Individual(s), Individualism, and the World of Chaos and Order: A Study of Tom Stoppard's Works

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Abstract

"Individual, Individualism, and the World of Chaos and Order" — Taewoo Kim

Stoppard's works can be neatly grouped into a few distinctive stages which reflect the process and development not only of his own interests and concerns but also of his establishing himself as a leading dramatist in the English theatre scene.

In the early works, typically in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead and Lord Malquist and Mr Moon, Stoppard presents modern man's desperate efforts to find meanings in his lives and the world, on the one hand, and the agonizing process of an aspiring writer trying to establish his own identity as a creative writer, on the other. In spite of their instinctive and intuitive belief in the order of the world, however, the early protagonists are unredeemably entrapped in chaos, and end up in ignominious deaths.

After the spectacular success of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, the tone of Stoppard's works changed in a significant, if almost imperceptible, way. The frustration and helplessness which permeate his earlier works almost disappeared. More significantly, Stoppard deliberately tried to expound and defend his own ideas on such fundamental issues as morality and art in Jumpers and Travesties, respectively, and the ideas have basically remained the same throughout his whole career.

After Travesties there took place more explicit changes in style and subject in Stoppard's works which marked Stoppard's so-called political theatre. The works of this period can best be explained as *occasional* and *transitional*, and, it is through these political works that Stoppard's individualist ethic found its most clear-cut expression.

The Real Thing signals a new, maturer era of Stoppardian theatre. Stoppard almost for the first time furnished the stage with fully fleshed-out characters not only in terms of the protagonist but down to every and each minor character. Ideas are not simply presented as preconceived, but unfold themselves to the final conclusion through dramatic actions and conflicts. Love, a rare theme in the Stoppardian theatre until then, finally takes centre stage as "the real thing", and is presented in such a way that only through love is a real union possible between the people (individuals).

Arcadia is the closest to Stoppard's dramatic ideal of "the perfect marriage between ideas and high comedy". In it, besides all the other important themes and techniques, the question of chaos versus order reappears as a central theme to the ultimate resolution that disorder and chaos are vital parts of the world and that a deeper, more complex order prevails in spite of all the apparent diversities of the world. This vision of the world as the union of Chaos and Order, it seems, is the final conclusion Stoppard has reached after some three decades of his vigorous career, though what will lead him where beyond this stage remains to be seen.

Acknowledgements

My deepest thanks first go to my supervisor, Dr Richard Faulkes, without whose guidance and encouragement this thesis would have been impossible. I also cherish memories of visits with Dr Richard Foulkes to various theatre performances in Oxford, Northampton, Manchester and elsewhere. On such occasions, I was invariably impressed, not only by his academic interest in theatre, but, more importantly, his deep love for it, which spoke for themselves and were invaluable lessons for me.

I cannot express enough my gratitude to my parents. Throughout their lives, they have supported me body and soul, and even in their extreme old age, they have had to put up with the sorry state of being separated from their eldest son. To return to them even a fraction of their love for me, and compensate them for their sacrifices as best as I can, is all I can hope for, and I am determined to accomplish.

I am also deeply grateful to my wife, JungHye Han, for her unwavering love and support for me during all these testing years, and, to my daughter, JuHee Kim, who made me realize that I am as dependent on her as she is on me.

My special thanks are, no doubt, due to my dear brother, TaeHa Kim, and my sister-in-law, YoungOk Lee. Besides their direct help and ever-abiding support, I am particularly grateful for the trouble they have taken to look after our parents.

Finally, I want to express my deep thanks for all those who have always wished me well and helped me to carry on with my work in one way or another.

Contents

I. Introduction

'Individual' is undoubtedly a basic unit of a society; without the one, the other cannot exist, or vice versa. Even so, however, different attitudes to the question, 'how vital is the interrelationship or interdependence of the two?', produce fundamentally different visions of human destiny in the world. From a Marxist point of view, for example, an individual *per se* cannot exist because an individual's existence is significant only within the interpenetrating relationship of an individual with a given society which is fundamentally social and historical.[1] At the other end of the spectrum lies the absolutized individual whose priority to society is self-evident, as is implied in, for example, Locke's insistence on the natural, individual rights.[2] The emphasis laid on individualism in this thesis reflects not only the fact that Stoppard firmly endorses the latter point of view,[3] but also that this basic individualist vision penetrates Stoppard's works.

A proper appreciation of Stoppard's individualism, which is one of the major aims of this thesis, is important in many ways. First, it leads to a wider, deeper understanding of Stoppard's works. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead,[4] for example, has been largely regarded as a portrayal of the disoriented modern man in the absurd world.

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[1] D.F.B. Tucker, for example, explains Marx's position as follows: "Marx believes, [. . .], that what we are is for the most part dependent on the kind of society we find ourselves in, and it is this that consequently determines at least some of our needs. What people require of government and of others varies, therefore, according to the period of history and the kind of society in which they are living." D.F.B. Tucker, Marxism and Individualism (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p.22. John Robinson argues, "The individual and society are *opposites*. [. . .] At the same time the two opposites mutually interpenetrate. [. . .] Society is the sum total of historically developed social relationships together with their means and media. It is thus neither a projection of any innate thought, values and motives of individuals. Nor is it something standing outside individuals to which individuals have to 'adjust' or 'adapt'." John Robinson, The Individual and Society: a Marxist Approach to Human Psychology (London: Index Academic Books, 1993), p.73.

[2] "[. . .] he [Locke] interpreted natural law as a claim to innate, indefeasible rights inherent in each individual. Of such rights that of private property is the typical case. Consequently his theory was by implication as egoistic as that of Hobbes. Both government and society exist to preserve the individual's rights, and the indefeasibility of such rights is a limitation on the authority of both." George H. Sabine, revised by Thomas Landon Thorson, A History of Political Theory (Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press, 1973), p.485. "[. . .] the 'classical' Western political philosophers (among whom one must count Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau) assumed that the individual person and his rights pre-existed any form of society." Colin Morris, The Discovery of the Individual: 1050-1200, (London: SPCK, 1972), pp.2-3.

[3] Stoppard expresses his individualist bias most explicitly in his political plays. For a detailed argument, see the Professional Foul section (pp.142-175) of this thesis.

[4] The first performance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead was given as an Edinburgh Festival Fringe production in 1966. The first professional production was at the Old Vic Theatre in London in 1967.

However, from the point of view this thesis has taken, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead is not set in an existential, absurd void. Absurd as it may seem, the world of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead is a normal world, and its origin is deeply rooted in Stoppard's own individualist vision. Moreover, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Stoppard's play do their utmost in their own way to establish their own identity as independent individuals.

Second, Stoppard's individualism is closely related to his absolutism, because it leads to the idea of the individual as a manifestation of unchanging, fundamental human nature. As an inevitable result, Stoppard's characters are usually either stereotypes fixated on certain abstract ideas or proponents of values which Stoppard regards as absolute. Lord Malquist in Lord Malquist and Mr Moon[5] and the Player in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead are examples at hand, as they are constructed around the single idea of 'style' and 'play-acting', respectively. In Travesties,[6] Tristan Tzara and Lenin are presented as embodying Dadaist self-indulgence and crude Marxist doctrine without due consideration being given to the historical contexts in which Dadaism and Marxist-Leninism should be placed. On the other hand, George in Jumpers[7] tries to derive the absolute moral standard from the Christian God whom he personally does not believe in, and Stoppard reveals his vision of an artist through James Joyce in Travesties "as the magician put among men to gratify-capriciously-their urge for immortality"[8]. Henry, the playwright protagonist in The Real Thing, confirms the absolute status of language as "innocent, neutral, precise", and his version of real love is based upon the "personal, final, uncompromised"[9] knowledge of each other, which by his very definition is absolute and unchangeable.

Third, Stoppard's individualist vision is inseparably intertwined with his vision of the world, which concerns a second major aim of this thesis as it describes the Stoppardian world as "the world of chaos and order". The absolutization of the individual suggests

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[5] Lord Malquist and Mr Moon is Stoppard's only major novel, so far. The novel was first published by Anthony Blond in London in 1966.

[6] The first performance of Travesties took place at the Aldwych Theatre, London, in 1974.

[7] Jumpers was first staged at the National Theatre in London in 1972.

[8] Tom Stoppard, Travesties (London: Faber and Faber, 1975; reprinted with corrections, 1993), p.41. In the second act of the play, Carr supports Joyce's view by arguing that "in some way it [art] gratifies a hunger that is common to princes and peasants." Ibid., p.50.

[9] Tom Stoppard, The Real Thing (London: Faber and Faber, 1988), p.54 and p.63, respectively. The Real Thing opened on 16 November 1982 at the Strand Theatre, London. The first printed edition was released in 1982, and subsequently underwent revisions when it was reprinted in 1983 and later in 1986.

that the world which the individuals inhabit is viewed in isolation from its historical contexts. Hence, Stoppard does not concern himself with the question through what course the world has come to be what it is. Nor does it concern him much what the world should be like in the future. Stoppard's preoccupation is with the world of 'the here and now', and when he deals with a past world together with the present world in his so-called 'mirror structure', he does so largely to the effect that the world has not gone under any serious transformation, and that core values and human relationships remain more or less unchanged. In this respect, the world of Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is the world of the here and now. It is largely made up of superficial appearances and random happenings. The early Stoppardian heroes are inevitably overwhelmed by them. However, their world is not an absurd world, not only because they are strongly motivated to find meanings in it. The quasi-absurdity of their world is also tellingly in conflict with the intricate formal arrangement of the very works they are in. The ironical implication is that, while form and content are largely at odds with each other in both Lord Malquist and Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, the elaborate formal structures support the belief in order held by Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

In order to organize into an artistic form the world which "is about to burst at the seams" because of the sheer volume and numbers of things and people,[10] Stoppard employs various formal devices such as recurrent images, allusions, analogies, vigorous structuring of fragmented episodes and borrowing plots, and so forth. More significantly, Stoppard uses 'binary opposition' not only for his major themes, but also for a structuring device. So, a series of binary oppositions, such as style versus substance, appearance versus reality, chance versus inevitability, life versus death, chaos versus order, etc., are repeatedly deployed in his novel and dramas so that the central thrust of his literary inventions can be maintained. In this respect, 'chaos and order' in this thesis not just represents the Stoppardian world. It also concerns itself with the very process of artistic practice, because to put the world into an artistic form is to bring order to chaos. Besides, it stands for the opposite pairs themselves.

[10] Tom Stoppard, Lord Malquist and Mr Moon (London: Anthony Blond, 1966; paperback edition, Faber and Faber, 1992), p.18.

In Jumpers, for example, the main argument is conducted along the contest between the jumpers' scientific, mechanistic order and George's claim for vital mysteries which cannot be reasoned away. Hence, in a conversed way, the interaction of chaos and order is maintained. In Travesties, Dadaist chaos and Marxist order are rendered inadequate in favour of Joyce's skilfully organized, evolutionary art. In The Real Thing, the binary opposition of life versus illusion is abundantly in evidence, but in this thesis, more attention is given to the tension between the overall development of the plot of Henry's education in love and his absolute idea of love. They form the two poles which are described as 'dynamic' and 'static' in the relevant chapter. In Arcadia,[11] chaos and order occupies a dominant theme. Between the conflict of Newtonian order and entropic chaos, Chaos Theory cuts in to reveal the vision that the present world is the inevitable result of the interaction of chaos and order, as one of the main characters memorably puts, "The unpredictable and the predetermined unfold together to make everything the way it is."[12]

The final aim of this thesis, which is closely related to the first two, is to put Stoppard's works into a coherent perspective with detailed analyses of his major works up to Arcadia. So far, not a small amount of literary criticism on Stoppard has accumulated. However, attempts to criticize Stoppard's works with a penetrating theme have been comparatively rare. Richard Corballis, as early as in 1984, published a book on Stoppard titled Stoppard: The Mystery and the Clockwork. In the book, Richard Corballis understands Stoppard's works in terms of the mystery versus clockwork opposition, which has been inspirational for this thesis. Inevitably, however, his work does not incorporate Stoppard's later works in its consideration, and sometimes a strict application of mystery versus clockwork scheme produces forced interpretations. Neil Sammells views Stoppard's works from a strict formalist point of view. As a result, his book, Tom Stoppard: The Artist as Critic (1988), is outstanding in its consistency, and has made an invaluable contribution to understanding the formal aspects of Stoppard's works. The very consistency, however, results in leaving out other aspects which cannot be approved of by a strict formalist. Katherine Kelly also

[11] Arcadia opened at the Lyttelton Theatre, Royal National Theatre, in 1993.
[12] Tom Stoppard, Arcadia (London: Faber and Faber, 1993), p.47.

adopts a formalist point of view in reviewing Stoppard's works, but not so strictly as Neil Sammells. Besides providing many reasonable insights into the Stoppardian theatre, her work, Tom Stoppard and the Craft of Comedy: Medium and Genre at work (1991), is also unique in that a considerable part in the beginning of the book is dedicated to a study of Stoppard's early career as a theatre reviewer. The main argument of Paul Delaney's Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays (1990), is that Stoppard is firm in his moral belief, which Paul Delaney himself seems to share, and that Stoppard expresses it without ambiguity. The book rises above many conflicting interpretations on such works as Jumpers and Travesties, to deliver its own unequivocal judgements.

On the other hand, a majority of critical books on Stoppard give overall accounts of Stoppard's works, without binding themselves to a particular theme. Tim Brassell's Tom Stoppard: An Assessment (1985), one of the earliest of this kind, is outstanding in extensive and detailed study which covers almost all of Stoppard's works from the earliest to Night and Day.[13] Michael Billington's Stoppard: The Playwright (1987), not only provides many insightful comments, but is particularly interesting as the author places Stoppard in a context with other contemporary British playwrights. Michael Billington's contribution is also valuable in that he, together with Kenneth Tynan,[14] shows a distinctively progressive ideological outlook.

Needless to say, this thesis is immensely indebted to all the previous critical works. However, it is also distinctive in several respects. First, this thesis interprets Stoppard's works in terms of his fundamental vision of man and the world, that is, individualism and the world of interacting, conflicting forces represented by chaos and order. This is a novel approach, particularly considering the fact that so far, no critic has capitalized on the significance of Stoppard's individualism. As for the vision of chaos and order, the inclusion of Arcadia in this thesis is vitally important;[15] it is through Arcadia, this

[13] Night and Day was first performed at the Phoenix Theatre in 1978.

[14] Kenneth Tynan's influential article, "Withdrawing with Style from the Chaos", was published as a profile of Tom Stoppard in New Yorker (19 December, 1971, pp.41-111). Later it was reprinted in his Show People: Profiles in Entertainment (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980; London: Virgin Books, 1981).

[15] Arcadia is a relatively recent work by Tom Stoppard. Hence, no previous critical book on Tom Stoppard deals with Arcadia.

thesis argues, that Stoppard's works come into a circular whole, and that the vision of chaos and order makes consistent sense.

Second, while absorbing the legacy of previous Stoppard criticism, this thesis tries to balance conflicting arguments. The counter-argument against the formalist interpretation in the Travesties section, for example, is not intended to deny the importance of formal aspects of Stoppard's work, but to balance it with due consideration for content analysis.

Finally, this thesis divides Stoppard's works into several distinctive stages. The objective, however, is not to highlight distinction in each stage. A strict division is neither possible nor helpful. Rather, the scheme is intended to show Stoppard's dramatic development in a more organized way, on the one hand, and, paradoxically, to underscore its continuity, on the other. The division of the first stage (till Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead) from the second (Jumpers and Travesties) is quite deliberate, and needs some explanation. The impact of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead was such that it immediately established itself as a modern classic, and fostered a whole variety of criticism.[16] It also in a sense set the way for Stoppard criticism. As a result, many critics argued that Stoppard did not side with any particular position or view while writing a drama. This thesis challenges this view by arguing that Stoppard began to assert his own ideas in both Jumpers and Travesties. What was largely understood to be 'existential angst' in Lord Malquist and Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead is closely bound up with a personal agony of a would-be writer. Mr Moon is a thinly-veiled writer figure who sees the world as the object of an artistic organization. On Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Stoppard commented, "One of the reasons that the play turned out to work so well, I think, is that the predicament of the characters coincides with the predicament of the

[16] Stoppard's controversial comment that "the idea is the end-product of the play" (Tom Stoppard, "Something to Declare," Sunday Times, 25 February 1968, p.47) partly resulted from the diverse responses Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead had created: "That used to be something I said with complete sincerity because after I had written Rosencrantz and Guildenstern [*sic*] I encountered over the next few years all kinds of interpretations of the events of the play, and it seemed to me that the play had somehow created all these ideas in the mind of the watcher and so were in that sense the end-product of a play about two Elizabethan courtiers trapped by the action of Hamlet." In the same interview, Stoppard said that his comment "stopped being applicable round about time I started writing Jumpers". David Gollob and David Roper, "Trad Tom Pops In," Gambit, 10, No.37 (1981), p.10.

playwright."[17] Albert in Albert's Bridge[18] tries to maintain a productive distance to the world; his failure in this forces him to be yo-yoing up and down the bridge. In this respect, the three works just mentioned properly belong to the 'meta-literature', which Jumpers and Travesties are not. In them, Stoppard deals with more topical, though fundamental, subjects of morality and art.

With its extremely topical nature, the stage of Stoppard's political theatre is clearly distinctive. However, this thesis argues that the difference is a matter of degree rather than a fundamental change, and that, rather paradoxically, Stoppard's individualist ethic finds its most clear-cut expression in his political plays.

The final stage is from the The Real Thing on. Love, a rare theme in Stoppard's works so far, is the main subject of The Real Thing. This has a serious implication; though love itself is an abstract idea, it inevitably involves a physical human relationship. In this respect, it is small wonder that Stoppard's increasing experiments with the realistic theatre began to bear a fruitful result with The Real Thing. Stoppard, almost for the first time, furnished the stage with a work which has a recognizable, convincing plot and fully fleshed-out characters. Even so, however, Stoppard's stock-in-trade devices of play-within-the-play and literary allusions are duly in place and at work. Even such a perceptive critic as Hersh Zeifman views The Real Thing as a series of "ambushes" which only lay bare the paradox of illusion and life.[19] However, what distinguishes The Real Thing from Stoppard's earlier comedies is the dynamic aspect which is materialized in the process of Henry's education in love. In addition to that, the play ends in a positive note as Henry and Annie confirm their renewed love for each other. This is what is termed as "reconciliation" in this thesis, and it is interpreted as a preparation for the final resolution of the conflict of chaos and order. Arcadia is a landmark work, being closest to Stoppard's earliest professed ideal of the perfect marriage of ideas and high comedy.[20] It incorporates into itself almost all the dramatic themes and tactics Stoppard has practised so far. Most important of all is the

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[17] Interview on Thames Television (28 September 1976). Quoted from Tim Brassell, (London: Macmillan, 1985), p.62.

[18] Albert Bridge was on radio in 1967.

[19] See Hersh Zeifman, "Comedy of Ambush: Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing," Modern Drama, 26, (1983), pp.139-49.

[20] "What I try to do, is to end up by contriving the perfect marriage between the play of ideas and farce or perhaps even high comedy." "Ambushes for the Audience: Towards a High Comedy of Ideas," Theatre Quarterly, 4, No. 14 (1974), p.7.

reappearance of the earliest question of chaos versus order as a central theme, to the final resolution that disorder and chaos are vital parts of the world and that a deeper, more complex order prevails in spite of all the apparent diversities. This vision demonstrates how far is the world of Arcadia from that of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, where Guildenstern complains of the absolute separation of "the fortuitous and the ordained",[21] but it also confirms the remarkable consistency of Stoppard's dramatic interest and development.

[21] "It related the fortuitous and the ordained into a reassuring union which we recognized as nature." Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (London: Faber and Faber, 1967; paperback edition, 1968), p.14. Guildenstern is saying this, because he is puzzled at the extremely strange phenomenon of consecutive heads in the beginning of the play.

II. Individual(s) Entrapped in the Chaos

A. Lord Malquist and Mr Moon

In 1966, Lord Malquist and Mr Moon,[22] the only novel so far by Tom Stoppard, was published in the same week as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead was first staged at the Edinburgh Fringe. Stoppard, rather surprisingly, was more ambitious over the novel than the play, as he told Janet Watts that "there was no doubt whatsoever that the novel would make my reputation, and the play would be of little consequence either way".[23] Quite contrary to his expectation, the novel went and the play stayed.[24] The novel did not attract much attention either from the public or from the critics. It was only after his fame was firmly established with the play, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, that some critics paid attention to the novel. Still, the very fact that criticisms of the novel were scanty and sporadic may serve as a kind of judgement on it. It is largely agreed, however, among those critics who contributed to the criticism of the novel, that Lord Malquist is an impressive creation not only in its own right, but also "as a precursor of subsequent dramatic triumphs".[25] There were even a few critics who were rather enthusiastic. Jill Levenson called the novel "a *tour de force* of absurdist fiction",[26] and Thomas Whitaker argued, "It is more finely wrought if less ambitious than John Fowles's The Magus, has a sharper wit and a more polished style than Thomas Pynchon's second novel, The Crying of Lot 49, and is intellectually as impressive as John Hawkes's fourth novel, Second Skin."[27] The importance of Lord Malquist particularly as a platform from which to look into Stoppard's drama works is

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[22] Reduced to Lord Malquist hereafter.

[23] Janet Watts, "Tom Stoppard," The Guardian, 21 March 1973, p.12.

[24] "'The novel came and went,' says Mr. Stoppard. 'The play came and stayed.'" John Dodd, "Success Is the Only Unusual Thing about Mr. Stoppard," The Sun, 13 April 1967, p.3.

[25] Tim Brassell, Tom Stoppard: An Assessment (London: Macmillan, 1985), p.23. Lord Malquist also marks the culmination point of Stoppard's efforts until then, as is pointed out by Anthony Jenkins: "Stylistically, the novel represents the culmination of six years' exploration and experiment; thematically, it contains all the ideas from the previous plays and short stories." Anthony Jenkins, The Theatre of Tom Stoppard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.28.

[26] Jill Levenson, "Views From a Revolving Door: Tom Stoppard's Canon to Date," Queen's Quarterly, 78 (1971), p.439.

[27] Thomas R. Whitaker, Tom Stoppard (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1983), p.27.

undeniable, but it is also true that the novel suffers from some apparent and serious drawbacks which make overt enthusiasm a matter of personal taste.

An important and unfortunate aspect of the criticisms of Lord Malquist is that they largely fail to present a comprehensive account of the novel in its entirety. Neil Sammells, for example, penetratingly carves out the formal and stylistic aspect of the novel in his detailed analysis, but in pushing his formalist tenets to the extreme, reduces the serious thematic concerns of the novel to just a matter of style. Hence, inspirational as his criticism is, a sense of nothingness is left behind, as one of his central arguments shows: "The point is clear: in Moon's looking-glass adventure one stereotype succeeds another and everything is cancelled out; his everyday experience is composed according to the same principle to which Stoppard adheres in opening his novel - as one style cancels another."[28] Taking into account Stoppard's own assertion that, "I am not a writer who doesn't care what things mean and doesn't care if there isn't any meaning,"[29] a purely formalistic approach like Sammells's will inevitably leave out some vital aspects of Stoppard's works. Moreover, taken as a whole, Stoppard's works show as much tendency to negate the formalistic aspects as they show them. Gabrielle Robinson, whose essays are also full of brilliant insights, interprets the novel and Stoppard's plays solely in terms of "leapfrog and ambush".[30] In doing so, she succeeds in demonstrating one of Stoppard's most basic tactics of dramatization, but fails, as I mentioned above, to present Stoppard's work, for example, Lord Malquist, as a whole. On the other hand, Tim Brassell stands at the other end of the spectrum. He pays due attention to the thematic concerns, while formal and stylistic aspects are rather neglected, though they are vital and integral parts of Lord Malquist.

Lord Malquist features a man named Mr Moon and his unusual, quite bizarre adventure on the day of "the funeral of the greatest man in the world", presumably Winston Churchill. His life is in a terrible mess. Though married for over six months,

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[28] Neil Sammells, Tom Stoppard: The Artist as Critic (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), p.52.

[29] Jon Bradshaw "Tom Stoppard, Nonstop: Word Games with a Hit Playwright." (New York Times, 10 January 1977) in Paul Delaney, TSIC, p.99.

[30] Refer to Gabrielle Robinson, "The Stereotype Betrayed: Tom Stoppard's Farce" in Farce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), and "Leapfrog and Ambush in Stoppard" in Forms of the Fantastic, ed. Jan Hokenson and Howard Pearce, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986).

his marriage has not yet been consummated. He is a pseudo historian and biographer, but has hardly begun his ambitious "The history of the world". The cheque written to him by Lord Malquist, his first customer since he set up so-called "Boswell Inc.", bounces back to him in due time. Most seriously, he suffers chronically from a schizophrenic obsession that the world is expanding uncontrollably. To him this is an obvious fact, but everyone else is carelessly unaware of it, simply "tak[ing] it all for granted". So he carries with himself a home-made bomb for possible use in the future, because, "It needs an explosion to shock people into calling a halt and catch up, stop and recognise, *realise*."(18)[31] Later the bomb indeed goes off at Trafalgar Square while the national anthem is being played. Instead of the explosion he expected, however, the bomb makes a big balloon on which is printed "a two-word message - familiar, unequivocal and obscene".(165) At the end of the novel, Mr Moon is ironically killed in his borrowed coach-and-two on his way home by a real bomb thrown by a Mr Kettle who mistakes him for Lord Malquist.

As a story, this is hardly plausible, held together by a loose backdrop of the funeral and some leitmotifs such as Mr Moon's obsession, "paper-roll hanging loose", Mr Moon's favourite murmur of "I don't care", and so forth. Some of the events narrated in the novel further strain credibility. The cowboys' shoot-outs, for example, defy any plausible explanation.[32] They are neither fantasy nor reality. The cowboys are not real cowboys, but stunt-men for Western Pork'n'Bean. Still, Marie, the French maid in Mr Moon's house, is killed with a bullet shot by one of the cowboys, and the corpse remains under a chesterfield unnoticed for a considerable time by any of the characters. Mr Moon's murder of the General is another highly unconvincing incident. Mr Moon, an extremely self-conscious man of inaction, kills, with a bottle "without a moment's hesitation",(88) the General who is engaged in taking obscene pictures of the dead

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[31] All the quotations are from, Tom Stoppard, Lord Malquist and Mr Moon (London: Faber and Faber, 1992).

