporally 'displaced' worlds, a microphone and English melody in *Narrow Road*, guns and rifles but mainly language in *Lear*, Evens's surmise of the future of the temporality of *The Sea* which is the present of the audience.

5) The aggro-effects are another device which aims at attacking the audience's sensitivities but which risks falling under the average Distance or Illusion necessary for the imitation of reality because Bond wants the violent actions to be authentic. Some find the realistic, physical violence on the stage ineffective for the theatre-goer, others find it emotionally alienating, especially the moment after its occurrence. Bond's aggro-effects, however, follow or parallel theatrical devices such as the atmosphere of playfulness or the divided focus of attention which lead to the violent action itself. Some productions, such as Howell's of *Narrow Road*, formalised the killing of five children by substituting them with dolls. Madness, though

an emotionally disturbing phenomenon, is also used by Bond as a method of learning, a method which leads to moments of recognition that lead to sanity.

6) As primarily preoccupied with the problems of the modern world, Bond has distanced to be able to see the problem in a new light. In *Lear*, Bond finds out that man is not innately aggressive and that coercive social and political systems generate the aggressiveness of human beings. The autopsy of Fontanelle, which corresponds to the autopsy of Kilroy in Williams' play *Camino Real*, a play which influenced *Early Morning* also, proves that nothing in the human body causes aggression. And in his madness, Lear arrives at the fact that man is capable of compassion, the compassion and companionship of the Boy. With those two discoveries, Lear acts against the powerful, unjust political regime of Cordelia. Bond goes to *The Sea* for a wider investigation of the causes of injustice. He states that tragedy is a condition of life, but we should not stop there: transcending the tragic is the way to laughter. With this discovery, Willy leaves the dehumanising reality of the island (England!) in search of answers with which to establish the humanist community. The father figure Evens evens the protagonist's thoughts and advises him to leave but not to stop changing the world: a role no other figure performs in the previous plays. The play also reconciles the old and the young figures, preparing the young to look for answers elsewhere.

## Chapter Two

### From "*Bingo*" to "*The Bundle*"

The contradiction one can find between Bond becoming acceptable to the the establishment theatre organisations, and his commitment to Marxism is a telling point. While the plays of this period show his support of revolutionary violence, they became acceptable to the 'big' theatres in London, and their 'big' stars. Astonishingly, the director who championed Bond, William Gaskill, became unhappy about the new plays. Gaskill's relationship with Bond actually indicates the real changes in Bond. One of the reasons why Gaskill turned *The Fool* down illustrates the extent Bond's commitment had reached.<sup>1</sup> According to Hay and Roberts, by the time *Bingo*'s rehearsals 'began in Exeter, theatres in London were vying with each other for the play and Bond wryly observed that "the R{oyal} S{hakespeare} C{ompany}, the National, and the {Royal} Court all want do it"<sup>2</sup> Gielgud eventually played Shakespeare at the Royal Court, and there was a plan to transfer the play to the National after its success there, though the plan never materialised.<sup>3</sup>

The theatrical devices of this period are external, obvious, and are meant for illustration and explanation: historicity has taken its course and the 'urgency' which necessitated the aggro-effects has declined. Historicity signified the taming of Bond. This process of temporal distancing actually started with *Early Morning*, but it made the dramas more and more schematic; this schematisation reflects a schematisation in Bond's politics. The actors of *The Fool* have observed the schematic nature of the play's politics; the polit-

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<sup>1</sup> At many points in his book, Gaskill shows that he objected to Bond's manipulation of dramatic events and characters for the sake of clarifying a dialectical theory. Gaskill summarises his objections in a telling observation: 'At the same time a reach-me-down Marxism is being spelt out. Bond seems determined to follow all the way in the footsteps of B{ertolt} B{recht} and impose a dialectical theory on his imagination'. *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> The performance at the Court broke all previous box-office records for the Court. See, *Ibid*, p. 297. The play had its American premiere in October 1975, and was revived by the Royal Shakespeare Company the following year. *Bingo* was performed at the Royal Court in August 1974, *The Fool* opened in November 1975 with Tom Courtenay as Clare. *The Woman* was the first 'modern' play to be performed on the Olivier stage, with Bond himself directing his favourite technicians and with a vast cast headed by Yvonne Bryceland as Hecuba.

ical conflict in the play is between Us and Them, the rich and the poor.<sup>4</sup> The purpose of didacticism becomes the main concern for the plays, and therefore the learning process is at the forefront of the theatrical elements of the plays.

### I) "*Bingo*":

The first play of this series shows the main structural device Bond uses throughout: 'Scenes of...'. Although the previous plays have been written in scenes, Bond's specification of the 'subject' of the new plays gives an indication of his manipulation of the structure to clarify antitheses. What prevails here is Bond's preoccupation with lucid 'arguments', inaugurated by titling the plays with the main themes they treat. As *Lear* was an examination of the choice of complete withdrawal that takes its subject from Shakespeare's play, *Bingo* examines its protagonist who puts himself in a similar situation to King Lear's. *Bingo* is another instance of examining the individual's role in life; how he lives and how he dies. In his garden, Shakespeare isolates himself from the current affairs, a dramatic variation on the enclosure that is taking place around him. His physical enclosure reflects an intellectual one, and both are echoed in the enclosure of the common land. Shakespeare's decision to tie with the upper classes as well as showing his lack of moral responsibility (while as a writer, he is supposed to have the greater responsibility), 'opens up' the exploration of the contradictions between the individual's moral choice and its consequence. Around the basic question of rational participation *Bingo* evolves.

The play begins with this dilemma in a concrete situation in which the repercussions of Shakespeare's choice are shown even at the moments of 'signing' the choice. The results, however, are not mechanical reflections of the signing; they are in the making for a long time. The signing is only the tip of the iceberg, the trigger that moves the action. The introduction of the Old Woman as Shakespeare's closest friend means the introduction of the dialectic between Shakespeare's class interests and the conflicting interests of the peasantry.<sup>5</sup> Her Son has already met others, she informs Shakespeare, to decide their next action against the enclosure. The introduction of the relationship between the Old Man and the Young

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<sup>4</sup> See Walter Donohue, 'Production Casebook No. 21: Edward Bond's *The Fool* at the Royal Court Theatre', *Theatre Quarterly*, 6, 21 (Spring 1976), pp. 14-15.

<sup>5</sup> See Brown, 'Alienation versus Commitment', *op. cit.*, p. 173.



Woman presents the long-term effects of the same enclosure: the victimisation and deformation of the poor. Their mentalities are the products of other moral choices which have been taken in the past, Shakespeare's included.

The practice of juxtaposing social action and its consequences in the first scene has a formal counterpoint: the juxtaposition of historic figures and fictional characters which creates a sort of generic tension; a source of theatricality. This practice creates tension between documentary elements in the play and the parabolic fictional world, which is emphasized further throughout the play. However, the historical elements are employed to activate the process of interpretation, and not merely to create re-enactment of a historic occurrence. The practice of giving Shakespeare's lines a sense of being a 'summary' or a 'reading' of the situation makes him aware of the happening as well as keeping him at a distance from the action, enclosed in his own thought process.<sup>6</sup> This is given a literal representation in Scene Three, which is a clear example of the practice of showing the action from different perspectives, or showing the characters' actions and reactions to a specific happening. But it also shows how Shakespeare is detached/involved in the events.

Shakespeare's silence in the first two scenes is foregrounded in Scene Three; his silence manifests a higher degree of antagonism *and* a deep estrangement as it is juxtaposed around the gibbeted body of the Young Woman. His silence resolves in complete withdrawal on the level of the artistic and everyday reality. Furthermore, he is made to utter in order to link the activity in the two worlds, his and theirs, to explain his impotence of 'playing' his role as an artist in creating his society. He recognises that violence in the streets is a part of the very fabric of society, albeit channelled safely into forms of public spectacle, and thus, bear baiting is a form of entertainment popular at all levels of the social scale. Although he did not see the hanging of the Young Woman, he saw bear baiting *and* continued writing plays. The inhumanity of rendering suffering into a spectacle as a phenomenon in that society is discovered by Shakespeare, a phenomenon by which he was 'stupefied'(p. 40). The result of his consciousness of the cost of living in such a society is embodied in a stream of questions that notify the impossibility of possessing any real artistic or social self.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, pp. 188-9.

<sup>7</sup> See Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

Bond at some points juxtaposes three different actions on the stage in order to show the effects of the hanging on the community and on Shakespeare. The gibbeted Young Woman remains there throughout the scene, so every assessment and action is measured against her death. The device of contrapuntal structure in this scene is supported by parabolic fictional characters with Shakespeare himself. Even his monologue parallels what happened to the Young Woman and the historic bear baiting, Queen Elizabeth and her father, and the blind bear Harry Hanks. The monologue is another instance of Bond's practice of using the language as an alienating device. It constitutes no thematic or causal relationship to the questions asked by Judith or the Old Woman.<sup>8</sup> On many occasions, Shakespeare uses the past tense as a response to matters in the present. The juxtaposition of the peasants' dialect and Shakespeare's 'language' is another instance of linguistic alienation in the scene.

The second part of the play follows the governing pattern of the first: it also begins with a silent figure who is confronted with evidence of hatred, greed, brutality, and social injustice. Scene Four employs devices such as 'theatre about itself', that is, about the life of the theatre. The historicity of Shakespeare is supported by the historicity of another artist, Ben Jonson, and by their discussion about theatrical activities and artistic creation. In the same scene, Bond employs the device of juxtaposition of different realities, those of the artists and the peasants.<sup>9</sup> The simultaneous action facilitates learning by comparing the two intellectually distinct, though physically connected, points of action. What is more interesting about the juxtaposition here is that it emphasizes the parallel between the historic and the fictional, the historic artists and the fictional peasants, the historic meeting and discussion about the burning of the Globe and Jonson's life and books and the peasants' reaction to the enclosure.

Scene Five explores many themes Bond has treated previously, one of which is the father figure. In his child-like state of mind, the Old Man has an honest and spontaneous relationship with his environment, including the natural world. His state of mind, however, is recognised in an almost horseplay sequence

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<sup>8</sup> The Old Woman's speech in pp. 57-8 is a clearer example of self-dramatisation. Bond will square this use of dialogue in *The Bundle*.

<sup>9</sup> The wide space of the Northcott Theatre, Exeter, helped in putting the simultaneous action in *Bingo* clearly on the stage. It was easy for Hayden Griffin, the designer, to balance the necessary distance between the two points of action and, at the same time, to keep the connection between them obvious to the spectator. Creating a picturesque, illustrative atmosphere was a primary concern to both Bond and Hayden Griffin, especially in this scene. See, Michael Coveney, 'Space Odyssey', *Plays and Players*, 23, 9 (June 1976), p. 11.

with his 'intellectual' twin, Shakespeare, at the beginning of the scene. This horseplay sequence, however, shows his lack of consciousness, a lack that leads to his death. Another theme is madness, which colours a whole spectrum of characters; most 'obvious' of all is the Son.<sup>10</sup> His madness, directly or indirectly (it comes to the same thing for the Son, as he confesses later to the other father figure) causes the death of the father figure. The Son's 'ideologies' lead to the execution of spontaneity and compassion.

The peasants' struggle for their lives is the opposite of Shakespeare's withdrawal. This opposition between life and death is illustrated in the Inn scene. The presence of death in the two artists' talk is opposed by the presence of the peasants who look for survival. This is one of the contrapuntal points in the scene. Shakespeare, though drunk, is aware of their struggle, and aware of the distance between him and them; the Son, Shakespeare knows, 'lies' to him about their activities. But although he knows, he does not act.

Shakespeare's actions and ideological stand did not only destroy Judith, but were destructive on the collective level because of his supposedly greater responsibility towards his society as an artist:

Shakespeare. Every writer writes in other men's blood. There's nothing else to write in. But only a god or a devil can write in other men's blood and not ask why they spilt it and what it cost. Not this hand, that's always melted snow. (p. 57)

In Scene Five Shakespeare discovers his own death, a death that is illustrated when the play later emphasizes that this recognition happened parallel to the physical death of the Old Man. As soon as the Old Man dies, Shakespeare recognises his own death. In the last scene, Shakespeare combines his knowledge with his abandoning of any moral justification for life and commits suicide. Now, as he predicted, the 'child' has come to 'touch' him and lead him to the grave.<sup>11</sup>

To link the play to the present, to balance the detachment created by the play's historicity, Bond uses anachronistic elements. They, as Gross maintains, 'momentarily annihilate the historical distance between

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<sup>10</sup> Coult explains the reasons behind the Son's madness and his need for justice: 'On the one hand, he is obsessively religious in a puritanical, fundamentalist way. On the other, he has an acute sense of justice, so much so that he becomes the leader of the local peasantry as they fill in the ditches dug to mark out enclosed common land. The two impulses become inextricably bound together, of course, and his vision of a just world, where rich thieves won't plunder the common land shades imperceptibly into visions of paradise'. See *The Plays, op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>11</sup> The Royal Shakespeare Company's production of *Bingo*, directed by Howard Davies and designed by Chris Dyer, avoided creating illusion. See Peter Hulton, *Theatre Papers*, Series No. 1 (1978), p. 9, 10, 23. Davies, for example, avoided putting a door to Shakespeare's bedroom. Knocking on non-existent door avoids creating any illusion of a reality. The acting made the audience comprehend the existence of the door, while at the same time the decor allowed them to see what was behind it.

the spectator and the presented world, and force him to see that the events of *Bingo* are not isolated incidents in the past, but are expressions of a dilemma rooted in man's nature and social change'.<sup>12</sup> However, in *Bingo*, the integration of the 'modern' signs, or those which could be interpreted as modern, is subtler and more deeply seated in the play than the earlier plays. These elements are consistent with *both* worlds, the modern or the historic. Bond leaves ample room for the audience's imagination to grow in. For example, Judith's description of her mother's causes of illness are consistent with her fictitious world and with ours:

Judith. I'll tell you why she stayed in bed. She hides from you. She doesn't know who she is, or what she's supposed to do, or who she married. She is bewildered - like so many of us! (p. 32)

Her statement could be a paraphrase of any modern spectator's exegesis of his own dilemma in the modern world. The 'many of us' puts the spectator in the focus.

What underlines the equivalent nature of the anachronistic touch is that no attempt is made to capture the seventeenth century's language. The abandoning of the historicity of the language is an important feature of the play, it is contemporary and even colloquial in many respects. Shakespeare's speech about the cost of staying alive has a modern ring and connotations, especially when he talks about 'women with shopping bags'(p. 40), which connotes modern supermarkets. In this respect the title of the play comes from the modern world. The anachronistic title indicates the relationship between the antecedent Elizabethan age and the contemporary values in the Western society: in each the question of capital ideologically formulates the (in)human behaviour.

Bond's creation of Shakespeare's consciousness, as Lappin has observed, makes it as if he 'possessed the sensibility of modern man'.<sup>13</sup> Such a characterisation has encouraged other critics to consider Shakespeare's cry 'Absurd! Absurd!' at the end of the play not only as his own judgement on his life, but as an attack on the pessimistic Theatre of the Absurd. Shakespeare, to Bulman, reaches the absurdist's limbo that prevented him from being morally committed to humanist values.<sup>14</sup> The subtle composition of anachronism enhances and is enhanced by the subtle juxtaposition of the historical and fictional characters,

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<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 51.

<sup>14</sup> 'Bond, Shakespeare, and the Absurd', *op. cit.*, p. 67.

incidents, and situations.

## II) "*The Fool*":

*The Fool* is one of the most successful Bond plays in depicting the learning process in images and dramatic action, and in avoiding the directness, though not the schematisation, of some earlier plays. One reason for the success is the fact that the accommodation of many theatrical devices in the play is more successful. *The Fool* contains historicity, play-within-play, songs, simultaneous action, madness, unsuccessful learning process of the protagonist, artist, and linguistic theatricality. As is the case with *Bingo*, the protagonist is marginalised in the first half of the play in order to depict the socio-economic circumstances, the mechanism of the society.<sup>15</sup> And because the play employs the strategy of 'Scenes of...', it concentrates on showing the relationship of the two main images, Bread and Love, which provide a nucleus for the overall structure of the play. The image of bread is in almost every scene and 'the constant references to food, and the actual eating of it in several scenes, far from suggesting plenty, sharply evoke and reinforce the atmosphere of raw poverty and blatant exploitation that define the social situation'.<sup>16</sup> The play-within-the-play exposes the actual relationship between classes as the lower depending on the generosity and charity of the upper. It shows the impossibility of the individual to stand against the militarists and their governing power. The song is another example that shows the peasants' need for a more just doctrine to re-distribute the nation's wealth.

The second half of the play starts with showing London's 'playfulness', as a parallel to the play-within-the-play. As the simultaneous action links what happens to Clare in the city to what happens to the boxer, it becomes obvious that if art in the first half is rewarded, even by charity, it is not rewarded at all in the competitive, commercial city. The boxing match is orientated as a form of entertainment for commercial purposes and one for which the labourers do not get their rewards, and unless Clare's art, the scene indicates, meets these commercial requirements, he is bound to fail. Simultaneous action is used to illustrate the social context within which Clare's art exists. Appropriately, this is a scene in which Clare's

<sup>15</sup> In the Royal Court's production of *The Fool*, the director, Peter Gill, did not feel the need for any degree of historical verisimilitude. Gill thought that the play was a 'simple view of the historical process', and therefore he stressed the poetic reality of the play. See 'Coming Fresh to *The Fool*', Gill interviewed by the Editors of *Theatre Quarterly*, 6, 21 (Spring 1976), p. 30.

<sup>16</sup> Hussain, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

poetry is read to the audience *because* it is censored by the upper classes.

As Clare has not integrated his art in his environment, he is entrapped by 'a system of aristocratic patronage and the machinery of capitalist, commercial culture',<sup>17</sup> the same system that left the 'worker'/boxer unrewarded for his physical labour. By origin, Clare is unable to reflect the culture of the governing class, and his commitment to neither class leaves Clare as an outsider: he consequently goes mad. The madness that is caused by the society's denying the fulfilling of the individual's instinctive needs is present in all shades in Scene Five: from Mary Lamb to Clare. Charles Lamb is forced to abandon his artistic talent and work as a clerk, his psychotic sister lacks love, Clare lacks freedom of expression and economic rewards for it. Their minds are, one way or the other, disintegrated. Even Lord Milton is shown at the end as a fallen victim of the same social inhumanity. By the end Clare and Milton are both destroyed by the exploiting forces of capitalism because 'the movement of the play in general reveals how "progress" of industrialisation leads to the disintegration of culture and of the rational human being'.<sup>18</sup>

As far as learning process is concerned, Bond models the play upon a Brechtian dramaturgical strategy of chronicling a selfish individual who cannot understand history or society. Clare, like many Brechtian anti-heroes, has the misfortune of living in one of history's most confused and troubled periods, a period that is a turning point for mankind. The established atmosphere and social conditions of the *Mummers'* play is followed by what seems an irrelevant subject invoked by the Parson and Milton. The Parson chronicles the social changes in England and Europe at that moment in history: wars, industrialisation, wages, the need for new ways of life to go with it. Milton's explanation of why Darkie's Christmas consists only of 'spuds an' greens' triggers the description of the conflicting powers in society, and the laws of economic science as the upper class understand them. After depicting the social condition, Bond turns to showing the place of the uncomprehending individual in it. Darkie's revolt and gloomy feelings of the coming chaos is put against Clare's selfish interest in Patty's breasts and, later, in Mary, to whom he falsifies his real relation to Patty. He seems indifferent to the surrounding social condition, involved in his own sexuality and womanising. Thus, the social context and the selfish individual are shown from the very

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<sup>17</sup> Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

<sup>18</sup> Brown, *Alienation versus Commitment*, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

beginning of the play.

The same schematising technique is employed in the next scene to depict Clare's inability to live in the present, and to understand the socio-economic changes that are taking place and his role in them. His 'isolation' in the forest meant that not only Darkie but even Patty knew better than him about Milton's plans to exploit the land, rivers, and forests. The new reality which Clare is unable to grasp, however, confronts him in his isolation, in the shape of the Keeper. He represents the iron hand of this reality, and Bond utilises this hand to show its effects on Clare's state of withdrawal and his personal life and his interest in Mary. She has already been out of Milton's household, living with gypsies. He, however, makes love to her in the shadow of the Keeper's and the Assistant Keeper's guns. From his aestheticising and romanticising comments about life in the forest, she understands that even the gypsies 'know better'. The new reality is apparent, only Clare is unable to comprehend it.

The riot scene, Three, leaves no doubt of Clare's isolation and his position in the community. In the midst of rioting, screaming, crying, tears, and pain, Clare translates Mary into a vision, a vision of escape from the harsh reality of life. He, instead, searches for his illusion.<sup>19</sup> Her disappearance from his life almost immediately after 'finding' her in the forest means that he chose an alien course against the currents of his times. It is a course that turns him from reality and, as in many of Brecht's plays, destroys him in the end. His failure to understand history properly, among other things, brings him to an obfuscated grasp of reality, and eventually to madness, to creating his own version of it.<sup>20</sup>

The process of the riot leads to its inevitable end: Darkie is to hang, and the selfish, instinctive poet to survive and prosper. Clare's unawareness even at this stage is still persistent; he thinks of his escape as a matter of luck. His artistic as well as personal detachment from the peasants' activities appears in the fact that he refuses to write about them and reflect the social injustice:

Miles. What you write boy? Write 'bout this place. What goo on.  
Clare. Who'd read that? (p. 110)

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<sup>19</sup> As Brown observes, 'Bond uses the character of Mary to suggest that in creating an ideal, Clare may have romanticized a world that never really existed'. See her *ibid*, p. 205.

<sup>20</sup> The rioting scene also contains the only aggro-effect in the play, which is the stripping of the Parson. Compared to the earlier torturing and stoning and blinding, this aggro-effect seems a mild one.

Darkie gives his coat (legacy) to Clare: the refusal to be a 'circus' to 'them', and how Clare, the artist/individual understands this legacy is the subject of the second half of the play.

Wearing Darkie's green jacket, in Scene Five, makes the nature of Clare's participation in the London circus obvious. As they do with the boxer Jackson, the upper classes knock Clare the clown down and censor his poetry. The events of the simultaneous action lead the two defeated men, Jackson and Clare, to discuss 'their' situation. Their discussion makes it clear that Clare is unable to comprehend why The Fool/Jackson 'kep comin' back'(p. 129), an action that Clare takes immediately after the end of the discussion: he goes back to his backers/betrayers. The inevitable outcome of the conflict between the unconscious Clare and his submissive, censoring society is the unpublishing of his new poetry and the return of the unsold copies. Clare's 'readers/patrons' alienate, seize, and stamp him with madness. He even comes to pose as a boxer against them, and Milton find himself embarrassingly defending himself against Clare. Clare embodies the image of the exploited boxer in a gesture of disillusionment, but it is also a gesture of inevitable defeat.

Clare's failure to comprehend is further stressed by Mary's rejection of him in Scene Seven. In order to prove his strength, he is beaten by the blind boxer, Darkie, who leaves the pose of The Thinker to fight him.<sup>21</sup> This harsh reality of lacking even bread, which is underlined by the presence of the four Irish characters, forces him to sell his beloved Mary. Only here, in madness, does Clare realise the distance he has travelled from his environment and his detachment from his society and people. He is made to drive the facts home, and to express what could have kept him sane. But these comments (p. 148) have no consequences to him as he is shown in the madhouse in the next scene which shows that he, the poet, lost even his ability to articulate and talk. Another mad character from the boxing scene, Mary Lamb, is the only one who is able to translate his thoughts and desires.<sup>22</sup> As in *Bingo*, *The Fool* introduces a character who becomes aware at some stage in his life of the mistakes he or the society have committed. In both cases the learning process of the protagonists is not complete, but the audience knows more than them. By showing

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<sup>21</sup> The fine arts and Bond: this is another incident in which Bond verifies his dramatic art with fine arts. Other incidents are the gibbeted woman in *Bingo*; Hero's looking like Michelangelo's Lorenzo de' Medici in *The Woman*; the villagers carrying Sentry 2 out in *Human Cannon*. This signifies a kind of weakness for his drama is unable to create its images.

<sup>22</sup> This last scene, as Peter Gill commented, 'has a kind of epilogue quality about it'. See 'Coming Fresh to *The Fool*', *op. cit.*, p. 26.



the socio-economic powers that destroyed even Milton himself, the audience are able to learn about the powers that make history and affect the individuals, and, consequently, to avoid their fatal destruction. The audience of *Bingo* and *The Fool* learn from the characters' experiences, and move beyond them.<sup>23</sup>

### III) "The Woman":

It has been indicated that *The Woman* depends on re-structuring some of the Greek images and plays, a dependence which could create theatricality. Yet as is the case with *Lear*, Bond's aim is to 'recapture the texture and resonance of classical Greek theatre without depending for effect on precise parallels'.<sup>24</sup> Bond's response to the Greek tragedy diminishes the status of the individual and the family and, instead, focuses on the political and social aspects of the war, sometimes to ridicule them. The epic features of the structure have not escaped attention, either. The dramatisation of the fall of Troy is in 'bold, Brechtian strokes'.<sup>25</sup> It is also, as Esslin has remarked, a 'parable play'<sup>26</sup> that uses the Brechtian epic approach to the presentation of the theme. In its approach, it is, as George Savona has commented, a '*Lehrstück*', a teaching play'.<sup>27</sup>

Structurally, *The Woman* is in two parts: the first examines the reasons behind the destruction of Troy and the irrationality of the war; the second demythologises Greek history in an isolated island but with many characters from the first part. An essential reason for this division and isolation is to put the learning process in quieter circumstances. As the main characters are depicted as role-players in society, and the histrionic words and actions underline this fact, the second part is designed to show how they change to believe in living authentically. The Play-within-the-play enhances the histrionicity of the characters, and the way Bond directed the performance for the National Theatre leaves little doubt about the phenomenon of role playing in *The Woman*.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup> 'If *The Fool* is successful', Spencer comments, 'the learning process Clare goes through in the play will not be identical in its understanding with the audience or with the forces that broke him'. 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>24</sup> Spencer, *ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>25</sup> James C. Bulman, 'The Woman and the Greek Myth: Bond's Theatre of History', *Modern Drama*, 29, 4 (December 1986), p. 506.

<sup>26</sup> 'The Woman', *Plays and Players*, 26, 1 (October 1978), p. 26.

<sup>27</sup> 'Edward Bond's *The Woman*', *Gambit*, 36 (1980), p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> Bond's staging avoided creating any illusionistic similitude. For more details see, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 242, 253. The lighting method was similar to Peter Brook's lighting for his production of *King Lear*, 1962: the house lights were brought up before the last savage action was completed. See, Peter Brook *The Empty Space*, MacGibbon & Kee, 1968, p. 82. For further details about Bond's production see, Savona, *op. cit.*, p. 30; Curran, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

To appreciate the characters' consciousness of being actors in real life, their relationship to each other and, especially, to the Goddess of Good Fortune has to be examined. The priests on both sides of the wall use the goddess as a context to their action. They plot and counter-plot as if playing games for the sake of the goddess. To counter the hostage-game Hecuba and Ismene perform, the Trojan High Priest participates in a plot with the Son to overthrow Hecuba. As he doubts the Son's action against the goddess, he, with the Second Trojan Priest, conspires with the Greek enemies against the Son. As the Trojan High Priest loses assurance of his fate with the Greeks, he goes back full circle and seeks protection from Hecuba, launching a new alliance with her against the Greeks and the Son. He admits his conspiracy with the latter. But the Son knew about it all because the Greek priests plotted and informed him about the Trojan priests' conspiracy with the Greeks. In this plotting and counter-plotting the spiritual welfare of the people is far from being accounted for. The short-sighted self-interest of the conspirators is given primary importance. But the plotting itself indicates their deceiving nature and behaviour as they show something different from what they hide. They, furthermore, are aware of their attitude and two-faced behaviour, aware that they are playing parts in real life.

But it is not only the priests who act deceitfully, the whole first part of the play contains only two occasions on which *two* characters talk honestly and freely to each other -- the structure of the play uncovers other relationships as depending on lies. The first occasion is the 'secret' talk between Hecuba and Ismene in which they, ironically, stage a hostage plot. This occasion is preceded by exchanged accusations of acting as if on the stage and playing with words, and it ends with a failure: Ismene imprisoned and Hecuba overthrown. The encounter between the ex-stagers in the prison constitutes the second occasion of 'free dialogue', where nobody else watches. It is a telling point that Ismene discovers at this moment the impossibility of pretending. She confesses her faulty performance, that she accepted joining the peace delegation while knowing that her husband lied, and that her humanistic sincerity had led her to the prison. Her confession (p. 199) of the impossibility of living deceitfully stamps the outside world as being a stage. But it is worthwhile to look back at the encounters between these two players to discriminate Ismene's new position of 'no-acting'.

The determining facts about Hecuba have been laid down in front of Ismene in the device of the

play-within-the-play, as playing the seducer to Priam in order to steal the statue. But Ismene's image is laid down to her face in Astyanax's unfulfilled expectations of a Greek (p. 192). Ismene is put in this role because the Greeks 'adapt' themselves to the new 'situation', and her encounter with Hecuba shows the mistrust between the two women. During much of her talk with Ismene, Hecuba is aware of her image: she had a 'sensational' look that left its traces on her old face. This encounter between the two players witnesses the 'correction' of Ismene's attitude to Hecuba, and to the world. Hecuba tells Ismene about her apprenticeship with Priam, he was such an experienced player, their marriage made the company of Troy prosper. But, Hecuba informs, 'when the old play games they mistake that for youth - it's only senility'(p. 190). The introduction of Astyanax to the situation causes no change in Ismene's attitude, and that forces Hecuba to use cruel words to retaliate and restore her image: 'You call me a seducer? You're a whore murdering children to satisfy her clients!'(p. 193).

This lesson gets the absolute beginner Ismene somewhere; she decides to play the hostage. This new role, as Thersites observes, makes the Greeks 'Fools!'(p. 195). Eventually, as the delegations and negotiations commence and terminate, Ismene comes to advocate the Trojan women's position. Discovering the impossibility of playing the hostage, she voices her new ideological opinions from the heights of the Trojan wall as her new stage, urging her audience to quit their roles as Greek soldiers. But, again, she is accused of acting. Nestor, for example, understands the code, Ismene 'says these things -these ravings!- to *prove* she's being forced. We understand the code, Ismene! Go on! Very good dear'(p. 204). Her gestures on the wall find interruptions and misinterpretations.

The last scene of part one witnesses her immured inside a wall, while Hecuba practises her last effort of playing the role of the sensitive female to Heros. The Queen/player pretends she cannot distinguish between right and wrong, and in her final effort she 'relies on a typically feminine gestures of conciliation, an effort to win favor through submission'.<sup>29</sup> It is the submission to another player; the 'most handsome man in the world'(p. 189). From the beginning, Heros is assessed like Agamemnon, Achilles, and Odysseus in that he *sums up* the nation's strength. He even 'defines his role historically: he is destined to uphold

<sup>29</sup> Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 163. To another critic, the player Hecuba 'is still playing an age-old women's game. Men are fools: so she kneels before Heros and tries that feminine strategy of ironic flattery and sexual seduction that has not failed her before'. Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

the values of his society. Athens expects Troy to be sacked, and Heros must meet that expectation'.<sup>30</sup> The encounter between the handsomest man and the sensational Queen in these societies results in the slaughter of the innocents, embodied in Astyanax. Recognising the fault in her acting method, Hecuba apologizes:

Hecuba. No. No. Don't -- I shall be blamed. I provoked you. I was wrong. Don't burden me with this! Forgive me! You see the state I'm in. Look -- I say please. You've made me humble. Take him to Greece. Bring him up an Athenian. (p. 218)

She retires, but it is a partial retirement: she blinds one eye only. This is the horror part of the scene; she insists on 'showing' her face to Heros. And with another 'theatrical gesture, Hecuba calls for the knife to put out her other eye'.<sup>31</sup>

The second part of *The Woman* witnesses the success of acting upon the newly gained consciousness and getting away with it. Instead of *Lear's* gesture at the end of the play, that gains only a look back, *The Woman* witnesses the defeat of the symbol of Greek authority without *Lear's* fate.<sup>32</sup> If the statue is not recovered, Heros implies, destruction is inevitable. He makes it clear that he does not intend to play the clown nor to be 'the laughing stock'(p. 250). Even with this threat, the horseplay that follows has a different outcome from the usual one in *Bond*. The three characters, Hecuba, Ismene, and the Dark Man, believe in the inevitability of tragedy (and their ability to transcend it), and therefore Heros's threat seems meaningless to them. They are joyful. The compassion, love, and care they show to each other implies a sense of 'tragic readiness'. The horseplay is actually immediately followed by an expression of the determination to *act*, to kill Heros. Hecuba 'evens' the Dark Man to act: she 'stage-manages'<sup>33</sup> the race and the destruction of the Greek leader. The playfulness the three characters enjoy is established on knowledge, awareness, and understanding. Thus, there is no fear that it might turn up dreadful or violent action. This is the first playfulness in one of *Bond's* plays that does not end in violence, a step that would be followed by another in *The Bundle*. Heros remains blind to Hecuba's blindness, and for once, she exploits Heros's method of acting, she plays on his weakness; superstition, and she wins. As Bulman observes, 'Hecuba

<sup>30</sup> Bulman, 'The Woman and the Greek Myth', *op. cit.*, p. 507. The play keeps indicating Heros's interest in his image, and in the second part of the play, the stage directions indicate that Heros looks like Michelangelo's Lorenzo de' Medici at the Basilica of San Lorenzo.

<sup>31</sup> Donahue, *op. cit.*, p. 193. Although Hecuba's is a painful action, I am more inclined to believe that *Bond* here is falsifying the Oedipal image of insight into blindness. The learning process Hecuba undergoes finds no justification other than that he denies the possibility of insight unless one 'opens' his/her eyes and faces the world with moral responsibility.

<sup>32</sup> *Bond*: 'In the second half I tried to create a political symbolic scheme -- *The Woman* really represents the life of many hundreds of years'. Private correspondence, 3 February 1990.

<sup>33</sup> Savona, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

beats tyranny at its own game: subversively, she fabricates a new myth to alter the course of civilization'.<sup>34</sup>

Like Lear, Hecuba knows the revolt demands sacrifice, her own life. But unlike him, she can 'argue' her case and not just die:

Hecuba. Wait! Nestor! Remember Troy! (*General hesitation.*) The cost! I told him: Go! You told him! We begged! Nothing could move him! What did he want? Look! (*She points to the sea. They all turn to face it.*) A little stone in the sea ... Is it a wonder he's dead? ... Now, you want my life? It matters less than nothing to me. (p. 266)

Heros's evaluation that she has nothing and wants nothing, so has nothing to lose comes to realisation: she loses nothing and contributes to the establishing of a new society. Her frightful death spells out Bond's understanding that tragic sacrifice is a prerequisite of achieving a dignified life in Jaspers' sense of the word. Her physical condition in death, to Bond, does not only suggest that she has to pay *a final payment*, but to establish an equation, a law: 'the end is showing that in order to change the world you do have to pay, it does cost'.<sup>35</sup>

*The Woman* constitutes a step in Bond's examination of history and drama to find a critique with which to deal with problems of the modern world.<sup>36</sup> And, as is indicated above, the protagonist arrives at a specific ideological formula from which to start. In order to do that, Bond had to sacrifice the dramatic for the sake of political clarity and achievement of the protagonist. He, for example, sacrifices dramatic plausibility in order to explain the political situation. That made the second part of *The Woman* vulnerable to criticism because of the 'easiness of achievement that is dramatically unjustified'.<sup>37</sup> Bond oversteps the passive rejection of society with which the first phase of plays ends, and here introduces an almost concrete solution to social injustice and class struggle at the expense of dramatic justification. Bond himself has noticed that *The Woman* introduces 'one temporary solution to the problem that ignores facts of the story in order to clarify the story's point and to make clear why the story is being told'.<sup>38</sup> *The Woman* anticipates the

<sup>34</sup> 'The Woman and the Greek Myth', *op. cit.*, p. 512.

<sup>35</sup> From Philip Roberts' Rehearsal Log of Bond's production of *The Woman*, quoted in Curran, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>36</sup> The play's anachronism is discussed by Lappin: 'the mutual suspicion of the Greeks and the Trojans resembles East/West tension and reflects the political turbulence of the cold war in the fifties and sixties. The figure of Heros especially defines the demagogic leaders of the twentieth century'. See *op. cit.*, p. 155. Bulman sees Bond's characterisation of Heros as holding the capitalist approach and the rise of European capitalism, especially in his Michelangelo-like dress, see 'The Woman and the Greek Myth', *op. cit.*, pp. 510-11. Furthermore, the Trojan High Priest assesses his role in terms of modern espionage; he describes his hanging of a pigeon in a cage for spying (p. 198), as if it was a videorecorder.

<sup>37</sup> Innes, 'The Political Spectrum', *op. cit.*, p. 203. Other sorts of objections are to be found in Hay and Roberts, *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 263; Curran, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>38</sup> Bond, 'A Socialist Rhapsody' in *Plays: Three*, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-79. See also Lappin, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

'answer plays' period, and the play's second part anticipates Bond's radical formal changes of dramatising the analysis in *The Bundle* and other formal issues in the plays of the third period.

#### IV) The Short Plays:

##### 1) "Stone":

Bond has moved persistently towards employing the external Brechtian theatrical elements, and that move is apparent in *Stone*. The parable form is used, and the element of journey which embeds the learning process is a variation on the element of journey in Brecht's *The Exception and the Rule*. In Bond's play, this is obvious from analysing two elements. The first is the Man who is going to make his place in the world, and starts his life in innocence and ends it in killing the symbol of exploitation. The second is the function the Man performs, which is delivering a stone, that turns out to be a life's journey. These two elements make the didacticism obvious in *Stone*. The courtroom scene has a specific function in exposing the kind of justice, or injustice, for the protagonist to learn. It constitutes a cornerstone in his journey after which he revolts against his exploiter. The judge and the courtroom in both Brecht's and Bond's plays have similarities.<sup>39</sup> Bond's increasing use of the external theatrical devices has been studied by many critics.<sup>40</sup> The theatrical device of the song started to take a political edge as a detaching/detached device which functions in advocating the dramatist's own analysis of the dramatic situation in direct preaching. The song started to underline the theatricality of the enactment as a series of incidents to illustrate a given thesis. The separation between the 'singer' and the 'actor' contributes to the theatricality of the device of the actor as actor. Thus, the theatricality of *Stone* is emphasized by many elements.

##### 2) "Grandma Faust":

This short piece has been studied as a 'witty fable'.<sup>41</sup> In it, 'caricature and parody are used in an onslaught on slavery, racism and capitalist ethic'.<sup>42</sup> What is significant to note is the continuing influence

<sup>39</sup> Bond's theatrical symbols of the coins are also Brecht's in *The Seven Deadly Sins*, the title of which recalls Bond's symbolism of calling his inn 'The Dance of the Seven Deadly Veils' and one of the play's songs the 'Song of the Seven Deadly Veils'.

<sup>40</sup> For more details on the comparison between Bond's *Stone* and Brecht's *The Exception and the Rule* see Hirst, *op. cit.*, p. 39; Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, pp. 226, 229; Nightingale, 'Tomming', *New Statesman*, 92 (5 November 1976), p. 650.

<sup>41</sup> Coult, *The Plays, op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>42</sup> Hay and Roberts, *A Study, op. cit.*, p. 221. See also D. R. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

of Williams' most expressionist play, *Camino Real*. Paul's chase for his soul is reminiscent of Kilroy's chase of his heart in the midst of his autopsy. Bond's object, however, is not a golden heart of an individual, but rather the social self of a black man in a racist society.<sup>43</sup> Significantly, Paul is as innocent as Kilroy; both are accused of the 'possession of stolen goods'; and society's aims are to exploit both the soul and the heart. The depiction of both chases has a dreamlike quality about it, and is punctuated with grotesque shouts and actions.

### 3) "The Swing":

In a complex opening narration, Paul unlocks the plot of the play, through direct address to the audience. Giving the plot away serves to establish the rest of the events as a re-enactment. As Paul directly participates in the action, Bond creates a specific expectation that Paul himself is going to be lynched, as the black man was lynched in the historic event. But Bond brings back Paul at the end of the play to explain the substitution of Fred for Paul on the swing. It is not that Paul's prophecy proves false, but that he is, in one sense, an actor and narrator of a re-enactment of the historical incident. The events are exposed as theatre events. Employing the theatre as the main location of the events also underlines that 'acting' within the fictional world is more likely to be involved, a fact which underlines the theatricality of the enactment.