[32] As Neil Sammells points out, they are the "lineal descendants of O'Brien's urban cowboys, Slug Willard and Shorty Andrews." Neil Sammells, p.43. In At Swim-Two-Birds, there is a highly comic scene which simulates a scene from Western film. It is in fact the author's playful and imaginative description of a bout in Dublin, as the author clearly states at the end of the cowboy scene that, "A number of men, stated to be labourers, were arraigned before Mr Lamphall in the District Court yesterday morning on charges of riotous assembly and malicious damage." Flann O'Brien, At Swim-Two-Birds (London: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 59. The novel was first published by Longmans Green in 1939.

Marie. After the killing, hence with two corpses on his living room carpet, Mr Moon begins to write and type a chronicle for his customer, Lord Malquist, worrying that "the results of his first day's work would not please the ninth earl".(107) After he finishes the chronicle, he urges the Risen Christ, another fantastic figure of the novel who has been sleeping on the same carpet, to remove the corpses. While the Risen Christ has gone out to bring his donkey in the house, Mr Moon is even seen to sit on the corpse of Marie which he has wrapped under the carpet. In the end, the Risen Christ leaves Mr Moon's house, sitting on the carpet with two corpses wrapped up in it which in turn is put upon the back of his donkey.

Near the end of the novel, all the characters happen to gather again at Trafalgar Square while the funeral procession is underway. There, the two cowboys kill each other in a duel before the Risen Christ appears at the end of the funeral procession which has been described in a very realistic detail: "Rather a long way behind them, but holding his own, came a white-robed figure on a donkey monstrously saddled with a carpet roll."(163) If this scene has any symbolic meaning at all, it will be that this sham preacher mocks the death of "the most important man in the world" which, according to Lord Malquist, marks "a change in the heroic posture - to that of the Stylist, the spectator as hero, the man of inaction who would not dare roll up his sleeves for fear of creasing the cuffs".(79) However, it is not clear whether this scene is invented with any particular intention. If so, it is very questionable whether the desired effect is achieved.

Lord Malquist also suffers from confusion caused by the narrator/author. On several occasions the narrator presents himself in the novel in a quite gratuitous way, and, as is correctly pointed out by Anthony Jenkins, the narrator/author not infrequently overlaps with Mr Moon,[33] causing inconsistencies in the character of Mr Moon. The following sequence between Mr Moon and Marie just after Mr Moon arrived home together with Lord Marquist is an apt example.

> 'You're so quiet and sweet.' Moon floundered in his compassion for her and found it inexpressible. 'You must be so lovely to look after -

[33] "Moon's role in the novel makes consistent sense, but his voice becomes difficult to place since it frequently overlaps with that of the omniscient narrator, and this presents a major problem." Anthony Jenkins, The Theatre of Tom Stoppard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) p.35.

please, you must tell me if there's anything I can—.' The banality of it infuriated him. He leaned forward and took the chain between his teeth. The corners of her mouth twitched minutely but did not quite smile. Moon let the chain go.

'Where are you from?' he asked gently. 'Paris?'

'M'sieur?'

'Where did you come from?'

'The agency they sent me.'

'Do you like it here?'

'Oui, merci bien, monsieur. Thank-you, very nice.'

'All I mean is,' Moon said, 'that I'm glad you're living in my house because you are so - simple.' *In a minute he would have to eat her.* (26-27, italics mine)[34]

As the comment emphasized at the end of the exchange shows, the narrator rather clumsily forces himself into the scene. The comment is neither a description nor Mr Moon's stream-of-consciousness. It is as if someone had been following their conversation and made a comment in spite of himself.[35]

Relatively insignificant as it is in terms of plot, the sequence quoted is very revealing and informative. First of all, the whole scene is hardly convincing as Mr Moon talks to Marie as if he saw Marie for the first time, though she has been at Mr Moon's for some time. Still, a keynote of Mr Moon's character is rather successfully conveyed in the scene as his clumsiness and inadequacy loom large in his prosaic conversation. Moreover, Mr Moon's response to his own words is particularly interesting. As is explained by the narrator, the moment he begins to talk, he is taken aback by the banality of his own words, and subsequently falls to a bizarre act of taking the chain between his teeth. His act, however, makes no effect on Marie at all, only amplifying

[34] All the italics in quotations without a note are from the original throughout the thesis.

[35] There are several instances of this sort of intervention. The following are a few examples: "'WHEN THE BATTLE [sic] becomes a farce the only position of dignity is above it,' said the ninth earl (*the battle raging farcically beneath him*)."(8) "Lord Malquist stood up and obligingly held a match to Jasper's cigarette which blazed up like a taper before dropping the ember and the rest of the tobacco onto the carpet *where it sent up tiny smoke signals of distress*."(35) "The mare [Slaughter's mare] had her head pulled high and back, almost vertical, but strolled on unnervingly serene, *as though contemplating a sonnet on the sky at dusk*."(35, Emphases in italics all mine)

the gap between his feeling and his inability to express it adequately. This kind of frustration prevails through Mr Moon's consciousness on all levels throughout the novel.[36]

Mr Moon's seemingly benign act of taking the door chain with his teeth would look absurd if presented cut from the context. In the scene, however, we can see that his act and his words are basically selfsame attempts to express his not-clearly-definable feeling. In a way, I suspect, this is how Stoppard intended all the absurdities of the novel. With the juxtaposition of the absurd and the commonplace, Stoppard deliberately poses questions such as "what is reality?" or "which is the more real of the commonplace and the absurd?" When Mr Moon is struck by the strangeness of Jane's make-up, he clearly states the question in focus.

> [. . .] he looked at her face and it was the same face, pink-lipped, green-eyed, only now quite unexceptional. Its familiarity ambushed him: lipstick and eye-shadow. Once more the commonplace had duped him into seeing absurdity, just as absurdity kept tricking him into accepting it as commonplace. (33-34)

Absurdity and common reality are just different sides of the same coin; a unicorn could be just "a horse with an arrow in its forehead" or vice versa.[37] So, near the end of the novel Mr Moon can make an excuse that, "For a moment he could believe that the recent excesses of his habitually implausible conduct were all part of the world's day-to-day occurrence, to be rationalised, made commonplace and forgotten."(182) Still, the whole argument does not sound particularly persuasive as his excesses include a murder case, to say the least.

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[36] To take a few examples: "He had tried to pin the image of an emotion against the wall but he did not have the words to transfix it."(23) "He held the vapours in his cupped hands but they would not crystalize. He did not have the words."(24) "He was trying to frame a question that would take in all the questions, and elicit an answer that would be all the answers, but it kept coming out so simple that he distrusted it."(30) "He typed badly, and when it came to framing sentences he found that he had no natural style and that it was all coming out stilted."(106)

[37] Refer to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, pp.16-17.

Mr Moon's rumination about his past while he is in conversation with Lady Malquist is quite startling for a man described just above and indeed throughout the novel, whose words are more likely to be cut short after "Do I dare?"

> *I used to walk through woods in summer with all the leaves in place, which was very nice, and in the autumn too, shushing through beds of leaves, but once I was lying on my back under a tree looking at a leaf and just as I was looking at it, it slipped off the tree, without a sound or any warning, it just came away and dropped down on me. Yellow. A chestnut leaf. I like things like that, catching the instant between the continuing things, because when you actually see a leaf come away like that then you know about summer and autumn, properly.* (138)

In his conversation with Lady Malquist, Mr Moon is generally seen as more verbally competent. It may be that he is on the verge of a life-time experience, that is, his sexual affair with Lady Malquist, the significance of which I will argue later. Even so, the narrative reveals a man of acute perception and almost poetic articulation, with which it is difficult to associate Mr Moon. What is achieved here is a sort of descriptive ideal in which the world is captured in a fleeting moment in such a solid and vivid image as "a chestnut leaf falling from a tree". It is not that Mr Moon aspires to this kind of ideal, but that he usually fails to deliver it which characterizes Mr Moon. On this account, one cannot help feeling that the highly accomplished style here is likely to have come from the narrator/author who is lurking behind Mr Moon. In Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead Guildenstern uses the same sequence with a slight alteration: "Autumnal - nothing to do with leaves. It is to do with a certain brownness at the edges of the day . . . Brown is creeping up on us, take my word for it . . . At such times, perhaps, coincidentally, the leaves might fall, somewhere, by repute. Yesterday was blue, like smoke."[38] As Guildenstern is about to embark on a journey to England, his remark fits in the dramatic context, successfully expressing his increasing awareness of his ultimate destiny. Mr Moon's rumination, however, remains rather an isolated occasion.

[38] Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, p.69.

A most apparent authorial intervention takes place when Mr Moon explicates his mental habit of "endless leapfrogging" to O'Hara, Lord Malquist's coachman.

> You see, when someone disagrees with you on a moral point you assume that he is one step behind in his thinking, and he assumes that he has gone one step ahead. But I take both parts, O'Hara, leapfrogging myself along the great moral issues, refuting myself and rebutting the refutation towards a truth that must be a compound of two opposite half-truths. (53)[39]

Interesting and informative as it is, Mr Moon's claim is hardly supported in the novel by *his* actions which will corroborate it. Instead, it serves as a meta-novelistic comment on Lord Malquist itself, where the leap-frogging happens most apparently between the two axes of Mr Moon and Lord Malquist, who represent the principle of *substance* and *style*, respectively. In this respect, Mr Moon here is rather inadvertently used as a mouthpiece for the author.

The author, of course, can speak with a character. Indeed, there would be no other way of inventing characters. To create an objective illusion of the highest order, however, the author should be hidden from view unless the author's presence is part of the scheme. The problem we encounter in Lord Malquist is that, as the presence of the author is so conspicuous, it causes contradiction in the character in question.

This practice of authorial intervention remains a major feature of Stoppardian theatre in general. In Jumpers and Travesties, for example, Stoppard is often seen to side with the protagonists, George and Carr, at crucial moments, to direct the sympathy of the

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[39] In an interview with Mel Gussow in 1972, Stoppard repeated, "I suddenly worked this out: I write plays because writing dialogue is the only respectable way of contradicting yourself. I'm the kind of person who embarks on an endless leapfrog down the great moral issues. I put a position, rebut it, refute the rebuttal, and rebut the refutation. Forever. Endlessly." Mel Gussow, Conversations with Stoppard (London: Nick Hern Books, 1995), p.3. Again, in an interview with the editors of Theatre Quarterly two years later, Stoppard said, "But I must make clear that, insofar as it's possible for me to look at my own work objectively at all, the element which I find most valuable is the one that other people are put off by—that is, that there is very often *no* single, clear statement in my plays. What there is, is a series of conflicting statements made by conflicting characters, and they tend to play a sort of infinite leap-frog. You know, an argument, a refutation, then a rebuttal of the refutation, then a counter-refutation, so that there is never any point in this intellectual leap-frog at which I feel *that* is the speech to stop it on, *that* is the last word." "Ambushes for the Audience: Towards a High Comedy of Ideas," Theatre Quarterly, 4, No. 14 (1974), 6-7.

audience. The final effect is that, while maintaining the stance of endless leapfrogging, in actuality, Stoppard makes quite clear statements about where he stands and what he supports.

Another problem with Lord Malquist can be attributed to what could be called Stoppard's distrust of self-revelation.[40] Tim Brassell comments, referring to the early three short stories by Stoppard, that "all of them present semi-autobiographical material in a curiously remote tone, as if the author is unusually anxious to detach himself from the implications of what is being said; this results in a striking and sometimes uneasy sense of tension in the writing, as if strong feelings were deliberately being reined back."[41] This comment, if unverifiable, is illuminating and equally true of Lord Malquist. According to the narrator, Mr Moon "sometimes wanted to be a Jew but had only the most superficial understanding of how to go about it".(28) Considering Stoppard's own turbulent childhood and his ethnic origin, this must be an expression of Stoppard's own bafflement, but in the context of the novel it is a quite gratuitous comment, only loosely connected with the theme of stereotype, because why Mr Moon wanted to be a Jew remains totally in the dark.

On another occasion, to his own question if he is "*a schizophrenic*", Mr Moon replies, "It's simply that my emotional bias towards the reactionary and my intellectual bias towards the radical do not survive each other, and are each interred by my aesthetic revulsion of their respective adherents . . ."(80) Though camouflaged under extremism, as "the reactionary" and "the radical" imply, this is a relatively straightforward statement which surely reflects Stoppard's own "emotional" and "intellectual" biases. It sheds a valuable light on understanding both Mr Moon's and Stoppard's mental habit of "subscribing to both parts". Still, the personal element melts into the rather axiomatic generalization without the benefit of immediacy.

As I have argued so far, Lord Malquist suffers from various drawbacks, but it is also obvious that some serious themes are knitted into the bizarre fabric of the novel. The

[40] In an interview with Giles Gordon, Stoppard said, "[. . .] in point of fact I am sensitive about self-revelation. I distrust it. I've written very little which could be said to be even remotely autobiographical and I've been subsequently somewhat embarrassed by what I have written." Giles Gordon, The Transatlantic Review, p.19.

vision of the deterministic universe (the question of inevitability and randomness) and the clashes between appearance and reality are those, among others, that are most noticeable. The novel is also dotted with some meta-novelistic (or meta-dramatic)[42] comments, and some observations of artistic properties are implicitly, but unmistakably, mentioned. If not in highly organized manner, all these themes are closely related to one another, and the meta-novelistic aspect is the most coherent and significant, as I will argue later. Still, some consideration of the other themes is no doubt necessary.

The reason is not clear why Mr Moon's thought is so much dominated by the endless cause-and-effect chain reaction. The most plausible explanation may be that Mr Moon basically views the world as the object to be incorporated into a work of art (in other words, to be described in his writing), and in his identification of the real world with the artistic world, he insists on the extreme causality as a fundamental requisite of art. This interpretation is all the more convincing, because *being arbitrary* is something which should be avoided at all costs in both Lord Malquist and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, and causality itself is regarded as "the meaning of order".[43] Unfortunately, however, the causalistic vision forms a vicious circle in Mr Moon's consciousness. The more Mr Moon tries to put the world and his present situation in order, the more confused he becomes in his reasoning. In one of his typical ruminations, Mr Moon attributes a possible collapse of a big power station even to "a toothache in the wrong man".

> [. . .] but it [the big power station] was a constant threat to his peace of mind for it sat by the river, monstrous and insatiable, consuming something - coke or coal or oil or something - consuming it in unimaginable quantities, and the whole thing was at the mercy of a million variables any of which might fail in some way - strikes, silicosis, storms at sea, a broken gauge, an Arabian coup d'etat, a drop in supply,

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[41] Tim Brassell, p.7.

[42] I am using this term simply to denote a novel which provides commentaries either on itself or artistic writings in general or the process of writing itself.

[43] "Wheels have been set in motion, and they have their own pace, to which we are . . . condemned. Each move is dictated by the previous one - that is the meaning of order. If we start being arbitrary it'll just be a shambles: at least, let us hope so." Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, p.43.

> a rise in demand, a derailment at Slough, a faux pas at a British Council cocktail party, a toothache in the wrong man at the wrong time - [. . .] (43)

As is clear here, what is highlighted is not the logic, but the inadequacy of Mr Moon's pseudo-logical thinking which borders on paranoia. There are too many variables (a million variables), as he admits, to reason clearly. In fact, though Mr Moon is not aware of it, this is a fairly accurate description of the well-known Butterfly Effect in the Chaos Theory which Stoppard will deal with squarely in Arcadia almost three decades later. At the moment, however, Mr Moon is unable to catch the glimpse of the redeeming order which emerges out of the chaos, and is left entrapped only in the chaos.

Not surprisingly, in Mr Moon's thinking, the past (history) is also dominated by chain-reaction causality. In the beginning, Mr Moon did not intend to write a history of the world, but tried "merely to examine his own history and the causes that determined it". In doing so, however, he experienced a vision which caused him to expand his project to cover the whole history of the world: "The rest of the world intruded itself in a cause-and-effect chain reaction that left him appalled at its endlessness; he experienced a vision of the billion connecting moments that lay behind and led to his simplest action, a vision of himself straightening his tie as the culminating act of a sequence that fled back into pre-history and began with the shift of a glacier."(68) In this overblown speech there is nothing concrete which will actually help Mr Moon to sort out his own existence. It is small wonder, therefore, that he has not yet even started writing his history book.

In my opinion, what Mr Moon tries to demonstrate is a sort of Joycean vision of the world. James Joyce presented a slice of the world in its entirety in his epic work of Ulysses; in it, the present is the logical conclusion of the past and is tightly controlled, in other words, put into order, by such structural devices as allusions, analogies, cross-references, and so on. In this scaled-down Ulysses of Lord Malquist, Mr Moon is caught at the intersecting point of the synchronic and diachronic worlds which are

closely and endlessly knitted together by their own logic, which, Mr Moon thinks, is denied to him.[44]

Though Mr Moon is left with chronic confusion, Stoppard endorses this causalistic vision not only through his efforts to organize the novel in an artistic form, linking every event with one another, but, more importantly, through Mr Moon's death itself. His death is predetermined by the author in the same way as Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. The only difference is that Mr Moon's death comes out rather surprisingly unlike Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's deaths. Mr Moon, however, is fundamentally the same character as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

The analogy between Lord Malquist and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead is extraordinary. They share similar themes, characters and even structure. For example, Mr Moon's fake bomb is Guildenstern's fake dagger with which he tries to kill the Player. Much to Guildenstern's consternation and humiliation, the Player stands back amid the applause of his company and even of Rosencrantz. In a similar way, the explosion of Mr Moon's bomb is applauded by a few "obscurely moved" people.(165) The symbolic meaning involved in both actions are virtually identical; they represent the last-ditch attempt to get out of the ominous plan, to get to grips with life itself. Both fail, and get killed in due time.

Several times Mr Moon summarizes his present situation in what could be a penetrating commentary on Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.

> Moon felt trapped in a complex of shifts - words spoken, overtures made, acts performed - that were not getting him anywhere. The initiative had been taken away from him and he was being edged towards panic - [. . .] (51)

This would be a briefest summary of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. Mr Moon, like the tragic pair, is heading for nowhere, and he has nothing to stop the

[44] The causalistic vision must also have something to do with Stoppard's own personal history and his searches for the true vocation. Born in Czechoslovakia and having ended up in England through Singapore and India, Stoppard must have wondered how and why all the past events were brought

momentum, because again, like the pair, he has no initiative, caught in the wheels of actions. At another time, Mr Moon compares himself to "a stranded actor denied the release of an exit because it would be purely arbitrary".(127) Shortly after Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have arrived in Elsinore, Rosencrantz asks Guildenstern to go back, but Guildenstern refuses, saying, "We can't afford anything quite so arbitrary."[45] Later, using the same expression, Guildenstern explains to Rosencrantz that "Each move is dictated by the previous one - that is the meaning of order. If we start being arbitrary it'll just be a shambles."[46] On this ground, Guildenstern ignores Rosencrantz's final plea to go back just before the voyage to England; Guildenstern is determined to know "If we'll ever come back."[47]

On the way with all the cuts and bruises to retrieve Lady Malquist's lost shoe, Mr Moon wonders if he is "the victim of a breathtaking conspiracy instituted at his birth, leading him from one planned encounter to another with the ultimate purpose of bringing into his possession a home-made bomb".(151) Similarly, frustrated Guildenstern bemoans aboard the ship to England that "we may seize the moment, toss it around while the moments pass, a short dash here, an exploration there, but we are brought round full circle to face again that single immutable fact - that we, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, bearing a letter from one king to another, are taking Hamlet to England."[48] Mr Moon may not be a victim of "a breathtaking conspiracy" or "a hoax," but, is inexorably heading for the final conclusion without "possibility or hope of explanation,"(151) exactly like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.[49]

Mr Moon's death is also foreshadowed by his reference to the five travellers who fell to their deaths from the bridge of San Luis Rey.

> *The point is that if five travellers on the road between Lima and Cuzco happen to be crossing the Bridge of San Luis Rey when it breaks, and if you want to discover whether we live and die by accident or design, and*

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together to result in his present situation; chance may be just the surface of the underlying logic of inevitability.

[45] Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, p.30.

[46] Ibid., p.43.

[47] Ibid., p.70.

[48] Ibid., p.74.

[49] Rosencrantz blurts out in Elsinore, "What a fine persecution - to be kept intrigued without ever quite being enlightened . . ."(32) Mr Moon is clearly in a no better situation.

> *if you decide therefore to inquire into the lives of those five travellers to find out why it happened to them rather than anyone else - then you must be prepared to go back to Babylon; because everything connects back, to the beginning of the history of the world.* (68-69)

Mr Moon's brooding is full of ominous foreboding in that Brother Juniper in the novel, The Bridge of San Luis Rey, is undertaking a similar subject to Mr Moon's, that is, to find a pattern in the five travellers' lives. By a surprising turn of events, however, Brother Juniper himself is condemned to death, and by his death he demonstrates that there is indeed such a kind of pattern, because his death shows how and why he is burned to death at the stake. By citing the deaths of the travellers, Mr Moon is unwittingly making a comment on his own destiny.

The most direct foreshadowing of Mr Moon's death is the story of an actor that Mr Moon relates to O'Hara. He tried to tell the story earlier, but was deterred by O'Hara's complete indifference.

> He [Mr Moon] pushed against the coach, rocking it. 'An actor . . . I haven't got myself placed yet, O'Hara,' he cried. 'I haven't got myself taped, you see. So I've got no direction, no momentum, and everything reaches me at slightly the wrong angle.' (54)

Beside the analogy between Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, what attracts out attention is that Mr Moon here is tacitly, but strongly, identified with the actor himself in the story Mr Moon is going to relate. Later, after the bomb explosion at Trafalgar Square, Mr Moon finally tells the story to O'Hara in front of Lord Malquist's house.

> 'I was going to tell you a story,' Moon remembered. 'A joke. Yes, well, there was this actor who met an old friend he hadn't seen for years, in a pub, you see, and to celebrate they started to drink double whiskies, [. . .], after an hour of this, the actor asked his friend if he liked the theatre and his friend said he did, so the actor said, Shay, hic, there's a fine play

> on jusht next door and I'd like to shee it meshelf - [. . .] So they bought two tickets for the gallery and after some delay the play began, and they sat watching it for a few minutes, and then the actor nudged his friend in the ribs and whispered, Keep your eyes shkinned, hic, because I come on in a minute . . .' (175)

This episode is an unmistakable parallel to the scene in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead where Rosencrantz and Guildenstern recognize two corpses in exactly the same costume as theirs at the end of the Player's dumbshow. Both episodes also touch upon the question of mistaken identity which is directed against self. Mr Moon once again unwittingly comments on his own destiny, making a joke out of it. At this moment, disguised officials on duty in front of Lord Malquist's house warn Mr Moon and O'Hara of an anarchist, saying, "Keep your eyes skinned, men." In no time, Mr Moon answers, "Because I come on in a minute." (176)

During the short stay at Lord Malquist's house before he indeed comes out, Mr Moon experiences the fatal disillusionment with Lady Malquist as he sees Lady Malquist with the Risen Christ in the same bed where he was with her several hours ago. His sexual encounter with Lady Malquist was the only real experience he had had. Just after it, Mr Moon felt that "he might after all get through life", exulted at the fact that he is at last "a man of experience".(145) The disillusionment is all the more bitter, because Mr Moon was initially attracted to Lady Malquist because of her pure compassion for the woman who had been knocked over by Lord Malquist's coach: "Moon looked at her and the real emotion on it shocked him. It seemed so long since he had been exposed to anything so real."(131) After the flop with the bomb, and with this fatal blow from Lady Malquist, Mr Moon is left with nothing to carry him through. In this context, Mr Moon's seemingly accidental death is not accidental in the end; it is only the logical conclusion.

The deceptive nature of the reality constitutes a major part of Mr Moon's problem. Early in the novel in his first long stream-of-consciousness, Mr Moon complains, "I don't know a single person who is completely honest, or even half honest, and they

don't know it because dishonesty is now a matter of degree, and sincerity is something to be marketed [. . .]."(23) The barren world of Lord Malquist is exactly constructed like that. Everything betrays what it seems to be, and human relationships are all dependent upon false premises and impressions. Lord Malquist was first drawn to Mr Moon's attention by his extremely handsome features and exquisite outfit. He is also a master conversationalist; Mr Moon writes in his chronicle that "it [his conversation with Lord Malquist] was a delightful experience and I congratulated myself on having made such a friend."(98) Under his sleek facade, however, lies his callousness to humane feelings and a total lack of seriousness, as is witnessed on several occasions throughout the novel. Jane, who has "got a block about it [sex]"(142), according to Mr Moon, imagines and presents herself as a heroine of a romantic novel, enjoying the masquerade with other men except Mr Moon. Marie, whom Mr Moon addresses with such expressions as "young, quiet, calm, sweet, simple", has been posing for the General for presumably obscene pictures without the knowledge of Mr Moon. The cowboys are real only in the sense that actors on a stage or in a film are supposed to be real, and the Risen Christ is a sham preacher who is always eager for food and quick sexual gratification. As for Lady Malquist, she is no less deceiving than her husband. Mr Moon turns out to be the ultimate victim of this confusing masquerade, as he is mistaken for Lord Malquist.[50]

It is not just people who betray their appearances. The luminous coins strewn on the street by Lord Malquist are actually chocolates wrapped up in tinsel. The nursery in Lord Malquist's is equipped with everything but a baby. Most significantly, Mr Moon's bomb, a solid object which is under Mr Moon's full control, is not a real bomb, but a toy. With the benefit of hindsight, it is almost pathetic of Mr Moon to have cherished the bomb for his last resort to give warning to the people.

Lord Malquist does give the impression that it is very much like the world itself in which Mr Moon happens to find himself. It is almost on the verge of bursting at the

[50] Actually, this happens several times. For example, Risen Christ and Fitch, secretary to Sir Mortimer, mistake Mr Moon for Lord Malquist.

seams as "the novel spins off on too many tangents".[51] Surprisingly, however, the novel emerges remarkably coherent as a sort of meta-novel.

The world depicted in Lord Malquist should be understood to be on two planes in a very similar way to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead; the world where Mr Moon lives and the world which Mr Moon tries to describe. In Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, this is easier to perceive as the real world of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern[52] and the play world of the Player turn round in close relation to each other. In Lord Malquist this is very difficult to detect as the focus is rather blurred.

Though disguised as an amateur historian, Mr Moon is fundamentally a writer-figure.[53] So, while he complains that the world is uncontrollably expanding, in fact he is making a confession of his inability to put the world into an artistic form. At one time Mr Moon states in a rather clear-cut way where the problem lies. When Lord Malquist declares his principle of style, Mr Moon immediately retorts by thinking "*I stand for substance*" before his position, in turn, is modified by the narrator.