Coult has observed that 'the inspired central image' of *The Swing* is the theatre building itself.<sup>44</sup> The image is used to emphasize a deeper phenomenon in that play, namely confusion between appearance and reality. Although Greta feels ashamed of her untalented mother, she herself is caught exhibiting her 'talents' on the very stage. Her 'rehearsal' anticipates what happens in the lynching, the 'war and blood-lusting running side by side...' (p. 45). Her select speeches both reflect an important part of her culture, and indicate that this culture has left inside her a distrust of men. Fred's encounter with her in this scene, one, manifests misunderstanding about whether she was rehearsing or not, a misunderstanding which adds to the

<sup>43</sup> Bond has explained the difference between his interests and Williams's: Williams 'is interested in the body as barrier: thus the heart that's searched for is really an organ inside the body. The soul in *Grandma Faust* is social. I am interested in the extended, social body'. Private correspondence, 3 February 1990. However, the chase in Williams's play connotes that the heart is not just an individual's, but rather *the* heart of the individual. The effort of returning the heart (P. 91) cannot be for a single case.

<sup>44</sup> *The Plays, op. cit.*, p. 60.

confusion between appearance and reality in that society. She is ashamed not only of having an untalented mother, but also of Fred spotting her practising the same profession. The 'values' of the society, which is reflected on the stage, cause the fissure inside her, and her madness is a theatrical device through which the character creates another, liveable reality parallel to that lived by the other characters.

The image of the theatre is supported by Bond's utilisation of vaudeville conventions such as the song and the entertainment of clowning. These are theatrical devices through which Bond exposes the insensitivities of the culture: the clowning shows the commercial culture's participation in victimising one of its members. But during the whole scene, Skinner makes contact with the audience, a contact that makes the real audience's involvement more likely. And it is an involvement in a violent action on the stage, an involvement which makes them accomplices. Skinner's declaration of the stage as a hall of justice does not make them a jury, there is no trial in any sense. The clowning and the direct address are Bond's characteristic technique of putting the violent action within unfeeling surroundings. In this scene also, the use of the histrionic words exposes the society as deceptive and engraves the phenomenon of the confusion between appearance and reality.

But the most compelling result of employing the image of the theatre in *The Swing* is, as I mentioned above, transferring the audience into accomplices. The employment of the image is similar to that of Osborne's *The Entertainer* and Wilder's *Our Town*, and *The Skin of Our Teeth*, namely the stage-on-the-stage device. As the events of *The Swing* are a re-enactment on a 'real' stage, the consequence of that is that the play transfers its 'real' audience to function as the imaginary ones, the ones to whom Skinner talks, and the participants in the lynching of Fred. Because the audience are seated where the historic audience were seated, they are trapped. And to embarrass them fully:

Paul. Obvious, if there's gonna be a lynchin you'll sit more comfortable if you know exactly what seat history's sat you on. (p. 37)

The direct address adds salt to the wound, and giving the plot away to them 'explicitly forewarns the audience of its involvement in the action'.<sup>45</sup> Further comments from Mrs Kroll after finishing her song: 'You heavenly audience! It is been divine'(p. 68), and Skinner's request and leading of the applause makes the

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<sup>45</sup> Demling, *op. cit.*, p. 86. See also a similar opinion in D. R. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 296.



audience a 'surrogate' audience to the real savages who participated in the lynching.

### V) "*The Bundle*":

If Bond before *The Bundle*<sup>46</sup> had depended on dramatic works, styles, or the character of the dramatist *par excellence*, Shakespeare, among other things, to create theatricality that depends on the spectator's knowledge of these, it is *The Bundle* that illuminates this technique of depending on the historic to create theatricality. Bond subtitles it *New Narrow Road to the Deep North*, a subtitle which intertextually relates to another play by Bond himself. But more than merely suggesting a re-examination of the old, *The Bundle* offers a 'new' approach to its central themes and to the artist as a mentor. The re-examination carried with it some technical aspects from the old play, but it has also introduced new ones that Bond felt necessary to illustrate the issues. The theatricality that has been derived from Brecht, however, is not deniable as Bond himself made clear in his 'A Note on Dramatic Method'. *The Bundle* employs the parable form as an appropriate vehicle for addressing problems of ethical behaviour and moral concepts. These issues and the Brechtian effects have been studied by other critics.<sup>47</sup>

In the same introduction in which Bond confesses his debts to Brecht, he also expresses his doubts that the audience might misinterpret his story. This reason, among others, has persuaded Bond to seek more explicit theatrical means to make 'implicit interpretations'.<sup>48</sup> The dramatic techniques used in *The Bundle* crystallise his previous theatrical technique and introduce new theatrical devices: ways of dramatising his own analysis of the dramatic action, to surpass Brecht's insufficient and ineffectual methods. The extension of Bond's theatricality at this stage appears in his introduction and understanding of the metaphor of the world as a stage, a metaphor which the new devices, in my opinion, came to support. Throughout the ages, this metaphor has been used to encapsulate and explain the relationship between art and reality. Through the very foundation of the theatre, the playwright uses his profession to formalise a set of socio-

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<sup>46</sup> I preferred to study *The Bundle* after *The Woman*, although the former was performed first, because my subject is Bond's writing, and the order of writing is observed in the thesis as far as possible.

<sup>47</sup> Spencer has indicated Bond's debt to Brecht's *The Good Person of Setzuan* and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. See her 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, pp. 168-70. Gaskill has observed that the focus in *The Bundle*, among other Bond plays, is on how the moral decisions are reached and how the action could be altered, which is the core of Brecht's *The Chalk Circle*. See his *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50. Rabey has stated that apart from Basho's book, the other complementary ghost hovering in the background of *The Bundle* is Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. See his *op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>48</sup> Bond, 'A Note on Dramatic Method', *The Bundle*, *op. cit.*, p. xv; see also p. xvi.

political relations and procedures to judge not only the fictitious world, but mainly the reality around him.<sup>49</sup>

The years 1978-79 witnessed Bond's own use and definition of the metaphor. In 'A Note on Dramatic Method', he defines the theatre's function as a way of creating the wholeness of human consciousness, because it confines conceptual ideas with justified expectation of an experience. Contrary to other artistic forms, theatre, to Bond, uses human beings and not aspects of them, and therefore their acts are judged 'not merely by what actors say but by how they say it, how they move, how and where they look, gesture, interact'.<sup>50</sup> The stage reflects and demonstrates the social relationships between people. 'Human acts', Bond continues, 'are then not judged by their theoretical correctness, nor oddly enough by their putative inevitability, but by their concrete plausibility to the audience, who are after all actors in their lives'.<sup>51</sup> To Bond, people do not behave according to their natural feelings, but they *act* in reality because of the exploitation they suffer, there is no difference between the stage and the world. The new technique, dramatising the analysis instead of the story, means further stress on teaching the audience to correctly interpret the events on the stage. The dramatisation of such moments is meant to demonstrate those crises in a story when the audience are asked to restore meaning to action, to interpret what is being shown on the stage.<sup>52</sup> At these moments, the audience are superior to the actors because they are on 'the real stage'.<sup>53</sup> And because Bond sees the stage as a reflective medium, it means that the metaphor is reversible.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> There are two main currents in modern theatre of the use of the metaphor: Pirandello and Brecht. Pirandello suggests that the boundaries between the real and the fictitious are tenuous, and that illusion is inseparable from reality. Brecht took a different approach when he emphasized the stage as stage in order to stress its reality. *His drama stands as a parable for the world*, and therefore his dramaturgical strategies show an awareness of depicting theatre events. His technique and practice of distancing means that no illusion is made in the process of the enactment. All means are used to distance the spectator from believing that the stage is reality.

<sup>50</sup> In *The Bundle*, *op. cit.*, p. xii.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, p. xx.

<sup>52</sup> An important reason behind the introduction of dramatising the analysis is Bond's belief that the institutionalised audience are bound to misinterpret his plays, as they do with Brecht's. But how the audience can interpret what the dramatist has already analysed for them is beyond my comprehension.

<sup>53</sup> 'A Note on Dramatic Method', *op. cit.*, p. xx.

<sup>54</sup> An earlier version of Bond's poem 'The Art of the Audience' was also written about 1978, for the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of *The Bundle*, though it was published with *The Activists Papers* (in *The Worlds*), 1980, pp. 143-5. This poem is related, in many ways, to 'A Note on Dramatic Method', especially to the stage/world metaphor. The main ideas in both are similar, but an interesting distinction appears in the poem. In it, Bond differentiates between audience (sometimes 'spectators') and 'onlooker' which is, to him, the difference between the exploited and the exploiter. In this poem, Bond defines his plays as reflections of the audience's talents an audience that also 'acts'. The actor's function, to Bond, is to reflect a reality in which the audience/exploited acts, and it is the function of the playwright to show answers for the problems 'played' in that reality.

The schematic nature of Bond's structure is apparent in every scene of the play. The Brechtian 'demonstration' strategy can be spotted easily, and in this introductory scene, the Ferryman represents one of the centres of moral consciousness in the play.<sup>55</sup> His language operates the Brechtian device of alienating the actor from his character during performance. Bond's language facilitates having the character speak as if he is observing himself. On many occasions, the Ferryman 'quotes' himself in the first person singular: 'I ask', and quotes other characters' imagined dialogue (the dialogue that must have taken place between the baby and its mother and an imagined dialogue between himself and the passengers in the future, and between himself and his wife when she knows he picked up the baby). More than underlining their class relationship, the method strips the actor from being the character. Even at the moments of moral dilemma and choice, the Ferryman is made to observe *his* own thought process.<sup>56</sup>

But the other centre of moral choice, Basho, also uses the same distancing language through different techniques such as dramatising past incidents between himself and the landlord and such as dramatising the dialogue between the Ferryman and the 'keeper of heaven'. Another is the direct introduction of self to the baby (and to the audience) which is a less effective theatrical manoeuvre than that in *Narrow Road*, in which Basho introduces himself directly to the audience because the introduction of self in *The Bundle* remains within the confines of the stage. A third method is the externalisation of the character's motivations and assumptions, embodied in Basho's questions and answers. As a self-appreciative character, he rejects the baby in a grandiose manner and with a self-dramatised excuse.<sup>57</sup>

The transition from scene to scene in the play elucidates the intellectual argument behind the structure. The object of moral choices in the first scene becomes the subject who has to choose, and Wang is forced to espouse the Ferryman's morality. The scene also depends on the same dramatic strategies employed in Scene One: dramatisation of past events by the Ferryman; Basho's grandiose self-

<sup>55</sup> The first scene of *The Bundle* shows clearly that Bond's dramatic methods, according to Hay and Roberts, are 'virtually identical with those of Brecht, and indeed there are obvious correspondences between the opening of *The Bundle* and Brecht's *the Caucasian Chalk Circle*, most notably in the similarity between the Ferryman's moral decision about the baby and the servant-girl Grusha's grudging humanity when she saves the Emperor's child in Brecht's play'. See *A Study*, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

<sup>56</sup> As Spencer states, 'Bond does not want the audience to get caught up in his delivery, but to keep a clear-sighted distance, observing the care with which the moral problem is elaborated'. See 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>57</sup> As Lappin observes, 'the idea of crawling through swamps, begging, and neglecting material wants provides a self-dramatizing impulse and a source of martyrdom. More than anything else, it furnishes a portrait of the artist nourished by his own self-absorption'. See, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

dramatisation. But anecdotes are used by the Ferryman to 'explain' to Wang the way his society works. Wang's eagerness to learn appears as the fundamental feature in his individuality, and the technique of question and answer is designed to expose the irrationality of that society.

The third scene shows the decisive powers that shape the moral choices; the river is introduced as a very important factor shaping reality. In this scene, as in others in the play, Bond uses the Brechtian gestic technique to show the irony of the river being a source of life as well as a cause of death; the villagers' camp is literally among gravestones. As a boat reaches them, offstage voices shout for help, which dramatises a much wider suffering community. The characterisation of the flood and the trapped people reaches melodrama at several points, and another melodramatic element appears in the sound of a woman in labour throughout the scene. As the sound of human cries reminds the audience that some are being saved at the expense of others, Wang is faced with a moral dilemma. He is the price wanted to rescue the family. The bargaining about the number of years is also punctuated with shouts and cries to mount the pressure on him. As the boat leaves, Wang calls back shouting 'Buy me'. The choice of the words, among other things, defines the socio-economic enterprise as the governing principle in that society, and it also uncovers Wang's awareness of that and of 'selling' himself to that system.<sup>58</sup>

### 1) Scene Four and the End of the Aggro-effects:

Basho confirms his earlier position of detachment when he, and Wang, encounter a baby. Left alone, Wang's internal conflict is externalised: he almost narrates his inner feelings about the dilemma in which he finds himself: facing an abandoned baby. *As he unfolds his inner conflicts, Bond's use of emotion appears as gestic.* This is the only incident that could be considered as an aggro-effect in the whole play: the reaction to an abandoned baby. The intellectual argument and the ideological justification, rather than the physical existence of the baby, become the centre of the aggro-effect. In *The Bundle*, Wang exposes the baby at the end of the intellectual argument: it is nothing more than a clump of grey cloth. In this, it is an 'assumption', a theatre prop.<sup>59</sup> From here on, Bond felt no need to involve the audience emotionally

<sup>58</sup> Wang accepts his identity as a slave and the economic relationships that come with it. Under these conditions he is inevitably forced into a position of compromise. See Marie Germanou, 'Playwriting and Dialectical Thought: Brecht's Concept of Dialectical Materialist Theatre and the Works of John Arden and Margaretta D'Arcy, Edward Bond, and Steve Gooch', unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Essex University, 1984, p. 153.

<sup>59</sup> In the production at the Warehouse, the emotional disturbance of throwing the baby was muffled by the ruse of transforming the baby into a clump of grey cloth that painlessly unfurls when thrown. The aggro-effect might have lost its

through aggro-effects. In this same aggro-effect, the protagonist arrives at specific tactics; the throwing of the baby is actually an ideological doctrine, no further historical research is required by Bond.

## 2) Scene Five and the End of the Horseplay Sequence:

Scene Five carries Bond's horseplay sequence to its ultimate end, an end which has been anticipated and partially practised in *The Woman*. The horseplay in *The Bundle* does not only end in merriment and joy, but also in knowledge and awareness of the causes that turned the lives of the lower classes into grief and destruction.<sup>60</sup> The group of thieves, adopt animal-like voices, Tiger waggles his stump *playfully* (p. 31) at Kaka's face to get his share of what they looted throughout the day. Being at the edge of the social spectrum shapes their narrowness of mind, 'but because Bond portrays them as almost childlike, we are interested rather than repelled or frightened by this group of characters'<sup>61</sup> The arrival of the protagonist Wang induces the group's leader Tiger to pretend he has been attacked, a trick that might enable him to rob Wang. But what brings the latter to this isolated place is an 'ideological affection' with the most alienated in an unjust society. His stance is that he can revolutionise them and change his society. For that very reason, playfulness in the scene does not end in violence, but changes smoothly into an artistic device, the play-within-the-play. This is the last of playfulness in Bond's plays.

## 3) Scene Six and the End of Ghosts:

As is studied elsewhere in this thesis, Bond arrives at the squaring of connecting the question of moral justification in life to his characterisation of people who are metaphorically dead. Although the Wife is not immoral, her death is caused by the Ferryman's moral selectivity that depends on humanistic indivi-

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frightening side, but the 'intellectual' meaning of it remained for the audience to grasp. Nightingale's reaction exemplifies many: 'viewed with the least imagination', Nightingale reported, 'it is still an arbitrary infanticide presented as a symbolic conversion to collectivist revolution: a human sacrifice to economic theory'. See, 'Any Answers', *New Statesman*, 95 (20 January 1978), p. 90.

<sup>60</sup> The selection of the bandits for horseplay, while Bond usually used innocent characters, invites a comparison with Brecht's formula in *The Threepenny Opera* that in a bad society, the lowest of the low must be good. But I do not think that Brecht was the only one to hover around the scene. Shaw's *Man and Superman*, which affected *Early Morning*, seems to have left its influence here. Bond's thieves are comparable to Shaw's brigands. Mendoza's description of the Brigands as well as his rationalisation of his motivations of joining the brigands could as well be attributed to Wang: 'Sir: I will be frank with you. Brigandage is abnormal. Abnormal professions attract two classes: those who are not good enough for ordinary bourgeois life and those who are too good for it'. See *Man and Superman*, Collected Plays, vol. 2, Max Rienhardt, The Bodley Head Ltd, 1971, p. 624. Wang feels he is too good for the bourgeois life Basho offers him, he is attracted to the 'abnormals'. Furthermore, Mendoza, like Tiger, tries to tell Tanner and Straker the 'story of his life'(p. 625).

<sup>61</sup> Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 193.

dual actions. As the Wife stops the duel between the Ferryman and Wang by asking her husband to help the son, Wang is born again. This is the real birth of the revolutionary, who is also taught to appreciate the sacrifice the humanists make to support him. By her moral choice, even when she is dying, she contributes life to Wang. The physical, second death of the Wife is the re-birth of Wang, a moral choice of life that stands in deep contrast to what Shakespeare or Kiro do, for example. In this scene the phenomenon of connecting the characterisation of *corpora* to the learning process seems to have reached its ultimate peak.

Scene Seven is not different in its demonstrative function of a specific argument: it shows how morality is created, and how it is broken (in a literal enactment), in the common man. And because of this function, the scene contains the biggest number of theatrical words. They function in showing and teaching, as Wang voices it while breaking the stone, '*who is the stone -- on the people's neck! And who is the stone breaker*'(p. 58). Wang's advice to Tiger to see and learn concentrates the audience's attention on the process of creating morality by the same method Basho used with the Ferryman: the stick and the carrot. The difference between the two scenes is between the public and the private which is embodied in the exterior and interior settings of the scenes. The presence of the soldiers represents the stick, and Kung-Tu's offering the water and rice crackers is the carrot. Kung-Tu's charity to the poor is a form of injustice for it exploits the common man's needs.<sup>62</sup>

The Ferryman's commitment to the revolution, it seems, bears fruit. But that means it is time to pay the usual price Bond's protagonists pay for their moral choices. Tiger, who was tortured by having his tongue and remaining hand cut off by the soldiers, is humiliated and pushed to perform in grotesque imitation of animals. That does not frighten the Ferryman on whom the policy of the carrot had not worked either. But the theatricality of the scene, Eight, springs from depicting it in three successive parts on two different areas, a strategy of illustrating the context, the text, and the price paid for it. As the first part shows the context of the Ferryman's subsequent choice of saving or betraying Wang, the second shows the action of dropping the pole to warn Wang, and the third shows the price the Ferryman pays. This is a reper-

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<sup>62</sup> The revolutionary action of freeing the Woman and her husband is timely and is not a priceless action. In order to overcome his instinctive humanist feeling and make the action timely, Wang disguises himself, like the Comrades in Brecht's *The Measures Taken*, and assumes the mask of ruthless, heartless schemer to procure the means of social change. But Wang does not repeat the Young Comrade's mistake: he suppresses his instinctive humanist feelings and that is illustrated in biting his tongue.

cession of Bond's simultaneous action to show related/separated social particulars, but in a diluted form. The actions are sequential, rather than overlapping: for example, the Second Soldier and the Wife remain motionless in the Ferryman's house during the happenings of the second part of the scene.

#### 4) Scene Ten and the End of the Wise Fool/Artist:

Basho's fate as an artist obviously depends on the authorities; when they fall he falls. In Scene Nine, he appears vainly shuffling his poems while the soldiers prepare to escape from the revolution. The landowner did not warn him, and the last scene of *The Bundle*, Ten, shows his disintegration, the seeker of (false) enlightenment is reincarnated and he walks in circles again. But his search is bound to fail, and the futility of his effort is embodied in his insensitive assault on a dead man. It is the young Wang who succeeds in linking ideas to practice, who introduces a different practice of creativity. This scene witnesses the end of the artist as the old man father figure, and the introduction of the young artist who revolts and defeats the old.<sup>63</sup> And as the end of the first half shows Wang's conscious use of drama and poetry, the second shows his use of another artistic genre: the story. Wang tells his 'audience' within and outside the world of the play a story that summarises the moral of the play. As an oration over the laid out corpse of the revolutionary Tuan, Wang's story could be also taken to symbolise an oration on the whole past that Bond has dealt with in the plays of the second period. At last he is able to get rid of the 'burden of the past' and start looking forward to the present and the future in his next play.

#### 5) *The Bundle* and the End of Learning Process:

After *Stone* and the second half of *The Woman*, it became almost impossible for Bond to depict the Brechtian incomplete learning, or to depict characters with Jaspers' optimistic tragic knowledge, only. In *The Bundle* Bond depicts not only knowledge but also action and the destruction of the old order.<sup>64</sup> The

<sup>63</sup> Besides showing the fall of the artist, the scene's theatricality depends on letting Basho grope down to the audience and cry in the auditorium. The construction of the Warehouse theatre, where the play had its first performance, made it impossible. As Bond says, 'it would have been better if Basho could have done what the script says -- that he actually went in among the audience'. As quoted by Hulton, *Theatre Papers*, *op. cit.*, p. 24. Bond used the same idea in *We Come to the River* when he stated that the ladies and gentlemen leave the stage through the audience in Scene Five, p. 32, the German edition.

<sup>64</sup> The success of the learning process differentiates Bond and Brecht. Brecht, to Needle and Thomson, did not make his protagonist aware of the historical situation and therefore Brecht did not have to tell 'politicians' lies' by following the protagonists' reaction against or attempt to change their situation. See their *Brecht*, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-4. After the two plays mentioned above, Bond makes his protagonists react and try and succeed in changing their situation.

relationship between the young man and the old and enlightenment could illustrate the way every one of them acquires it and how successful he is in applying it to reality.

Bond makes Wang arrive at the disturbing morality of a play like *The Good Person of Setzuan*: instinctive goodness and moral behaviour are impossible in a society that depends on force and moralisation. Wang's action of throwing the baby in the river is disturbing and challenging.<sup>65</sup> Bond's support of revolutionary violence is undeniable, but it is a subject which is known to be controversial and 'which cannot be settled by a simple formula'.<sup>66</sup>

#### Summary:

The main observation about the plays of this period is that they are written for the purpose of illustrating specific points: these are the images used for the subtitles of the plays. The learning process of the protagonist has become *the* primary concern. The obvious schematic structuring has made Bond more and more comparable to Brecht; critics found common themes, techniques, and political views. An overall view of the plays of the period indicates that:

1) Most of the plays are written in the form of 'Scenes of...'; the subtitles of the plays emphasize the importance Bond allocates to clarifying and analysing specific issues with which the plays deal.

2) Like many of the plays of the first period, all the plays of the second are spatio-temporally distanced through historicity. Bond's historicisation, to a great extent, is the Brechtian dramaturgical strategy, it is a synonym for *Verfremdung* which means judging a particular social system from the present's point of view. This distancing, furthermore, is given the form of the parable, most obviously in *Stone*, which also employs the element of journey as a matter of illustration. These parables take their material and subject matters from history, legend, or the real lives of artists.

3) In this period, Bond started to write for the opera, the most artificial art form, and therefore, the most theatrical.

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<sup>65</sup> Nightingale, for instance, wondered 'is the tossing of a tot to its death by drowning any less destructive an act than the stoning by thugs of a nursing in its pram, the famous atrocity at the core of Bond's *Saved*?' See 'Any Answers', *op. cit.*, p. 90. I do not think that Nightingale is correct in seeing the youths of *Saved* as thugs.

<sup>66</sup> Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 196. The political argument of *The Bundle* seems to be one of the very few signs of creating anachronism.



4) The aggro-effects, except in *The Swing*, are less drastic; a gibbeted woman in *Bingo* and the stripping of the Parson in *The Fool*. In *The Bundle*, the object of the aggro-effects is exposed to be nothing more than a clump of grey cloth which unfurls when thrown. The intellectual argument of throwing the baby in the river, in my opinion, rather than the physical action, constitute the aggro-effect. This action proved to be the last of its kind in Bond's plays because it signifies the end of the search for political tactics for the protagonist.

5) The anachronisms are marginal, and appear decreasingly in the plays because the parable form does not require them. Anachronisms play a less dominant role, and they mostly appear in the political argument of the play rather than in physical execution.

6) Most of the protagonists of this period are, to use Jaspers term for failure, 'shipwrecked' in one way or another, a few of them act and transcend the tragedy. All the plays are examinations of shipwrecked individuals or the social circumstances that led them to that situation of total resignation. In that, the plays of the second period take over where Bond left Evens in *The Sea*. Many of the wise fools do not learn from experience, it is Ismene who persuades her mentor Hecuba to open her eyes and face the tragedy. In the last play of the period, Wang revolts against his mentor *and* builds his utopia, at a price.

7) The protagonists of the latter plays in this phase, *The Woman*, and *The Bundle*, are tragically ready to sacrifice their lives, they transcend the tragedy. The protagonists, especially Wang, arrive at specific tactics with which they overthrow the old repressive system. *Wang reaches the New Narrow Road to the Deep North*, to enlightenment, and in that sense, among others, *The Bundle is the end of the plays of the second period*. This play witnessed the end of other theatrical devices Bond used to employ in his earlier plays.

## Chapter Three

### From "*The Worlds*" to "*The War Plays*"

Contrary to the plays of the second phase in which some of the protagonists succeed in coming to terms with the past, specifically in the *The Woman* and *The Bundle*, and in which they arrive at specific tactics of overthrowing the irrational regimes, *within* the drama, the plays of the third phase are temporally modern. They deal with modern issues in modern societies.<sup>1</sup> Other plays in this period, such as *Restoration*, are temporally distanced, but other strong elements make the historicity marginal and emphasize the relevance of the play to modern society. Other plays, especially the later ones, are temporally in the future. But the connections with modern society are guaranteed by employing devices to emphasize the connection. There is no learning process, although the didacticism is more obvious and the manipulation of the dramatic action to prove a specific ideological point is basic. Therefore, there are no devices that facilitate the learning, such as Siamese twins, no father figures or mentors, artists or otherwise. Bond seems to have abandoned the aggro-effects and his requirement to emotionally involve the audience, and instead, he talks of reason: 'Don't always astonish and surprise {the audience} but give them time to observe and consider. Reveal truth patiently, if necessary step by step. Enjoy the flow of the dialectic and the turns it makes'.<sup>2</sup>

Anachronism takes a very different materialisation, though the same principle for the 'historical' plays applies. Anachronism here is not a simple historical misplacement of an object or an action that remains content within the confines of the historical fiction, but is a detaching/detached device such as songs. The songs are the dramatist's own interpretation of the dramatic events, slotted between or within the scenes, and in this sense they are anachronistic to the dramatic action even if it was temporally present.

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<sup>1</sup> Nightingale asserts that some of Bond's friends persuaded him not to propagandise for revolution in contemporary Britain on the basis of scathing exposés of injustice in pre-industrial Japan or Homer's Aegean or other more or less primordial times, climes and slimes. See his 'Four-square behind the *Sputum*', *New Statesman*, 103 (5 February 1982), p. 27. I see the change in the light of Bond's own ideological and dramatic progress which reached a conclusion in *The Bundle*. Bond, and his protagonist, arrived at specific orientation from which they can deal with the modern world.

<sup>2</sup> *The Activists Papers* (with *The Worlds*), *op. cit.*, p. 133.

Some of the dramatic devices, such as dramatising the analysis, are a re-working of some devices Bond introduced in the second phase. As is explained below, these devices are anachronistic as they partly put the analysis (by the characters) in the future. The extent of this device appears in a play where Bond imagines the unimaginable, post-nuclear destruction. The device takes Bond's dramatic strategy into the utopian in order to warn the audience of the irrationality of the political system of capitalism. As Bond takes off into the imaginary, he needs more and more linguistic similes to make the action comprehensible.

### I) "*The Worlds*":

Bond's search for new dramaturgical methods to accommodate his expression of the 'rational culture', the working class culture, culminates in his *The Activists' Papers*. Dramatising the analysis, which he talked about in the theoretical papers accompanying *The Bundle*, finds its materialisation in what he called the public soliloquy in *The Worlds*. Dramatising the analysis meant that the drama must be the medium for depicting political explanations or arguments in a direct manner. Instead of writing prefaces, notes, or introductions as backgrounds or foregrounds, the drama itself must carry these in a dramatised form, and become functionally instrumental in putting the playwright's (or the characters, it comes to the same thing when we compare them) analysis. Judged by traditional criteria, *The Worlds*, and the plays of the third phase are quasi-drama; ideas in monologues or dialogues, with titles to further guide the interpretation. The public soliloquy is, in essence, an anachronism to the 'here and now' of the dramatic situation: it makes the character talk 'not as he is but as he would be after we have been there'(p. 139), ahead of his time and age. The coherence of temporality is ignored for the sake of the political argument. The 'post-modern' consciousness of the characters is 'slotted' in their modern situation and environment.

The term 'texture' also appears: it is the social context without which a character, Bond thinks, should not be depicted. The texture is the means of balancing the character's subjectivity. In his poem 'Advice to Actors' (and in 'On Working with Young Actors'), Bond illustrates his concern to place the character in its environment:

What does the character bring to his situation?  
 Characteristics? Temperament? Useless!  
 Is he proud? Of what? Angry? When? Kind? To whom?  
 Unless we know a man's situation we can't say if he's good or evil  
 How can the fishwife fix the price of fish till she knows the state of the market?

How can she know what she does till she knows what world she's in? (p. 102)

It is apparent that the texture and public soliloquy are contradictory in nature: to create texture, the character must be 'placed in its social context'(p. 132), while public soliloquy requires the character to express historical hindsight and 'greater political consciousness and stronger political presence'(p. 139).<sup>3</sup> The new techniques, however, make the play a combination of dramatic situations and their explanations. They aim at helping the audience to connect reality and appearance, to differentiate between 'what's untrue but innocent and see through hypocrisy'(p. 133). They are ways of creating opportunities for the audience to use and strengthen their social skills. But these new techniques show also that Bond's mistrust of the audience's ability to interpret the dramatic situation has grown hugely.

*The Worlds* is taken by Mick Martin as an example of the dominant trend in the new British writing for theatre in pre-1981, which has been 'the presentation and discussion, usually from an avowedly left-wing standpoint -- of social and political issues'.<sup>4</sup> The encounter of dramatists like Barrie Keefe, Howard Brenton, Trevor Griffiths, Stephen Lowe, and Bond with the values and threats of the establishment motivated their search for a new form which 'makes the necessary concessions to the dramatic expectations of the spectator, but which does so without compromising either the nature or the force of the political message it is designed to express'.<sup>5</sup> It is a form that achieves the correct balance between emotions and detachment, a road travelled by Brecht. Bond's *The Worlds* seems the outcome of Bond's own search for that form, though his next plays ventured more in inventing new forms because of Bond's experience in tampering with forms and because he worked in unconventional circumstances and venues, among university students, for example.

The frequency of the histrionic words and actions in the play is explainable in the light of the new device of dramatising the analysis. They are the means with which Bond exposes hypocrisy, the hypocrisy embodied in the almost critical definition of character. It is a definition which, among other occasions in the play, foregrounds language as object. But equally, the histrionic words and actions expose the false cul-

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<sup>3</sup> Bond seemed on the defensive when I faced him with the contradiction between the texture and public soliloquy but added 'I developed from that way of thinking of it, from talking about it as a public soliloquy and texture towards Theatre Events, towards being bold' in integrating the political analysis. Personal interview, 9 March 1990.

<sup>4</sup> 'The Search for a Form: Recently Published Plays', *Critical Quarterly*, 23, 4 (May 1986), P. 49.

<sup>5</sup> *Loc. cit.*

tural orientation of the businessmen. The discussion is a 'parody of serious discussion that recalls an entire genre of British social comedy'.<sup>6</sup> The definitions are full of banalities, and self-congratulatory in spirit because they think of themselves as the builders.<sup>7</sup> And to prove that the businessmen's definition pays little attention to the social context (Bond's 'texture'), Bond puts their analysis to the test. When he introduces the information that the company is in the midst of a paralysing strike, the spectator knows not only their deprecation of the workers, but that their judgement and definition are false, because they did not take this important fact into consideration. Without the social context, the 'critical jargon' of definition seems superficial and entirely inappropriate. Faced with the reality introduced by the social context, the definition takes different streams and every member of the think-tank is put to the test.

The third scene could be structurally put before the second. By delaying it Bond guarantees sympathy with the terrorists because the audience has seen the executives' reaction to the kidnapping of their boss and friend. They showed no mercy to Trench's fate. The introduction of the terrorists and their intellectual definition of the crisis in the Western world gives Bond a vehicle for direct expression of his own political analysis, many of these views are to be found in *The Activists' Papers*. This introduction furnishes the means underlining the nature of Trench's world as he is a representative of that society.<sup>8</sup> The theatricality of the scene depends, among other things, on linguistic foregrounding: the political views of the terrorists are introduced to Trench in an ultimatum to read, but he punctuates it in the wrong places. Beside the meaning of the confused reading, that these letters have no meaning and the ideas make no sense to Trench, the audience becomes eager to know the 'correct' reading. This is what Anna does. Thus 'the "confused" reading and the clear reading of the ultimatum inscribe in language/thought the different positions of Trench and the terrorists'.<sup>9</sup>

In Scene Four, which is a combination of histrionic words and actions and a playlet, the investigation of the conflict between the management and the workers is discussed in the shadow of the terrorists' action

<sup>6</sup> Spencer, 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 215.

<sup>7</sup> The self-appreciation appears in two complementary artistic elements: 1) a painter who apparently is drawing a picture of them all. The picture, for Trench, is the means of catching their characters. 2) Trench's reading of poetry, which is used by him to gain distinction and appreciation. Even from the Perfect Waiter, he asks appreciation: 'You didn't know managing directors read poetry' (p. 17).

<sup>8</sup> Bond has said that Trench is, in a way 'a sort of summary figure like the figures in the second act of *The Woman*. He is an individual but he also represents a particular tendency in society'. As quoted by Roberts, *Bond on File, op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>9</sup> Germanou, *op. cit.*, p. 168-9.

of kidnapping Trench. The play-within-the-play, discussed earlier, is the means of establishing that the workers are 'both in and outside their time and aren't eternal prisoners of the present appearance of things'.<sup>10</sup> But the success of the public soliloquy is questionable because the characters' language does not change during the scene to match the intention of putting them in a progressive historical position or to match their 'new' consciousness.

Scene Five witnesses the introduction of the 'real' factors that govern the definition of character, that is, the materialist foundations. The abstraction of 'common humanity', or the think-tank's requirements for profitability, makes the need for a workable definition greater. The clash between these two definitions happens in the 'unavoidable scene'. And as I have explained, the clash between Trench and his executives brings out the worst in both sides. Trench, however, pretends to leave 'playing the elder statesman'(p. 41). But Bond denies him any tragic status. 'From an objective point of view', Spencer observes, 'Trench is as much a victim of economic necessity as a victim of a betrayal by his friends; and given the essentially comic style with which this world is depicted, his "tragic destiny" shrinks to the more pathetic proportions of a man sacked from his job'.<sup>11</sup> The capitalist system disallows him even what he thought of as his basic right: to be able to judge. Even the basic 'expression of opinion' (vote through ballot-boxes!) has nothing to do with the mechanism of commercialism. His scream: '*I have a right to judge*'(p. 39) goes unnoticed. The sound and fury of the collapse of this system is portrayed in the next scene. What the terrorists have done, in essence, is to expose its reality to Trench. The revelation of Trench's concept of his think-tank is embodied in a work of art, a *commissioned painting*. *The effect of the picture is grotesque: hysterical actions begin and continue until the end of the scene.*

Full of hatred, or 'off his head'( p. 54), as Lisa calls him, Trench retires to the same place that witnessed his kidnapping, and a melodramatic re-run starts anew: another strike, another kidnapping, another encounter between the terrorists and Trench in the very same house.<sup>12</sup> More melodramatic are the circumstances of the kidnapping, which failed because Kendal and the chauffeur swapped hats. This trivial

<sup>10</sup> Bond, *The Activists Papers*, *op. cit.*, p. 141. This theatrical characterisation makes the workers a chorus, since this scene does not advance the main action.

<sup>11</sup> 'Structure and Politics', *op. cit.*, p. 226.

<sup>12</sup> Some critics have felt that one cannot escape the feeling that 'Bond is moving pieces on a chessboard in his desire to show a familiar situation (i.e. the management/worker relationship) in a new light'. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 56. See also David Roper, 'Bond's *The Worlds*', *Gambit*, 9, 36 (1980), p. 32.

point, however, produces a significant result: what the terrorists are going to do if the kidnapped person was one that they were supposed to defend. As Hubbard, conscious of the nature of class struggle, puts it to Gate:

Hubbard. When Mr Trench was taken the hostage was what you'd call a class enemy. A boss. ...  
Even a cat that didn't know it had whiskers could tell how you'd react to that. This is different.  
The chauffeur earns less than you -- (p. 63)

The real intention behind the 'Public Soliloquy' here, II. iii, is to explain and assess the present injustice under capitalism and the future under the culture of the working class. Part of the re-run of the events is evident in II. iv, as Ray, again, is in favour of going back to work under the new circumstances. He has even won Beryl to his humanist argument. Terry's argument against the assumption that the terrorists would kill the chauffeur, 'A Workman's Biography' and 'A Speech', is the parallel of the play-within-the-play, in I. iv. Both defend an ideological point of view that should not be blackmailed by the humanistic argument. Terry's argument, similar to Wang's in *The Bundle*, renounces changing the world by kindness. Furthermore, the argument almost indicates the uselessness of the Ferryman's ideological standpoint when Terry says: 'Are we suddenly powerful we can change the world by being kind? It's been tried. It didn't work'(p. 73). The two pieces are actually better examples of the public soliloquy than the play-with-the-play. The scene, furthermore, does not follow a linear construction: it appears as if Scene Three is cut off somewhere to insert Scene Four, then it continues again in Scene Five.

Trench's 'Story', in II. v, illustrates his nihilism. Anna characterises his situation as a representative of a 'culture of despair'(p. 76). Her description links him to the 'Absurd', because he did not find any other alternative to his failed definition of character but to despair. His lack of concrete definition makes him a 'hermit' whose despair gives him the 'illusion' that he has a moral sense. The story itself ends with a picture of the world as a void similar to that in Beckett's *Endgame*: 'One day the world will be silent. Peace after the last shot'(p. 77). Anna, then Lisa, lecture him, and the audience, about the machinations of the worlds of appearance and reality, and the workings towards achieving the unity of the two worlds. Up to *The Worlds*, there has been no character who is able to be such an intellectual 'teacher'.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Roberts observes what I think of as *the* essential feature in Bond's work in the third phase: the intellectual examination of situations and the clarity and wholeness of the characters' ideology. 'The ability of Anna and Lisa to articulate clearly their understanding of the social situation in which they find themselves and their resolve to act in response to it, is an index to the distance travelled through Bond's work from the early plays'. "Making the two Worlds One" -- The Plays of Edward Bond', *Critical Quarterly*, 21, 4 (Winter 1979), p. 76.

But the preaching in the 'Lecture' and 'Lecture Repeated' are not enjoyable, not because they preach but because they repeat each other. They are also long and cerebral. And to counter their cerebrality, Bond indulges in writing a sentimental confession by the terrorists in which he shows their 'difficult' position as hunted, their 'sacrifice' for the new generation, and their longing to be 'ordinary'. Schematically, that is followed by Trench's 'Fantazy' in which he concentrates his nihilism and hatred on the still-hooded white figure. This 'Fantazy' prepares the audience for Trench's next action of shooting the white figure, when, schematically also, the place is attacked and it is left behind. This schematic structuring and melodramatic depiction is not confined to this scene only, but prevails throughout the whole play. It is *the* formal feature of the plays of the third phase: Bond now depicts characters who know everything about their social situation, because they have acquired their ideological orientation before the unfolding of the drama. Most, if not all, of the plays of this period are written to 'prove' the correctness of the dramatist's, and some of the characters' political standpoint. The schematic structuring seems unavoidable in such circumstances.