> That wasn't true at all, he didn't even know what it meant. He stood for peace of mind. For tidiness. For control, direction, order; proportion, above all he stood for proportion. Quantities - volume and number - must be related to the constant of the human scale, proportionate. Quantities of power, of space and objects. He contracted his mind, trying to refine his subconscious from the abstract to the specific but there was a middle ground which he could not negotiate. (63)

On the surface it seems that Mr Moon's obsession is about the outside world, but it is also true that he is implicitly commenting on the principles of art: "control, direction, order, and above all, proportion". Undeniably, Lord Malquist and Mr Moon form the pair of form and content. However, Mr Moon, not to mention Stoppard himself, is aware of the fact that content alone will not make a work of art or indeed of history. Hence, the emphasis on content is immediately shifted to a rather innocuous concept of

[51] Anthony Jenkins, p.35.

[52] One of the reasons for the immense complexity of the play is that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern themselves are fictional characters originally created by Shakespeare.

"proportion", where the fusion of form and content is vaguely implied. Mr Moon's inability as a writer is further pointed out by the fact that he cannot negotiate "a middle ground". The middle ground is the real world where people live with all their uniqueness and diversities. It is where chaos and order, form and content, and the abstract and the specific are all mingled. Mr Moon tries in vain to separate the one from the other,[54] and that is the reason why he fails both as a man and as a writer.

Mr Moon's repetitive complaints about his inability to articulate properly reflects a fundamental fear a writer might feel at the prospect.

> He had tried to pin the image of an emotion against the wall but he did not have the words to transfix it. [. . .] he did not even have the words to translate a certain fear about something as real as a coffee-pot, only not a coffee-pot and he did not even have the words to formulate that. (23)

To a writer, being unable to write means being unable to live; a writer is a being whose life is defined by what he writes. In this context, Mr Moon's fear is imbued with an urgency which is denied when simply understood as his chronic psychological problem. At one point Mr Moon projects himself into "a pure writer" and clearly relates the agonizing process of writing and the fear involved in it.

> [. . .] he could not put down a word without suspecting that it might be the wrong one and that if he held back for another day the intermediate experience would provide the right one. There was no end to that, and Moon fearfully glimpsed himself as a pure writer who after a lifetime of absolutely no output whatever, would prepare on his deathbed the single sentence that was the distillation of everything he had saved up, and die before he was able to utter it. (29)

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[53] A historian and biographer is of course a writer, but the question in focus is more related to creative writing.

[54] "Every response gave Moon the feeling that reality was just outside his perception. If he made a certain move, changed the angle of his existence to the common ground, logic and absurdity would separate. As it was he couldn't pin them down."(32)

Stoppard himself must have experienced the same vision and fear. In one of his earliest short stories, Life, Times: Fragments, Stoppard describes a writer whose situation is virtually the same as Mr Moon envisages here. The only difference is that the writer actually utters the last revelation,[55] only to be rebuffed again by the Lord Himself.

The writer in the short story is once seen to denounce adamantly numerous past literary masters including Balzac, Flaubert, Stendhal, Wilde, Thackeray, James Joyce, Hemingway and so on, and explains the reason as follows:

> [. . .] "the models are no good any more, we've had all that, we're on our own now," and bending into her profile, hoarse with carnage, he said, "I will do it, yes, that much I know, I will do it and it will be for you," and, wild, shameless, whispered the urgent unspeakable secret, "*I am - I feel - seminal!*" and she, getting up, faceless for the dark, said, "No, do you mind if we don't tonight. I've run out of the stuff."[56]

The problem with the past masters is, as is shown here, not that they are actually worthless, but that they are not tenable any longer. This is a question a would-be writer will inevitably face. He cannot simply imitate past styles; if he did, he would not be able to establish his own identity. On the other hand, he cannot be absolutely free from literary traditions. It is not only impossible but unproductive as well. Here lies his aspiration and the prospect of despair; inventing his own style may be his aspiration but if he fails, he will not be saved in the end. The writer in this short story can declare he is "seminal", but cannot find his own new, original style. This is implied through a sudden debunking of his whole argument by the woman's indifferent response.

Interestingly, the writer in the story unambiguously denounces Oscar Wilde as "just a wisecracker" who "said nothing about life". As for James Joyce, he equivocates: "Yes,

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[55] "But one day when he received his one-hundred-and-twenty-seventh consecutive rejection slip, he truly saw the Light. Falling on his knees, he cried out loud, joyfully, 'Dear Lord, I have seen the Light. Forgive my former pride and witness my humility. I cast off my worldly aspirations, and offer myself, Dear Lord, wholly to your eternal service.'" Tom Stoppard, Life, Times: Fragments in Introduction 2, (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), p.129. The anthology contains two other stories by Stoppard, Reunion and The Story.

and no contemporary writer belongs in the same room with Joyce, and Joyce doesn't belong in the same room with Lawrence, and Lawrence was wrong about everything."[57] In fact, the writer endorses Joycean style by his repetition of "yes", the first and last word of the final episode of Ulysses.[58] As for T. S. Eliot and Samuel Beckett, they are outstanding for the absence of any reference at all. The reason is not difficult to guess. The writer implicitly imitates both writers.

> I was sitting up to my navel in sea when I remembered I was not twenty-six any more, and whatever it was I'd been waiting for slipped by then, between waves, as quickly as that. I was twenty-six and biding my time and when the next wave came I was twenty-seven and losing. It is awfully pleasant though. I read, much of the night, and if I don't complain about the others she'll take me south in the winter.[59]

The writer evokes T. S. Eliot's style with the poetic cadences of the prose and the apparent allusions to The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock (the sea and drowning, i.e. losing) and to The Waste Land (the final sentence). A tribute to Beckett is more palpable.

> I am seriously thinking of getting up now. Something is troubling me, however. I cannot remember whether I forgot to say my prayers last night or whether I decided not to. It might make a difference if there is any difference to be made. Too late anyhow, if there's anyone keeping score. Fifty years is ah fifteen, twenty thousand nights so about ten thousand it just didn't arise except in moments of extremity, and they passed, and about five thousand I forgot and the rest I decided not to, so I'd have to remember for the next thirty years, if it works like that, which of course it doesn't. Do not despair: one of the thieves was saved.

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[56] Life, Times: Fragments in Introduction 2, p.128.

[57] Ibid., p.128.

[58] He repeats 'yes' here and in the previous quotation "I will do it, yes, that much I know". The final episode of Ulysses begins with "yes" and ends with "yes I said yes I will Yes." James Joyce, Ulysses (London: Penguin Book, 1992), p. 933. Ulysses was first published in Paris by Shakespeare and Company in 1922. This edition was first published by The Bodley Head in 1960.

> Do not presume: one of the thieves was damned. Very nice, that. St. Augustine, I believe. Not that it gets you anywhere. Must clean the room. Christ, what a mess.[60]

Not just the story of the thieves which was also alluded to by Beckett, but the rhythm and structure of the prose unmistakably evoke Beckettian style.[61] While feeling "seminal", the writer in fact is trying to imitate past styles to his use.

Mr Moon is facing virtually the same problem as this writer. He sums up the question memorably in his talk with O'Hara.

> 'The thing about people is,' said Moon, 'that hardly anyone behaves naturally any more, they all behave the way they think they are supposed to be, as if they'd read about themselves or seen themselves at the pictures. The whole of life is like that now. It's even impossible to think naturally because opinion has been set out for you to read back. Originality has been used up. And yet faith in one's uniqueness dies hard.' (53)

On the surface, Mr Moon seems to be talking about people, but what underlies his complaint is that he cannot see people as they are. He basically sees people as objects to be described, but he cannot describe them because they have already been described in one way or other. Mr Moon cannot get past the past literary traditions to create his own original style. All the literary styles available to him "ha[ve] been used up". Still, he has to find his own individual style if only to define his own identity.

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[59] Life, Times: Fragments in Introduction 2, p.127.

[60] Ibid., p.128.

[61] In his interview with Giles Gordon, Stoppard defines Beckettian style as follows: "I wasn't thinking so much of what they [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern] are about so much as the way in which Beckett expresses himself, and the bent of his humour. I find Beckett deliciously funny in the way that he qualifies everything as he goes along, reduces, refines and dismantles. When I read it I love it and when I write I just guess it comes out as other things come out." Giles Gordon, "Tom Stoppard," p.23. In view of this comment, the typical Stoppardian tactic of heightening and debunking format, which is shown above by the woman in the short story, seems also to have developed out of Beckettian influence.

The writer's "urgent unspeakable secret" in the short story that "he feels seminal" smacks of obscenity, the implication of which is immediately caught by the woman. This may be closest to what the protagonist of Reunion describes as "the word".

> "There is a certain word," he said very carefully, "which if shouted at the right pitch and in a silence worthy of it, would nudge the universe into gear. [. . .] His world will have shuddered into a great and marvellous calm in which books will be written and flowers picked and loves complemented. No one knows what the word is."[62]

The young man here is also a writer-figure who regards writing as fundamentally a creative act, as books are equated with flowers and loves. He, like the writer in Life, Times: Fragments and Mr Moon, cannot establish his own identity as a writer in spite of his aspiration and belief in his vocation. Interestingly, he comments that the word "will probably turn out to be an obscenity",[63] establishing the link between the word and the writer's declaration of "I am seminal" in Life, Times; Fragments, but most importantly with Mr Moon's bomb. In this context, it is evident that Mr Moon's bomb was originally conceived not as a real bomb but as a ploy. And the link between Mr Moon's bomb and "the word" and "the secret" makes it highly plausible that the explosion of Mr Moon's bomb is the same declaration of his own uniqueness, i.e., his own identity as a writer, but at the same time the admission of his failure and despair. As a parody of a real bomb, Mr Moon's bomb is the most effective metaphor in Lord Malquist as it embodies a master spirit of parody in a concrete object like, say, "a chestnut leaf" or "a coffee-pot".

As is typical of Stoppard, Lord Malquist is an amalgamation of literary styles. Critics enumerate quite a number of adopted and adapted literary styles, allusions, and cross-references.[64] John Harty succinctly sums up the situation as "the literature of

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[62] Reunion in Introduction 2, p.123.

[63] Ibid., p.123

[64] "Critics have pointed out the use of old-fashioned melodrama, drawing-room comedy, Heyer Regency romance, westerns, vaudeville, film, absurdity, Oscar Wilde, Kingsley Amis, Salvador Dali, Hemingway, T. S. Eliot, Joseph Conrad, Evelyn Waugh, P. G. Wodehouse, Pepys, Boswell, Nabokov,

exhaustion", by which he means "a work [which] echoes and parodies literary works that have preceded it".[65] As is pointed out and quoted by Harty himself, in Lord Malquist there are images which clearly corroborate this aspect of the novel; the stacked cans "with a picture of a cowboy holding a tin with a picture of a cowboy holding a tin with a picture of a cowboy"(42), and more adequately the hinged mirror which "caught the reflection of his [Mr Moon's] reflection and the reflection of that, and of that"(87).

In the essay Harty makes considerable efforts to verify Joyce's influences on the novel, but remains vague as to the question what is the function and significance of this practice of literary borrowing. He simply quotes from John Barth: "What is now a possibility Barth states is ' . . . that artistic conventions are liable to be retired, subverted, transcended, transformed, or even deployed against themselves to generate new and lively work.'"[66]

It is undoubtedly true that the numerous styles employed in Lord Malquist are intended to be parodies in the widest sense of the word, but it is only part of the whole picture. Lord Malquist should be understood in a wider context as a story not only of Stoppard's own attempts to find his own authentic style through vaguely disguised characters of Mr Moon and Lord Malquist, but also of his failure to "generate new and lively style" which is confirmed by Mr Moon's bomb explosion, his very death, and the other stereotypical characters. Lord Malquist itself in a way serves as evidence of Stoppard's failure, as the novel largely gives the impression of a work of apprenticeship in spite of some sparkling parts and moments.

The opening section, subtitled '*Dramatis Personae and Other Coincidences*', is as fantastic and shocking as the well-known opening of the coin-tossing scene in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. It is made up of several openings for each character in his/her own style. Lord Malquist's mannered, aphoristic speech is no doubt an adaptation of Wildean style. Compared with Lord Malquist's, Mr Moon's style is distinctively modern and familiar, and, in his stream-of-consciousness, fragments of Eliot's poems pop up and Joycean catechism is duly in place, showing his

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and others. " John Harty, "Lord Malquist & Mr Moon: The Beginning." in John Harty, ed., Tom Stoppard, A Casebook (New York and London: Garland, 1988), p.7.

[65] John Harty, p.3.

[66] Ibid., p.3.

literary ancestors. Other minor characters are presented in a simpler, single style, correspondingly; the cowboys in the style of a second-rate Western novel, the Risen Christ, of a religious tale, Lady Malquist, of a Hemingwayan adventure story, and Jane, of a cheap romantic novel. In the second part of the introduction the author is busy linking all these separate openings in an ingeniously coherent, if not entirely plausible, narrative line.

Neil Sammells argues that Stoppard introduces each style only to dismantle it immediately: "a proposed style is established and, almost instantaneously, is refuted."[67] The objective of this practice is to lay bare what Neil Sammells calls "the self-evident sham" and thus call our attention to the unviability of each literary style cited. Neil Sammells's interpretation is valid and inspirational, but does not seem to be entirely convincing or coherent to the detail. For example, before he quotes from the Jane section of the introduction to support his argument, he explains; "the prose is heavily reminiscent of Joyce's parody of women's magazine fiction in the *Nausikaa* section of Ulysses. The blushing romanticism reaches a peak before being dismantled."[68] What remains obscure is whether the parodic intent is directed against Joyce or the romantic novel style or even Beckett.[69] Furthermore, the dismantled styles regain their dominance in Chapter 5, *The Funeral of the Year*, where all the characters come together once again at Trafalgar Square.

> Now that he [Risen Christ] was alone again he felt a great peace and a conviction that took away his burdens of doubt and fear and choice. The donkey's burden was not so nebulous but it protected him from the weather to some extent. (158)

> It was true. Yet she[Jane] could but sigh. A shadow passed over her exquisite features and her soft ripe bosom heaved. Too late, too late! a voice cried within her. Ah, would that we had met when we were free! (160)

[67] Neil Sammells, p.43.
[68] Ibid., p.44. The actual quotation is on the next page (p.33).
[69] As I argued before, this technique of sudden dismantlement reflects Beckett's influence.

The Risen Christ seems to have regained his innocence, and Jane is still engrossed in her romantic fantasy. Considering that these styles are not refuted as they were in the beginning, the question of the styles is not just a matter of style itself. It seems that the implication should be sought in a wider context.

Neil Sammells indeed makes a kind of concession at the end of his criticism: "[. . .] Stoppard departs from O'Brien's approach by creating, in Moon himself, something of an apologist for realism; as a would-be writer Moon condemns himself to a vain search for a quintessential style which will replace the self-evident shams in which everyone else is prepared to invest."[70] However, it is still questionable whether Mr Moon is searching for "a quintessential style". Being unique in the sense of being individual does not necessarily mean being "quintessential". Mr Moon's search for an adequate literary style, most probably, reflects his rather modest ambition to find his own identity, because his own style will define and establish it for him.

The opening of Lord Malquist can be explained as evidence of what I would like to call 'Stoppard's dramatic imagination'. As the subtitle simply states, it introduces the characters of the novel. The corresponding styles are the character notes; they represent the characters' worlds as is argued by Thomas Whitaker,[71] and their languages as well. As for the question of "the self-evident sham", Stoppard already tacitly begs the question by titling the section as "*Dramatis Personae and Other Coincidences*", underscoring the fact that the following story is a fiction.

This dramatic imagination is seen to be working on a more specific level in the part of Jane's introduction.

> She jumped up with a cry wrung out of her heart, tears of joy streaming down her face, and started to run towards his strong brown arms, forgetting that her knickers were round her ankles. She fell heavily on the bathmat, and the tight roll of paper she had been holding on her lap spun away, unwinding itself across the floor. (17)

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[70] Neil Sammells, p.53.

[71] Thomas Whitaker interprets each literary style as a projection of a different world: "Stoppard's method here has obvious links with that in Joyce's Ulysses. It warns us that every style projects a world, and that beyond the limits of every world we will find not chaos but another world projected by another style, either more or less capacious." This interpretation is undoubtedly true, but too general to be truly illuminating. Thomas R. Whitaker, Tom Stoppard (London: Macmillan, 1983), p.34.

Jane is sitting at the toilet, and the discrepancy between the style and the real situation inevitably anticipates a comic catastrophe.[72] This is a typical comic device of heightening a false expectation and sudden debunking of it. It usually occasions laughter, and the comic effect of Lord Malquist is largely indebted to this device. Another bathroom scene will serve as an appropriate example.

> Moon said nothing. Lord Malquist turned off the tap and the silence of water-sounds was broken by a deeper stillness which seemed to Moon godlike by comparison, presaging some revelation - a wind, a voice, a flame, some clue that would unify all mystery and resolve it for him. Jane hit him over the head with her sponge bag. (71-72)

Mr Moon's habitual infatuation with big words is instantly dismantled by Jane's sponge bag. The mundane quality of the sponge bag is outstanding beside Mr Moon's figurative words which are teeming with almost religious implications. Shortly, Mr Moon falls back into the bath as he spins round while Jane is getting undressed. Mr Moon explains: "I was trying to face one way or the other and I got confused and fell over."(72) These scenes are so vivid that we can easily picture them in our mind as scenes in a drama.

Throughout Lord Malquist are scattered dialogues and situations which will nicely fit in a drama. The telephone conversation between Mr Moon and the General is a prominent example for its dramatic quality. The conversation is full of comic confusion because the General thinks Mr Moon's house is a brothel and Mr Moon does not know that the General has been taking pictures of Marie. Marie's corpse tucked away under a chesterfield would make more sense in a drama performance, because the stage has more room for the suspension of disbelief. Stoppard indeed makes use of a similar scene in Jumpers where the dead body of McFee remains in Dotty's room without George's suspicion or knowledge.

[72] "Jane was sitting at her toilette, as she called it in the French manner, dreaming of might-have-beens." (15)

If not privileged in a traditional sense, Mr Moon's style dominates throughout the novel. Mr Moon is the only character whose inner thoughts are directly available to the readers. If under the influence of, for example, T. S. Eliot and James Joyce, he is not totally submerged under the influences. Unlike Prufrock and Bloom, Mr Moon experiences a real affair with Lady Malquist. The sexual encounter also implies that Mr Moon is the only character in the novel who gets in touch with reality.

> *I've had it away* he thought, amazed. *I have lain with Lady Malquist* (*how poetical!*). *Tupped her* bragged Moon Jacobean, *been intimate with her* claimed Moon journalistic, *I've had sexual relations* thought Puritan Moon. *I've committed misconduct* admitted Moon co-respondent, *had carnal knowledge* swore Moon legalistic, *in the biblical sense have I known her*—
>
> *I've had an affair with Laura Malquist* (*O sophisticated Moon!*)
>
> He swung his feet over his side of the bed and stood up on a piece of broken whisky bottle that slashed through his sock into the heel of his only remaining unwounded foot. (145-146)

What is extraordinary about Mr Moon's experience with Lady Malquist is that it is essentially an act of reproduction; it promises creation. For the first time Mr Moon sees a ray of hope that he will be redeemed from the barren life he leads both as a man and as a writer. The excitement Mr Moon feels is demonstrated not only by his unusual burst of verbal virtuosity as he describes his experience with almost all possible expressions, but also by the fact that he is a man in whom are united all the characters he would deliver in his creations. This is the vision of the supreme artist, the closest being the one envisaged by Stephen in Ulysses of Shakespeare: "He is, Stephen said. The boy of act one [of Hamlet] is the mature man of act five. All in all. In Cymbeline, in Othello he is bawd and cuckold. He acts and is acted on. Lover of an ideal or a perversion, like Jos he kills the real Carmen. His unremitting intellect is the hornmad Iago ceaselessly willing that the moor in him shall suffer."[73] Quite significantly, each aspect of Mr Moon is given each expression, in other words, style. This is a sequence

[73] Ulysses, pp.272-273.

which repeats in miniature the whole opening section where Stoppard the creator presents all of his characters.

Unfortunately, the vision Mr Moon is experiencing is instantly dismantled as he steps on "a piece of broken whisky bottle". The dismantlement, however, is not directed at literary styles or influences, but at Mr Moon himself. Mr Moon aspires and despairs. The fake bomb is directed at himself as much as at the world.

The engagement with past literary styles quite naturally is mediated through judgements; it is a process of both preservation and denouncement. The case of Lord Malquist superbly demonstrates it. Lord Malquist is not a character in a proper sense of the word in that he represents the single principle of style. He is a shadow of a literary tradition, most notably of Oscar Wilde, created out of an idea, and is pushed to the extreme. His comment to worried Jane to cut off both breasts simply on the basis of aesthetic consideration is an adequate example at hand.

> 'One off, both off,' said the ninth earl. 'An asymmetrical body is vulgar both as body and as art.'
>
> Jane laughed merrily - 'Oh Falcon, you're awful!' (59)

The unviability of Lord Malquist's style, hence Stoppard's disagreement with it, is expressed by describing him as a repulsive figure throughout. As he represents only the style, he is totally alienated from life, and the alienation leads to moral degeneration as in the case of Albert in Albert's Bridge. As Albert is ever more obsessed with the bridge, he abandons all basic social responsibilities. He even encourages Fraser to commit suicide out of avarice for having the bridge all to himself. On the other hand, Albert's yo-yoing between the bridge and the earth symbolically describes a predicament in which a would-be writer may find himself; he cannot maintain a proper distance between himself and the world. On top of the bridge, he, like Lord Malquist, is too much distanced to see the real world, and down on earth, he, like Mr Moon, is so close to realities that everything is blurred into chaos. There is no hope of redemption in both cases.

Lord Malquist in the end explicitly voices through his own lips his unviability not only as a man but also as a personification of a literary style: "The unfortunate thing is that I have nowhere to retreat any more. I have withdrawn from a number of positions and made my stand anew with my diminished resources drawn in around me . . . but now I am at a loss."(187) His self-destructive life, however, does not mean the total denouncement of the Wildean style. Oscar Wilde is a literary master whose influence upon Stoppard has been maintained almost throughout Stoppard's whole career. Even in Arcadia his influence is unmistakably felt in the character of Lady Croom. So it is small wonder that we often hear Stoppard through Lord Malquist. As is convincingly argued by Michael Billington, Lord Malquist's diagnosis of the age reflects Stoppard's own perception of it.[74] Kenneth Tynan correctly, if too harshly, points out that "you can see the early Stoppard at his purest in Lord Malquist and Mr Moon", and illustrates three quotations from Lord Malquist which "have a ring of authority which suggests the author speaking".[75] One of them is the well-known sentence after which Tynan titled his own essay: "Since we cannot hope for order, let us withdraw with style."(21) Another is Lord Malquist's verdict on history: "Nothing is the history of the world viewed from a suitable distance. Revolution is a trivial shift in the emphasis of suffering; the capacity for self-indulgence changes hands. But the world does not alter its shape or its course."(8) Stoppard's denouncement of Lenin in Travesties is particularly based upon virtually an identical perception that an oppressive Czar was simply replaced with another, even worse, dictator.

Stoppard's representation of Lord Malquist shows how he is engaged with the past literary tradition. Roughly speaking, while he takes comic quality and extreme concern for style from Oscar Wilde, he voices his dissent that a style totally alienated from life is unsustainable. As for James Joyce and T. S. Eliot, his critical engagement is not as vigorous as with Oscar Wilde. If anything, Stoppard largely acknowledges the influences of both masters. Joycean influence is pervasive, as I have been trying to demonstrate.

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[74] "What Stoppard is doing is underlining Levin's point that the death of Churchill was indeed a watershed in British life: that it marked the passing of an age [. . .] Stoppard, true to form, does not take sides or say either that he regrets the passing of the old era or the advent of the new, but he forces us to recognise that something of profound significance occurred in Britain in late January, 1965 and that things would never be quite the same thereafter." Michael Billington, Stoppard: The Playwright (London: Methuen, 1987), p.47.

Besides directly quoted fragments of T. S. Eliot's poems, there is also a sequence which bears an apparent analogy with T. S. Eliot's The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock. Almost poetic cadences and colourful imageries make the prose highly effective and enjoyable.

> She put one hand behind his head, trapping it against her mouth, and like an ondine beguiling a drowned sailor into her cave she drew him through the curtain folds and laid him down in soft grey light, her fingers sinuous and busy about him, her mouth fish-feeding on his, and turned under him with underwater grace and gripped hard making sea-moans that lingered in the flooded chambers of his mind where all his fears separated into seaweed strands and flowed apart and were gone as he clung with him limbs and his mouth to sanctuary. (143)

Stoppard said, "One of the reasons that the play [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead] turned out to work so well, I think, is that the predicament of the characters coincides with the predicament of the playwright."[76] This rather enigmatic comment does not seem to be particularly helpful in appreciating the play. However, it has a more explicit bearing on Lord Malquist; it shows how the novel was conceived and intended. Lord Malquist deals with a man and writer who is desperately trying to establish his own individual identity. This, in turn, is revealing, concerning Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead; the predicament of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in the play reflects Stoppard's own struggle with the most daunting literary influence, i.e., Shakespeare.[77] In this respect, the success of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead and the failure of Lord Malquist is truly interesting. The success of the play is due in no small amount to the fact that Hamlet forms a firm

[75] Kenneth Tynan, Show People: Profiles in Entertainment (London: Virgin Books, 1981), pp.54-55.
[76] Interview on Thames Television (28 September 1976). Quoted from Tim Brassell, p.62.
[77] In the interview Stoppard does not comment exactly to this effect. He simply says that "[. . .] I have these two guys in there and there's no plot until somebody comes in three pages later and they have to fill three pages and I have to fill three pages, and there's nothing." Ibid., p.62.

backbone to which Stoppard's play is constantly referring to. Lord Malquist unfortunately was delivered to the world rather boneless.

B. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

Since Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead[78] was first performed at the National Theatre in London in 1967 amid much fanfare, quite a number of criticisms on the play have accumulated so far. Still, no critical consensus has ever been achieved. The play seems to be versatile enough to be interpreted in so many ways. On close inspection, however, criticisms of the play have largely been variations of the basic perception that, "Text is destiny."[79] The fate of the two Elizabethan gentlemen, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, had already been written by Shakespeare, and now in Stoppard's Rosencrantz they simply relive the same ignominious life.

Text as destiny is a concept most effectively exploited by the famous Italian playwright Pirandello, and critics lost no time in identifying him as one of the main influences on the play. On the other hand, like Estragon and Vladimir in Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern seem to have no idea how to spend their time when they are off-Hamlet scenes. Naturally, verifying Beckett's influence and subsequently refuting it[80] have constituted a large chunk of Rosencrantz criticism. Robert Brustein summarizes the early critical atmosphere as follows: "As is now generally known, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead is a theatrical parasite, feeding off Hamlet, Waiting for Godot, and Six Characters in Search of an Author."[81]

As for the influence of Pirandello, however, critics seem to simply take it for granted without taking the trouble to substantiate it. In my opinion, the direct influence of Pirandello on Rosencrantz is very questionable.[82] In James Saunders's Next Time I'll Sing to You,[83] for example, Pirandellian influence is surely noticeable. The actor who

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[78] Reduced to Rosencrantz hereafter.

[79] This is the first sentence of William Babula's short article titled "The Play-Life Metaphor in Shakespeare and Stoppard". Modern Drama, 15 (1972), p.279.

[80] Joseph E. Duncan conclusively discusses the difference between Stoppard's play and Waiting for Godot in his article, "Godot Comes: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead". (Ariel, 12, No.4, October 1981, pp57-70.)

[81] Robert Brustein, "Waiting for Hamlet," New Republic, 4, (November 1967), p.25.

[82] Katherine Kelly also doubts the influence: "If he is specifically indebted to Pirandello, which I doubt, Stoppard's debt lies less in his use of actors as characters than in his broad exploration of the mutually penetrating realms of art and life." Katherine Kelly, Tom Stoppard and the Craft of Comedy: Medium and Genre at Play (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1991), p.77.

[83] James Saunders's Next Time I'll Sing To You is a play, to which Rosencrantz is heavily indebted. Tim Brassell says rather curiously that "beyond a certain similarity of style, dependent upon a combination of verbal quippery, philosophical introspection, and the strong awareness of the play as play, there seems no basis for an extensive comparison". Tim Brassell, pp.65-66. However, Brassell's

plays the Hermit, increasingly identifies himself with the character he is playing particularly in the second act, a situation at the heart of Pirandello's Henry IV. On the other hand, the Hermit seems like a character who only exists in the performance as his historical existence becomes more and more doubtful in the process of the play. In this context, it can be said that there is an analogy between him and the six characters in Six Characters in Search of an Author. In Rosencrantz, however, the nearest to Pirandello's character will be the Player, but he is more like Lord Malquist in that he is a character constructed around the single idea of play-acting. As for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, they are not the characters who exist only in the script or performance. To demonstrate this is one of the main objectives of this section. Generally speaking, Pirandello is far more sophisticated and focused in his interests and handling of his themes, while Stoppard incorporated into Rosencrantz ideas which have wider implications.

Beckettian influence has also largely been exaggerated. The music hall routines, word games, and so forth, repeated by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, are the most visible Beckettian legacy, but those parts are in fact rather boring, unnecessarily prolonged. Stoppard must have been aware of it as Guildenstern's complaint to Rosencrantz has an ironic, self-reflexive tone: "Why don't you say something original! No wonder the whole thing is so stagnant!"(76) The fundamental outlook of the world and human destiny expressed in Rosencrantz, however, is inherently different from that in Waiting for Godot.[84]

The most complex is the relationship between Rosencrantz and Hamlet. Stoppard set before himself a most challenging task of keeping the delicate balance between Rosencrantz and Hamlet so that Rosencrantz could remain uniquely his own in spite of its inextricable relationship with Hamlet. In this, Stoppard made an unusual success, which in turn may be the true reason for the spectacular success of Rosencrantz.

A question worth asking concerning the relationship between Rosencrantz and Hamlet is whether we can enjoy the play without a knowledge of Hamlet. In other words, will the play stand independent of Hamlet? Critics' answers to this question have almost

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comment itself testifies that both works share not just style, but also important themes and theatrical strategies.

[84] I will come back to this issue whenever necessary as I argue along.

unanimously been in the negative. Besides the rather disparaging criticisms,[85] Michael Billington, for example, while acknowledging that Stoppard "is artistically free to make of them [Shakespeare's characters] what he pleases", still argues that he "is bound to enquire how they marry up with his invented Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; and the answer is hardly at all."[86] Tim Brassell's argument is virtually the same. He similarly acknowledges that "the liberties which he [Stoppard] is entitled to take with them [Stoppard's characters] once they have been extracted must have become a matter for his own judgement", but still argues that "Stoppard's professed belief that it [the audience's familiarity with Hamlet] is not essential to an understanding of his play" is nonsense.[87]

As critics continuously view Rosencrantz from only the Hamlet point of view,[88] Brassell's comment, for example, that, "Stoppard's heroes are conscious of the theatricality of the Hamlet world, yet what they fail to understand is that they too are an integral part of that bizarre and incomprehensible world with all its theatricality, with all its predetermined plotting and role-playing,"[89] has become almost a common stock of knowledge. However, this is rather a curious proposition, because it is absolutely impossible that a character in a play knows the "predetermined plotting and role-playing" of the play. What is unusual and most baffling, therefore, is not Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's ignorance, but the Player's knowledge of the plot of Hamlet, which I will discuss later.

The Shakespearean legacy is so deeply embedded in Western culture that critics, it seems, are simply unable to dissociate themselves from it. In my opinion, if we see Rosencrantz exclusively in terms of its Shakespearean connection, there is surprisingly

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[85] For example, Normand Berlin said that "what Stoppard does best" [is] "to help us realize 'how remarkable Shakespeare is'". Normand Berlin, "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead: Theatre of Criticism," Modern Drama, 16, (1973), p.271. John Weightman also commented, "The action is not a legitimate extension of the minimal identity that Shakespeare gives Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Hamlet, and so Mr. Stoppard's play operates at an uncomfortable tangent to Shakespeare's." John Weightman, "Mini-Hamlets in Limbo," Encounter, 29, (July 1976), p.38.

[86] Michael Billington, pp.34-35.

[87] Tim Brassell, p.46 and p.50, respectively.

[88] This does not mean that critics interpret the play only in terms of Hamlet connection, as is shown by Michael Billington's assertion that, "Stoppard's play works on two distinct levels: as an extended gloss upon Hamlet which reveals the private dilemma of two attendant lords, and as a metaphor of the human condition showing how we are sent into this world with free will but find ourselves the victim of arbitrary circumstances which leads to our inevitable extinction." Michael Billington, p.33. What I mean is that too much emphasis had been laid upon the Hamlet connection, and that critics tend to see the world of Rosencrantz in terms of Shakespeare's Hamlet.

little room to extricate the full meanings of the play. It is beyond question that the immediate success of Rosencrantz is largely indebted to its close relationship with Hamlet. The play is indeed constructed in such a way that its thematic and structural links with Hamlet should be maintained throughout. However, there are some other contexts which are dovetailed along with Hamlet, and if we are to understand the play in its entirety, we have to take all of the different contexts into consideration.

Clive James commented in his much acclaimed article, "It is the plurality of contexts that concerns Stoppard: ambiguities are just places where contexts join."[90] Though he did not actually take the trouble to verify and pursue each different context, his is indeed a penetrating insight into Stoppard's dramaturgy in general. The major aim of this section is to pursue the multiple contexts of the play, and try to unravel the seemingly entangled skein of this masterful looking-glass adventure of Rosencrantz.

There are at least four distinctive contexts in Rosencrantz: the Hamlet parody, a variation of a spy thriller, a parable of the destiny of the modern men "between womb and tomb",[91] and the debate on the life/illusion dichotomy. In my opinion, the most interesting are the third and the fourth context, from which the complex meanings of the play largely emanate. It is impossible, however, to keep clear distinctions of the four different contexts in the discussion, because they are intricately linked to one another. So, for the sake of convenience, I will discuss the second context first, and then, the first context, before I turn to the third and the fourth. The fourth, however, does not make a whole context as the others do. So I will discuss the third and the fourth together, referring to the Hamlet connection, whenever necessary.

We can easily imagine in, say, John le Carré's novels, a situation where an agent is summoned by the agency he is working for and is instructed to carry out a certain mission. As is usual in such a case, the agent in question is not given full information

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[89] Tim Brassell, p.51.

[90] Clive James, "Count Zero Splits the Infinite" (Encounter, 45, November 1975) in Anthony Jenkins, ed., Critical Essays on Tom Stoppard (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1990), p.27. In an interview with Ronald Hayman Stoppard said to the same effect, explaining the process of his composition: "Because you have other threads converging, and I suppose in the end you can just change your mind, and if you can get enough threads going for you, you can leave out the one you started with." Ronald Hayman, p.5.

[91] Anthony Jenkins, The Theatre of Tom Stoppard, p.41. Ronald Hayman describes it as "birth, growth and death". Ronald Hayman, Tom Stoppard (London: Heineman, 1977), p.34.

about the whole operation. While he is doing his job, however, he slowly realizes that something has gone wrong; simply put, that he has been manipulated and will be abandoned in the end. By the time he has realized this, he cannot get out of the situation, because the momentum of the events surrounding him has overtaken him. More importantly, the agent himself is in a way determined to find out where the unfolding events will take him in the end, whether he would ever come back alive. Leamas in The Spy Who Came in From the Cold and Leiser in The Looking-Glass War[92] are all in a similar situation just outlined above. They are in a way picked to be abandoned, and die in the end. The analogy with Rosencrantz is clear. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are similarly summoned by Claudius, and mercilessly used by him to his own purpose. Even if Claudius has no intention of killing them, the question of their life or death does not matter much to him; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are simply expendable.

When Leamas is in Switzerland, contacting East German agents, there are stories about his defection all over the English newspapers. This is something Leamas least expected, because his defection was part of the whole operation: "This wasn't part of the bargain; this was different. What the hell was he supposed to do? By pulling out now, by refusing to go along with Peters, he was wrecking the operation. [. . .] But if he went, if he agreed to go east, to Poland, Czechoslovakia or God knows where, there was no good reason why they should ever let him out."(102) Only at this time does Leamas realize that there has been something wrong from the beginning: "The terms had been too generous, he'd known that all along. They didn't throw money about like that for nothing—not unless they thought they might lose you."(102) While in the car on the way to East Germany just after they arrive in Berlin, Leamas experiences an inner conflict which is akin to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's: "They drove quite slowly. Leamas sat with his hands on his knees, looking straight in front of him. He didn't want to see Berlin that night. This was his last chance, he knew that. The way he was sitting now he could drive the side of his right hand into Peters' throat, smashing the promontory of the thorax. He could get out and run, weaving to avoid the bullets

[92] John le Carré, The Spy Who Came in from the Cold (London: Victor Gollancz, 1963; reprint ed., London and Sydney: Pan Books, 1983), The Looking-Glass War (London: William Heinemann, 1965; reprint ed., Pan Books, 1966). The analogy between Rosencrantz and The Spy Who Came in from the

from the car behind. He would be free—there were people in Berlin who would take care of him—he could get away. He did nothing."(116)

Once in Elsinore, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern immediately notice that something is wrong. Just after they meet Claudius and Gertrude, Rosencrantz expresses his wish "to go home", shouting, "I tell you it's all stopping to a death, it's boding to a depth, stepping to a head, it's all heading to a dead stop".(29) Guildenstern refuses on the ground that they "can't afford anything quite so arbitrary".(30) By this time, they are properly caught in the actions of the state politics which is beyond their understanding. Just after Hamlet is arrested because of his murder of Polonius, Rosencrantz feels relieved that "they've done with us now".(68) Bemused Guildenstern, however, thinks otherwise: "And yet it doesn't seem enough; to have breathed such significance. Can that be all? And why us? - anybody would have done. And we have contributed nothing."(68) Their mission is not completed, and they will take Hamlet to England, though it is not "part of the bargain". Just before they embark on the voyage, Rosencrantz implores Guildenstern again to go back, but Guildenstern is determined to know "where I am". If they go back, there is no knowing "if we'll ever come back".(70)

On board the ship to England, there is a moment when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern talk like disillusioned agents.

> ROS: I wish I was dead. (*Considers the drop.*) I could jump over the side. That would put a spoke in their wheel.
>
> GUIL: Unless they're counting on it.
>
> ROS: I shall remain on board. That'll put a spoke in their wheel. (*The futility of it, fury.*) All right! We don't question, we don't doubt. We perform. [. . .] (79)

When they first came to Elsinore, Guildenstern consoled Rosencrantz that, "At least we are presented with alternatives,"(30) if not choice. Now they are denied even alternatives as "our [their] momentum has taken over".(88) When they realize that the

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Cold is more striking, while Leiser in The Looking-Glass War is a more appropriate case of being picked up to be abandoned.

letter they are carrying is a death-warrant for Hamlet, and even when they discover that the letter has been replaced with the one which seals their lives, there is nothing they can do about it. There is no choice involved but to accept the situation.

As Leamas is a secret agent, a man of action, it is psychologically difficult to associate him with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, but Leamas is similarly caught in the state machinery and relentlessly manipulated. He wholeheartedly believes that the destruction of Mundt, head of the East German secret agency, is the goal of his mission. In fact, Mundt is the one London is trying to protect even at the expense of Leamas from the threat of Fiedler who is suspicious of Mundt. So it is extremely ironic when Leamas was "asleep, content in the knowledge that Fiedler was his ally and that they would shortly send Mundt to his death. That was something which he had looked forward to for a very long time."(174) When Leamas at last realizes "the whole ghastly trick",(217) he is still not in a position to do anything to change the course of events, left with nothing but disgust and bitter feelings.

Liz, with whom Leamas happened to have a relationship before he left England, is a more innocent victim. She knows nothing about the whole situation, but inexorably gets caught in the espionage work, and pays dearly: "I should know, I was the one who was kicked about, wasn't I: By them, by you because you don't care. [. . .] . . . you all treated me as if I was . . . nothing . . . just currency to pay with . . . You're all the same, Alec."(232) Leamas is also extremely exhausted by this time: "I hate it, I hate it all; I'm tired. But it's the world, it's mankind that's gone mad. We're a tiny price to pay . . . but everywhere's the same, people cheated and misled, whole lives thrown away, people shot and in prison, whole groups and classes of men written off for nothing."(232) This world by definition is not that far from the world Rosencrantz and Guildenstern happen to find themselves in.

To argue that Rosencrantz strictly fits into the plot of a spy-thriller would be too far-fetched, but there are apparent benefits from viewing the play from this point of view. First of all, text is not necessarily destiny. Their deaths have wider significances outside Hamlet. Secondly, the moral of the play can be more easily and clearly grasped. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern not only represent the predicament of modern men, but also the human spirit which will not be deterred from questing for the ultimate truth even in the face of death. This is a factor which makes Rosencrantz inherently

different from the existential void of Waiting for Godot. More importantly, this spirit is something Stoppard has been trying to convey all through his career. Mr Moon, even though he fails, surely embodies this spirit. George in Jumpers is also a character who keeps his own faith to the last. In The Real Thing the same quest for truth is presented through the process of Henry's education in true love. Hannah in Arcadia makes the point unequivocally clear: "Better to struggle on knowing that failure is final."[93] In Rosencrantz it is extremely difficult to locate this determination to reach enlightenment because of the pair's all too apparent inabilities, but the spirit is undeniably there.

As I have already said, to extricate significances of Rosencrantz solely from its Shakespearean connection is rather difficult. The play presents an inverted picture of Hamlet as Hamlet is reduced to the fringe and the two non-entities of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern take centre stage. Underlying this is a perception that a hero in the old sense of the word is no longer tenable in the modern world, as Lord Malquist memorably claims in Lord Malquist and Mr Moon.[94] Another is Stoppard's personal view that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are "a couple of bewildered innocents rather than a couple of henchmen."[95] As for the one, it was hardly a new, original concept in the Sixties.[96] As for the other, even in the original Hamlet itself, it is not easy to settle whether Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are "traitors hoist by their own petard" or "victims of the gods".(61)[97] Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's role in the original is too

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[93] Tom Stoppard, Arcadia, p.61.

[94] "His [Churchill's] was an age that saw history as a drama directed by great men; [. . .] I think perhaps that such a stance is no longer inspiring nor equal to events - its philosophy is questionable and its consequences can no longer be put down to the destiny of an individual." Lord Malquist and Mr Moon, p.79.

[95] Giles Gordon, "Tom Stoppard," p.20.

[96] Corballis summarizes the atmosphere as follows: "David Warner played Hamlet as an unheroic alienated young intellectual in Peter Hall's 1965 production for the Royal Shakespeare Company; Nicol Williamson portrayed a very down-to-earth prince at the Round House in 1969 and subsequently on film; and Charles Marowitz went further in producing a *Hamlet* collage with a hero who 'is a slob' and can 'never pull his finger out'." Richard Corballis, Stoppard: The Mystery and the Clockwork (Oxford: Amber Lane Press, 1984), p.48.

[97] It was Oscar Wilde who made a most profound observation about this pair of characters in De Profundis, which must have influenced Stoppard immensely: "I know of nothing in all Drama more incomparable from the point of view of Art, or more suggestive in its subtlety of observation, than Shakespeare's drawing of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. [. . .] They bow and smirk and smile, and what the one says the other echoes with sicklier iteration. [. . .], Guildenstern and Rosencrantz see no more in his[Hamlet's] conduct than a rather painful breach of court-etiquette. [. . .] They are close to his very secret and know nothing of it. Nor would there be any use in telling them. They are the little cups that

minimal, and the play is so arranged that Hamlet is the sole centre of our attention and sympathy. So, what is important will be Stoppard's modification of the original Hamlet material to divert the charge that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are willing accomplices in the plot against Hamlet.

The Hamlet in Rosencrantz is not the Hamlet in Hamlet, a fact which has more often than not been overlooked by the critics. Hamlet in Rosencrantz is seen to walk backwards, smoke on stage, hide behind a gaudy striped umbrella, eavesdropping on Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's conversation. He even spits into the audience.

> HAMLET *comes down to footlights and regards the audience. The others watch but don't speak. Hamlet clears his throat noisily and spits into the audience. A split later he claps his hand to his eye and wipes himself. He goes back upstage.* (85)

Hamlet's gesture clearly shows that he is alienated from the modern audience. It can even make the audience feel rather uncomfortable, because Hamlet here makes such a discord from the preconceived image of Hamlet. Stoppard also muted Hamlet by transforming the famous soliloquy into a mime, depriving him of "another chance to communicate directly with the audience".[98] On the other hand, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are presented as more congenial to us, which is most notably achieved by the juxtaposition of the archaic language of Hamlet and the pair's distinctively modern style.[99]

However, it is in the handling of the scenes in the original where Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are directly involved that show Stoppard's imaginative touch. Stoppard has cut entirely the recorder scene where Hamlet clearly indemnifies Rosencrantz and

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can hold so much and no more. [. . .] They are types fixed for all time. To censure them would show a lack of appreciation. They are merely out of their sphere; that is all." Oscar Wilde, De Profundis in Complete Works of Oscar Wilde (Glasgow: Harper Collins *Publishers*, 1994), pp.1052-1053. T. S. Eliot's tacit reference to them in The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock reflects a more general and traditional view: "No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;/ Am an attendant lord, one that will do/ Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy too,/ Deferential, glad to be of use,/ Politic, cautious, and meticulous;/ Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;/ At time, indeed, almost ridiculous--/ Almost at times, the Fool."

[98] Richard Corballis, p.36.

[99] "[. . .] as we share the modern speech idiom of his heroes, so too, in a manner reminiscent of Moon's sense of estrangement, we share in their sense of foreignness in the hostile Hamlet world with its remote, alien language." Tim Brassell, p.43.

Guildenstern: "'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me."(III.ii.357-360) Stoppard also went to great lengths to save Rosencrantz and Guildenstern from a compromising situation where in the original they bring Hamlet to Claudius after his murder of Polonius. In Rosencrantz the pair actually try to capture Hamlet.

> GUIL: [. . .] Let him walk into the trap!
>
> ROS: What trap!
>
> GUIL: You stand there! Don't let him pass!
>
> (*He positions* ROS *with his back to one wing, facing* HAMLET'*s entrance.* GUIL *positions himself next to* ROS, *a few feet away, so that they are covering one side of the stage, facing the opposite side.* GUIL *unfastens his belt.* ROS *does the same. They join the two belts, and hold them taut between them.* ROS'*s trousers slide slowly down.* HAMLET *enters opposite, slowly, dragging* POLONIUS'*s body. He enters upstage, makes a small arc and leaves by the same side, a few feet downstage.*
>
> ROS *and* GUIL, *holding the belts taut, stare at him in some bewilderment.* HAMLET *leaves, dragging the body. They relax the strain on the belts.*)
>
> ROS: That was close.
>
> GUIL: There's a limit to what two people can do.(65-66)

This music hall routine is also imported from Waiting for Godot, but here it has a clear implication; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are no match for Hamlet. They are inherently incapable of doing anything to effect harm on Hamlet. When they actually meet Hamlet after he has disposed of the dead body of Polonius, they are once again easily outwitted by Hamlet's simple trick, which is also a common comic device.

> HAMLET: [. . .] Bring me to him.
>
> (HAMLET *moves resolutely towards one wing. They move with him,*

shepherding. Just before they reach the exit, HAMLET, *apparently seeing* CLAUDIUS *approaching from off stage, bends low in a sweeping ceremonial bow with their cloaks swept round them.* HAMLET, *however, continues the movement into an about-turn and walks off in the opposite direction.* ROS *and* GUIL, *with their heads low, do not notice. No one comes on.* [. . .]) (67)

When Claudius comes on, and asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern where Hamlet is, the embarrassing situation is only saved as Hamlet voluntarily gives himself up. Throughout the play, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are similarly described as incapable of being in charge of a situation. After their first meeting with the Player in the second act, for example, Guildenstern tries to assert his own control as he feels he has found out the exact cause of Hamlet's madness.

ROS: Ha! It's beginning to make sense! Unrequited passion!
(*The* PLAYER *moves.*)
GUIL: (*Fascist*) Nobody leaves this room! (*Pause, lamely.*)
Without a *very* good reason.
PLAYER: Why not?
GUIL: All this strolling about is getting too arbitrary by half - I'm rapidly losing my grip. From now on reason will prevail.
PLAYER: I have lines to learn.
GUIL: Pass! (50)

This kind of rather harmless, meaningless sequence in the end helps to build up the impression that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern cannot do anything on their part.

The most significant event concerning the Hamlet connection is when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern confirm the contents of the letter as the death-warrant for Hamlet. This is the first time that they are offered a choice which will give them their own identity. Rosencrantz's response is compassionate: "We're his friends." Guildenstern, however, tries to ignore the fact, saying, "You've only got their words for it," and

concludes, "we'd be well advised to leave well alone".(80-81) William Gruber stresses the pair's immorality with great emphasis.

> Given the opportunity for meaningful action, Guil (and thus, by way of tacit compliance, Ros) refuses to act. Given suddenly—one is tempted to say beneficently—ample room and time to define their selves, the courtiers cannot swell to fit their new roles. For a moment, Hamlet is swept away, suspended powerless; for a brief interim we sense that the fate of the prince and his play rests in Ros and Guil's hands. That interim is theirs alone; it does not belong to Hamlet. And they refuse to act. To choose not to choose, of course, is a manner of choosing. Ros and Guil fill their moment of time, their *season*, with emptiness—until the text of Shakespeare's Hamlet rushes back to fill the vacuum.[100]

Though eloquently stated, Gruber's verdict of the pair's immorality and inactivity reflects more of his own wish, ignoring the balance between Rosencrantz and Hamlet which I mentioned. If Rosencrantz and Guildenstern actually do anything to save Hamlet's life like "the destruction of a single letter", which Gruber argues they should have done, they will surely have the chance to define their selves as moral beings, but only at a high price; they will lose their original identities as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, not only as characters in Hamlet but also as ones in Rosencrantz.

Considering Hamlet's transformation mentioned above, it is not fair to interpret the event solely from Hamlet's, i.e. the original Hamlet's, point of view. If Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's moral integrity is put into question, even when they have not done anything voluntarily to endanger Hamlet in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, the integrity of Hamlet's stealthy action of forging the letter to seal his bewildered friends' lives should also be questioned. So far, no critic, including Gruber, has ever posed that question. This neglect may have done justice to Hamlet, but not to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. If Hamlet simply does not care about his friends' death, Hamlet's integrity will be seriously compromised. If Hamlet has interpreted their

[100] William E. Gruber, "'Wheels within Wheels, etcetera': Artistic Design in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead," (Comparative Drama, 15, 1981-2) in John Harty, ed., Tom Stoppard, A Casebook (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1988), p.39.

decision as a betrayal (he has been eavesdropping on their conversation), still his retaliation is not becoming to a stately prince. Besides, Guildenstern's excuse that they are little men[101] does not sound as insidious as it is supposed to, because it is a just description of themselves. They are indeed little men, and have been treated so both throughout Hamlet and Rosencrantz. The irony is that Guildenstern's excuse is exactly identical to Hamlet's explanation for his undoing of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Hamlet: "Why, man, they did make love to this employment./ They are not near my conscience. Their defeat/ Doth by their own insinuation grow./ *Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes/* Between the pass and fell incensèd points/ Of mighty opposites." (V,ii, 58-63, italics mine) Rosencrantz does not provide strong evidence to suggest that they did make love to this employment. As William Gruber overemphasizes the importance of the scene, he reduces the significance of the whole play to a matter of an agonizing moral choice. When Rosencrantz and Guildenstern confirm the contents of the changed letter, they do not complain of Hamlet's betrayal. They simply accept their fate, and "gain identity as humans and as individuals in accepting the inevitability of their own approaching deaths, indeed in knowingly delivering their own death warrants".[102]

Taken in all, the relationship of Rosencrantz with Hamlet shows Stoppard's shrewd ability to take full advantage of one of the most famous works in drama history, as he adapts it to his own purpose, while basically maintaining the original plot. However, as I will argue shortly, Rosencrantz has its own agendas which are in a way more fundamental than its Hamlet connection, and make Rosencrantz uniquely Stoppard's own. In this context, the deprecating attack on Stoppard as "a theatrical parasite" seems to reflect the unusual influence and respect Shakespeare still wields in the present theatre scene rather than does justice to Stoppard's creative achievement.

[101] "we are little men, we don't know the ins and outs of the matter, there are wheels within wheels, etcetera - it would be presumptuous of us to interfere with the designs of fate or even of kings." (81)

[102] Joseph Duncan, "Godot Comes," pp.66-67.

The play is most effective when viewed as a parable of modern man's destiny from birth to death. It is this context which accommodates the most thought-provoking debates of ideas; life versus death and life versus illusion.