The last scene illustrates the main trouble with the public soliloquy as Bond used it in *The Worlds*. The 'Press Release' ends the play with a strong attack on the silent people who do not change the world, and indicates who are the *real* terrorists. But beside the vagueness and abstractness of the required change, the attack is done in a very crude manner, as the rest of the titled sections in the play. The intellectual arguments are easily separable from the dramatic situations, neither lose anything by abandoning the other. These blocks of arguments appear as patches scattered all over without Bond really being able to integrate them as intellectual orientation of character. Bond's search for new poetic methods which transcend the specifications and individuality of theatre character in order to express the wider political pattern in which that character exists has led to crude schematic characterisation. Martin's objection to Bond's rigidity and manipulation of human responses, which is, to him, evident throughout the play, seems justifiable.<sup>14</sup> Bond's formal solutions make their contents unrelated to the dramatic action of the play. However, one should take *The Worlds*, as Bond took it to be, as an experimental play in which he, courageously, tried to build on Brecht's and Shakespeare's dramatic devices, aiming for political clarity.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>15</sup> In both productions of *The Worlds* at the Newcastle Playhouse and at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, 1979, Bond employed young players to enact older characters. Bond pursued no illusion of making the player suitable for the character. The traditional bare stage was a permanent feature in both productions. In the production of the Half Moon Theatre, Ian McDiarmid emphasised the anti-naturalistic elements. See Jane Bryce, 'Rehearsing Optimism', *Leveller*, 60 (10-24 July



## II) *Restoration*:

The title of the play enforces on its audience a sense of familiar play style, but its historicity is deliberately undermined. The events could happen in another place at another time, and thus Bond introduces the play as not having a 'precise link to any historical moment'.<sup>16</sup> Bond opens its referentiality further by subtitling it 'A Pastoral'. But 'as the play goes along', Worth comments, 'we realise that the reference extends beyond Restoration Comedy to Gay and his "Newgate Pastoral," *The Beggar's Opera*, and from that to the Brechtian version and to the whole Brechtian field of thought'.<sup>17</sup>

The songs remain the essential device through which Bond provides the balance with historicity. As detached/ detaching entities, they provide the main device of creating theatricality as they could be considered as anachronisms to the dramatic action. Though the 'historical' parts create theatricality, their opposition with modern songs underlines this theatricality.<sup>18</sup> The songs also carry the dramatist's analysis, they are public soliloquy. *Restoration* is a more successful play in practising the public soliloquy because the songs do not pretend to be the characters' expression of political awareness, as happens with the Public Soliloquy of *The Worlds*. They are the dramatist's.<sup>19</sup> Through the device of the songs Bond manages the following:

- 1- He avoids his twofold depiction of characters as 'both in and outside their time'.<sup>20</sup>
- 2- He avoids the contradiction of giving class-consciousness to politically and historically unconscious characters.
- 3- He avoids creating contemporary relevance by minor matters, like anachronism.<sup>21</sup>

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1981), p. 19.

<sup>16</sup> Holland, 'Upstairs, Downstairs', *Times Literary Supplement*, 7 August 1981, p. 906.

<sup>17</sup> 'Bond's *Restoration*, *op. cit.*, p. 480.

<sup>18</sup> In Bond's production of *Restoration* at the Royal Court Theatre, 1981, the modernity of the songs and their marking off from the dramatic events were made simple when 'a band, placed on a high scaffold above the scene at the back of the stage, was rolled forward for the musical episodes which closed each scene, all in rock style'. Reported by Worth, *ibid*', p. 482.

<sup>19</sup> It seems that Bond, in a way, is forced back to Brechtian techniques. John Elsom, among others, has noticed that 'this mock Restoration comedy is interspersed with Brecht/Eisler-like songs'. See his 'Theatre': a review of the Court's *Restoration*, *Listener*, 106 (6 August 1981), p. 125.

<sup>20</sup> Bond, 'If We Were Here', in *The Activists Papers*, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>21</sup> Even Rose, an anachronistic element in terms of Restoration drama, was interpreted as 'part of Bond's intention to create a theatrical world in which we are unsure of our bearing'. G. E. H. Hughes, 'Edward Bond's *Restoration*', *Critical Quarterly*, 25, 4 (Winter 1983), p. 77.

4- The song proved to be a flexible device, especially in revivals of the play.

Lord Are incorporates a kind of play metaphor Bond has been tinkering with for over a decade: the actor/character. The first scene allows Are not only the use of devices such as asides, but also a monologue through which he expresses his concealed plans to marry a wealthy wife. Thus, he establishes not only his fraudulent self, but also a relationship with the real audience as a trustworthy friend: a relationship no other character in Bond's canon enjoys. Although Bond did want the actors to be fully separated from their characters, he surely wanted to assure the audience of Are's capacity to perform a different character when faced with others. For this reason, but more importantly for Bond's desire to make the actor, generally, his story-teller, Bond instructed Simon Callow, who played Lord Are in Bond's production, to act the interpretation of the situation, and not the character.<sup>22</sup> By this 'special' relationship, Bond allocates the audience the same role he allocates them in *The Swing*: accomplices.

The characterisation of Are contributes to the theatricality of the play as he is portrayed not only as a master of theatre but also of style. The play opens as high-coloured extravagant pastiche of Restoration comedy, with Are overdressed in a wig, pinned to a tree. His use, or abuse, of artistic matters is to support his image as a master of style. First, he uses fine art to deliver his image. Having a sketch drawn by 'a man renowned for his landscapes'(p. 8) is intended to be put to what he calls 'a proper use of art', that is, to deliver him with an object to imitate. Another gesture of 'proper use' is a book of poetry in his hand. But he does not read any poetry, though he has 'standards' of judging it. His critical standards require the poem to be 'well cut' to 'fit the page neatly as if it were written by your tailor'(p. 8). His critical measure of what constitutes a literary style is the poem's 'margins'(p. 8). After the exploitation of fine arts and literature to create a pose and an image comes music to prove Are's mastership. Between himself and the audience, he is doing his best to avoid the result of 'rattling a spoon in a tin mug', which would not sound as 'a serenade'(p. 9). He does not want any disturbance of his pose, nothing to 'discommode the complexion'(p. 9). He is aware of his professionalism that he has acquired early; he knows that 'style cannot strike at any

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<sup>22</sup> That was the main misunderstanding between Callow and Bond. Bond, simplifying the issue of his new method of acting, which is partly similar to Brecht's, asked Callow precisely to play the situation as if with the approval of the spectators. Callow was inclined, dissimilar to Bond's (and Lord Are's) method of acting, to unify the actor and the character in deep involvement that reaches even their thought patterns. Callow wanted to 'experience' even Are's private life. For more details, see Callow, *Being an Actor*, Penguin, 1984, pp. 133-6; 165.

age like a conversion, its rudiments are learned in the nursery or never'(p. 9).

In two scenes, Ann is settled in Haligay and has discovered Are's real self, with a mind 'schooled in polite society': 'why ma'm if a gentleman kept his promises society would fall apart'(p. 23). She prepares herself for revenge. But Scene Four does not follow the masters, but the servants who, contrary to Are, lack any ability of improvisation because they have been raised according to the book of the upper classes. Bob knows that, according to what was 'laid down in the history' of the state, he is bound to serve his lord. Mrs Hedges inherited the life-time experience of her ancestors. Their defined roles and economic dependence prevent them from challenging the rules and traditions. The scene shows how an individual theft of the cutlery is taken to be disobedient of the law. The melodramatically timed tie of Frank with the discovery of the theft, and Bob's insistence on telling the authority, lead to Rose's discovery of Bob's narrowness of mind as a working man. The clash between the servants illustrates how they were moralised, and how their 'self' and identity were depicted by the ruling classes as rule-abiding subjects. Contrary to that is Rose whose reaction is to free Frank and help him to escape. Her 'creative' self has been formulated in different circumstances, she knows her relation to the upper classes and to Frank, a knowledge that frightens Bob.

Scene Five goes back to the masters and their ghost plays. Ann's dressing as a ghost is another sort of denying responsibility, of playing death to life, a performance to retire on. The encounter between Are and the ghost is a territorial struggle, and Are's victory seems inevitable. The encounter even shows undiscovered abilities in Are. Evading responsibility, the scene implies, is a form of death, and the *corpus* physically dies. She is worth her costume, and nothing more: 'the costume becomes thee'(p. 44), says Are. But the situation rocks the master momentarily. His mastery is in doubt, but he feels it necessary to have a new facial approach to transcend the situation. His style is shaken, and, ironically, the styleless character is to deliver, unintentionally, the revelation. Uncomfortable, Are passes through the 'tedium of a tragedy', its 'wailing and hallooing', and its 'convulsion' in order to make Bob a tragic sacrifice.

Eventually, he tries to persuade Bob to play the national hero: 'The nation asks it of you'(p. 56). Believing that Are is the law, Bob confirms his earlier position as a yes-sir character, and therefore his decision to play the man is contradictory. As a different character, Rose has a different assessment of the situa-

tion. Her assumption that the battle is not between Are and Bob, but between two bosses comes true as Hardache becomes 'Father Satan' who forces Are to sign 'an alliance with the devil'(p. 75). The Faustian intimation is obvious, but Hardache's decision to exploit the situation for his own benefit leaves Bob where he was; waiting for a melodramatically timed pardon. As Rose persuades Bob to take his chains off, she discovers that his chains are interior.<sup>23</sup> Bob discovers that playing the man is not timely, and he is left with no other choice but to trust the 'Conjuror' and hope for his reward.

Rose investigates whether Old Lady Are has really got Bob's pardon. During their brief encounter, the Old Lady proves her knowledge of artistic modes. It looks like child's play for her to get Bob the pardon, but she is reluctant to protest against the law. Rose's begging is another occasion that proves the point: 'Up! Ye made an old lady merry with a farce and now ye mar it with a wailing play!'(p. 82). As Rose leaves, Lady Are thinks of playing a game with her son. Bob's life becomes an object with which every 'player' tries to prove his/her talent.

Scene Ten shows the clash between the two Ares, the 'Old Lady-*dea ex machina*' and the modern 'Vice'. It is in this scene especially that Lord Are shows many of his talents as a protean actor and author. To make the comparison between the real and the artificial selves clear, Bond shows Are as 'naked', in a shirt and breeches and without a wig, for the first time. In his privacy, Are feels triumphant about the success of his structuring of events: it is the hanging day. He acknowledges his extraordinary talent and plasticity; even nature appreciates him: 'How pleasantly the sun shines in at my windows to bless me'(p. 84). He, then, puts his 'natural personality' into the 'public image' to receive his reward, which is in deep contrast to Restoration Drama. As any actor, he knows the importance of clothes in shaping the image: 'Now to the business of the day: clothes'(p. 85). But the messenger of the *dea ex machina* arrives, to Are's astonishment, with the long-awaited pardon. Are shows every effort to withhold the pardon, by intimidating and frightening the messenger. Having failed, he abridges the world of the spectators to that of the drama by another aside: 'Must I kill another before breakfast in this room? I shall run out on Bobs'(p. 87). Bribery is his last, and successful solution; in a Biblical allusion, he gives the messenger thirty guineas in gold.

<sup>23</sup> Worth observes that Bob 'accepted the official masquerade - as he always accepted the mental shackles imposed by a brutal and corrupt system'. See her 'Bond's *Restoration*', *op. cit.*, p. 491. Bob has no capacity to act, he accepts imprisonment, as his father and mother accepted blindness and servitude, happily. Their acceptance makes them safe to employ for the ruling classes.

Acquiring the pardon is the consummate reward he gets, an occasion for the ultimate self-appreciation.

From a long monologue, I quote:

Are. I begin to like thee, and I might worship thee. You have talents, nay powers I knew not of!  
(p. 88)

That is followed by designing another plan to arrive late at the hanging, a design in which he actually practices his role, in a complete scenario of what will he pretend and what will happen to Bob.

Scene Eleven is emotionally disturbing and full of ironies and moments of black comedy. It shows the preparation for taking both Bob and Frank to hang. Bob's coming to terms with the reality that lending his 'name' to his master meant losing himself is illustrated throughout the scene. But, significantly, his last sentence is directed towards the audience. It is the first and last time Bob talks to his spectators in an aside.<sup>24</sup> This aside involves the spectators with Bob's predicament, but they epistemologically remain superior to him. For the audience, it is a closed matter: they have seen the burning of the pardon by Mrs Hedges, and it seems almost certainly impossible to find another 'dramatic' or 'melodramatic' solution to Bob's fate. The audience's knowledge of that prohibits them from saying with Bob 'I ont believe this'(p. 98).

### III) *Summer*:

Critics have compared and placed *Summer* in the midst of the European drama.<sup>25</sup> But *Summer*, in my judgement is not only that, it is a reworking of many of Bond's earlier themes, ideas, techniques. Even the governing of the play by means of a pattern of arrival and departure has been used in *The Sea*, though *Summer* shows the last re-enactment of this pattern. However, I would like to study the theatricality of the play through three main elements which have existed previously in Bond's plays, and have not escaped some

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<sup>24</sup> In the Royal Shakespeare Company's revival of *Restoration* at the Pit, the Barbican Centre, 1988, the theatricality of the whole performance was maintained by the following elements: A) An arena theatre: the actors were actually playing in the midst of the audience. B) A bare, varnished stage on which an artificial element (the flower in Scene One), was placed. C) The set was changed in view of the audience by the actors. Some of the changes happened during the singing by the un-participating actors. The props were stationed at the back of the acting arena behind a huge white wall in which a door was usually used as a passage for the props. When these latter were bigger than the door, the huge wall itself was removed and all 'behind the scenes' were exposed. D) Simon Russell Beale played Lord Are not only as if in the approval of the spectators, but in almost physical contact with them.

<sup>25</sup> Mathers, for example, goes so far as to suggest that there are corresponding figures and situations between Bond's play and Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard*: Marthe, Xenia, the German, Ann, and David are, to some extent, counterparts to Firs, Ranevskaya, Lopakhin, Anya, and Trofimov; the nostalgic aestheticism of Xenia/Ranevskaya is put against the ascendant materialism of the German/Lopakhin as the central opposition between the characters in the plays. See his *op. cit.*, p. 136-8

attention. These three elements are 1) Re-Enactment, 2) The territorial struggle for space of the terrace as a stage, and 3) Ghosts and second death in the play.

### 1) Re-Enactment:

As history has become less prominent in the plays of the third phase -- that is, as they have become less a matter of re-enactment of events -- historicity has become a marginal device. Instead, Bond uses the same 'idea' by having the stories from the characters' past unfolding on the stage and, at the same time, having the *same* events acted as they *used* to happen, with slight variation that depends on introducing a new element, namely, Marthe's death. With the exception of Marthe as a 'dying' character, the events of *Summer* are an annual occurrence. The new element changes the course of the ritual, determines the tragic encounters between some of the characters, and ends its repetitiousness. Part of the suspense of the play depends on advocating the courses of the action as a repeated happening for unlocated, unexposed reasons, at the beginning. The construction of the play as a repetition underlines the importance of the past, and of coming to terms with it, a theme from the plays of the second period. The difference is that the 'coming to terms' depends upon ideological orientations which are already acquired before the start of the drama.

The first scene shows the 'changes' that occurred 'this' time for the usual visit: Marthe has changed her room, she is dying. The second scene underlines the ritual as occurring for far-reaching reasons: Xenia has been returning to the same 'stage' each summer for forty years, but it seems that the repetition is bound to break when Marthe knows that Xenia has transferred 'the history of every stone in this house' to the younger generation, Ann. This reason shakes Xenia's excuse, that she was born there. Both characters' worlds are completely separated and unbridgeable:

Marthe: Why do you come here every year? There are other places where you could find the sun.

You're married, you have money, your own shop. You have a new life.

Xenia: It's natural to want to come back to the place where you were born. Even if it's another world. This house was my home for twenty years. I have friends who've lived on in this town. I like to speak my own language.

Marthe: Wipe our dust from your feet. That's good advice. This isn't your home any more.

You're a stranger here. (p. 11)

The continuity of the ritual visit seemed unavoidable, an eternal rite for Xenia. At the beginning of Scene Five, she wonders 'Shall I come here when you're dead?' (p. 40), but near the end, she resents coming back again. The re-enactment is shattered. The disappearance of one of the players makes the re-enactment un-

playable. That implies that the changes, the new elements, are greater than to maintain the continuity of the monotonous ritual.

Where the younger generation is to live, and what affected their elders' choice of the place is the subject of Scene Three. As a beginning, Marthe advises Ann to escape and not to be caught in the cross-fire between herself and Xenia, not to be a prisoner to the idea that she is one of the company that have been 'turned out'(p. 19). Seeing Marthe's attempt to secure Ann as one of her own troop, Xenia prepares her lines to narrate her solemn past. The verbal struggle between the two women in this scene is a reconstruction of past events, and the occasion turns out to be a performance through which every player tries to win the spectator Ann. Ann is used to represent a spectator: winning her is the target behind the long speeches in the play.<sup>26</sup> She is the offspring of Xenia, but emotionally involved, to a specific degree at the beginning, with the opposite side. To make her the ideal spectator who receives and judges, she is prohibited from previous knowledge. She is not wholly absorbed in either side of the argument.<sup>27</sup> To some extent, she is similar in her position to Rose and Willy in *The Sea*, an ideal spectator in that she is neither completely separated nor fully engaged in the events portrayed almost for her benefit.

## 2) The Significance of the Place as a Stage:

The annual visit to the same scene, among other things, emphasizes the continuous significance of the place as a symbol of dominance. The place signifies power: whoever governs the place, it seems, is ideologically victorious. What the characters say about the 'ideological' importance of the place, however, is subject to no discussion between them. But the place is taken for its 'significance', and the two main antagonists struggle for it. This 'territorial struggle' is for dominance, and the history of the 'house' becomes the history of the struggle between the ancestors/players. This first sentence in the play: 'You're in your old room'(p. 1) seems unnecessary information provided by David for Xenia, especially when we know that he is informing her about *her own* room, a room to which she comes every summer. She is *that* familiar with the place, and even young Ann observes the sameness of the place. The sentence obviously

<sup>26</sup> Roberts observes that Xenia and Marthe 'are engaged in a struggle for Ann. How Ann decides between the two will determine the nature of the future'. 'The Search for Epic Drama', *op. cit.*, p. 476, italics mine.

<sup>27</sup> As Mathers observes, 'an account of of the past can be naturalized as conversation, as response to her interrogative relationship to what happened before the play in history'. See *Op. cit.*, p. 144.

stresses the importance of the place as a locale that has something unusual about it.

The weight of the place, and the need to pass its dominating power to the younger 'players', is the subject of the first conflict between the older ones. Being born in the place, spending twenty years in it, and making annual pilgrimage to it do not, to Marthe, constitute an intimate relationship that allows one to live or, for that matter, to die there. Under the guard of the young male player, Marthe claims the place to be hers: 'I can stay here to die. I've lived on the sea since I was a child. I'd be unhappy if it was taken away now'(p. 12). Xenia needs time to comprehend the new reality that her main 'rival' is leaving the scene. From the terrace, Xenia and her family once celebrated their conspicuous wealth and power. In the summer evenings, the family and their friends, after a day out on the islands, came back to the house and its garden to the sound of the farmers singing in the hills. They performed their roles and duties as upper class characters and as owners.<sup>28</sup> Her account of that past is a lamentation of the lost paradise which she owned.

But this experience has a different meaning to Marthe. The islands, the house, and the terrace have a different interpretation when seen from a 'lower' angle, from the servant's. The very beautiful and romantic island was the scene of Marthe's experience of death at the hands of the Nazi. Marthe's account of her imprisonment and subsequent release from the Nazi's concentration camp is very long, a short story in itself. It is intended to verbally re-create the past, but it illustrates the extent to which the verbal imagery has become a primary medium in 'dramatising' the experience in Bond's plays, instead of his previous rich visual images.<sup>29</sup>

The two characters' accounts and interpretations of historical events arrive at considering the house as a battleground, a stage to be dominated if any of them is to 'live'.<sup>30</sup> Marthe makes it concrete: 'This house is my life'(p. 27). The islands, the creation of Xenia's system and ideology, are her tragedy. As for Xenia, she, melodramatically, meets one of the very Nazi soldiers who served on the islands which used to be concentration camps. They even meet and stand on the very spot that was the execution wall, from which Marthe was saved. For the first time since the war ended, he visits the spot, a 'surprise' from his son

<sup>28</sup> The terrace, as Mathers notices, has been used 'by the text's characters, particularly Xenia, as a place of performance'. *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>29</sup> Marthe's account happens because, as Roberts comments, 'a good deal of the action involves recounting the past'. See 'The Search for Epic Drama', *op. cit.*, p. 474. But the extent of *recounting the past* annihilates the play as an *action*.

<sup>30</sup> See Roberts, 'Edward Bond's *Summer: A Voice from the Working Class*', *Modern Drama*, 26, 2 (June 1983), p. 129.



and daughter-in-law to make him re-live the past. His mission in the drama seems to be defining Xenia's position to herself. As it is 'partly a play of after action', the fourth scene shows 'an ex-criminal visiting the scene of his crime'.<sup>31</sup> The crimes of this German were made possible by the old order, Xenia's. And the encounter of these 'diabolical siamese twins', as Bond called them,<sup>32</sup> is meant to diametrically show the ultimate results of the old order. The scene is the only outdoor one in the play, and it is meant to 'expose' Xenia's ideological stand, by the German. The German's account introduces another 'hidden' factor to the picture: the systematic justification of the militarists for their atrocities which were committed, the German confesses, to 'protect' Xenia.