Simply put, Elsinore to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is London to Mr Moon. The frustration they experience is fundamentally identical. They want to know what their existences are for in this world, but are denied enlightenment; they cannot see through the chaotic surface into the redeeming order. Guildenstern, if anything, knows how the world is, or should be, organized, as his penetrating comment on nature shows: "It related the fortuitous and the ordained into a reassuring union which we recognized as nature."[103] However, he is caught in a vicious circle as "the fortuitous" and "the ordained" do not make "a reassuring union", but only add to his confusion.

The single most important question which penetrates the whole debate is *death.* The relationship between life and death is akin to that between yin and yang in Eastern philosophy; they define each other. Without life, there will be no death; without death, there will be no life. To the Player, "blood is compulsory",(25) but not death. There is a delicate, but important, difference in nuance between blood and death. Blood is indeed compulsory to him, because he is a tragedian, but death as "the mother of beauty", for example, is a totally alien concept to him.[104] What is a matter of life and death to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is a matter of success or failure to the Player, because he understands death totally in terms of performance. This vital difference in their visions is the driving force which makes the sparks in their confrontations. In my opinion, Rosencrantz and particularly Guildenstern have a wider vision which incorporates both life and death, and therefore, it is not the Player but they, who will deliver a higher order of reality in the end.

The royal summons of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern can be interpreted in several ways. First of all, the messenger's arrival marks the starting point for their unusual

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[103] This clearly anticipates Valentine's assertion in Arcadia: "The unpredictable and the predetermined unfold together to make everything the way it is." Arcadia, p.47.

[104] Wallace Stevens, an American poet, muses upon the vital relationship between life and death in his famous Sunday Morning: "Death is the mother of beauty; hence from her,/ Alone, shall come fulfilment to our dreams/ And our desires." Wallace Stevens, Selected Poems (London: Faber and Faber, n. d.), p. 33. The Player once remarks, "they [the Player's group] always pick up wonderfully for the deaths - it brings out the poetry in them".(56) Still, we can see that "the poetry" is exclusively related with the

adventure in Elsinore. From then on they will be caught in the actions of Hamlet. The continuous "heads" which so much annoys Guildenstern prefigures this fact. Bertrand Russell said, "There is, as we all know, a law that if you throw dice you will get double sixes only about once in thirty-six times, and we do not regard that as evidence that the fall of the dice is regulated by design; on the contrary, if the double sixes came every time we should think that there was design."[105] The design involved in Rosencrantz must be that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern will follow the path they previously trod in Hamlet "to their little deaths".(90)

On the other hand, the arrival of the messenger is described in a conspicuously mysterious way, which makes room for further metaphoric interpretation.

> A man standing in his saddle in the half-lit half-alive dawn banged on the shutters and called two names. He was just a hat and a cloak levitating in the grey plume of his own breath, but when he called we came. (29-30)

Since the summons, the pair's lives are no longer the same. Rosencrantz once remarks, "There were answers everywhere you *looked.* There was no question about it - people knew who I was and if they didn't they asked and I told them."(29) The more cerebral Guildenstern explains to his bewildered friend that it is because, "All your life you live so close to truth, it becomes a permanent blur in the corner of your eye, and when something nudges it into outline it is like being ambushed by a grotesque."(29-30) The summons, then, was the event which nudged Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to see different aspects of realities. In the past, they have "never known anything to write home about".(13) Now, they are in a new phase of life, leaving behind their trouble-free past, seeking the significance of their lives.

If we further expand the implications of the summons, it can also be interpreted as marking the symbolic birth point of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.[106] In their

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performance of death scenes. On the other hand, Wallace Stevens uses the word, death, in a broader sense closer to what Guildenstern understands it to be.

[105] Bertrand Russell, Why I Am Not A Christian and Other Essays on Religion and Related Subjects, ed. Paul Edwards (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958), p.5.

[106] Lucina Gabbard is the only critic as far as I know who actually ventures to extricate a symbolic meaning of the summons in this way: "The summons is a metaphor for both the beginning and the

reminiscences there is nothing concrete to substantiate their past. What characterizes them is indeed their lack of memory of the past. This could be rather reasonably explained that their past is a sort of lost paradise, representing the prenatal phase of life. So Rosencrantz dramatizes the futile attempts for the modern man to find meanings in himself and the world from birth to death which are marked by the summons and the pair's final deaths, respectively.

In Act Two, Rosencrantz, quite unlike himself otherwise, pinpoints a central issue of the play.

> Whatever became of the moment when one first knew about death? There must have been one, a moment, in childhood when it first occurred to you that you don't go on for ever. It must have been shattering - stamped into one's memory. And yet I can't remember it. It never occurred to me at all. What does one make of that? We must be born with an intuition of mortality. Before we know the words for it, before we know that there are words, out we come, bloodied and squalling with the knowledge that for all the compasses in the world, there's only one direction, and time is its only measure.(52)

It is a common experience that when we realize we are going to die sooner or later, we ask ourselves, if not panicking about the prospect, what the point is of our living in this world. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's desperate efforts to *know*, their constant complaints about the lack of information, surely reflect this doubt, because they have experienced, if anything, the moment Rosencrantz mentions above. Moments after the opening of the play, Guildenstern articulates why he is so much worried about the implication of the unbelievable "heads": "Fear! The crack that might flood your brain with light!"(12) The famous coin-tossing scene of Rosencrantz is therefore related to their awareness of mortality. However, the question at stake is whether this is because

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ending of life. The royal call in the pale sky before dawn is comparable to the involuntary event of birth set in progress by the king and queen of each child's life-his parents. The same summons raises the specter of death as the pale rider." Lucina P. Gabbard, The Stoppard Plays (Troy, New York: The Whitsun Publishing Co., 1982), p.34.

they are in Hamlet or their intuition of mortality has a wider significance, even independent of Hamlet.

The fear triggers Guildenstern into musing about the implications of the phenomenon. Though critics have usually regarded Guildenstern's reasoning as rather irrelevant, if not positively meaningless, it is unusually informative.

> GUIL: [. . .] One. I'm willing it. Inside where nothing shows, I am the essence of a man spinning double-headed coins, and betting against himself in private atonement for an unremembered past. (*He spins a coin at* ROS.)
>
> ROS: Heads.
>
> GUIL: Two. Time has stopped dead, and the single experience of one coin being spun once has been repeated ninety times . . . [. . .] On the whole, doubtful. Three. Divine intervention, that is to say, a good turn from above concerning him, cf. children of Israel, or retribution from above concerning me, cf. Lot's wife. Four. A spectacular vindication of the principle that each individual coin spun individually [. . .] is as likely to come down heads as tails and therefore should cause no surprise each individual time it does. (13)

The first thing which attracts our attention is that Guildenstern explicitly denies the second proposition which is most related to the Absurdist position.[107] Hence, Guildenstern makes it clear that he is not in an existential void. The third, though camouflaged under the Biblical allusions, is referring to the relationship of the play with Hamlet as the "divine intervention" suggests. By implication, it suggests, everything, including the miraculous turn of heads, is already predetermined, which is a proof of a design at work. The most interesting is the first. As a metaphoric description of an embryo in a mother's womb at the verge of delivery, it clearly involves the question of birth and death. "The essence of a man inside where nothing shows" may well be interpreted so. He spins "double-headed coins" because the result

[107] "Among these possibilities, the second, that time has stopped dead, is the only one endemic to the Theatre of the Absurd and the only one discounted by Guil." Joan F. Dean, Tom Stoppard: Comedy as a Moral Matrix (Columbia & London: University of Missouri Press, 1981), p.37.

is always the same. The tossing is not about choosing sex, but about birth and death. "There's one born every minute"(19), but no newly-born will ever escape the ultimate reality of death. This is further corroborated by the vaguely religious implication of "private atonement for an unremembered past"; death is the price to pay for original sin according to Christian belief.

What Guildenstern tries to convince himself is that he and Rosencrantz are not "within un-, sub- or supernatural forces".(14) Guildenstern arrives at this conclusion in a rather circular syllogistic logic, but in an important sense they are not "within un-, sub- or supernatural forces" as Guildenstern insists. In fact, they are in the perfectly natural world, if we understand the continuous heads as a metaphor for *entropy*.[108] Katherine Kelly is the only critic who has ever tried to interpret the phenomenon as a metaphor for a scientific theory.

> If my guess is correct, the coin tossing is the first example of Stoppard's sustained interest in illustrating philosophical and mathematical principles in precise stage terms [. . .] In Guildenstern's talk, "probability" is the technocratic jargon for post-Beckettian "reality," and as such identifies Stoppard's Courtiers as members of contemporary culture for whom the "real" can be defined only as the probable and for whom the probable has been mysteriously suspended. This layer of scientific metaphor distinguishes Rosencrantz and Guildenstern from both their Shakespearean and their Beckettian models.[109]

Though she pinpoints the implication of paraphrasing coin tossing into a scientific theory, what she actually argues, I should say, is somewhat forced, not quite making consistent sense. As a metaphor for entropy, however, the continuous heads not only describe brilliantly the universally acknowledged scientific law, but fit in the scheme of the play thematically; entropy always increases anywhere, anytime, to the final heat-death, as indeed Rosencrantz says "there's only one direction, and time is its only measure".(52) To us human beings, the implication of entropy converges on death.

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[108] By this, I do not mean that they are just in the natural world. They are both inside and outside the natural world according to the viewpoint we choose.

[109] Katherine Kelly, pp.74-75.

All the coin games Rosencrantz and Guildenstern play in Rosencrantz always leave no room for a different result. As Guildenstern mentioned above, the double headed coin will always produce the same result. In Act Three, Rosencrantz plays a coin game with coins in both hands, "to make you [Guildenstern] happy".(75) Guildenstern asks the Player to bet on "the year of my birth doubled is an odd number",(23) an invitation to a game the Player can never win. Surprisingly, the Player who is an unusually experienced and worldly figure does not quite catch what the betting is about.

> PLAYER: *Your* birth - !
> GUIL: If you don't trust me don't bet with me.
> PLAYER: Would you trust *me*?
> GUIL: *Bet* me then.
> PLAYER: My birth?
> GUIL: Odd numbers you win.
> PLAYER: You're on -
> GUIL: Good. Year of your birth. Double it. Even numbers I win, odd numbers I lose.
> (*Silence. An awful sigh as the* TRAGEDIANS *realize that any number doubled is even. Then a terrible row as they object. Then a terrible silence.*)
> PLAYER: We have no money. (23-24)

The Player's inability to realize the trap of the game quickly can only mean that he does not have the proper concept of birth and death.

In all probability Stoppard must have been aware that he was using the concept of entropy. Guildenstern says, "The law of averages [. . .] means that if six monkeys were thrown up in the air for long enough they would land on their tails about as often as they would land on their -", followed by Rosencrantz's "Heads".(10) Interestingly, Richard Dutton construes the phenomenon as follows: "The odd proposition, in fact was that if six monkeys were left typing indefinitely, one of them would – quite

randomly and by chance – eventually write Hamlet, word for word."[110] This is of course as impossible as an attempt to reverse the course of entropy. Arguing against the attempts to invalidate entropy, Sir Arthur Eddington used a similar metaphor of monkeys.

> If an army of monkeys were strumming on typewriters they 'might' write all the books in the British Museum. The chance of their doing so is decidedly more favourable than the chance of the molecules returning to one half of the vessel.[111]

Ludwig Boltzmann tried to "turn the second law [entropy] into a probability or statistical law".[112] His proposition was that there is a probability that all the innumerable number of air molecules in a vessel which contains a certain gas, can actually gather at one half of the vessel, a logic somewhat similar to Guildenstern's fourth interpretation of the continuous heads.[113] However, this only underscores the absolute impossibility of such an event, as Sir Arthur Eddington quite successfully demonstrates.[114]

A benefit of viewing the pair's deaths from the viewpoint of entropy is again that they are not solely dictated by Shakespeare. As I have already mentioned, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Rosencrantz have their own agendas, and the drama unfolds particularly through the confrontations between them and the Player. The Player is a most interesting, typically Stoppardian character, in whom Wildean influence is most apparent. Like Lord Malquist, he is constructed around a single idea; he sees the world from an inverted viewpoint of play-acting. This inversion of viewpoint seems to be one of the most important elements Stoppard inherited from Oscar Wilde. The Picture of Dorian Gray, for example, provides a master treatment of this vision. Oscar Wilde

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[110] Richard Dutton, Modern Tragicomedy and the British Tradition: Beckett, Pinter, Stoppard, Albee and Storey (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986), p.136.

[111] Jeremy Rifkin and Ted Howard, Entropy: A New World View (London: Paladin Books, Granada Publishing, 1985), p.53.

[112] Ibid., p.52.

[113] It is quoted in p.56.

[114] In Arcadia, Stoppard uses this metaphor of monkey again, underscoring the impossibility that Thomasina actually discovered the Chaos Theory and the second law of Thermodynamics: "HANNAH: She must have been doing something./ VALENTINE: Doodling. Nothing she understood./ HANNAH: A monkey at a typewriter?/ VALENTINE: Yes. Well, a piano." Arcadia, p.47.

created the character of Dorian Gray probably to present the purest form of life, which is art. Dorian swaps reality with art. So while he represents youth and beauty to the world, his real self captured in the portrait is being distorted, reflecting the flow of time and the crimes committed by Dorian. Dorian's outward life, therefore, is just an illusion very much in the sense that the Player's is. It is paradoxically the incompatibility of life and art that is ultimately demonstrated by Dorian's life. While trying to demonstrate the perfect marriage of art and life, Dorian in the end spectacularly testifies to its impossibility and human mortality.

The incompatibility of life and art is also at the heart of the suicide case of Sibyl, the actress Dorian happens to fall in love with. After the fiasco of Romeo and Juliet in the presence of Dorian and his friends, Lord Henry and Basil, the artist, she explains the reason as follows:

> 'Dorian, Dorian,' she cried, 'before I knew you, acting was the one reality of my life. It was only in the theatre that I lived. I thought that it was all true. I was Rosalind one night, and Portia the other. The joy of Beatrice was my joy, and the sorrows of Cordelia were mine also. I believed in everything. [. . .] I knew nothing but shadows, and I thought them real. You came - oh, my beautiful love! - and you freed my soul from prison. You taught me what reality really is. To-night, for the first time in my life, I saw through the hollowness, the sham, the silliness of the empty pageant in which I had always played. To-night, for the first time, I became conscious that the Romeo was hideous, and old, and painted, that the moonlight in the orchard was false, that the scenery was vulgar, and that the words I had to speak were unreal, were not my words, were not what I wanted to say. You had brought me something higher, something of which all art is but a reflection.[115]

It is extremely ironic and penetrating that the moment she feels what reality is, she cannot act. Her performance cannot produce any artistic effect, which not surprisingly kills Dorian's love for her; to Dorian the artistic world is the only reality. Sibyl's

[115] Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray in Complete Works of Oscar Wilde, p.71.

suicide causes only transient sorrow and pangs of conscience to Dorian, and he immediately dramatizes her death: "Somehow, now that it has happened actually, and to me, it seems far too wonderful for tears. Here is the first passionate love-letter I have ever written in my life. Strange, that my first passionate love-letter should have been addressed to a dead girl."[116] And his rumination about the last moment of Sibyl's death exactly captures the question at stake in Rosencrantz: "Poor Sibyl! What a romance it had all been! She had often mimicked death on the stage. Then Death himself had touched her, and taken her with him. How had she played that dreadful last scene?"[117] Which reality is more real, Dorian's or Sibyl's? Which death is more real, Sibyl's performance or her real death? It would be crude to argue that the one is more real than the other in any definitive sense. The chances are that the truth lies in the dialectic of the two. However, as the terrible scene of Dorian's death testifies, the ultimate reality of the real death seems to assert itself in the end. And yet, it is again a death in a fiction.

Stoppard is trying to delve into the same question in Rosencrantz through the debates between Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and the Player.[118] Just before Rosencrantz and Guildenstern meet the Player, Guildenstern relates a story of a unicorn which, as is typical of the play itself, has important implications difficult to locate.

> A man breaking his journey between one place and another at a third place of no name, character, population or significance, sees a unicorn cross his path and disappear. [. . .]; until - 'My God', says a second man, 'I must be dreaming, I thought I saw a unicorn.' At which point, a dimension is added that makes the experience as alarming as it will ever be. A third witness, you understand, adds no further dimension but only spreads it thinner, and a fourth thinner still, and the more witnesses there are the thinner it gets and the more reasonable it becomes until it is as

[116] Ibid., p.79.

[117] Ibid., p.83.

[118] Hamlet itself is of course a source of this conflict, too. Just after Hamlet meets the Players, he muses upon the dynamic relationship between reality and illusion: "O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!/ Is it not monstrous that this player here,/ But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,/ Could force his soul so to his whole conceit/ That from her working all his visage wanned,/ Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,/ A broken voice, and his whole function suiting/ With forms to his conceit? And all for

> thin as reality, the name we give to the common experience . . . 'Look, look!' recites the crowd. 'A horse with an arrow in its forehead! It must have been mistaken for a deer.' (17)

The episode works in basically two ways. First, it underscores the difference between the fantastic creature of a unicorn and a horse with an arrow in its forehead which reflects the stark reality. Secondly, it underscores the sameness between a unicorn and a horse, which reflects the interchangeability of illusion and reality.

The unicorn is a metaphor for reality of a higher order which we wish to encounter in our drab lives. Guildenstern's disappointment at finding only the Player's group is understandable as he was "*prepared*"(21) to meet something fantastic and grander which will make his life full of meanings. Dotty's breakdown in Jumpers is the result of a similar disillusionment as men infringe upon the sanctity of the Moon.

> They thought it was overwork or alcohol, but it was just those little grey men in goldfish bowls, clumping about in their lead boots on the television news; it was very interesting, but it certainly spoiled that Juney old moon; and much else besides . . . The analyst went barking up the wrong tree, of course; I should never have mentioned unicorns to a Freudian.[119]

Her complaint is that man's landing on the moon has shattered the mystery of it; a unicorn has been found out as a horse with an arrow in its forehead. In Artist Descending a Staircase, however, a unicorn is more suggestively mentioned in relation to the properties of art itself. Sophie says she "can improve on reality, like a painter, but without fear of contradiction", because she is blind: "Indeed, if I hear hoofbeats, I can put a unicorn in the garden and no one can open my eyes against it and say it isn't true." To her Martello replies, "To the Incas, who had never seen a horse, unicorns had the same reality as horses, which is a very high degree of reality".[120] Here, too, a

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nothing./ For Hecuba!/ What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,/ That he should weep for her? What would he do/ Had he the motive and the cue for passion/ That I have?" (II, ii, 552-564)

[119] Jumpers, p.30.

[120] Artist Descending a Staircase in Stoppard: The Plays for Radio 1964-1991, pp. 142-143.

unicorn is associated with fantasy, but Sophie poses a subtle question, i.e., which is the truer of illusion and reality in emotional and aesthetic terms. Art is an illusion which is supposed to be true.

This parable of the unicorn is a beautiful illustration of Stoppard's vital dramatic technique of "ambush". As I already discussed in the previous section on Lord Malquist and Mr Moon, Stoppardian ambush presents the grotesque as the commonplace, the fantastic as the perfectly reasonable and vice versa. After Magritte[121] is a short drama constructed entirely on this principle as the grotesque tableau of the opening scene makes perfectly reasonable sense in the process of the performance, only to end in one more grotesque picture. On the other hand, the tale also refers to the relationship between Rosencrantz and Hamlet. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern go to Elsinore to see the unicorn, but the hope will eventually end up as "a horse with an arrow in its head". This is particularly an apt metaphor with its appalling implication.

The pair, victims of a false hope that their destiny could be otherwise in spite of their increasing awareness of, and mounting evidence for, their future disaster, will challenge the Player later with the only truth in this uncertain world of their mortality. The test of the truth will be the question whether death could be acted on stage. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, however, are in a doubly paradoxical situation, because they themselves are actors and characters in a play, and they will perform death in the end. Therefore, the more they insist on the realities as opposed to the illusion presented on stage, the greater the burden will be for them to present themselves as real as possible. If they succeed in presenting themselves as real to any extent, it will, in turn, demonstrate that illusion can be reality. The little tale related by Guildenstern indeed has a moral, to which the central issue of the whole play points up to.[122]

When the Player first meets Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, he expresses his joy by exclaiming, "An audience!"(17) To him anyone outside his group is a potential

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[121] The first performance of After Magritte was given at the Ambiance Lunch-hour Theatre Club in April 1970.

[122] Robert Egan particularly stresses the importance of the story: "This parable is far more applicable to his situation than Guildenstern himself can know. He does not offer a moral to his little tale; yet in a sense, all that occurs between him and the Tragedians will point up that moral." Robert Egan, "A Thin Beam of Light: The Purpose of Playing in R. & G. are Dead" (Education Theatre Journal, 31, 1979) in T. Bareham, ed., Tom Stoppard: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Jumpers, Travesties: A Casebook (Basingstoke and London: MacMillan Education, 1990), p. 96.

audience. Shortly, he reveals his rather dubious intent by addressing Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as "fellow artists".(18) He explains:

> For some of us it is performance, for others, patronage. They are two sides of the same coin, or, let us say, being as there are so many of us, the same side of two coins. (18)

The Player's argument here is that all human beings are actors in one way or another, as he puts it as "two sides of the same coin or the same side of two coins". It is a tempting interpretation that his words are a sort of meta-dramatic comment, implying that the true identities of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are the actors who play the roles of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Still, it sounds too far-fetched, making everything unnecessarily complicated.

In terms of the actions of the play the Player's foremost concern and role is to set a trap for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. As to the nature of the trap, however, interpretations could differ. From the Hamlet point of view, what the Player is trying to achieve is to connect them to the plot of Hamlet. The Player's suggestion gets more cunning, and straight at the same time, when he remarks, "It costs little to watch, and little more if you happen to get caught up in the action."(18) On the surface, what the Player proposes here is that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern either just watch the group's performance, or participate in a sort of prostitution. However, it is also apparent that he very clearly articulates what Rosencrantz and Guildenstern will do in the whole play; watching and getting caught up in the action. A comparison of their situation with that of the two critics in The Real Inspector Hound[123] is quite revealing. Moon and Birdboot, two drama critics, get caught up in the actions of the-play-within-the-play, while watching it. Once caught up, they can do nothing but follow the plot of the inner play to their deaths; plot indeed becomes destiny.

Guildenstern responds carefully to the Player, as his words seem to express what Guildenstern has some intuitive, if vague, idea of. However, when Guildenstern has found out that what the Player means by participation is the offer of Alfred, the child

[123] The first performance of The Real Inspector Hound was given in June 1968, at the Criterion Theatre, London.

actor who plays the woman's role, Guildenstern is greatly disappointed just as he was when he had expected a unicorn.

> It could have been - it didn't have to be *obscene* . . . It could have been - a bird out of season, dropping bright-feathered on my shoulder . . . It could have been a tongueless dwarf standing by the road to point the way . . . [. . .] But it's this, is it? No enigma, no dignity, nothing classical, portentous, only this - a comic pornographer and a rabble of prostitutes . . . (21)

Guildenstern's disappointment is understandable, because he expected to hear something from the Player that might illuminate him on his destiny or on his future. His disappointment, however, betrays his inability to penetrate the Player's words, which should not be taken at their face value. Robert Egan interprets the first meeting as a missed chance on the part of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

> Yet Guildenstern, in his aversion to the Tragedians, misses the full significance of what they do and what they are. For, despite their sorry condition, the Player and his troupe are that very hint of magic for which Guildenstern has been looking.[124]

This is a very penetrating comment from someone who actually played the role of the Player.[125] Unfortunately, however, it only reflects the Player's point of view. Robert Egan basically understands the Player as a sort of mentor figure to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and suggests that Guildenstern is solely to blame for having failed to grasp the vital vision which the Player is willing to impart.

An actor is someone in whom life and illusion are united, not only in the sense that he does "on stage the things that are supposed to happen off"(22), but that, though his role is written by someone else, his presentation of the role is tempered by what he actually experiences in the off-stage, real life. Referring to the Player, Robert Egan in all

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[124] Ibid., p.97.

[125] Robert Egan played the role of the Player in the New York production of Rosencrantz in October 1967.

probability envisages this vision of the supreme actor. The Player, however, is not that kind of figure. He is a hovering spirit of drama somewhat similar to Dorian. Furthermore, the vision of the supreme actor is largely a metaphor. The fusion of life and illusion is easier to say than to achieve. If there is indeed any actor who actually lives the illusion, he may be, if anything, a madman. So, from a different point of view, an actor is someone permanently divided in life and illusion. What the Player proposes to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, therefore, is to share his vision, to accept the life led solely under illusion: "Everything has to be taken on trust; truth is only that which is taken to be true. It's the currency of living. There may be nothing behind it, but it doesn't make any difference so long as it is honoured."(49) Rosencrantz and Guildenstern wisely refuse to take the Player's invitation. In this context, their first meeting with the Player is not a missed chance, but a wise refusal on their part, setting the dialectic between them and the Player in motion. In Act Two, baffled Guildenstern expects some advice from the Player who knows "his way around", and "which way the wind is blowing".(48) What the Player advises him to do, however, is simply to accept his own situation without any further efforts to find meanings.

> PLAYER: Uncertainty is the normal state. You're nobody special.
>
> (*He makes to leave again.* GUIL *loses his cool.*)
>
> GUIL: But for God's sake what are we supposed to *do*!
>
> PLAYER: Relax. Respond. That's what people do. You can't go through life questioning your situation at every turn. (48)[126]

[126] The Player's advice and Dust's to the Hermit in Next Time I'll Sing to You make a striking analogy. Though it is rather long, I think it is worth quoting in full: "The natural reaction. Relax, my dear fellow—you feel that you don't quite fit into the world, that there's something special about you; you think you feel a friction, as though the world is a badly fitting jacket. But it's not true, I assure you—it's all those nasty tensions that make you feel out of place. Get rid of them; think of beautiful things—think of a nightingale singing in the middle of a wood in the middle of the night with no one to hear it—how perfect a machine it is, that such a thing can happen. You too are part of this machine—an exquisitely balanced cog in a clock that can never go wrong. Relax, my dear fellow—*relax*." James Saunders, Next Time I'll Sing To You, (London: Heineman, 1965), p.55. As is clear in Dust's advice, the Player is urging Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to accept the illusion of theatre wholeheartedly. Besides this occasion, there are striking examples which show that Stoppard borrowed heavily from James Saunders.

It is as if Lord Malquist gave advice to Mr Moon that he should not throw a bomb because he is confused.[127] Rosencrantz and Guildenstern naturally refuse to take the advice.