The German's justifications, another very long speech, shares Xenia's assumptions of man's inhumanity; thus the soldier waged war for the protection of her class and her culture from the savages. 'This culture' as Vivian M. Patraka discerns, 'becomes poignantly essentialized in the symbol of the "woman in white," a young woman seen by the soldiers on a balcony'.<sup>33</sup> Her 'performance' on her terrace represented to the German the cultural standards which they were defending. The girl, the German's speech implies, must have known what she was doing when she appeared to the soldiers on the terrace, any claims to the contrary must be pretentiousness:

German: She stood on the terrace and pretended to stare at the sea. Hour after hour for days at a time. We sang to her as we sailed below or swam. We watched her through binoculars. ... We loved her. ... She was our friend. She stood there as a sign. (p. 35)

Not knowing her identity, he tells Xenia that the girl in white is his witness that he is telling the truth. He, unwittingly, shatters Xenia's illusions about the kindness and justice of her class. Her own kindness to Marthe proves the rule: others had to be executed.

This feeling explains her insistence on talking to Marthe in the next scene: to test the reality exposed to her. It is the only time that Xenia confesses that she thinks Marthe 'despises' her, and so does David. The encounter with the German persuades her to be 'honest' and to correctly evaluate standing on her terrace 'for days at a time'. They put their cases to each other: the foundations of their worlds. Behind the appearance of Xenia's world of kindness, consideration, and charity lies the world of reality, that of money

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<sup>31</sup> Bond, quoted in *ibid*, p. 137.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in *ibid*, p. 133.

<sup>33</sup> 'Contemporary Drama, Fascism, and the Holocaust', *Theatre Journal*, 39, 1 (March 1987), p. 74.

and competition that led to panic and madness, to war. Marthe exposes the connection between the two worlds, a near repetition of Anna and Liza's speech in *The Worlds*. From a long speech, full of theatrical words, I quote:

Marthe: Your world was a puppet show. You thought the puppets moved because of the little pieces of wood under their bright coats. They were moved by strings: the factories, banks, governments that control our lives. What we do, what we are, depends on the relationship between us and such things. (p. 43)

The use of the histrionic words proves that their user is pretentious and deceitful, as does Xenia's accusation, which is full of these words. At this stage, Marthe still lives in the past. Xenia accuses Marthe of lacking dignity and intelligence in her role: 'Now our roles are reversed. I got away -- but you're corrupted by the past'(p. 44). Marthe's spit is another sign of living as a prisoner in the past. In this scene, Marthe literally takes on 'the role of the woman next to whom she sat as they waited to die, through spitting in Xenia's face Marthe's own reorientation becomes possible'.<sup>34</sup> The 'performance' of the spitting seems to claim Marthe's exit, her ties with the role of the servant come to an end and the past/house/stage does not burden her any more. She transcends the "'tragic" blunder of living, which is to die'.<sup>35</sup>

### 3) Ghosts and Second Death:

One interpretation of *Summer* is that it is a conflict between *corpora*. The way of life Xenia lived in her youth made her without any moral responsibility, and the way she lives also makes her without moral responsibility. Her saving of her servant Marthe proves that this society depended on individual favouring, and not on justice. This single action of saving Marthe turns out to be disastrous because Marthe lived with her guilt that she lived while others who lacked this 'privilege' of being servant to the powerful people died. This guilt, however, does not encourage Marthe to avenge her suffering, she does not challenge Xenia, who kept coming back to her birth-place for several years. Although Marthe gave evidence against Xenia's father, she still feels inferior to Xenia. Marthe's timid soul made her afraid of death: a *corpus*, but when David explains to her that the reaction to death signifies a choice of how to live, she acts. She transcends her fear and spits in Xenia's face. In challenging her mistress she performs her acceptance of moral

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<sup>34</sup> Mathers, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

<sup>35</sup> Bond, quoted by Roberts in 'A Voice from the Working Class', *op. cit.*, p. 137.

responsibility, a performance which is an expression of a new stance towards death; Marthe transcends the tragedy when she overcomes her isolation and avoidance of behaving morally.

#### IV) The Short Plays:

##### 1) *Derek*:

Many of Bond's characteristic themes and theatrical devices are reworked in *Derek*. What is new is the concentration on literally depicting the mentality of the person who joins the army. The theme itself is not new; many plays show the destructive power of the army as a dehumanising institution, and show many people who become destructive by militarist activity. Derek 'literally' sells his brain and becomes a 'head-less' human being, and that is why he joins the army.

The dialogue between the theatrical characterisation of being and becoming (Derek 1 and Derek 2) offers an example of the strategy of externalising the interior conflict in dramatisation. Dramatisation, however, does not stop at this incident; it is a method used by other characters too. Even some of the characters who are normally incapable of analyzing their situations or their personality are allowed to use it. The lawyer's letter exemplifies the tendency to dramatise Biff: it shows Biff's stupidity and his dependence on the lawyer's words and plans. The lawyer states even the way Biff is to perform the letter: at specific points he must 'begin to crescendo'(p. 12). The sharing of the reading of the letter avoids the boredom created by the lengthy letter, as well as alienating its content: Biff does not understand the parts he reads, while Derek reads what is not written for him. This 'reading' of the letter persuades Derek to dramatise his future life when he agrees to selling his brain to Biff, and the alternative of not selling:

Derek. We'd be millionaires! What a life! All the things in the ads'd jump out and grab us! If you're rich yer don't need a brain! Yer pay people t'think for yer. What's the alternative? Shut up in the jug till I'm gaga ...(p. 12).

Obtaining the brain will facilitate the stupid Biff making his 'maiden speech' in the House of Commons, and the speech is also dramatised. In it, he will address his 'mates and matesses'. Within this imagined speech, Biff dramatises the argument of those 'who speak against the fluff'(p. 13). He will suggest that they should be hit hard enough, a suggestion that, the dramatisation goes on, will make the members laugh.

Biff's dramatisations establishes the metaphor of the world as a stage on which every one acts,

depending on what is written for him. This is a pretentious society that maintains the appearance and not the reality. The Doctor diagnoses it: 'the customs and institutions of society must be designed to conceal the truth'(p. 8). It is not an individual case, all the society works through this silent agreement upon hypocrisy. Although Biff's mental age is ten, voice, clothes, education, manners, attitude and money will hide his handicap. Hypocrisy is the foundation of that society, as it is in many other societies Bond depicted. The upper class creates a restricted life, view, perspective for the lower class. As the previously mentioned letter maintains, Derek is supposed to say specific things at specific times, otherwise, he is un-textual.

The song is also used as a theatrical device through which Bond introduces his own political views of the performed situations. The songs, sung by the characters, carry a consciousness that is decisively different from theirs in the drama, and their allocation seems to be for the *actors* and not for the characters. Exceptional cases are the Doctor's Song which is in accord with his dramatic characteristics. But it exposes these features to the audience. The extent of the theatricality of the songs occurs in the last scene: while he is dead, Derek is one of the singers of the last song. His experience, however, has led to his death, and therefore the experience itself is a contributory element in forging the song. As is the case with the Dead Soldier in *Passion*, because he is dead, the content of the song has its justification.<sup>36</sup>

## 2) *After the Assassinations:*

Only the Choruses are published from this play, and at best they could be taken as part of Bond's 'material', e.g. poems, fables, and stories, that he used to write to accompany the third period plays. They carry Bond's own analysis, comments, and arguments in relation to the dramatic events. During the rehearsals of the play, Bond called them 'stories', 'poems', and he took the actors through these 'poems' as 'distinctly separate parts of the play, which in itself would appear to point to their separate identity as pieces of writing'.<sup>37</sup> The extent of their autonomy appears in the fact that Bond has selected one of these Choruses,

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<sup>36</sup> The production of *Derek*, as the Author's Note indicates, has not used any realistic scenery to create the illusion. And some of the props such as the sacks and the money in Scene Three, were mimed. The tragic scene of the mother's narration of her sudden wealth and her throwing the money out of the window was played as a farce, a method Bond used in *The Swing*. These tragic moments were punctuated with laughter, sometimes uncontrollable. The aim remains the same: 'to show the character whipped from tragedy to farce as we are made aware of the enormous waste of her ability that has made her the nagging and destructive woman she now is'. See Hirst, *Bond, op. cit.*, p. 163.

<sup>37</sup> Reported by Tompsett, 'Approaches to Imagery in Edward Bond's *After the Assassinations*', in *Contradictory Theatres*, edited by Leslie Bell (Colchester: Theatre Action Press, 1984), pp. 95-6.

'A Story', to be re-published as an individual item in the Swan Theatre *Restoration*. The possibility of separating materials from the dramatic to the narrative indicates its generalising nature. Although it is difficult to deduce their effectiveness in rendering strength to the playtext, my judgement is built upon Bond's decision to publish them apart from the play and therefore no judgement is made upon their relation to the drama.

*Choruses*, however, has the same weakness in Bond's dramatic writing in this period: his desperation to get his message through which makes his drama reach the un-dramatic. The 'speeches', or 'choruses', are very long and have no coherence or unified subject. No one of them is understandable in itself (except 'A Story'), no one in itself constitutes a parable or a song or a story. But they, as Bond himself states in his 'Author's Note' to the play, deal with themes that occur in *Derek*. But other themes from his earlier plays appear in the Choruses.

The main analogy with earlier plays is to be found in Bond's mounting interest in depicting 'dead' characters. In *Choruses*, the Son is introduced as a 'dead' person who is not yet born, and from the Choruses and the critical reports on the performance, he seems a primary and dominating character. He, like many other characters by Bond, joins the army *because* he is *corpus*. The chorus 'The Deserter Looks at the Stars' is a reminiscent of *Lear*, II. iii, and the Deserter of *We Come to the River*. The chorus 'Love' even repeats *Lear*'s argument with Cordelia in III. iii. Another long speech crystallizes Arthur's argument in *Early Morning*, that human beings are destructive and therefore must be abolished; a spice of ideology is added to the argument, however:

It's better to be dead than red?  
 But if it's better ... why don't their people ask us to drop our rockets on them -- if it's better to be  
 dead than red? ...  
 If we dropped our rockets they'd drop theirs so we can't drop ours though they want us to as it's  
 better to be dead ...  
 Does that mean *none* of us should live?<sup>38</sup>

Some of the criticism directed towards *After the Assassinations* confirms my argument about *Summer*: the narration and description of past events consistently assert the priority of the literary narrative over the dramatic action. In *After the Assassinations*, this 'literariness' (the long 'poetical' narrations and the

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<sup>38</sup> Bond, "*Choruses*" from *After the Assassinations*, Methuen New Theatrescript series, 1983, p. 42. All subsequent references to the play will be to this edition and will be parenthetically cited in the text.

monologues) 'renders the stage a platform for literary description and a forum for literary poetics at the expense of action and conflict'.<sup>39</sup> The published 'Choruses' themselves do not operate on any situational level. They are heavily loaded with linguistic images, some of which are incomprehensible: 'empty wind', while others are very long, unbreakable sentences: 'What scavengers first stripped uniforms from the dead while crows cawed as the bared skin turned the field white with the winter of death?' (p. 33), and others are banal 'The dead don't get up/The blind don't see' (p. 43).

Nonetheless, these choruses are intended to function as a theatrical device similar to the songs of *Restoration* in that the choruses 'carry the burden of the writer's philosophy and dramatic purpose'.<sup>40</sup> But the most outstanding phenomenon in *After the Assassinations* that one could grasp as a *new* theatrical element is Bond's introduction of the actors as actors, for the first time in his plays. In the published text as well as in his direction of the play Bond, for the first time, explores the Brechtian technique of separating the actor from the character, to its full extent. In 'The Father Talks of His Son', the Father introduces himself as an actor. By this technique, Bond is abandoning the pretence that the spectators are eavesdropping on actual events. He openly admits that the theatre is a theatre and the events are theatre events.

The histrionic words that occur in the published parts strengthen the theatricality of the play. 'The scene of the crime', the Father explains, 'is the world and each step and gesture of its people is part of the struggle of killers and victims' (p. 31). Bond also uses direct address and the first person singular 'I am' for the Government Representative and the Teacher. It is difficult to measure the weight of these elements, and others, without the full text.<sup>41</sup> But they are fully exploited in Bond's next play, in which his theatricality reaches one of its peaks, *Human Cannon*.<sup>42</sup>

### 3) *Human Cannon*:

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<sup>39</sup> Martin Chiverton, 'Scenes of Statements and Obscurity: The Problem of Obfuscation in Edward Bond's *After the Assassinations*', in Bell, *Contradictory Theatres*, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>40</sup> Tompsett, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>41</sup> In my interview with Bond, 9 March 1990, he informed me that he had not got a complete text of the play.

<sup>42</sup> One of Bond's directing methods of the performance of *The Assassinations* was to get the 'performers to step out of character to emphasise the play as a narrated story of reality'. Reported by Chiverton, *op. cit.*, p. 104. In this performance in the Drama Department of Essex University, Bond also repeated his method of raising the house lights instead of dimming them, a lighting method he used in his production of *The Woman and Summer*.

This play could be accounted for as one of Bond's most theatrical plays to date. The Bondian spatio-temporal distancing and the scenic structure that depend on no linear progress are at work. But it seems that Bond has taken many theatrical devices to their ultimate extent. Some of these devices appear in his earlier plays, but the trial, for example, is employed with greater stress on showing its theatrical potential. As is discussed earlier, the trial in *Human Cannon* constitutes unprecedented depiction in form as well as in content in Bond's plays. As well as the changing place of the antagonists, Bond introduces other elements that make the theatricality of the trial as a detached/detaching identity unmistakable. The histrionic words are also used on a much wider scale than ever before in Bond's dialogue. Furthermore, they are used in a revolutionary regime as an accusation of the pre-revolutionary one: the latter is described as a pretentious, illusory world. Nando specifies ownership to be the cause of the capitalist society's irrationality, in histrionic words. His story, while he is making the wooden box for his dead child, seems irrelevant to the immediate dramatic action; the Priest seems to be waiting, doing nothing until the end of the story, but that is exactly what makes it a story, a theatrical device which contains the histrionic words: as the world grew up:

Nando: Soon the world became complicated but the story didn't change. At different times it's a tragedy or farce or mystery but the plot is always the same. (p. 5)

This is followed by a public soliloquy called 'The Argument of the Story' which is similar to: 'The Genesis According to Karl Marx'. The long speeches of the revolutionary Ignacio accord with his function as a prosecutor, he uses forceful and vehement language in which he includes theatrical words to define the false foundations of the people's lives, acts, and characters.

Two other complementary theatrical devices form a new phenomenon in a play by Bond, namely the narration and role-playing. Bond has never used narration before as an external theatrical device. The extreme he has gone to is the characters' narration of past events, narration of the dramatic within the confines of the stage, as in *Narrow Road*. Many of his plays avoided making the narration even seem as narration, and stopped at making it look as part of the dialogue, as in the famous example of the play about the past, *Summer*. But in *Human Cannon*, the marking off of the narrated parts is indisputable. And this marking off makes the players appear as players of theatre action. To some extent, this narration equates role-playing to the actor introducing himself in *After the Assassinations*.

The first three narrations in the first part of the play punctuate the scenes from one to four. They are allocated to different players/characters: Ignacio, Tina, and Agustina successively. Their function is solely to depict the context (texture) of the dramatic world, to define the place and time, and the necessary consciousness for the revolutionary activity to achieve justice within and between nations. Because these narrations occur between scenes, they are in themselves bracketed off as a theatrical device, and their theatricality is greater because they have no immediate link to the drama.<sup>43</sup> By the same token, the narrated sections bracket the scenes and make them appear autonomous as theatre actions.

The second part of the play employs a different kind of narration that depends on the strategy of chronicling past events and offstage happenings. But, contrary to the method of narration employed in the first half, it is the character involved in the dramatic action who narrates. And the narration does not systematically fall between scenes. Agustina's opens Scene Six by chronicling what happened to the village after the defeat of the revolution, and also stating her return to the same village. Nando's narration between scenes six and seven depicts his wife's evacuation from the village. Agustina's narration of her pride in her Spain, and her account of its beauties punctuates scenes Eight and Nine. But the song and the chorus take over the function of punctuating scenes Seven/Eight, Nine/Ten, and Eleven/Twelve. The 'Chorus' is of a threatening nature to the rich and well-fed, but because it is sung by figures from outside the drama, its theatricality is unambiguous: it is an authorial comment.

Agustina's narration in Scene Nine is rather problematic. At the beginning of the scene, she recounts her action in setting the time bomb in the church, and her return 'now' to her old house. She also recounts the changes she recognised in her house, which proves that she has just come back from the church a while earlier. She continues: 'I've stood here five minutes'(p. 34). And when nobody comes to question her presence, she goes into the house continuing her observations of the changes. She eventually describes her action (presumably to the audience) at the very moment of its occurrence, a very theatrical device:

Agustina: I go to the rug that covers the trapdoor to push it aside  
And perhaps because there is so much new to see

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<sup>43</sup> Antonia's narration (p. 20) is of a different nature; it has a direct relation to the character's activity in the scene. It misses the generalizing nature of the first three and, instead, describes Agustina's tactics of playing the ancient trades of whoring and cleaning for Juan in order to learn how to operate the gun. But the universal nature of the necessary tactics is also present in the narration.



And so much old to remember  
 I do not notice at first  
 Although it is light  
 That the whole floor is buried in six inches of  
 concrete! (p. 35)

As she discovers the impossibility of hiding in the trap, she states that 'the bomb explodes in an hour'(p. 35). The shed, she thinks, would be safe. As she stands in the open doorway of the shed, she starts to use the past tense again as if the mentioned hour has already passed, and the bomb has exploded. As she hides in the shed the dramatic events unfold in the present again. Of course the technical solutions to the 'confusion' or 'combination' of past and present are possible (using lights, for example). But the point the combination introduces is a new phenomenon in Bond's plays. In *After the Assassinations* (and in the next play *The War Plays*), the characters *know* they are actors. But here, there is a *possibility* of stressing the actor as actor. There is another possibility, however, which occurred to a lesser extent through other devices in some of Bond's plays: the depiction of character as *feeling* its theatrical presence. The playwright creates a suspended time as a means of underlining the theatricality of the scene.

This feeling of theatrical presence is not exclusive to Agustina. Other characters feel it, and other incidents are meant to emphasise this device. First, Ignacio's re-presentation of Manuel makes him a surrogate character. He is not himself, but a theatrical presence, and he is conscious of it. His personification, however, is not absolute because he remains within the limits of legalising Manuel's situation. His dialogue is not whole-heartedly committed to Manuel's character. He speaks *for* Manuel, not *as* Manuel. This method keeps Ignacio in and out of his role. At the moments he is out of his role, he 'lives' in a suspended time playing Manuel.<sup>44</sup>

A second example is the character's anticipation of his coming destiny, whether comic or tragic. That means he feels he is living in a borrowed, suspended, dramatic time. Nando's citation: 'In five minutes I shall be dead'(p. 36) contributes to the phenomenon of suspended time, for he eventually gets killed as he predicted. Another incident occurs in Tina's narration at the end of the trial scene of what would happen in the future:

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<sup>44</sup> The use of 'as if' to create simile is typical of Bond's inclination to over-explain the meaning, in the plays of the third period. There is scarcely a single page in *Human Cannon* without 'as as', 'as if', or 'like'. See, for this incident, Ignacio's talking for Manuel p. 9.

Tina: In December nineteen thirty eight Barcelona fell  
 Soon Madrid would fall  
 And on the first of April nineteen thirty-nine the Republic  
 would fall. (p. 13)

The prediction of what would happen in the future, though rare in the play, adds to the other elements mentioned in my discussion in underlining the theatricality of the play. But although *Human Cannon* shows the extent which Bond's theatricality has reached, it remains obvious that he is halfheartedly committed to creating full theatricality.

## V) "*The War Plays*": An Endpoint or a Resting Place?

If *Human Cannon* has taken Bond's theatricality to one of its conclusions, *The War Plays* takes it to another conclusion as it takes the theme of death, and the theatrical devices linked to it, to their edge. It also crystallizes the ideological argument he used for the plays of the third period. The devastating effects of capitalism are seen to be not only the reason for the dehumanising reality he depicts in many plays but also behind the nuclear destruction of the world. The embodiment of the irrationality of modern capitalism, militarism, appears in two of the three plays which constitute the trilogy: they show the process of killing a child by the military agents in order to save the civilian community from the famine of post-nuclear wars. They are also the plays which show what other protagonists have yearned for: Paradise, at last, is created and *all* unnecessary or militant members are excluded, one way or the other. Although Bond spent the years 1985-90 without producing any plays, he started publishing again. One reason for this stoppage might be that the trilogy has delivered many answers, and taken many themes and devices to their extreme.