Guildenstern and the Player are basically unreconcilable as Mr Moon is to Lord Malquist. This is further supported by the fact that the atmosphere of their meetings is always tense and antagonistic throughout the play. When the Player shows indifference to Guildenstern's insistence that he has influence, Guildenstern "*seizes the* PLAYER *violently*".(20) When Guildenstern has found that what the Player offers is prostitution, he "*smashes the* PLAYER *across the face*".(21) The second confrontation of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with the Player in Act Two begins with a threat to the Player. It is virtually a death threat.

> GUIL: So you've caught up.
>
> PLAYER: (*Coldly*) Not yet, sir.
>
> GUIL: Now mind your tongue, or well have it out and throw the rest of you away, like a nightingale at a Roman feast.
>
> ROS: Took the very words out of my mouth.
>
> GUIL: You'd be *lost* for words.
>
> ROS: You'd be tongue-tied.
>
> GUIL: Like a mute in a monologue.
>
> ROS: Like a nightingale at a Roman feast.
>
> GUIL: Your diction will go to pieces.
>
> ROS: Your lines will be cut.
>
> GUIL: To dumbshows.
>
> ROS: And dramatic pauses.
>
> GUIL: You'll never *find* your tongue. (45)

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern carefully select words which indicate a symbolic death for an actor. The Player, however, is too wry to be intimated by the innocent pair, and

[127] Lord Malquist's advice to Mr Moon is actually identical in purport to the Player's: "No, Mr Moon, you'll simply have to change your attitude, disclaim your connection. Idealism is the thin edge of madness - console yourself, dear boy, with the thought that if life is pursuit of perfection then imperfection is the nature of life." Lord Malquist and Mr Moon, p.170.

in no time acts on the offensive, accusing them of leaving in the middle of performance on their first meeting.

> PLAYER: (*Burst out*) We can't look each other in the face! . . . You don't understand the humiliation of it - to be tricked out of the single assumption which makes our existence viable - that somebody is *watching* . . . (46)

For actors, "the opposite of the people"(46) according to the Player, the absence of an audience is death[128]: "The silence was unbreakable, it imposed itself upon us; it was obscene."(47) So, the seemingly harmless meeting in the first act was in fact a fatal confrontation, clearly anticipating Guildenstern's real attempt to kill the Player in Act Three.

When the coin at last turns out "tails", Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are swept into Elsinore, and Hamlet proper begins. Unlike in the original Hamlet, however, it is the other characters who exit, and the pair are left on their own. Once again they spend time with rather meaningless verbal games before Guildenstern relates a little tale about a Chinese philosopher which in essence is a variation of the earlier one of a unicorn.

> A Chinaman of the Tang Dynasty - and, by which definition, a philosopher - dreamed he was a butterfly, and from that moment he was never quite sure that he was not a butterfly dreaming it was a Chinese philosopher. Envy him; in his two-fold security. (44)

Just after Guildenstern finishes this story, Rosencrantz shouts out of the blue, "Fire!", and explains his deed as an attempt to demonstrate "the misuse of free speech!", which makes one of the most entertaining moments in the whole performance. Moments later, facing the audience, Rosencrantz contemptuously remarks, "They should burn to death in their shoes", once again to the audience's laughter. The comic momentum is that

[128] "As the Player's passionate rebuke makes clear, it is performing without an audience which represents 'death for the actor". Tim Brassell, p.58.

Rosencrantz is referring to the Chinese philosopher's story as nonsense. To a Western audience the story will sound rather incomprehensible, if not entirely bizarre. In a way, however, Rosencrantz is supporting Guildenstern's argument by breaking the dramatic convention; Rosencrantz blurs the division of illusion and reality by speaking directly to the audience.

In the Far East, Guildenstern's story is rather well-known as the "Butterfly Dream". The name of the philosopher mentioned is Chuang Tzu, successor of the half-historical and half-mythical figure of Lao Tzu who is generally believed to have founded Taoism. Though Chuang Tzu himself is an ancient figure, the confusion is because Taoism was nationally worshipped in the Tang dynasty. The gist of the Butterfly Dream is that through the process of materialization, everything is distinct from one another, but has originated from the same and one source. Once we realize this truly, all the distinctions we encounter in the everyday world will disappear. Even a butterfly and Chuang-Tzu can be one and the same, and dream is no different from reality.

What Guildenstern's story indicates, therefore, is quite evident; illusion and reality are not so different from each other as they are supposed to be. Guildenstern's mention of "two-fold security" is particularly revealing in this respect. Guildenstern is aware of the dialectic of illusion and reality unlike the Player who, in spite of all the complexities and delicate suggestions he makes, remains fundamentally one-dimensional. What the Player offers is a melodrama from which "occasionally [. . .] there escapes a thin beam of light that, seen at the right angle, can crack the shell of mortality."(61) This is surely a true and profound observation, but it is also true that it is solely based upon the premises of the theatre. Guildenstern will not be persuaded, and rightly so, because he wants to see both sides of the coin, the one and same reality which transcends the division between reality and illusion.

Rosencrantz's direct address to the audience is also highly functional in several ways besides its comic effect. It makes a strong contrast to Hamlet's spitting to the audience, establishing Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as far more congenial characters. Guildenstern's mention of the Chinaman and the Tang Dynasty also serves the same purpose, because the knowledge is exclusively shared between the audience and them. On the other hand, it has its so-called alienation effect; the audience are suddenly reminded that what they are watching is an illusion, and thus are prevented from

identifying themselves too much with the protagonists. This is vitally important, because the ultimate message the pair will deliver is death. An over-identification with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern will bring depression rather than pleasure; as Rosencrantz says, the audience "want to be *entertained* - they don't come expecting sordid and gratuitous filth."(59)

Guildenstern challenges the Player in a clear-cut way just after the Players group's dumbshow, the most baffling part of the play in my opinion.

> GUIL: (*Fear, derision*) Actors! The mechanics of cheap melodrama! That isn't *death*! (*More quietly*) You scream and choke and sink to your knees, but it doesn't bring death home to anyone - it doesn't catch them unawares and start the whisper in their skulls that says - 'One day you are going to die.' (62)

If Guildenstern does not understand the exact significance of the show, he is still aware of some ominous foreboding involved in it. He has just seen that the two spies who are ordered to death by the English king are "*wearing coats identical to those worn by* ROS *and* GUIL".(61) To Guildenstern's remark, however, the Player once again comes up with a well measured counter argument. He supports his own argument by quoting an episode of an actor who was condemned to be hanged for stealing a sheep, and was actually hanged in the middle of a play: "he just *wasn't* convincing! It was impossible to suspend one's disbelief".(62) The paradox of theatre succinctly explained by the Player is that when the distance between illusion and reality is abolished, a drama loses all its credentials as a drama. So, on the surface, the Player seems to have an edge over Guildenstern, for the simple reason that what he says is true. Still, Guildenstern refutes the Player again with an equally convincing argument. The whole exchange between Guildenstern and the Player here is truly an exemplary kind of "leap-frogging".

> No, no, no . . . you've got it all wrong . . . you can't act death. The *fact* of it is nothing to do with seeing it happen - it's not gasps and blood and

> falling about - that isn't what makes it death. It's just a man failing to reappear, that's all - now you see him, now you don't that's the only thing that's real: here one minute and gone the next and never coming back - an exit, unobtrusive and unannounced, a disappearance gathering weight as it goes on, until, finally, it is heavy with death. (62)

What Guildenstern maintains is that death cannot be acted. His argument is based on the one sure assumption that "the only beginning is birth and the only end is death".(30) The truth of Guildenstern's assertion cannot be denied, either. There is an unbridgeable gap between an acting of death and a real death. When we see a death scene on a stage, we all know that the actor(s) is not actually dead. The dumb show has just demonstrated it before Guildenstern's own eyes. At the end of it there are "eight corpses all told"(61), but we all know that they are not actually dead. Paul Delaney supports Guildenstern's argument by saying, "When confronted by the fact of death, all the world is distinctly not a stage."[129] Rosencrantz and Guildenstern recognize, unlike the Player, the absolute finality of the fact of death and their limit of mortality.

The implications of the verbal battle between Guildenstern and the Player, however, do not stop here. As we know, Guildenstern himself is an actor and a character, and will eventually act out death. Hence, the question will come down to whether his own death will be convincing to the audience. And if so, will his death be a real death? The dramatic illusion is also something which is ultimately unbreakable.

The first part of the players' dumbshow is exactly like the one in Hamlet, and as expected, Claudius immediately orders that Hamlet be sent with speed to England. Quite unexpectedly to the pair and the audience, however, the second act of the dumbshow follows, covering the rest of the Hamlet scenes, finally to reveal Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's destiny. With the Player's highly ironic narration, and dextrous handling of the rest of the scenes of Hamlet, the dumb show is a superb

[129] Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays (Basingstoke & London: Macmillan, 1990), p.28. Tim Brassell also says that "death is the stern ultimate 'reality' which cannot be acted or shammed. Guildenstern's sharp awareness of this truth brings the audience to its closest point of contact with Stoppard's frail heroes". Tim Brassell, p.57.

exercise of Stoppard's creative mind. It complicates the overall structure of the play immensely, leading to deeply resounding significances.

As soon as the dumbshow begins, Rosencrantz expresses his wish for "a good story, with a beginning, middle, and end", and Guildenstern joins by saying, "I'd prefer art to mirror life."(59) The dumbshow is, in fact, exactly intended for that. Claudius immediately grasps the point as "the only member of the court who has experienced 'murder i'th garden'".[130] On the other hand, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, even with their knowledge of the past happenings in Elsinore, do not figure out that Lucianus, nephew to the King, is mirroring Hamlet. Rosencrantz, however, is at least perplexed by the fact that the spies are wearing the same coats worn by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

The baffling aspect of the dumb show is its implication that a character in a play knows the plot of the whole play, which is absolutely out of the question. If this happens, the illusion of the theatre, the metaphor of the stage as the world, all collapses. What the dumbshow corroborates is, therefore, that the Player is not a character from Hamlet. Logically speaking, he cannot even be a character in Rosencrantz, because he knows that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Rosencrantz are repeating the roles set forth in Hamlet.

This contradiction is, it seems, imposed out of tactical necessity. A major reason why we can enjoy Rosencrantz without the knowledge of Hamlet is paradoxically that Stoppard rather faithfully presents the whole of Hamlet in his play. The dumb show is vitally instrumental in achieving this, and also functions as a foreshadowing of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's death in the way Mr Moon's death is foreshadowed by the story of an actor narrated by Mr Moon himself. The uncanny analogy is that Mr Moon tried to tell the story early in the novel, but could not. Similarly, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern could have seen their destiny earlier in the play when the Player's group was going to perform their show on the road to Elsinore.

> PLAYER: [. . .] The plot was two corpses gone before we caught sight of ourselves, stripped naked in the middle of nowhere and pouring ourselves down a bottomless well.

[130] Anthony Jenkins, The Theatre of Tom Stoppard, p.45.

ROS: Is *that* thirty-eight? (46)

To those who do not know of Hamlet, the dumbshow will give a clear idea what will happen to the pair in the future, and helps to bring their actions and words into context.

The dumbshow here can also be a metaphor for a potentially revealing moment or event in our lives which will define our future, as in the case of the moment when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern confirms the contents of the changed letter. In this, however, we are no more capable of grasping the full significance than the hapless pair in Rosencrantz.

Already in Act Two, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's notion of death is slowly beginning to take an immediate hue. So Rosencrantz suddenly asks Guildenstern if he "ever thinks of yourself as actually dead, lying in a box with a lid on it".(51) Guildenstern's reply is a simple "no". But Rosencrantz continues:

> Naturally, you'd prefer to be alive. Life in a box is better than no life at all. I expect. You'd have a chance at least. You could lie there thinking - well, at least I'm not dead! In a minute someone's going to bang on the lid and tell me to come out. (52)

The box turns into a boat in Act Three.

> ROS: We might as well be dead. Do you think death could possibly be a boat?
>
> GUIL: No, no, no . . . Death is . . . not. Death isn't. You take my meaning. Death is the ultimate negative. Not-being. You can't not-be on a boat. (79)

At first sight, this sounds like a playful word game, but Guildenstern is consistently making his point that death is ultimately the absence of presence.

As soon as the Third Act begins, it is apparent that they are now on the final journey. Guildenstern aptly summarizes their situation: "we may seize the moment, toss it

around while the moments pass, a short dash here, an exploration there, but we are brought round full circle to face again the single immutable fact - that we, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, bearing a letter from one king to another, are taking Hamlet to England."(74) "England" here is death itself, as John Perlette persuasively argues in his article, "Theatre at the Limit: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead": "when 'England' becomes 'death', England becomes an empty impossibility, unreal because unbelieved and unbelievable."[131] We are inherently inhibited to picture our own death. Similarly Rosencrantz repeatedly emphasizes his incapability of picturing the scene of their arrival in England.[132] Perlette supports this argument by quoting Freud: "Our own death is indeed unimaginable, and whenever we make the attempt to imagine it we can perceive that we really survive as spectators. Hence the psychoanalytic school could venture on the assertion that at bottom no one believes in his own death."[133] Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are spectators in more than one sense.[134]

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's final confrontation with the Player is a sort of structural necessity. The Player group's appearance has made a pattern in the previous two acts, and the ongoing dialectic between Guildenstern and the Player stands unresolved. Just after the pair have found out that the letter is replaced and that it is a death-warrant for them, not for Hamlet, the final confrontation takes place. To Guildenstern's frustrated outcry, "Who are we that so much should converge on our little deaths?" the Player imperviously replies, "You are Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

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[131] John M. Perlette, "Theatre at the Limit: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead," Modern Drama, 28, No. 4 (December 1985), p.661.

[132] "ROS: (*Mournfully*) Not even England. I don't believe in it any way."(78) "ROS: I mean I don't believe it! (*Calmer*) I have no image. I try to picture us arriving, [. . .] But my mind remains a blank. No. We're slipping off the map."(78-79) "I would like to put it on record that I have no confidence in England. Thank you."(79)

[133] John Perlette, p.661.

[134] Stoppard's stress of the concept of "spectator", it seems, also shows the influence of Oscar Wilde. One of the aphorisms collected in the Preface of The Picture of Dorian Gray is that, "It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors." Oscar Wilde gave an explanation to this enigmatic comment in De Profundis: "He [Hamlet] keeps playing with action, as an artist plays with a theory. He makes himself the spy of his proper actions, and listening to his own words knows them to be but 'words, words, words.' Instead of trying to be the hero of his own history, he seeks to be the spectator of his own tragedy." Complete Works of Oscar Wilde, p. 17 and p.1053, respectively. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are spectators, not only because they cannot participate in the meaningful actions, but also because they will not: "ROS: (*To* GUIL) It's going to be chaos on the night./ GUIL: Keep back - we're spectators." (58) Mr Moon is also a spectator: "*He reached out with an iron grip round the snivelling fellow's* [Slaughter's] *throat. 'You dirty rat!' he spat and with one twist—/* But he could only watch. He was a spectator." Lord Malquist and Mr Moon, p.114.

That's enough." To make matters worse, he adds, "In our experience, most things end in death."(90) The enraged Guildenstern stabs the Player, and the conflict between them approaches its conclusion. This sudden act of violence is least expected on the part of the audience. However, as we have seen, the final moment of Guildenstern's exertion has been carefully prepared in the previous meetings.

Guildenstern, together with the audience, believes that the Player is stabbed to death. While the Player is dying, Guildenstern hysterically pronounces:

> If we have a destiny, then so had he - and if this is ours, then that was his and if there are no explanations for us, then let there be none for him - (90)

By stabbing the Player, Guildenstern is trying to confirm his own belief that death cannot be acted. He is resisting the life-threatening force of drama embodied not only in Hamlet but also in the Player. But he fails. It is not that the knife is a stage prop which has a retractable blade, but that the Player's death, if it actually happens, would destroy every premise the whole play is based on. We sympathize with the pair because they are helpless souls entrapped in the inscrutable destiny, reflecting our predicament. In his attempt at murder, Guildenstern is trying to be master of his own destiny by making a verdict on another human being's life, subjecting everything to random happenings, as the Player's death would be the result of Guildenstern's whim and despair.

On the other hand, the Player is virtually indestructible as is foreshadowed by his own words: "Do you know what happens to old actors? [. . .] Nothing. They are still acting. Surprised, then?"(85) Besides being indestructible, he uses Guildenstern's foolish attempt to his own advantage. His performance of dying evokes the tragedians' applause. Even Rosencrantz is completely taken in. At last, the Player, it seems, has vanquished Guildenstern completely, and the last scene of Hamlet starts at the Player's professional cue.

> PLAYER: (*Activated, arms spread, the professional*) Deaths for all ages and occasions! Deaths by suspension, convulsion, consumption,

> incision, execution, asphyxiation and malnutrition - ! Climactic carnage, by poison and by steel - ! Double deaths by duel - ! Show! (ALFRED, *still in his queen's costume, dies by poison: the* PLAYER, *with rapier, kills the King and duels with a fourth* TRAGEDIAN, *inflicting and receiving a wound; the two remaining* TRAGEDIANS, *the two* Spies *dressed in the same coats as* ROS and GUIL, *are stabbed, as before. And the light is fading over the deaths which take place right upstage. Dying amid the dying - tragically; romantically.*) So there's an end to that - it's commonplace: light goes with life, and in the winter of your years the dark comes early . . . (91)

Even in this heavily shortened version, all the characters in Hamlet repeat the same course. Hamlet cannot evade the abominable fate he so much deplored in the original. However, it is at this moment that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern almost free themselves from the destructive, powerful grip of Hamlet. It can easily escape our attention because it "catches us unawares", and also because they themselves die as is predicated by Hamlet.

As characters both in Hamlet and Rosencrantz, it is simply impossible for them to escape from their own deaths. What is important, therefore, is how they die. With all the tragedians dead on the stage, the official story has ended, as the Player declared. However, the few moments between the end and the final curtain are the real interim Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have for themselves, and in it we are presented with another mode of death; that is, simple disappearance. Rosencrantz says "he is relieved", and disappears. A moment later, Guildenstern disappears, too, with his words suddenly cut in the middle: "Now you see me, now you -."(92) That is exactly how Guildenstern has perceived death from the beginning to the end: "It's just a man failing to reappear, that's all - now you see him, now you don't that's the only thing that's real." In theatrical terms, their deaths are far more impressive and real than the tragedians' tragic, romantic deaths. The mode of their deaths also perfectly matches their meaningless existence, and through their deaths, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern finally succeed in presenting a higher degree of reality, and therefore, a higher degree of illusion. At the moment of their disappearance, "a sigh leaks unawares, and we are left

to bear the weight of loss and to experience the pain of absence that Guil has identified as death".[135]

It goes without saying that Rosencrantz is surely an impressive achievement. It translates several of highly complex and abstruse questions into a dramatic language, and still manages to deliver emotional impacts with the least realized characters of the drama history. What should be noted concerning the characters of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, however, is that they are both Stoppardian characters and the ones borrowed from Shakespeare's Hamlet. As Stoppard's creation, they, like Mr Moon, are lost souls entrapped in the chaos of the world. They are desperately trying to establish their own individual identities so that they, as distinctive individuals, can fulfil the roles expected of them. They fail, because they cannot put their existence in order. Their predicament, which is fundamentally identical to Mr Moon's, is more vividly brought in relief in Rosencrantz, because the plot of Hamlet itself serves as the presiding order of the world.

As characters from Hamlet, they are an easily recognizable type, lacking concrete individual characteristics. This largely enables them to claim universality as modern everyman. However, the universality is also undercut by the self-same abstractness. If not in an existential void, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are still in a historical and social void. As the result, they are presented fundamentally as lonely individuals. In this context, Rosencrantz pinpoints the problematic of Stoppardian theatre in general. The Stoppardian world is essentially static in that it is presented cut off from the historical context. This lack of historical consideration, in turn, is compensated for by, for example, elaborate pattern-making and analogies. What underlies this vision is the basic perception that people are just an aggregation of individuals and that the most important things in the world do not change. This perception opens the road to moral and aesthetic absolutism. As I will discuss in the next two chapters, Jumpers and Travesties are the results of Stoppard's conscious efforts to clarify and elaborate on his own *individualistic* and *absolutistic* vision of morality and art which is already embedded in Lord Malquist and Mr Moon and Rosencrantz.

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[135] Anthony Jenkins, The Theatre of Tom Stoppard, p.46.

III. Fundamental Questions: Debates on Morality and Art

A. Jumpers

In an interview which took place in 1974 with the editors of Theatre Quarterly, Stoppard said that "the element which I find most valuable is the one that other people are put off by—that is, that there is very often *no* single, clear statement in my plays. What there is, is a series of conflicting statements made by conflicting characters, and they tend to play a sort of infinite leap-frog. [. . .], so that there is never any point in this intellectual leapfrog at which I feel *that* is the speech to stop it on, *that* is the last word."[136] This comment, in which interestingly is implied a sort of mental gymnastics, has been widely quoted as a possible explanation for the ambiguity permeating Jumpers, Stoppard's second major play which was first staged in London in 1972.[137]

It is questionable, however, if the ambiguity of Jumpers really originates from this kind of intellectual leap-frog as Stoppard argues, because, though Jumpers takes the form of a debate drama, we do not see any lively arguments between the opposing viewpoints. McFee, who is supposed to do the leap-frog with George, the protagonist, at the annual symposium, is killed immediately after the play opens. As a result, he stays on the stage as a dead body before it is removed by his colleagues at the end of Act One, and what we come to know about his philosophical tenets and moral position is relayed to us through George as he quotes him a couple of times. Similarly, Archie, the main opponent of George, is largely absent in the first act, and we owe what we

[136] "Ambushes for the Audience," Theatre Quarterly, pp.6-7.

[137] When Jumpers arrived at the Old Vic in London in 1972, it was an instant success. The academic criticism was also largely favourable. Michael Hinden wrote that "it is not only Stoppard's most ambitious work, but stands as one of the most energetic plays of the seventies". According to Anthony Jenkins, Jumpers "up to the present moment at least, stands as his most completely achieved stage work". Felicia Londré expressed her opinion that it is "the supreme dramatic achievement in Stoppard's canon to date". However, a few critics were consistently unpersuaded. Kauffmann dubbed it as "a fake, structurally and thematically", and Schwaniz's assessment is that "as a whole, the attempt miscarries". John Weightman, who felt so dubious about Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, also commented, "According to my antennae, quite a few bits of this play have not been brought fully into intellectual or aesthetic focus."(45) Michael Hinden, "Jumpers: Stoppard and the Theater of Exhaustion," Twentieth Century Literature, 27, (1981), p.13. Anthony Jenkins, p.76. Felicia Hardison Londré, p. 49. Stanley Kauffmann, Persons of the Drama: Theater Criticism and Comment (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), p.241. Dietrich Schwanitz, "The Method of Madness: Tom Stoppard's Theatrum Logico-Philosophicum." in Essays on Contemporary British Drama, Hedwig Bock and Albert Wertheim, ed. (München: Max Hueber Verlag, 1984), p.145. John Weightman, "Jumpers: a Metaphysical Comedy," Encounter, 38, (1972), p.45.

know about him to Dotty's report on him. Even in the Second Act, where he has significant presence, he is depicted simply as an abominable person.

Archie is head of the jumpers as the Player is of his troupe in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.[138] Unlike the Player, however, Archie is not engaged in any convincing argument with his counterpart. Compared with George's lengthy monologues, what Archie says in terms of moral debate, remains almost minimal. When at last he is given a proper chance to speak at the annual symposium, his argument does not even make coherent sense.

> Indeed, if moon mad herd instinct, is God dad the inference? - to take another point: If goons in mood, by Gad is sin different or banned good, f'r'instance? - thirdly: out of the ether, random nucleic acid testes or neither universa vice, to name but one - fourthly: If the necessary being isn't, surely mother of inventions as Voltaire said, not to mention Darwin different from the origin of the specious - to sum up: Super, both natural and stitious, sexual ergo cogito er go-go sometimes, as Descartes said, and who are we? Thank you. (73)

The excuse is that the symposium is taking place in George's dream. However, like Tzara's poems in Travesties, Archie's presentation is not complete nonsense.[139] Archie here, rather accurately, recapitulates the central questions of Jumpers; whether or not God is dead, whether God is a logical necessity if only for the absolute moral standard, whether man is the end-product of Darwinian evolution, with the summing up that man is the thinking being, sometimes doing mental gymnastics ("cogito er go-go sometimes"). Obviously, however, this cannot be said to be a rigorous proposition of the philosophical knowledge or doctrine from Archie's part.

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[138] The analogy is most apparent when Dotty jeers at the human pyramid which the jumpers are making: "(*Jeers*) Jumpers I've *had* - yellow, I've had them all! *In*credible, *barely* credible, credible and all too bloody likely - When I say jump, *jump*!" (12) This is a variation of Guildenstern's story of the unicorn just before he meets the Player's group.

[139] The following is Katherine Kelly's paraphrasing of part of Archie's words: "If moon man has instinct, is the death of God to be inferred from it? To take another point: If good is in the moon [if God can be said to exist on the moon?], then is sin to be defined as a quality different from God or as the absence of good; thirdly, [has the universe arisen] either out of the ether or out of random mixing of gases, or neither [or] vice versa?" Katherine Kelly, p.102.

In my opinion, the ambiguity of Jumpers is partly imposed by the author and partly inevitable. It is imposed because Stoppard's sympathy with George and his antipathy against the jumpers are all too apparent. In this situation, it will be extremely difficult to maintain a balanced debate.[140] Archie is presented as "a spiv"[141] who masterminded the murder of McFee, and turned it into a suicide like a magician. He is also having an affair with his colleague's wife under the pretence of medical treatment.[142] So, his last comment at the end of Act Two comes as a surprise, because there is suddenly a tone of the author's endorsement in it.

> The truth to us philosophers, Mr Crouch, is always an interim judgement. We will never even know for certain who did shoot McFee. Unlike mystery novels, life does not guarantee a denouement; and if it came, how would one know whether to believe it? (72)

This is a fair judgement, because, though McFee was certainly murdered, the murderer has not yet been brought to justice, and it does not seem that he will ever be. Moreover, this conclusive comment makes such a contrast to George's panic-stricken cry of "Help! Murder!" that the Coda scene seems to be almost a necessity in spite of many critics' mention of its structural defect. The main function of the Coda is, in my opinion, to make it clearer that Archie is the murderer of McFee. Clegthorpe, an agnostic who was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by the Rad-Lib government, experienced a conversion, as McFee did, and gets killed by the jumpers under Archie's order, a replica of what happened to McFee in all probability. Still, Archie is the one who, following George near the end of the Coda, delivers the last lengthy argument which, except for bland optimism, does not sound so sinister. Consequently, we cannot help feeling that there are some incongruities in the presentation of Archie, because the balance between George and Archie at the final moment is not the result of a consistent dramatic development.

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[140] The Lenin episode in Travesties is a useful example.
[141] A. J. Ayer, "Love Among the Logical Positivists," The Sunday Times, 9 April 1972, p.16.
[142] There is no evidence as such to confirm this. I will come to this issue shortly.

The ambiguity of Jumpers arises inevitably because Stoppard is caught in a sort of vicious circle in his handling of the ideas, and the ambiguity itself is intended to be an integral part of the play. George's position is well established as a moral absolutist who believes that God is the source of the absolute standard. The jumpers are, however, a mixed bunch: "Logical positivists, mainly, with a linguistic analyst or two, a couple of Benthamite Utilitarians . . . lapsed Kantians and empiricists generally . . . and of course the usual Behaviourists".(41) They may well be atheists, but are they necessarily moral relativists? From George's, and indeed Stoppard's, point of view, they are moral relativists because they are atheists, in other words, because they deny the presence of the absolute God. As I will argue later, however, the absolute moral standard is not necessarily based upon the Christian God. Hence, it could be said that the focus of confrontation is slightly out of joint. Moreover, the charge seems to be too exaggerated for, say, a logical positivist that he will kill someone because of the change of a philosophical view.

However, there is a real threat which all those jumpers pose: they are the forces who are trying to remove mysteries in the world, and turn the world into a giant clockwork-like mechanism. Surrounded by them, George is a ludicrous dissenter because of his "aptitude for reducing a complex and logical thesis to a mysticism of staggering banality."(63) George's modesty, however, could be a well-considered pre-emptive move, because what he rather apologetically refers to as "a mysticism of staggering banality" is his central argument of "*Cogito ergo deus est*".(63) On the other hand, McFee "never put himself at risk by finding mystery in the clockwork".(63) In this context, the real opposition in Jumpers can better be defined as *mystery* versus *clockwork.*

Naturally, the strategy to discredit clockwork is to underscore the fact that the world is full of mysteries which cannot be reasoned away. In this, Stoppard succeeds, but if the world is so much laden with mysteries, another problem inevitably arises, namely, where to locate George's absolutism, or to put it more bluntly, is absolutism possible at all? It is no wonder that George complains from time to time somewhat like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern or Mr Moon, "How does one know what it is one believes when it's so difficult to know what it is one knows."(62) The only way left for

George, therefore, is to jump, so he jumps to God, that is, the absolute,[143] though he regards "all sudden movements as ill-bred".(42)

They all jump, George and the jumpers. The difference, however, is that while McFee "left nothing behind but a vacancy,"(63) George leaves something behind, which is, in my opinion, "the last word, the speech to stop it on" in the above-quoted Stoppard's interview.

The half-way solution of McFee's murder case is an example of the dilemma Stoppard faces in handling the ideas. Kenneth Tynan objected to the ambiguity surrounding the murder mystery on practical grounds.

> Even if Tom rejects the idea of saying who did it, I'm certain that there should be at least a statement to the effect that it doesn't *matter* who did it. As things stand, the question we've been asking all evening is simply ignored at the end. I don't think it can be set aside so lightly—not only for theatrical reasons, but also because murder is a crime against morality and one of our main themes is the validity of morality.[144]

Despite the repeated objections,[145] Stoppard decided to leave the mystery unresolved. It is not so difficult to reason why. A clear-cut solution will give the impression that mysteries in the world can be solved, and therefore, the jumpers' argument will gain support; on the other hand, if the murder case is simply left in mystery, it will destroy the moral argument of the whole play. The result is a compromise which falls short of a definite resolution, but suggests enough as to who is behind the murder. As I have

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[143] "Yet, ironically, George does wind up being a 'Jumper,' in still another sense of that multi-layered pun: he makes a 'leap' into faith. George's God, like all metaphysical 'certainties,' is pulled out of his hat rather than his head: produced, not by the thoughtwaves of a logical mind, but by the handwaves of a magical wand." Hersh Zeifman, "Tomfoolery: Stoppard's Theatrical Puns," in Anthony Jenkins, ed., Critical Essays on Tom Stoppard, p. 185. In my opinion, however, it would be more appropriate to describe George's jump as a jump to the absolute, because a religious god is not George's interest.

[144] Quoted from Barbara Kreps, "How Do We Know That We Know What We Know in Tom Stoppard's Jumpers," Twentieth Century Literature, 32, No.2 (Summer 1986), 192.

[145] On another occasion Kenneth Tynan complains, "I know Tom's objection to this, but I still maintain that to set up a whodunit and not reveal whodidit is very confusing. The audience will feel cheated." Ibid., p.191.

already mentioned, the Coda is a structural necessity because how and why McFee was murdered is revealed in the mirroring event of Clegthorpe's death.

Dotty's affair is a similar case. Even to George, Archie's daily visits to Dotty look suspicious.[146] In the Second Act, George directly challenges Archie about his relationship with Dotty.

> GEORGE: [(. . .)] You must think I'm a bloody fool!
>
> ARCHIE: What do you mean?
>
> GEORGE: Well, everything you do makes it *look* as if you're . . .
>
> (*Pause.*)
>
> ARCHIE: Well, what would it have *looked* like if it had *looked* as if I were making a dermatographical examination.(69)

Archie suavely evades George's charge and makes his point. Indeed, there is no evidence as such to confirm the affair between Archie and Dotty, though apparently they are not in a normal doctor-patient relationship. As a result, most critics reserve their judgement about the nature of this affair except D. Z. Philips who asserts that "Any idiot should be able to see it."[147] D. Z. Philips in a way attests to Stoppard's success because what Stoppard wants is to get it both ways.

Stoppard is said to have begun writing Jumpers only with the image of a collapsing human pyramid. The effectiveness of the image as such in theatrical terms is questionable, but Stoppard succeeds in transforming it as the most powerful symbol of the play, exploiting to the full the theatrical potential of the image. It could mean any artificial system built out of human aspiration to defy God, and in Jumpers, it is particularly related with the philosophical movement called Logical Positivism. The collapsing human pyramid, therefore, is a visual equivalent to Stoppard's poignant

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[146] "GEORGE: [. . .] Now let us see. What can we make of it all? Wife in bed, daily visits by gentleman caller. Does anything suggest itself? / DOTTY: (*Calmly*) Sounds to me he's the doctor." (24)

[147] D. Z. Phillips, From Fantasy to Faith: The Philosophy of Religion and Twentieth-Century Literature (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Education, 1991), p.109.

criticism that logical positivist movement is doomed to fail because of its false premises.

In 1936, A. J. Ayer published Language, Truth and Logic, a most well-known text of Logical Positivism. In it, Ayer proclaimed that the radical philosophy of Logical positivism solved all the traditional metaphysical questions of philosophy. In fact, they were not solved, but simply excluded from the proper realm of philosophy, because, according to logical positivists, "no statement which refers to a 'reality' transcending the limits of all possible sense-experience can possibly have any literal significance".[148] Ayer further argued that "the validity of the analytic method is not dependent on any empirical [. . .] presupposition about the nature of things". Therefore, the philosopher is "concerned only with the way in which we speak about them [the physical properties of things]".[149] As a result, language analysis takes the place of primary philosophical concern.

If it is rightly pointed out, however, that language and sense-experience, the core means of the logical positivist approach, are limited in many ways, their adamant proclamation will inevitably collapse. This is the basic tactic Stoppard employed in Jumpers. Almost all of the comic devices such as charade, cross-talking, and theatrical puns (language), and many episodes and aural, visual images (sense-experience), not to mention the central episodes of McFee's murder and Dotty's affair, are organized in such a way that the inadequacies of language and sense-experience as credible means for scientific analysis may be exposed. To show how the tactic works in Jumpers, I think, a brief account of After Magritte and Artist Descending a Staircase will be effective enough, because both works largely deal with the self-same question.

In After Magritte, Stoppard dramatizes the clash between appearance and reality with his usual ingenuity. The central episode is about a man the Harris family saw on the street when they came out of an exhibition featuring René Magritte. Though they have seen an identical man, all of them relate different accounts of him. Harris insists that "he was an old man with one leg and a white beard, dressed in pyjamas, hopping along

[148] A. J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic (Penguin Books, 1971), p.46. His definition of "The Principle of Verification" is that "a sentence had literal meaning if and only if the proposition it expressed was either analytic or empirically verifiable". Ibid., p.7.

[149] Ibid., p.76.

in the rain with a tortoise under his arm and brandishing a white stick",[150] while Thelma asserts that he was a young man "i[I]n pyjamas, if you insist, striped in the colours of West Bromwich Albion, if you allow, carrying under his arm, if not a football then something very similar like a wineskin or a pair of bagpipes, and swinging a white stick in the form of an ivory cane".[151] Mother also has her own story: "He was playing hopscotch on the corner, a man in the loose-fitting striped gaberdine of a convicted felon. He carried a handbag under one arm, and with the other he waved at me with a cricket bat."[152] The man in question, however, was Inspector Foot, who rushed out in the middle of shaving to put his car in the only parking space left when Harris was pulling out his car.

> I flung down my razor and rushed into the street, pausing only to grab my wife's handbag containing the small change and her parasol to keep off the rain [. . .] I couldn't unfurl the damned thing, and I couldn't move fast because in my haste to pull up my pyjama trousers I put both feet into the same leg.[153]

The moment he finishes his story, lights come on, indicating that the puzzle has been solved. Still, the characters remain confused, and the play ends with another absurd tableau like the opening one.

Artist Descending a Staircase [154]is a highly achieved work, generally regarded as the precursor to Travesties. However, its relevance to Jumpers is more remarkable than After Magritte. In it Stoppard attacks Dadaist avant-garde art in a way similar to his attack of the jumpers in Jumpers. Beauchamp, like Archie, is described as a repugnant character throughout. It is not just because he pretends to be a serious artist while

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[150] After Magritte in The Real Inspector Hound and Other Entertainments (The Real Inspector Hound, After Magritte, Dirty Linen and New-Found-Land, Dogg's Hamlet and Cahoot's Macbeth) (London: Faber and Faber, 1993), p.55. Quotations from each play are from this anthology throughout.

[151] Ibid., p.56.

[152] Ibid., p.67.

[153] Ibid., pp.71-72.

[154] Artist Descending a Staircase was aired in 1972. Quotations from Stoppard's radio plays are all from the following anthology throughout. Tom Stoppard, Stoppard: The Plays for Radio 1964—1991 (The Dissolution of Dominic Boot, 'M' is for Moon Among Other Things, If You're Glad I'll be Frank, Albert's Bridge, Where Are They Now?, Artist Descending a Staircase, The Dog It Was That Died, In the Native State) (London: Faber and Faber, 1994).

producing practically meaningless sounds. It is more to do with his reckless and irresponsible love affair with Sophie. Donner, on the other hand, sticks to his love all his life, winning our sympathy in the end.

The most poignant irony is that it was in fact Donner with whom Sophie actually fell in love. Sophie was almost blind when she attended the first exhibition by Beauchamp, Martello and Donner. There, she was instantly attracted to one of them who stood by a painting of a snow scene. The only snow scene that there was, was painted by Beauchamp, so it was settled that Beauchamp was the one Sophie had in mind. However, later when Sophie was living with Beauchamp, it occurred to Martello that her description of the painting was more likely to be Donner's.

> MARTELLO: [. . .] she described it briefly, and I had an image of black vertical railings, like park railings, right across the canvas, as though one were looking at a field of snow through the bars of a cage; not like Beauchamp's snow scene at all.
>
> DONNER: But it was the only snow scene.
>
> ------
>
> MARTELLO: Well, your painting of the white fence------
>
> DONNER: White fence?
>
> MARTELLO: Thick white posts, top to bottom across the whole canvas, an inch or two apart, black in the gaps-----
>
> DONNER: Yes, I remember it. Oh God.[155]

It was the trick of senses which cost Sophie her life and Donner his love for her. The legal term applied to her fatal accident was "defenestration", and like her, Donner also dies from falling as the artist "descending a staircase". So the title of the drama which is coined after the famous painting "Nude Descending a Staircase" by Duchamp is no idle joke.

It is in the case of Donner's death that Stoppard pushes our sense-experience to a test situation. The drama begins with a series of a sounds which surely suggest a murder case.

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[155] Artist Descending a Staircase, pp.153-154.

(*a*) Donner *dozing: an irregular droning noise.*

(b) *Careful footsteps approach. The effect is stealthy. A board creaks.*

(*c*) *This wakes* Donner, *i.e. the droning stops in mid-beat.*

(*d*) *The footsteps freeze.*

(*e*) Donner'*s voice, unalarmed: 'Ah! There you are . . .'*

(*f*) *Two more quick steps, and then Thump!*

(*g*) Donner *cries out.*

(*h*) *Wood cracks as he falls through a balustrade.*

(*i*) *He falls heavily down the stairs, with a final sickening thump when he hits the bottom. Silence.*[156]

It is unimaginable at this stage that the "irregular droning noise" is made by a fly. We are left with no other choice but to believe that Donner is murdered. However, the prime suspects, i.e. Beauchamp and Martello, do not seem to have any motive to murder their friend. It is not until the end of the play that another possibility dawns upon us when we hear the sounds again in a different context.

(*a*) *Fly droning.*

(*b*) *Careful footsteps approach. A board creaks.*

(*c*) *The fly settles.*

(*d*) BEAUCHAMP *halts.*

(*e*) BEAUCHAMP: '*Ah! There you are.*'

(*f*) *Two more quick steps and then; Thump!*[157]

Now it seems more likely that Donner accidentally fell down the stairs while trying to catch a fly. However, there is no confirmation of the fact. The conclusion remains rather elusive just like the end of After Magritte, and we are left doubting how we can know anything for certain "when our very means of discovery are themselves highly suspect".[158]

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[156] Ibid., p.113.
[157] Ibid., p.156.
[158] Hersh Zeifman, "Tomfoolery: Stoppard's Theatrical Puns," p.185.

Stoppard repeats the same kind of visual, aural, and lingual jokes in Jumpers. George opens the door for Inspector Bones, "holding a bow and arrow in one hand and a tortoise in the other, his face covered in shaving foam".(34) When Bones, a passionate admirer of Dotty, first meets Dotty in her bedroom, a series of sounds are heard which have double contexts. The dermatographical picture of Dotty's skin must be very different from what we usually associate with the naked body of a beautiful woman, as a real picture of the surface of the moon is different from what it looks like to us.

A most ingenious and at the same time hilarious device is the "Cognomen Syndrome". Understandably, it is Archie's "baby", and he himself is infected with it as he freely admits: "I've got it. Jumper's the name - my card."(52) However, it is Inspector Bones's brother who really suffered from it, because he was an osteopath. Following Archie's advice, he changed his name to "Foot", and became interested in chiropody. He ended up in an asylum, which seems to be the right and final place for him. The episode undermines Archie's credentials as a psychiatrist, and at the same time, the comic implication undermines the appropriateness of language as a reliable means for scientific or philosophical research.

George's task is to break through the ambiguities to the absolute. Not surprisingly, he wants to establish the existence of God. His interest in God, however, has nothing to do with religious belief: "If God exists, he certainly existed before religion. He is a philosopher's God, logically inferred from self-evident premises. That he should have been taken up by a glorified supporters' club is only a matter of psychological interest."(30) Still, God's existence is the overwhelming question from which the absolute standard of morality will be derived.

George's demonstration of God's existence, however, is more impressive as comedy-cum-parody than as a rigorous development of logical reasoning. His argument is mainly the one which is known as "The First Cause Argument".

> [...] taking first the God of Creation - or to give him his chief philosophical *raison d'être*, the First Cause - we see that a supernatural or divine origin is the logical consequence of the assumption that one

thing leads to another, and that this series must have had a first term; (18)

However, this argument has a serious defect as Russell succinctly pointed out in his lecture, "Why I Am Not a Christian".

> I may say that when I was a young man and was debating these questions very seriously in my mind, I for a long time accepted the argument of the First Cause, until one day, at the age of 18, I read John Stuart Mill's Autobiography, and I there found this sentence: 'My father taught me that the question, "Who made me?" cannot be answered, since it immediately suggests the further question, "Who made God?"' That very simple sentence showed me, as I still think, the fallacy in the argument of the First Cause."[159]

Still, George reasons that to prove God's existence he has only to counter-argue the reduction to absurdity as is implied in the infinite series of cause and effect. So, he introduces Zeno's paradox, which almost like an example of magic through logic, puts forward a curious proposition that an arrow shot towards a target could neither get to the target nor move at all.

For a live demonstration to disprove Zeno's paradox at the annual symposium, George has prepared a bow and arrow, and "specially trained hare and tortoise", jokingly following the precedence of G. E. Moore, the renowned English philosopher, who raised both his hands to prove "that two human hands exist" in a lecture entitled "Proof of an External World" at the British Academy in 1939.[160] Unfortunately, however, while dictating the draft for the presentation at the symposium, George misfires the arrow as Dotty shouts "Fire!" in her bedroom to attract his attention. In the final scene of Act Two, George discovers Thumper, his hare, impaled on his misfired arrow on top of the cupboard. Subsequently, when he comes down from a chair, he fatally steps on

[159] Bertrand Russell, Why I Am Not a Christian, pp.4-5. The lecture was delivered on March 6, 1927. A. J. Ayer also pointed out in his article, "Love among the Logical Positivists," that, "For the creator he relies on the first-cause argument, which is notoriously fallacious, since it starts from the assumption that everything must have a cause and ends with something that lacks one."

Pat, his tortoise, to his horror and consternation. Stoppard's ingenious touch is to let George succeed in his demonstration with the fatal accidents, while the merit of his whole argument is effectively put into question at the same time.

To disprove Zeno's paradox will not help George to demonstrate the existence of God, which is in the end a matter of belief, but the whole process of George's demonstration is an integral part of the play, not only because of its comic and philosophical value but as a superb parody of the philosophers in general who are out of touch with the everyday world. Some philosophical argument which must be a crystal-clear logical reasoning, could look like a Dadaist poem to a layman. Still, philosophers command respect from us, indulging themselves in rarefied discussions of philosophy. Stoppard exposes them through George, who is cut off from everyone including his wife and his secretary who are supposed to be closest to him. His wife is having an affair with Archie, his main opponent, and his secretary is secretly betrothed to McFee, Archie's protégé. Engrossed in his own metaphysical question of God's existence and moral absolute, he does not know what is happening in the outside world where man has landed on the moon, and the Rad-Libs have seized power through coup. What happens ultimately to the hare and the tortoise graphically betrays George's inadequacies not only as a philosopher but also as a man.

Another argument George elaborates on to prove the existence of God is related to a geometric concept. Though rather long, I think it worth quoting in full.

> There is in mathematics a concept known as a limiting curve, that is the curve defined as the limit of a polygon with an infinite number of sides. For example, if I had never seen a circle and didn't know how to draw one, I could nevertheless postulate the existence of circles by thinking of them as regular polygons with numberless edges, so that an old threepenny-bit would be a bumpy imperfect circle which would approach perfection if I kept doubling the number of its sides: at infinity the result would be the circle which I have never seen and do not know how to draw, and which is logically implied by the existence of

[160] A. J. Ayer, Russell and Moore: The Analytical Heritage (London: Macmillan, 1971), pp.170-171.

> polygons. And now and again, not necessarily in the contemplation of polygons or newborn babes, nor in extremities of pain or joy, but more probably in some quite trivial moment, it seems to me that life itself is the mundane figure which argues perfection at its limiting curve. And if I doubt it, the ability to doubt, to question, to *think*, seems to be the curve itself. *Cogito ergo deus est*. (62-63)

The logic itself, it seems to me, is as erroneous as the case of the First Cause Argument, because what George actually argues is that the existence of God can only be inferred. So indeed, God seems to have "any number of predicates including omniscience, perfection and four-wheel-drive but not, as it happens, existence".(16) This surely falls short of a successful demonstration. Moreover, George's declaration of "*Cogito ergo deus est*" is a sort of double jumping; the moment he jumps to Cartesian Cogito, he jumps further to the existence of God.

Even Cartesian Cogito could be a sort of mental jump. Norman Smith, reviewing Descartes' metaphysics from a critical point of view, voices an objection to Cartesian Cogito as follows: "When used, however, to prove existence, the 'I' is illegitimately brought in. The present consciousness does not afford us any indubitable certainty of our having existed in the past or of continuing to exist in the future, and yet such implications of continuity of existence the use of the 'I' certainly involves."[161] Furthermore, George's jumping from human consciousness through the existence of 'I' to the existence of God seems to be an inverted course of Descartes' argument on God's existence: "The idea of God is, therefore, the primary fact in our consciousness, and makes possible the consciousness of the self as a doubting finite being."[162]

What really matters in George's argument, however, is not the question of God, but of "life". The focus of George's discourse is delicately shifted from God to humanity as he argues "life itself is the mundane figure which argues perfection at its limiting curve". In all probability, this is "the speech to stop it [endless leap-frog] on" in Jumpers. George here voices Stoppard's own conviction around which the whole play is constructed. Our existence is imperfect, but the true significance of it lies in our

[161] Norman Smith, Studies in the Cartesian Philosophy (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962) p.50.
[162] Ibid., p.57.

incessant efforts to strive for perfection, aided by a deep moral conviction in ourselves and the world. If the vital mysteries are removed from us, the world will be a place totally mechanized, and our quest for perfection will be at a dead end. Stoppard's objection to the jumpers can be better understood from this point of view than from that of moral absolutism or the necessity of God's existence.

As I commented in the previous chapter, this attitude has been the true Stoppardian position throughout his career. The most important theme of Arcadia is also the confirmation of this searching, questioning spirit of humanity. The difference between Jumpers and Arcadia, however, is that this vital message forces itself upon us in Arcadia, while in Jumpers we have to try hard to catch it. It is due in no small degree to the fact that Jumpers lacks a coherent plot. Though the murder mystery kicks in as soon as the play opens, which is inevitable because of the collapsing human pyramid, it does not develop into a compelling plot.[163] This lack of a plot is made up for, on the one hand, by the historic events of man's moon landing and the Rad-Lib's election win which form the backdrop like "the funeral of the most important man in the world" in Lord Malquist and Mr Moon, and, on the other, by the intricate cobweb of allusions, images, episodes, and theatrical puns, and so on. Still, they lack the gravity to make enduring emotional and intellectual impact, and to a certain degree obscure the central message.

At the centre of George's moral argument is the question of 'altruism', which is worth attention because it is directly linked to another central event of Jumpers, that is, man's moon-murder. Otherwise, I should say, there is nothing particularly interesting or convincing in George's moral argument. None other than A. J. Ayer himself precisely pointed out its problem: "morality is very largely founded on sympathy and affection, and for these one does not require religious sanctions".[164] The story of the Good Samaritan contains an important moral, not because it is a parable from the Bible, but because it exemplifies the universal moral principle called "the principle of reversibility": "the behaviour in question must be acceptable to a person whether he is

[163] "Jumpers opens dramatically with a murder. Yet, again, this is not so much the beginning of a plot as the first in a series of farcical incidents, coincidences, mistaken identities, and misunderstandings." Gabrielle S. Robinson, "Plays without Plot: The Theatre of Tom Stoppard," English Theatre Studies, 29, (1977), p. 46.

at the 'giving' or 'receiving' end of it".[165] Moreover, altruism itself is part of moral obligation.

> The principle of reversibility does not merely impose certain prohibitions on a moral agent, but also certain positive injunctions. It is, for instance, wrong - an omission - not to help another person when he is in need and when we are in a position to help him. The story of the Good Samaritan makes the point. The positive version of the Golden Rule makes the same point more generally: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you'. Note that it is wrong - not merely not meritorious - to omit to help others when they are in need and when you are in a position to help them.[166]

As is shown here, the moral absolute can be established without resorting to the religious God. Linking the moral absolute to the religious absolute, in a way, can actually undermine moral premises because of the extreme self-righteousness related with religious fervour. It is not the moral relativism, but the absolute belief that they were right, that they were in the vanguard of the progress of history, which led communists to commit many deplorable crimes.

George's moral argument, however, gets the strongest endorsement from quite an unexpected source. The two moon-men's fighting on the moon highlights the moral disaster prevailing on the planet Earth. The irony is only too apparent, because they share the names of the historic explorers, Captain Scott and Lawrence Oates. While broadcast nation-wide, Captain Scott kicks Astronaut Oates off from the ladder of the spaceship, saying, "I am going up now. I may be gone for some time",(14) which are reportedly the final words from the explorer Oates[167] who sacrificed "his life to give his companions a slim chance of survival".(70-71)

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[164] A. J. Ayer, "Love among the Logical Positivists".

[165] Kurt Baier, "The moral point of view" in The Definition of Morality, G. Wallace and A. D. M. Walker, ed. (London: Methuen, 1970), p.201.

[166] Ibid.

[167] "His [Captain Oates's] taciturn exit line was, 'I am just going outside and may be gone for some time.'" Mary R. Davidson, "Historical Homonyms: A New Way of Naming in Tom Stoppard's Jumpers," Modern Drama, 22, (1979), 308.

The fighting on the moon was the decisive event which resulted in McFee's conversion. According to Crouch, McFee "kept harking back to the first Captain Oates"(70) and admitted that "If altruism is a possibility, my argument is up a gum tree. . ."(71) George has effectively won his debate even without having had one.

The symbolic significance of the moonmen's fighting is unquestionable because of the emotional impact, but a doubt lingers whether it is an appropriate example for a proper moral argument. Captain Scott's act is deplorable only because he shows no humane concern for the tragedy of Astronaut Oates, but he cannot be blamed for his own survival. It will not be an alternative for both of them to refuse to survive because one of them has to die. It seems that theirs is a situation where a question of morality cannot be involved, because either survivor would be both morally right and wrong. Paul Delaney, however, most eloquently explains the significance of the event.

> Stoppard thus creates a situation in which murder is seen in isolation. Sociological, economic, psychoanalytic, and cultural contexts are removed, and we see the cold-blooded decision of one man to kill a fellow human being in order to save his own neck. [. . .] Stoppard isolates his Cain and Abel in a new unpeopled world and forces us to witness, in this modern context, the first murder in the world.[168]

If indeed it is the case as Paul Delaney argues, what possible meaning may the murder on the moon have in relation to the real situations in the world, where we cannot be freed from "sociological, economic, psychoanalytic, and cultural contexts"? Contrary to his argument, Captain Scott is to blame because he is not entirely cut off from the earth. To argue at all that men are capable of behaving in this gratuitously harmful way in an absolutely isolated condition would amount to an extreme cynicism. Interestingly, George's conclusion of his moral argument at the end of the first act is not a stark absolutism, but a carefully balanced opinion.