The trilogy suffers from Bond's desire to be as sharp and decisive as drama can be, he depicts a utopia of a world destroyed by a nuclear disaster. The depiction of a utopia, of an assumed reality, might explain two phenomena which have been hovering in the other plays for a long time and culminated in the trilogy:

### 1) The Use of Similes:

The history of Bond's employment of verbal imagery progresses from one image in *Saved* to a convoy of unending images in *The War Plays*. That underlines the fact that the verbal supplanted the visual. I

footnoted the essential role the verbal imagery plays in *Summer* and *Human Cannon*, but more than any other play, the verbal similes in the Trilogy have become the dominant means of communication with the reader or the viewer. There are few pages in it that do not have four or five 'likes', 'as ifs', or 'as ases'. The tendency to use similes betrays the dramatist's impotence and inability to use any other dramatic or performing means to depict the events. The increasing reliance on similes indicates not only Bond's desperate attempt to communicate the unfamiliar, but, more fundamentally, to imagine the unknowable and make it understandable. The subject of of the trilogy might indicate Bond's characteristic courage in facing and showing what others avoid, but it sadly indicates that his cerebral treatment of plays like *After the Assassinations*, *Derek*, and *Human Cannon* has arrived at a blind alley. This increasing intellectualism appears in the fact that he has used prepositions and conjunctions of similitude frequently in them.

## 2) The Dramatic Referentiality:

The question of being 'true' as a description of dramatic events which Bond raised in *Early Morning* when he started his spatio-temporal distancing also reached its inevitable conclusion in *The War Plays*. The question of truthfulness explains a degree of doubt that the audience would believe the events. A similar comment is repeated at the beginning of *After the Assassinations* within the fictional world when the actor-father expresses his knowledge that the events are 'assumed', but also are true. *The War Plays* repeats the same question of referentiality: at the end of Scene One of *Red Black and Ignorant*, the Monster reflects (the audience's) doubts about the authenticity of the events and tries to assure (them) of its likelihood in a tone similar to Bond's preface to *Early Morning*.<sup>45</sup> The reason for raising the question of the trilogy's weak referentiality is, again, Bond's attempt to convince the spectator of the unknowable, of the possibility that the events might happen.

Bond's political didacticism resulted in his turning more and more towards simplification on the level of themes, schematisation on the level of structure, flattening on the level of characterisation, jamming his plays with external theatrical devices. His yearning for a final solution to man's suffering has rested on

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<sup>45</sup> *The War Plays* shares with *Early Morning* some surrealist features: people exist in heaven that is clearly hell, the events of *The War Plays* happen to dead people or a born-dead Monster in unmistakable hell. The heaven of *Early Morning* is metaphorical, the earth of *The War Plays* is realistic, but in both some miracles happen, a person ascends or a bundle speaks.

unashamedly melodramatic depiction which culminates also in the trilogy. For example the penultimate destruction of the world is the result of good luck (p. 49). More melodramatic accidents were in store.<sup>46</sup> As this paradise fails for unfortunate reasons, another appears at the end of the trilogy: a 'New Community' that is built on abandoning ownership altogether by characters who are conscious that they 'don't 'ave to blow themselves up' (P: III, p. 55). In a very long passage, Bond introduces, or re-introduces, his revolutionary viewpoint, a passage that illustrates how simplifying Bond has become in treating fundamental issues about history, culture, democracy, ownership, and science.<sup>47</sup> This political didacticism, however, has resulted in Bond's emphasis on the theatrical devices in order to make his argument work. One result of that is that the trilogy constitutes the squaring of these devices which makes the trilogy one of Bond's most theatrical plays. The unity of the trilogy does not prohibit producing them individually, every part of them is autonomous. But to evaluate the many fragmented devices, I will group them in four:

#### A) Performance Devices:

At three different occasions, Bond uses the performance of the play to illustrate the play's theatricality: a) when the Monster participates in *I. ii as a baby*. b) His child is made up of newspaper papier mâché. c) The bundle speaks in *Great Peace*, Scene Fourteen as if it were a child while the audience knows that it is an empty bundle. These three performance devices abandon the realistic or naturalistic purpose of creating illusion.

#### B) Epistemology as a Theatrical Device:

##### i) Madness:

Madness is a persisting source of creating theatricality in Bond's plays as a creation of a parallel reality to that of the other characters. It normally leads, on many occasions, to epistemological awareness of the character's own position in the world. In *The War Plays*, this characterisation find its difficulties

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<sup>46</sup> See *The Tin Can People*, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>47</sup> This political argument of building a new society on the ruins of the old has been falsified by the Left and questioned by Bond's supporters. Nightingale, for example, has questioned the underpinning justifications of the New Community. See his 'Human Bondage', *New Statesman*, 110 (2 August 1985), p. 31. Cawood stated Ernest Mandel's argument (*New Left Review*, 141, September-October 1983), which illustrates the absurdity of such notions of "socialism out of the ruins", pointing out that a nuclear war would destroy the considerable human and technical resources necessary for building a classless society. See Cawood, *op. cit.*, p. 13. Bond has revised the last scene of the trilogy for the American publication.

because, as is discussed elsewhere in this thesis, it is difficult to situate the Woman's madness. She suddenly uncovers her continuous awareness of the bundle being as such, although she gives many signs that she considered it as her baby. However, the device still creates a sense of suspended time in which the Woman lives, for a considerable period in III.

ii) Ghosts and Second Death:

The trilogy is a depiction of hypothetical characters in hypothetical situations. And although drama is hypothetical, *The War Plays*, is hypothetical in the sense that it supposes the temporality of the unknowable future after the destruction of the world. This fact makes all the characters of the trilogy ghosts. But if we refer to the fact that Bond wanted to reflect the modern 'present' society in a metaphor of nuclear destruction, and that the society of the trilogy is our society, it remains clear that all the characters are *corpora*. The characters themselves feel their identities as such. Thus, ghosts and *corpora* are employed to illustrate Bond's characteristic question of the moral responsibility of the individual. They are the people who did not participate in the prevention of the destruction, who did not resist the dehumanising circumstances. These dehumanising circumstances are literalised in the learning process of the Monster. When they participate in achieving the humanist change, care for each other and build the New Community, their characteristics as ghosts stop.

C) Vocal Theatricality:

Besides the song which is employed in the first part of the trilogy, Bond uses other vocal theatrical effects as detached/detaching entities. *The Tin Can People* depends on the vocal theatricality of the chorus which could be sung by an individual as a way of story-telling. The use of the present tense in these choruses, however, functions in advocating the dramatist's viewpoint on the way 'modern' society lives and behaves. Even when the choruses use the past tense to describe the past events, they link that past to the present way of running society. The past tense is meant to show the inescapable consequences of what happens in the present as the playwright comprehends it.

The First Chorus (p. 33) describes what happened after the explosions, as the characters experienced it, and the horror of the explosion has made the chorus unable to articulate, almost deformed. The Second

Chorus (p. 40) adds nothing to the First or to the dramatic action because the First Chorus has already described the horror of what happened after the explosions, and the dramatic action leaves no opportunity to remind us of or involve us in that horrendous atmosphere. Even the information about how this group of people was saved is conveyed in the previous scene. The Third Chorus (p. 46) is Bond's analysis of the situation: Bond uses histrionic words to indicate the confusion between the world of appearance and that of reality. The Chorus punctuates Scenes One and Two of Section Two. It shows the origins of people's madness that led to the final destruction. The 'oracles and newspapers and radios', the chorus informs us, lied about the people's lives. While the world of appearance asked people to practise virtue and live peacefully, the 'real' world forced them to behave inhumanely to each other. The media have turned people into robots that perform one action: press with the button-finger, and therefore they were unable to discover the madness that penetrated their world. The bomb uncovered that madness and the fallacy of the foundations of that life. The Fourth Chorus picks up the thread to ask why the bombs were dropped. The injustice in that world, the Chorus informs us, was justified by corrupting words, beliefs, opinions, faiths, and passions. The moral of this chorus is that the way of life produces its inevitable consequences, and that injustice produces H Bombs.

*Great Peace* has neither songs nor choruses, and instead depends on sharing in telling the moments of horror of the explosion by the soldiers as they experienced it. The sharing, however, adds a dimension of objectivity as it makes it a collective experience everyone passed, or was going to pass, through. The soldiers depict different parts of the picture of the holocaust. Every soldier completes a different part of the same story to indicate the communal nature of the experience. At times, more than one soldier repeats a sentence or a word which makes their account choric and uplifts the personal experience to the 'public and general' level. The account functions also in keeping the audience hooked in the horror of the experience.

#### D) Linguistic Theatricality:

Language is the prime vehicle with which Bond depicts the theatricality of the trilogy.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> The trilogy is exhausting in reading, let alone watching it in one go. As a trilogy, it ran for five and half hours in the Royal Shakespeare Company's production. Jim Hiley confirmed that the plays need 'editing down'. See his 'Confronting the Issue', *Listener*, 114 (8 August 1985), p. 38; Nicholas de Jongh on *Red Black and Ignorant* when it was performed stated that it was 'enacted in a speech form which sounds as if inadequately translated from a foreign tongue'. See his 'Thoughtcrimes', *Guardian*, 28 January 1984, p. 10; Cawood explained that Bond had the tendency of making personal declarations, a problem which was further compounded by Bond's tendency to 'produce long and arch speeches'. See his, *op.*

## i) Narrating the assumed:

A great part of the trilogy is about the past, our present.<sup>49</sup> But another part is about that assumed, utopian future. It is, to use Bond's favourite simile, as if he has been there and seen what 'happens'. In this latter sense, the events of the trilogy occur in the 'here and now' of 'there and then' of the future. This double temporality is achieved by language. The first part being of a life that did not, but could, take place necessitated making the play 'progress' in the imagined past or as a flash-back to the present. The exposure of the happenings as theatre happenings has occurred only in *After the Assassinations*; it is here also a place of depicting scenes of a life that could have been, a pure theatre event for the purpose of illustration. The other two parts parallel the moments before and after the explosion and also proceed with the 'here and now' of the future temporality.

The first half shows the way the born-dead Monster could have been raised in capitalist society. The scenes are an attempt to literalise the learning process society could have given to the Monster, from Bond's point of view. The process moves from 'Learning' to 'Love' to 'Eating' to 'Selling' to 'Work' to 'The Army'. But the process is questionable when the Monster behaves humanely to the Woman in VI, while the claimed purpose of the depiction is to illustrate the way society dehumanises the individual. The result is that either the learning process the Monster has undergone is humanizing, or that this process is dehumanising and therefore this action of kindness is, dramatically speaking, in real trouble. It does not help announcing at the beginning of the scene that 'no one can willingly give up the name of humanity'.

## ii) Scene titles:

The Brechtian device of scene titles has at last become one of Bond's theatrical devices in *The War Plays*. It is, however, a linguistic pronunciation of the titles by the characters-actors in Part One. The function is both to indicate the subject of the scene, and also to underline the schematic structure of the drama *and* the schematic orientation of the Monster. That is, in my opinion, the only reason why Bond uses the linguistic scene titling. Faced with scenes which are about non-existent life, which are supported by the preliminary pronunciation of scene titles and which are designed to take the Monster into the journey of his

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*cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>49</sup> Cawood observes that the scenes of part one stress the connection between our present way of life and post-nuclear existence, 'showing the origins of the Monster to lie essentially in our time'. See his *op. cit.*, p. 47.

supposed orientation of learning process that resulted in his 'being' dead, the audience are left in no doubt that the characters are playing roles in a theatre on a self-conscious stage.

iii) The pronunciation of stage directions:

Although the trilogy deals with the past in many parts, language is used for two different, though linked, purposes: description of what happens on the stage and pronunciation of the stage direction, sometimes in one situation. Description of what happens, as well as the physical movement of the character on the stage as a parallel to the stage directions, is to be found in Part One, Scene Six:

Son: I look anxiously along the empty street afraid someone will come  
 I see my father at the corner  
 He comes towards me  
*The Monster comes on* (p. 12)

This describing function leaves no doubt of the theatricality of the event.<sup>50</sup> All the scenes of Part One have titles which are pronounced by the characters at the beginning.

iv) Dramatisation and self-dramatisation:

The linguistic devices of dramatisation and self-dramatisation are to be found in the moments of dialogue between the characters and themselves, describing and dramatising their inner feelings and conflicting emotions (P: III, pp. 16-17). And dialogues with absent figures (The Son with Mrs Alison (P: I, p. 17).

**Summary:**

1) As soon as the protagonist of the last play of the second phase of Bond's plays, *The Bundle*, reaches specific tactics with which to overthrow the dehumanising systems, Bond comes back to examine modern issues in temporally modern plays. These very tactics might be the motivations behind Bond's investigation of the aftermath of the present in plays which are temporally in the future (*After the Assassinations*, *The War Plays*). The latter play, in my opinion, constitutes a resting place for Bond because of the scale of the play, the chart Bond draws for the future, and the universal devastation he emphasized. These facts, among others, show the extent of Bond's desperation to warn his audience of the inhuman power that controls their lives at the moment. He has defined the real terrorist as the man who controls the economy

<sup>50</sup> See another examples in the Woman's: 'I look at the face of the man who helped me...' (p. 13).



and explicitly exploits the workers, and exposed as false the widespread idea that the terrorist is the one who carries a gun. This purpose has necessitated the use of histrionic words in *The Worlds* to show the hidden reality of the appealing 'liberal' system.

2) In the same play, Bond introduced the theatrical device of dramatising the analysis and not the story in order to integrate his own political analysis. The public soliloquy is the name Bond gave to some parts of dramatising his analysis, the play-within-the-play also embodies this dramatisation of the analysis. Other artistic and non-artistic features appear in the play as the means of introducing Bond's views of the dramatic situation. The blocks' titles are one of those means, although they are used to guide the interpretation only. This aim of introducing his views of the dramatic situation have remained with Bond until now. In *Summer* for example, which he directed, one of his poems was read parallel to the dramatic action as a way of showing the situation in the light of another point of view, creating theatricality. Other directorial means were used by Bond to expose the theatricality of the play, and not to hide the fact that the audience were in a theatre. In *Restoration*, the song became Bond's means not only of carrying his views, but to balance the play's 'relative' historicity. As he is not decisive about the temporality of the play, the result is that the dramatic action is exemplary, for illustration. In this case, the song was of primary importance to the extent that the dramatic action seemed an interruption of the songs. In *Restoration* also Bond depends on the theatricality of examining a familiar play style and a type of character.

3) Bond appeared as more and more inclined towards the sheer theatricality that hides nothing from the audience: the trial scene appears theatrical with characters deciding who plays whom, though within the confines of the stage. Poetry is used for narration and for the trial's verdict. The public soliloquy also appears in some instances as the characters deliberately analyse the situation without Bond giving much concern about the continuity of the action (*Human Cannon*); scene titles and stage directions are read by the actors, some of which are utopian characters, as the events take place after the nuclear explosion of the world. They are *corpora* in the fullest sense (*Red Black and Ignorant*). He also uses the song or chorus as detaching/detached entities, as he does with the autonomous choruses from *After the Assassinations*, one of which Bond re-published in his introductory material for the Swan *Restoration*.

4) Bond's method of acting, a subject he dealt with previously, indicates the extent of theatricality he

wants for these plays. The period of 1978-9 witnessed a peak of Bond's attempts to define the method of acting suitable for his plays. Although this method disapproved of Brecht's, it also rejected the Method acting and remained within the boundaries of the Epic. Bond repudiated the Brechtian complete separation between the actor and the character, and the complete unification of them by the Method. He, though he did not introduce a complete definition, wanted the actor to be his storyteller in a degree of separation and a degree of unification. He demanded the externalisation of the character's hidden emotions to appear on the actor's body, hands, feet, face, and head. In doing so, the actor becomes free to interpret the situation, to relate the character to the social context, to explain and analyse our condition.

5) But the plays of this period showed the extent to which Bond has travelled in imposing his own views on the plays, in manipulating the dramatic for the purpose of illustration. The new dramatic devices have been a reflection of his search for ways to integrate the political analysis of the dramatic situation. The structure of his plays has reached a peak in showing the extent of his schematisation, and many characters of this period, regardless of their origins or degree of education or intelligence, appear as capable of analysing and articulating their views of the problems of the modern world, views which are almost Bond's. They might be workers, but they are capable of articulating the relationship between capitalism, class-struggle, and materialism. This extent of allocating the characters a consciousness which they might not naturally have, and the increasing links between the dramatist and his characters, and the utopian world he chose to depict, among other things, have necessitated the growing number of similes and linguistic images in the plays, especially *The War Play*.

## Conclusion

Theatricality is defined in the thesis as the political consciousness of seeing reality as changing and changeable, a consciousness which is embodied in dramatic devices, methods of characterisation, and dramatic structure which make the fabrics of the stage as stage and the actors as actors apparent to the spectators. The theatrical device is the one which is used as a vehicle to advocate political consciousness, the theatrical characterisation is the one which uses the characters as figures for demonstration although he/she remains as individual. But the theatrical dramatist considers the character as a social creature who is governed by social law, and whose experiences are not personally, but rather socially, significant. The theatrical structure means the stress on keeping the audience aware of the social in the drama.

Bond's theatrical devices, the subject of Part One, create a potential possibility of communication between the worlds of stage and the auditorium: as he progressed in his career, further emphasis on the stage as a stage was recognised. The histrionic words and actions, the theme of Chapter One, though they are infrequent in his plays, create theatricality by putting the world of theatre itself in the focus of the dramatic experience, reminding the audience that they are in the theatre. This phenomenon reaches its fullest theatricality in the later plays because it is linked to other theatrical devices. The words 'tragedy' and 'tragic' have special ring about them and therefore they are used by the authority figures. The tragic knowledge of the German philosopher Karl Jaspers proved to be a sufficient model for understanding both the implications of these words and even Bond's opinion on the need for tragedy because it is essentially human. We, Bond claims, need tragedy as something to use in our life, that gives us sympathy and understanding of other people. For Jaspers and Bond, man must transcend tragedy, a transcendence which must lead to moral maturity.

This is also the case with the courtroom scenes in Bond's plays, the theme of Chapter Two. Across his career, such scenes move towards being theatrical, as detached/detaching entities. Within the diegesis, the trials remain an effective instrument to expose the 'justice' or 'injustice' of a dehumanising reality in the plays. But even when the trials are diegetic, they contain other theatrical elements such as songs or the histrionic words and actions. The trial in *Human Cannon* is clearly a detaching/detached device which

contains other theatrical elements such as role-playing as characters play other characters within the trial, a phenomenon which is paralleled by the stress on the story-tellers/actors which is employed between and within scenes in the play. The verdict is written in verse, contrary to the scene's prose dialogue, a contrast which heightens the 'artificiality' of the poetry as the dramatist's. The trial, especially the roles of Agustina, who defends the accused Priest, and Nando, who prosecutes him, has the potential for *direct address* to the audience. The didactic character of the trial also emphasises the thesis element in the play.

Chapter Three discusses three connected theatrical devices: playfulness, divided focus of aggro-effects, and simultaneous action. The core of theatre, imitation, is employed by Bond as a playfulness in sequences of horseplay, especially in his first plays. A variant on horseplay is also used in plays like *Bingo*, *The Woman*, and *The Bundle*, but they end differently. The playful atmosphere leads to or is accompanied by a violent action which Bond called aggro-effect. Bond wanted the aggro-effects to keep the audience emotionally involved with the action on the stage. But these effects are potential alienation effects, especially immediately after their occurrence. Some of these effects occur simultaneously alongside another action which occupies another part of the stage. The spectator's attention is divided, and the emotional effect is reduced in its capacity to involve the audience emotionally. This divided focus of attention has developed into another theatrical device called simultaneous actions, actions which are not likely to converge in reality. The simultaneity keeps the audience alert to the happenings on both areas of the stage, and thus creates a sense of detachment. Apart from its remarkable economy of expression, the device of simultaneous actions illustrates Bond's preoccupation with exploiting the elements of time and space in the theatre to create theatricality. The device means breaking away from the concept of time meaningful in a successive cause-and-effect relationship: it creates theatricality because it destroys linear time by juxtaposing two (or more) locales. Bond risked the inaudibility of his words in *We Come to the River*, in which he employed three fixed stages throughout the opera. At some points in it, the fixed stages proved unnecessary.

The play-with-the-play, the topic of Chapter Four, could underdistance as well as overdistance the spectator. In Bond's employment of the device, it is obvious that the device is often used to expose the characters participating in the inner play: some characters exploit the power of the stage, as is the case with

*The Sea*. The exposure appears in thematic correspondence between the inner and the outer plays as well as the juxtapositional structure of the two. The playlet in *The Fool* remains also, like that in *The Sea*, within the confines of the stage despite the theatricality of the inserted device. The playlet in *The Fool* works as establishing the atmosphere of playfulness which is disintegrated by the dehumanising reality. In *The Woman*, the device illuminates the reality of the Greeks as their leader 'reviews' the situation to his men after the death of Priam in the form of a play-with-a-play. It is with *The Bundle* and *The Worlds* that Bond uses the device as a method of dramatising the situation from the point of view of the politically conscious characters. Many elements underline the theatricality of the play-within-the-play as a detached/detaching device. In *The Worlds*, the inner dramatisation embodies Bond's theatrical device of the 'public soliloquy', a device which is designed to present characters objectively.

The progress of Bond's employment of dramatic lyrics and songs, the issue of Chapter Five, shows that it reached its fullest Brechtian alienation capability in plays such as *Stone*, *The Swing*, *Restoration*, *Human Cannon*, *After the Assassinations*, and *The War Plays*. In these plays, the song is a detached/detaching device which expresses Bond's own analysis and interpretation of the dramatic situation. The employment of the song as an alienation effect has coincided with Bond's belief in the necessity of using violence to overthrow repressive political regimes, and he used it to advocate his creed in a direct address to the audience. Bond's early lyrics are mostly diegetic: they are expressions of emotions, characters, and dramatic situations. But even in this employment, Bond infuses fresh and strange content into what seems to be a traditional hymn (*The Pope's Wedding*), or switches the tack of the famous lullaby into savage and brutal words about the symbol of innocence, the baby (*Saved*), or shows the disharmony in society by a failure to echo the Anglican hymn (*The Sea*).

Employing the theatrical device of the histrionic words and actions partly breaks the illusion of the stage because they are not subjected to inter-communication between the stage and the auditorium, except in his later plays such as *After the Assassinations*, and *Red Black and Ignorant* wherein the natures of the events as theatre events and the players as actors are apparent. The trial scenes in Bond's plays often occur within the presented, fictional world, with the exception of *Human Cannon*. The trial's function remains as the device which illustrates the relationship between the antagonists within the drama. Playfulness also

occurs and remains within the presented world, and the authentic violent actions are doubtful in keeping the audience emotionally involved. And in any case, they lose their impact in time. Bond stopped using the aggro-effect in its physical sense in the plays of the second and the third periods. Bond has successfully used the theatrical device of simultaneous actions only in *Bingo* and *The Fool*. He stopped using the device because his plays were increasingly inclined towards being overtly theatrical in other respects. The use of the play-within-the-play and the song as alienation effects occurred in the plays of the second and third periods.

All of these indications illustrate the way Bond's plays moved towards open theatricality. The points of correspondence between Brecht and Bond have been used throughout the thesis to emphasise Bond's movement towards the Brechtian theatricality, especially in the plays of the second period. Starting from *The Worlds*, Bond tried to introduce 'new' theatrical devices by building on Shakespearean and Brechtian theatrical devices in order to explain reality. He introduced the 'public soliloquy', the 'texture', and the dramatisation of the political analysis instead of the story. Another way of theatricalising his plays was to put the plays in the future. He tried the complete cancellation of the aesthetic distance by allowing the actors to inter-communicate with and address the audience in *After the Assassinations*, or by pronouncing the scene titles in *Red Black and Ignorant*. His latest tag for the theatricality of his plays is the 'Theatre Event', meaning the production of situations on the stage as mere theatre events.

The schematic nature of Bond's characterisation, the functional employment of figures for the purpose of demonstration, constitutes another theatrical aspect of Bond's drama. The artist, for example, is an archetype of the 'bad', uncommitted one who fails to deliver enlightenment to the young figures in society. The artist figure is an extension of the schematic relationship between father figures and young protagonists in the plays. He represents fatherhood in its extreme, the cultural father figure which found embodiment in a figure like Shakespeare without his art. The artist is important because he carries the weight of the 'message', and therefore he is an essential part of the fabrics of the thesis element in plays like *The Fool* or *The Bundle*. The figure is theatrical because Bond avoids writing about the psychology of the figure, his creation or creativity. On the contrary, Bond avoids the romantic image of the artist and introduces a commoner (Wang in *The Bundle*) who commits himself to changing the dehumanising reality of the artist/father

figure Basho. Wang, a young figure, succeeds in understanding that 'coming down' to reality with visions of change is the only function the artist can have in society. Wang searches for the outcasts and interacts with them, organises them, and succeeds in building his utopia. The play that followed *The Bundle*, *The Worlds*, witnesses Bond's theory of the function of the artist in society. 'A Poem', which is used throughout Part One, Chapter One, is a guide with which to judge the activity of all artists in Bond's plays: the poem concludes that visions are as necessary as the involvement in the struggle to change society.

Bond uses a method of characterisation of oppositional figures, the subject of Chapter Two. The most famous of these figures is the Siamese twins. This double figure, or split character, is designated to show the interior opposition in a character between being socially moralised and being an instinctively good person in search of an alternative social or political system. Bond's employment of the image, like the expressionists' and Brecht's, pays little attention to illusion because the figure is incredible in a fourth-wall theatre style. The chapter on the oppositional configuration investigates the doubling in plays prior and subsequent to *Early Morning*, but it is in opposition to Bond's 'pairing' in these plays. The pairing, in my opinion, happens in the young figures only and therefore the pairing in *The Pope's Wedding* (between Billy and Scopey), *Saved* (Len and Fred), *Narrow Road* (Shogo and Kiro), *Lear* (Lear, in some stage of his life and the Gravedigger's Boy and his Ghost), and *The Sea* (Willy and Billy) are studied to emphasise the theatricality of the method, especially when the element of the relationship of these pairs to the father figure is considered. The phenomenon of the split character in this generational division ends with *The Sea*. In the plays of the second and third periods, the variant of this method of characterisation appears in *Bingo* (the father figures of Shakespeare and the Old Man), *The Fool* (Clare and Darkie), and in *Derek* (Derek 1 and Derek 2).

A third theatrical type of character is the ghost and its variant of *corpora*, or the metaphorically dead character, this is the motif of Chapter Three. The use of ghosts discourages the audience from questioning the probability or plausibility of the characters: these are functional figures to illustrate abstract notions, ghosts representing life-in-death and *corpora* representing death-in-life existence. The comparison between Wedekind's *Spring Awakening* and Bond's *Early Morning* proved Wedekind's influence on Bond. The Ghost in *Lear* represents Bond's fullest exploration of the figure, making it function to embody a 'dying'

political principle and to lead Lear's steps into compassion. The *corpora* are the figures who abandon their moral commitment to better reality. These begin with the metaphorically dead father figure Harry at the end of *Saved*. The characterisation persisted in *Early Morning*, but the strongest manifestation of the *corpora* occurs in *Bingo* when Shakespeare feels his death because he abandoned his responsibility as an artist and as a father figure. The effects of Shakespeare's detachment from social struggle and his alliance with the owning classes appear on his most beloved creature, Judith. In *The Bundle*, Bond effectively employs this sort of characterisation by showing the effects of the Ferryman's humane choice of saving Wang. The Ferryman destroys his Wife's health because of his choice. The metaphorically dead Wife persuades the Ferryman to participate in Wang's revolution, and Wang is almost physically reborn because of the Wife's moral commitment. Bond used this idea of *corpora* for all the characters of the plays which are temporally in the future: *After the Assassinations* and *The War Plays*.

The Possessed Figure, the topic of Chapter Four, is the fourth sort of character Bond employs as a matter of demonstration in his plays. The presence of a mad character means the introduction of another reality and the juxtaposition of this reality with the other characters' creates two temporalities. As a result of this juxtaposition a third 'theatrical' reality and time are created. Another dimension to the theatricality of the figure, a dimension which Bond uses as a principal way of characterisation, is the emphasis on the sociopolitical causes of madness. Thus, Bond adds his 'comment' on the reasons for insanity and creates detachment. The possessed figures are schematically accompanied by ghosts throughout their journey in madness. Madness, as often as not, is an expression both of being affected by the processes of social conditioning and also of being in search for an alternative: the possessed in the plays are in the passageway to freedom. The mad individuals in the plays are cases that reflect the lack of humane cultures to allow the individual to practice his/her imagination. As part of the schematic characterisation, many of Bond's possessed figures reach moments of recognition and re-assessment, and it is these moments which connect the phenomenon of madness to the phenomenon of learning in the plays. The recognition, in some cases, means the dismissal and death of the ghost figure in the plays.

Part Three of the thesis examines the overall structure of the plays in chronological order of writing as far as possible: Chapter One from *The Pope's Wedding* to *The Sea*, Chapter Two from *Bingo* to *The Bun-*



dle, and Chapter Three from *The Worlds* to *The War Plays*. The main features of Bond's dramatic strategies are as follows:

1) Bond's structure is panoramic, a method which facilitates tracking many happenings in society. The temporality of the first two plays is modern after which Bond started to temporally and/or geographically distance his plays up to and including *The Bundle*. Some theatrical devices in the plays of the third period function in distancing the dramatic action which is temporally in the present or in the future.

2) Bond's scenes are purposefully structured to show the case in society in the first half of the play. In the second half they follow a typical member of that society (often a young protagonist) to his end.

3) The method of structure facilitates examining social conventions, some of which are portrayed as madness or cause madness, until the protagonist succeeds or fails to come to terms with his society. The structure thus embodies the learning process of the protagonist, the learning process which underlines the element of thesis in the plays. Some of these structures embody the element of journey as in *Early Morning* and especially in *Stone*. Williams's *Camino Real* has the same physicality as *Early Morning*, and the comparison between the two plays proved some points of correspondence and the employment of similar dramatic devices.

4) Bond requires a bare stage for the enactment of his plays to discourage creating the illusion of verisimilitude. The bare stage facilitates emphasising or adding other theatrical elements, a facility which the productions of some of the plays explored. But despite that, Bond, with a few exceptions, requires his stage to be conscious and not self-conscious.

5) The plays of the second period are written to illustrate specific points, e.g. the relationship between war and freedom. These points are stressed by the subtitles of the plays. These plays are investigations in history for a viable political system, an investigation which concludes with refusal of the past but the need to understand it in order to understand the present. The element of learning process is the primary concern of these plays, and the thesis element is obvious in them.

6) With *The Bundle*, the end of the search in history is echoed in the end of some theatrical devices such as historicity, artist figures, aggro-effects in the physical sense, horseplay sequence, and the learning process which arrives at the inescapability of using violence.

7) More theatrical devices are employed in the plays of the third period. One such device is the 'public soliloquy' which allows the character to express greater consciousness than he/she really has in the present. This is a way of adding objectivity in characterisation which enables Bond to burden the character with political consciousness. Bond also gives the scenes titles but only as a guide for interpretation. In the last play of the second period, and in the first of the third, he concentrates on dramatising the analysis of the dramatic events instead of the story.

8) The plays of the third period exploit the song to function as a detached/detaching device to carry Bond's own political interpretation of and comment on the dramatic action. Some plays are also temporally in the future, a method of characterisation which allows Bond the freedom to manipulate the consciousness of the character as it could be rather than as it should be. The temporality of the future allows Bond to analyse the story (of the present) and present its consequences in the future.

9) The theatricality of Bond's plays becomes greater in the plays of the third period. In some plays he exposes the actor as actor, in others the actors pronounce scene titles. The old diegetic devices, such as songs and trials, became theatrical. The required method of acting for a Bond play is to be the play's storyteller: the actor must externalise the hidden emotions in order to be able to introduce the situation and its interpretation.

10) Many devices which were employed to keep the audience emotionally involved, such as aggro-effects, bear the possibility of being alienation effects. They also risk the element of Illusion or Distance necessary for any work of art. Some aggro-effects are accompanied by balancing elements to create detachment, a method which divides the stage inviting comparison and not involvement. Bond uses the emotionally disturbing characterisation of madness, but madness also is a potentially theatrical method. All of this proves that Bond's theatricality is partially created by these methods and devices and that he does not favour either complete detachment or whole involvement.

11) *The War Plays* is one of Bond's most theatrical plays: it is a culmination of Bond's themes, devices, characterisation, and his increasing inclination towards theatricality. But it also shows the risks Bond takes to make obvious the political issues in theatrical devices. A closer look at *The War Plays* in this respect is necessary:

Bond started his career with a genuine building on the Brechtian technique in *Saved*. But as soon as he was stunned by the reaction to the play, he turned to the external alienation of historicity in *Early Morning*. But the play also shows modern society. In 1968, Brecht was an outdated dramatist, but as Bond progressed, his theatrical technique and themes resembled Brecht's. And although in mid-course Bond was not satisfied with the Brechtian acting method, he was more inclined to consider it the base; he started talking with appreciation of Brecht and the need to continue experimenting with his incomplete epic theatre. By the beginning of the third period, Bond introduced political solutions to the dramatic problems, solutions which were embodied in new theatrical devices. Since then Bond has been busy finding methods to integrate his analysis, interpretation, and solution to the problems. The degree of Bond's intellectualism and the separation between his personal experience and the theme, temporality, and the action of *The War Plays* need no further comment: Bond wrote the trilogy from afar, and about a utopian solution to the causes of suffering and nuclear age. But the trilogy contains many theatrical devices and its structure embodies what Bond called 'Theatre Events'. Politics and theatricality go together, but what kind of politics?

'Bond seemed to me', Albert Hunt commented in 1975, 'a playwright who has been trapped by his own literary aspiration, and has lost touch with the society he is trying to explain'.<sup>1</sup> Hunt's reason was Evens's 'banalities' in *The Sea*: 'suffering is a universal language', etc. Reviewing *The War Plays*, Cawood expressed a similar opinion, that Bond 'has fallen victim to what he once warned others against; he has become "shut up in private fantasies, experiments in style, unrewarding obscurities"'.<sup>2</sup> As I am arguing, Bond came back from his historical research in the plays of the second period with political and intellectual commitment that affected the spontaneity, and ambiguity of the first plays. Bond, one can venture to say, opted out from his society in order to understand and explain it better, an opting out which explains the increasing theatricality of his plays. Historical research might have made it difficult for Bond to come back to the modern or the same society from which he opted out. Nightingale has explained the change in Bond. He has mentioned that Bond's humanity was systematically dehumanising Bond and he compared Bond to

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<sup>1</sup> 'A Writer's Theatre', *New Society*, 34 (11 December 1975), p. 607.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

Pol Pot, a comparison, Nightingale has continued, which might be only two or three plays ahead. He reminded Bond of Shaw's stance of supporting Stalin. One feels Nightingale's agony underneath his stream of questions directed towards Bond to answer, especially his support of using violence, and I think Nightingale has been one of the best critics who understood and appreciated Bond.<sup>3</sup> And on the 1985 revival of *The Pope's Wedding* and *Saved* by the Royal Court Theatre, Nightingale lamented Bond's loss of spontaneity. He was eager that Bond would find some way to 'make a *Saved* as clear as *Worlds* -- and a *Worlds* as true as a *Saved*'.<sup>4</sup>

By *The War Plays*, Nightingale was still praising Bond's exceptional sensitivity to suffering combined with exceptional horror at its causes, but Nightingale accused Bond of being more of a pontificating windbag than ever before. Bond's political commitment has made him refuse not only the past but also the present to the extent that one feels Bond would not much mind the semi-final destruction of the world if it were to lead to the establishment of his humane society. This is the outcome of Bond's intellectualism which is embodied in theatrical devices and methods. In my interview with Bond, he explained that he moved towards the bold in introducing the political analysis in theatrical devices because he believed that the theatrical devices are capable of embodying the political. His numerous attempts at finding ways of integrating the political analysis of the dramatic situation signify the importance he gives to the connection between these two elements and the relationship between his drama and its environment. The extent of this appears in Bond's latest tag, his Theatre Event or TE.

The Theatre Event is not, like many other Bondian attempts, a device or a method of structure or characterisation: Theatre Event is the action of the play introduced as a theatre event, no illusion involved. The strategy of TEs, according to Bond, 'is: we select incidents in the story and open these incidents out in such a way that they can't be captured by the story but must be examined for themselves in relation to the story: then "reality" may impose its interpretation on the story'.<sup>5</sup> TEs are 'not imposed on moments of the story -- but drawn from it, they are already naturally there once anyone undertakes to tell any story. So then

<sup>3</sup> See 'Four-square behind the Sputum', *op. cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> 'Show or Tell', *New Statesman*, 109 (4 January 1985), p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Personal correspondence, 3 February 1990. TEs signify Bond's appreciation of theatre, especially Shakespeare's. For him '*Hamlet's* verse is a TE (William Shakespeare's blank verse is always TE): it is immensely artificial but is needed by W.S. to tell the plain truth'. From a letter to John Clemo, 9 March 1990. A photocopy of that letter was kindly lent to me by Bond.

the emotional-psychological line of the story -- which absolutely has its own character -- isn't destroyed: it appears to be cast quite rigidly, but it's exactly this rigidity which gives it its flexibility'.<sup>6</sup>

Theatre Event, to Bond, is also the way of expressing the character -- but perhaps in a heightened way; it does not abandon subjectivity of character but stresses the objective in it. TEs should also be used to act and direct plays, however ancient: then we can see what they meant for their creators and how they can have meaning for us. He considered some of his own earlier devices TEs -- for example, changing scenery before the audience and allowing dead actors to stand and walk off. These were done to assure the audience of the theatrical nature of the stage.<sup>7</sup> *The War Plays* was written completely as TEs, and he added in an unpublished introduction to the plays, that the characters of *Red Black and Ignorant* and *Great Peace* are Theatre-characters. In this introduction, Bond further illustrates the TEs and how they are linked to politics: 'Instead of the story being a quasi-biblical, or mythical, or psychoanalytical whole, or an absurd, ineluctable riddle, the story should be told as occasions for interpretation'.<sup>8</sup> The function of the stage, as Bond defines it, 'is not to produce psychology but to show how psychology is produced. To do this, he continues, we need to use stage events as T-events and not pretend they are "real"'.<sup>9</sup>

Bond links this method of 'use' to the epic theatre: the scenes of a play should aim towards showing where the meaning of the dramatic events lies. Playing the scene should aim at political clarification of the meaning of the story. But scenes and events should not be distorted in order to 'use' them. Still, the 'use' of the T-events is not simply an alienation effect that frees people to choose. It indicates how they should choose: T-events do not show the audience how to behave in the staged circumstances but in any circumstances. Further explanation of the TEs is introduced by Bond: he defines them as parts of the meta-text which are designed to carry the political interpretation:

A meta-text is designed to be broken down into smaller "theatre events" (TEs). The actor does not leave his character to play the meta-text but create his character in playing it. In this way

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Unpublished introduction to *The War Plays*; a photocopy was kindly lent to me by Bond. One way of practising the TE, aiming at intervening in reality in order to get at truths social institutions obscure or corrupt, Bond has written in the same introduction, 'is to recount several versions of the same event -- the versions of the judge, juror, witness, etc'. In addition to this Brechtian method, Bond added: 'another way is to show events which are separate but which have certain crucial features in common. This is the method of *The War Plays*'.

<sup>9</sup> *Personal correspondence, 3 February 1990.*

the individual is generalised ... TEs are means of analytical understanding. They make clear the cause and consequence of events, collecting the diffuseness of real life into illustration and demonstration.<sup>10</sup>

The meta-text creates theatricality, but it is a theatricality which has its reality. Theatricality, to Bond, is ruthless in creating its form of reality perhaps because it creates the political in the drama, a creation which this thesis has tried to clarify in studying Bond's dramatic devices, methods of characterisation, and dramatic structure. In my interview with Bond, he expressed his opinion that the most theatrical is the most political. This point explains Bond's understanding of the theatricality of his plays and the importance he attributes to it in carrying his political analysis of society and its problems. 'The art and skill of theatre', Bond wrote to me, 'should lie in exploiting TEs. This brings it very close to what I think you mean by theatricality'.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Bond, 'Notes on Post-Modernism', in *Two Post-Modern Plays*, Methuen Drama, 1990, p. 243.

<sup>11</sup> Personal letter from Bond, 9 March 1990.

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Primary Sources are arranged in chronological order. Within Primary Sources, Dramatic Works are arranged according to their first performance, followed by the production(s) mentioned and the edition(s) used throughout the thesis. Secondary Sources are arranged in alphabetical order. Items preceded by \*\* are unpublished.

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