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[168] Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays, p.51.

> The irreducible fact of goodness is not implicit in one kind of action any more than in its opposite, but in the existence of a relationship between the two. It is the sense of comparisons being in order. (46)

This is not George's main stance in Jumpers. George is largely described throughout the play as a moral absolutist and the quotation above remains rather an isolated argument. Even so, however, the significance of the quoted argument is considerable, because it demonstrates that George, and Stoppard, too, knows the limit of the uncompromised absolutism.

In the much quoted article, "Philosophy and Mr Stoppard", Jonathan Bennett concludes about Jumpers that "there is nothing here that deserves the attention of philosophers".[169] To this, Henning Jensen answers back in the same journal by arguing that though the philosophical materials are "thin and uninteresting", the author is well aware of it, and that Jumpers raises a serious philosophical issue as "a trenchant criticism of any philosophical activity which [. . .] lacks seriousness and depth". [170] George's argument in the end should not be evaluated solely in terms of its philosophical validity in that Jumpers is not a philosophical thesis, but a text for a highly theatrical event. What is interesting about George's argument is that it appeals not to intellect but to emotion. George never fails to embroider his argument with lively figurative expressions and intimate instances. An example of the highest standard is the punch line with which George enlivens his explication of Zeno's paradox: "[. . .] though an arrow is always approaching its target, it never quite gets there, and Saint Sebastian died of fright".(19) With this, the paradox is virtually unriddled even before it is properly introduced. If we forget the actual contents of George's argument, it is unlikely that we will ever forget this superb example of verbal ingenuity.

Just before George delivers his central argument of "*Cogito ergo deus est*", he also warms the audience up with his usual tactic.

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[169] Jonathan Bennett, "Philosophy and Mr Stoppard," Philosophy, 50, (1975), 8.
[170] Henning Jensen, "Jonathan Bennett and Mr Stoppard," Philosophy, 52, (1977), p.214, p.216.

> And yet I tell you that, now and again, not necessarily in the contemplation of rainbows or newborn babes, nor in extremities of pain or joy, but more probably ambushed by some quite trivial moment - say the exchange of signals between two long-distance lorry-drivers in the black sleet of a god-awful night on the old A1 - then, in that dip-flash, dip-flash of headlights in the rain that seems to affirm some common ground that is not animal and not long-distance lorry-driving - then I tell you I *know* - I sound like a joke vicar, new paragraph. (62)

George here demonstrates Stoppard's typical strategy for his argument, which could be justifiably termed as "begging the question" as a purely logical term without the rather derogatory connotation associated with it in its everyday applications. George sidesteps the argument in such a way that the audience cannot detect the flaw of the logic. And then, at the final moment he backs down with a self-accusation which is usually irresistibly comic. The result is that the whole argument is reinforced instead of being dismantled. What makes it all the more effective is the delivery of apt and emotionally-charged words like, in this case, "rainbow, newborn babe, pain, joy, signal exchange, A1", and so forth.

This strategy is perfectly at work at one of the most significant moments of Jumpers when George outbursts to Dotty when she, quoting Archie, remarks that "the Church is a monument to irrationality".

> The National Gallery is a monument to irrationality! Every concert hall is a monument to irrationality! - and so is a nicely kept garden, or a lover's favour, or a home for stray dogs! You stupid woman, if rationality were the criterion for things being allowed to exist, the world would be one gigantic field of soya beans!
> (*He picks up his tortoise and balances it lovingly on the palm of his hand, at the level of his mouth. Apologetically.*) Wouldn't it, Pat? (30)

Apparently it is not logic or other philosophical considerations that makes George's argument so powerful. The language is emotional and personal so that the audience can sympathize whole-heartedly. And then, the heightened emotion immediately levels down when George seeks approval from none other than his pet tortoise. However, George's outburst here is part of the most important argument in Jumpers, because it is directly related to the question of mystery and clockwork. As if to underscore its importance, George instantly resumes his barrage.

> The irrational, the emotional, the whimsical . . . these are the stamp of humanity which makes reason a civilizing force. In a wholly rational society the moralist will be a variety of crank, haranguing the bus queue with the demented certitude of one blessed with privileged information
> 'Good and evil are metaphysical absolutes!
> What did I come in for? (*Looking round.*) (31)

Though slightly shadowed by George's concern for moral absolutes, the central message is still all the same, that mystery is an integral, vital part of the world. As such, it is a measure for Stoppard's departure from the earlier stage of Lord Malquist and Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, where the protagonists are utterly entrapped in the labyrinthine chaos of the world. What George argues and the confidence he displays in his argument cannot be expected of Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. At the same time, it reveals a clue to Stoppard's future direction. The world we live in is not just either Chaos or Order. The true vision lies "in the existence of a relationship between the two".(46) Guildenstern's penetration that nature is the "reassuring union" of "the fortuitous and the ordained" still remains at the centre of Stoppard's vision of the world, and it moves towards the final reconciliation between Chaos and Order in Arcadia.

Jumpers is undoubtedly no small achievement with evident merits; an overt theatricality, a dazzling display of verbal virtuosity, and the fusion of comedy and philosophy, to name but a few. As Michael Billington comments, "Any work that takes on board so many complex ideas while keeping us entertained for two-and-a-half hours

has to have a lot going for it."[171] However, it is also a work with some serious drawbacks. Dotty seems to be intended as the emotional centre of the play between the opposition of George and Archie. Her instinctive distrust of the jumpers is clearly shown at the opening of the play when the jumpers enter "*jumping, tumbling, somersaulting.*"

> DOTTY: (*Entering*) That's not incredible . . . . Well, is it? I can sing better than that. I mean I can sing better than they can jump. [(. . .)] No good - you're still credible. (*Generally.*) Get me someone unbelievable! (10)

At this moment enters George who is "unbelievable" in a sense, as he is her philosopher husband "living in dreamland!".(22) Dotty is having an affair with Archie not because she loves him, as her suspicion of him as McFee's murderer shows, but because she despairs of George who is "bloody humbug! - the last of the metaphysical egocentrics!"(65) Still, her basic sympathy goes with George, because she shares with George the belief in absolutes: "Man is on the Moon, his feet on solid ground, and he has seen us whole, all in one go, *little - local* . . . and all our absolutes, the thou-shalts and the thou-shalt-nots that seemed to be the very condition of our existence, how did *they* look to two moonmen with a single neck to save between them?"(65-66) The difference is that Dotty has the vision to realize that the absolutes are discredited in the Rad-Lib world.

Dotty's role has a huge potential as an axis for the dramatic dynamics of the triangular relationship of George, Archie and Dotty herself. However, apparent inconsistencies make her too flimsy a character to carry the task. At the beginning, she is presented as almost on the brink of mental collapse, giving the impression that she has killed McFee by accident. For the rest of the play, however, she remains more or less a normal character. On the other hand, her extreme sensitiveness to Man's moon-landing stretches credibility as John Weightman wonders, "Why [. . .] has Dorothy gone off sex with her husband, after the shock of the de-poeticisation of the moon?"[172] The idea of

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[171] Michael Billington, p.90.

[172] John Weightman, "Jumpers: a Metaphysical Comedy", p.45.

the inverted point-of-view itself is by now rather tarnished, because Stoppard has already used it several times in, say, Albert's Bridge and Another Moon Called Earth.[173]

George's secretary is also a problematic character. Doreen Thomson interprets her as a character in whom is combined "incomprehensible femme fatale and harmless sex kitten".[174] However, this is obviously too generous a comment for a character who does one striptease at the opening and remains seated without a word throughout the rest of the performance. A more natural response will be a doubt as to what meaningful role she can possibly have. Is she a personification of mystery itself? Or is her strip tease "*in sight for a second, out of sight for a second*"(9) a symbolic expression that we can never get to the naked truth, though we glimpse it from time to time? Whatever it is, her role is too minimal, and any interpretation of it will inevitably be highly speculative. Even her secret affair with McFee seems to be an convenient arrangement to get her involved in the play.

Another serious defect is that the world of Jumpers is solely built upon a hypothetical question what will become of the world, if the views held by the jumpers totally prevail. This is, however, a groundless fear because no political party in England is ever likely to seize power through a coup. Moreover, by the time Jumpers was staged, Logical Positivism, for example, had already lost all its edges. As early as in 1963, a philosopher is said to have remarked that "to discuss the 'verifiability theory of meaning' might be 'flogging a dead horse'", because "there are no longer any logical positivists left".[175] In the end, the whole sophisticated and complicated picture of the world of Jumpers does not have any real equivalent,[176] leaving Stoppard vulnerable to the charge that he is the biggest jumper of all.

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[173] Another Moon Called Earth is a short TV play, out of which Jumpers has evolved. It was first transmitted in June 1967 by the BBC.

[174] Doreen Thompson, "Stoppard's Idea of Woman: 'Good, Bad or Indifferent?'," in Anthony Jenkins ed., Critical Essays on Tom Stoppard, p.195.

[175] Oswald Hanfling, Logical Positivism (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981) p.1. Later in 1979, asked what he now saw as its main defects, A. J. Ayer himself replied that "I suppose the most important . . . was that nearly all of it was false." Ibid.

[176] "What Stoppard has done is to create a fictive, bogey-party that sounds like a parody of the Loony Left but that corresponds to nothing in the world of political reality!" Michael, Billington, p.90.

Despite the endemic ambiguity, Jumpers successfully delivers Stoppard's own beliefs.[177] As for what he believes in, it is best summarized by Stoppard's own words: "Western liberal democracy favouring an intellectual elite and a progressive middle class and based on a moral order derived from Christian absolutes".[178] This is basically "the moral matrix, the moral sensibility" Stoppard is trying to provide for us through his works and Jumpers in particular, so that we could "make our judgements about the world" from it.[179] Though already implicit in the above-mentioned manifesto, anti-communism and individualism also stand at the centre of Stoppard's belief, which need some more detailed account.

As I have mentioned, a logical positivist will not kill someone because he has changed his allegiance, but a communist will. The reason why communists are not named in Jumpers, it seems to me, is that they need some special treatment; compared with them (Lenin), the jumpers are almost harmless, benign Dadaists (Tzara). Communists not only represent all the evils that are attributed to the jumpers, but they do so in a more extreme form. If they seize power through revolution, they will not just rationalize the Church, but obliterate it. The broadcasting services will surely be taken over, and the Police Force will not just be "thinned out to a ceremonial front for the peace-keeping activities of the Army"(56), but will be turned into an actual threat to the people as an oppressive state machine. Anti-Communist belief and sentiment are something that leaves no room for a flicker of ambiguity in Stoppard.

> For a start it [Stoppard's moral belief] goes against Marxist-Leninism in particular, and against all materialistic philosophy. I believe all political acts must be judged in moral terms, in terms of consequences. Otherwise they are simply attempts to put the boot on some other foot. There is a sense in which contradictory political arguments are restatements of

[177] Stoppard had no doubt that his message in Jumpers is clear: "Opacity would be a distinct failure in the play. I don't think of it as being opaque anyway, and I consider clarity essential." "Ambushes for the Audience," p.13.

[178] Tom Stoppard, "But for the Middle Classes," Times Literary Supplement, 3 June 1977, p.677 The article is a review of Enemies of Society by Paul Johnson.

[179] "Briefly, art—Auden or Fugard or the entire cauldron—is important because it provides the moral matrix, the moral sensibility, from which we make our judgements about the world." "Ambushes for the Audience," p.14.

each other. For example, Leninism and Fascism are restatements of totalitarianism.[180]

The world of Jumpers seems to be a milder version of, if anything, the dictatorial communist regime,[181] clearly anticipating not only the Lenin episode of Travesties but also Stoppard's later political plays.

The issue of individualism is more difficult to ascertain, because it is inconspicuous. George's lonely fight against the jumpers is the most explicit evidence of it, anticipating the dissenters in Stoppard's later political plays. However, individualism cuts deep through the very foundation of Stoppard's moral and artistic vision, and the Wittgenstein connection in Jumpers is an illuminating source for Stoppard's own individualistic vision.

George refers to Wittgenstein directly only once, when he quotes an episode related with the philosopher.

> GEORGE: (*Facing away, out front, emotionless*) Meeting a friend in a corridor, Wittgenstein said: 'Tell me, why do people always say it was *natural* for men to assume that the sun went round the earth rather than that the earth was rotating?' His friend said, 'Well, obviously, because it just *looks* as if the sun is going round the earth.' To which the philosopher replied, 'Well, what would it have looked like if it had looked as if the earth was rotating?' (66)

According to Barbara Kreps, there was also a behind-the-scenes discussion about the quotation. The Wittgenstein reference was originally on the cutting list by Kenneth Tynan. He thought the original manuscript of Jumpers was too long, and wanted to

[180] Ibid., p.12.

[181] According to Kenneth Tynan, the Radical Liberals "embody Stoppard's satiric vision of socialism in action". Kenneth Tynan, Show People: Profiles in Entertainment (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979; reprint edition, London: Virgin Books, 1981), p.93.

reduce the text "to what I [Tynan] considered manageable length". However, Stoppard disagreed: "Hard to cut Wittgenstein."[182] So, Wittgenstein remained.

Barbara Kreps argues that the reason for its survival is "because the anecdote expresses so well the essence of Stoppard's vision in Jumpers".[183] This may be true, unless it leads to the conclusion that Jumpers is all ambiguity. What could be objectionable to the quotation, however, is that it is voiced by none other than George, with whose absolutism the tenet of the episode does not fit well. As I have already mentioned, Archie immediately takes advantage of George's own quotation to evade George's challenge about his dubious treatment of Dotty with the dermatograph machine. My guess is that by making George quote Wittgenstein Stoppard tacitly acknowledges his debt to the philosopher.

Though some critics count Wittgenstein among the jumpers because of his huge influence on the logical positivists, the criticism cannot be justified. It is true that the Verification Principle was originally founded by Wittgenstein, but, according to Ray Monk, Wittgenstein later "denied that he had ever intended this principle to be the foundation of a Theory of Meaning, and distanced himself from the dogmatic application of it by the logical positivists."[184]

In Jumpers, Stoppard rather faithfully follows the line of Wittgenstein's thought. For example, Ray Monk relates Wittgenstein's moral argument as follows:

> Schlick had, that year [1930], published a book on ethics in which, in discussing theological ethics, he had distinguished two conceptions of the essence of the good: according to the first, the good is good because it is what God wants; according to the second, God wants the good because it is good. The second, Schlick said, was the more profound. On the contrary, Wittgenstein insisted, the first is: 'For it cuts off the way to any explanation "why" it is good, while the second is the shallow,

[182] Barbara Kreps, "How Do We Know that We Know What We Know in Tom Stoppard's Jumpers," p.189.

[183] Ibid.

[184] Ray Monk, Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius (London: Vantage, 1991), pp.286-287. The part of the thesis related with Wittgenstein is heavily indebted to this work.

rationalist one, which proceeds "as if" you could give reasons for what is good'[185]

In discrediting McFee's moral relativism, George asks emphatically, "Whence comes this sense of some actions being better than others? - not more useful, or more convenient, or more popular, but simply pointlessly *better*? What, in short, is so good about *good*?"(45) George's moral absolutism memorably expressed here has an uncanny echo of Wittgenstein's moral argument quoted above.

George also proposes aesthetic absolutism to bolster his own moral absolutism, on the one hand, and to discredit McFee, on the other: "By discrediting the idea of beauty as an aesthetic absolute, he hopes to discredit by association the idea of goodness as a moral absolute and as a first step he directs us to listen to different kinds of music."(43) George has prepared recordings of three different sounds which he labelled "Beethoven", "elephant" and "stairs" for an aural demonstration that there is "some mysterious property of the music" which absolutely distinguishes Beethoven from other non-musical noises. Wittgenstein might not have agreed to George, but George's aesthetic absolutism is also supported by Wittgenstein's argument on aesthetic value: "What is valuable in a Beethoven sonata? The sequence of notes? The feelings Beethoven had when he was composing it? The state of mind produced by listening to it? 'I would reply', said Wittgenstein, 'that whatever I was told, I would reject, and that not because the explanation was false but because it was an *explanation*'."[186]

Stoppard had already dramatized Wittgenstein's theory of language learning in an experimental piece of Dogg's Our Pet.[187] In Professional Foul, Professor Anderson will quote Wittgenstein, if with a difference, when he is mistakenly asked to comment on the presentation by an American scholar in the colloquium.

> ANDERSON: Ah . . . I would only like to offer Professor Stone the observation that language is not the only level of human communication, and perhaps not the most important level. Whereof

[185] Ibid., pp.304-305.
[186] Ibid., p.305.
[187] This is an extremely short piece which was staged in 1971 by Inter-Action.

we cannot speak, thereof we are by no means silent.[188]

Professor Anderson's quotation of Wittgenstein is in fact the opposite of the famous last sentence of Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus, "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent." The meaning of this sentence has more often than not been misunderstood as is shown, for example, in Michael Hinden's interpretation of it: "Wittgenstein set forth the enormously influential view that philosophy was largely a matter of language usage and that, whereas the propositions of natural science had meaning and could be logically analyzed, all metaphysical and ethical propositions were utterly devoid of sense. 'What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence,' Wittgenstein maintains. We must, in other words, discard philosophy as formerly we understood it as a guide to conduct and eternal truth."[189] On the contrary, Ray Monk explains that Wittgenstein expresses "both a logico-philosophical truth and an ethical precept," because, "There is indeed the inexpressible. This *shows* itself; it is the mystical."[190] Instead of underscoring the all-importance of the language, Wittgenstein's famous sentence serves as a warning against a blind faith in the language itself. Of this, in all probability, Professor Anderson is aware, as his comment before quoting Wittgenstein implies. However, the distortion of Wittgenstein is meaningful in the scheme of Professional Foul.

Early in Jumpers, George relates that he and Russell "talked animatedly for some time". This was because George "was simply trying to bring his mind back to matters of universal import, and away from the day-to-day parochialism of international politics".(22) It may sound a bit far-fetched, but Wittgenstein indeed fiercely objected to Russell's involvement in affairs outside philosophy. Ray Monk reports a story told by Engelmann of Russell's meeting with Wittgenstein.

> When, in the 'twenties, Russell wanted to establish, or join, a 'World Organization for Peace and Freedom' or something similar, Wittgenstein rebuked him so severely, that Russell said to him: 'Well, I suppose *you*

[188] Professional Foul in Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul, p.63.
[189] Michael Hinden, "Jumpers: Stoppard and the Theater of Exhaustion," p.8.
[190] Ray Monk, p.156.

> would rather establish a World Organization for War and Slavery', to which Wittgenstein passionately assented: 'Yes, rather that, rather that!'[191]

It is not that Wittgenstein did not believe in improving the world. What is at stake in this confrontation are the different attitudes about the way of achieving it. Russell believed that he actually had to do something to improve the world. To Wittgenstein to improve oneself is the only thing we can do to better the world.[192]

Individualism embedded in Wittgenstein's attitude is the cornerstone of Stoppard's own moral and artistic vision. George's words only invite a sarcastic criticism from Dotty ("*Universal import!* You're living in dreamland!"), but his claim is not without its significance. Almost imperceptibly, it raises a similar issue concerning the role of art, as is illustrated in the episode of Wittgenstein's meeting with Russell. Moreover, Wittgenstein's own view on the role of philosophy is surprisingly similar to Stoppard's view on the role of art.

> Wittgenstein's remark about philosophy - that it 'leaves everything as it is' - is often quoted. But it is less often realized that, in seeking to change nothing but the way we look at things, Wittgenstein was attempting to change *everything*. His pessimism about the effectiveness of his work is related to his conviction that the way we look at *things* is determined, not by our philosophical beliefs, but by our culture, by the way we are brought up.[193]

This is the strongest philosophical endorsement of Stoppard's own vision. It also provides a valuable clue to Stoppard's firm conviction in the role of his art in spite of consistent criticism of his lack of commitment. Stoppard argued in an interview, "The plain truth is that if you are angered or disgusted by a particular injustice or immorality, and you want to do something about it, *now*, *at once*, then you can hardly do worse than

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[191] Ibid., p.211

[192] "Thus, when Postl once remarked that he wished to improve the world, Wittgenstein replied: 'Just improve yourself; that is the only thing you *can* do to better the world.'" Ibid., p.213.

[193] Ibid., p.533.

write a play about it. That's what art is bad at. But the less plain truth is that *without* that play and plays like it, without artists, the injustice will *never* be eradicated."[194] This is because art provides "the moral matrix" for society exactly as Stoppard has tried to achieve in Jumpers. In this way, the artist will be able to change the world, because he/she will help to "alter people's perceptions so that they behave a little differently at that axis of behaviour where we locate politics or justice".[195] Still, it is not clear how 'trying to change the world' and 'trying to change the way we look at things' should remain different or even mutually exclusive. No serious artist will sacrifice his art to do something "*now, at once*". At any rate, Stoppard will further pursue the question of art in his next major work, Travesties.

[194] "Ambushes for the Audience," p.14.
[195] The Real Thing, p.54.

B. Travesties

Travesties, Stoppard's third major play,[196] represents the culmination point of Stoppard's early career in many ways. Stoppard said that the aim of his dramatic creation is "to end up by contriving the perfect marriage between the play of ideas and farce or perhaps even high comedy".[197] The sheer brilliance of the verbal artistry, the comic force, and the structural symmetry, on the one hand, and the ideas on art put forth by the major characters, on the other, attest to the highest standard of the kind of play Stoppard had in mind. Besides, Travesties is a masterful display of the dramatic expertise he had developed so far. It shares with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead a basic structural and thematic concern. Based on The Importance of Being Earnest[198] it recalls the play-within-the-play structure of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, and the transformation of a minor British Consular official into the protagonist of a play which has as its characters such gigantic figures as Tzara, Joyce, and Lenin, bears an apparent analogy to what happened to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead. The distorting effect of memory on reality was treated earlier in a short piece called Where Are They Now?, and the question is now brought into wider and richer context by Carr's faulty memory in Travesties. Travesties is also an extension of the polemic discussion between the traditional and the avant-garde art in Artist Descending a Staircase, covering more diverse views in a more detailed way. The analogy with Jumpers, however, is the most interesting. Stoppard himself pointed out the similarities in the organization of both works.

> Jumpers and Travesties are very similar plays. No one's said that, but they're so similar that were I to do it a third time it would be a bore. You start with a prologue which is slightly strange. Then you have an interminable monologue which is rather funny. Then you have scenes.

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[196] Travesties was first staged at the Aldwych Theatre in London, June 1974. Like Jumpers, it was an immediate success, bringing yet another Evening Standard's Best Play Award to Stoppard. The next year, it was reintroduced into the RSC's repertoire for a second season. The play then moved to Broadway in 1975 and captured three of the annual Tony awards.

[197] "Ambushes for the Audience," p.7.

[198] Reduced to Earnest hereafter.

> Then you end up with another monologue. And you have unexpected bits of music and drama, and at the same time people are playing ping-pong with various intellectual arguments.[199]

Being the author's remark, this is surely an illuminating piece of information concerning both works, but the analogy goes deeper than the admission suggests. For example, the Coda of Jumpers is quite significant in its relation to the basic structure of Travesties in that, while the Coda of Jumpers is supposed to be George's dream, Travesties as a whole is Carr's fantasy. Far more significant, however, is the way Stoppard builds up the conflicting arguments. He gives the impression that presenting different views from different viewpoints is all he does, but at the same time, he never fails to organize them in such a way that there is no mistaking where his sympathy lies. This is being done with such subtlety that the critical responses show a wide spectrum of critical interpretations, each with its own supporting evidence. This is the case both with Jumpers and Travesties.

As we know, George and Archie represent each extreme of the opposite attitudes in Jumpers, forming the typical bipolar structure of Stoppardian theatre. While Travesties seems to sublate it through a wider variety of characters whose opinions cannot be easily ignored in their own right, the bipolar structure still persists. To conclude in advance, it is the alliance of Carr and Joyce against the evil contentions of the radical revolutionaries of Tzara and Lenin who represent respectively Dadaist chaos and stifling Marxist order.

The task of finding who is Stoppard's favourite character in Travesties is somewhat similar to tracing down the murderer of McFee in Jumpers. In Jumpers, a seemingly paradoxical situation permeates. A murder is committed; the dead body on stage is the proof of it. The identity of the murderer, however, is kept in the dark. No one is free from suspicion, and the play ends with the case still being open. Some critics responded by insisting that the world of Jumpers is a world of mystery where everything is left unresolved. However, the inconclusive ending is not so inconclusive in the end. Stoppard achieves his objective in a quite suggestive way by building up small episodes and changing tones and styles to influence the audience. Consequently,

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[199] Ronald Hayman, "First interview" in Tom Stoppard, p.12.

he does not need to point out the murderer, because there is no surprise in revealing the identity. If he did, the overall dramatic effect would indeed be undercut, the whole play being reduced to a whodunit with no dramatic denouement. Travesties is composed in a similar way. Each character is presented in roughly equal proportion. On the surface, therefore, the different views seem to be presented fairly and objectively. A closer look, however, will prove that it is not the case. The views themselves are important, but the way the characters are presented in their actions and dialogue is, in a sense, more important, because it is the deciding factor. Furthermore, objectivity itself is inherently impossible to achieve when characters are a mixture of fact and fiction. The mixture invariably presupposes selection, and selection cannot be made without judgement. The judgement will manifest itself in one way or another in the process of organization.

In the early sixties Stoppard happened to hear from a friend that Tzara and Lenin had stayed together in Zurich in 1917. With this in mind, he originally tried to write a play with Tzara and Lenin as main characters. However, he came to find that James Joyce had also been in Zurich at around the same time. The discovery caused him to "see if there's anything in this James Joyce angle,"[200] and incorporated Joyce into the play as one of the main characters.

According to Richard Ellmann, Joyce directed a production of Oscar Wilde's Earnest while he was in Zurich, and a minor official in the British Consulate in Zurich named Henry Carr happened to play a leading role as Algernon in Joyce's production. Carr, out of enthusiasm, bought "a pair of trousers, a new hat, and a pair of gloves",[201] and actually made a small success with his performance. However, a squabble with Joyce over a petty money matter brought him and Joyce to court. Carr won the case over money but lost over the case of the slander charged against him by Joyce. Joyce did not forget this incident. Later, he avenged himself on Carr by naming one of "the two drunken, blasphemous, and obscene soldiers who knock Stephen Dedalus down in the *Circe* episode" as Private Carr.[202] The episode provided Stoppard with "the linking

[200] Charles Marowitz, "Tom Stoppard - The Theatre's Intellectual P. T. Barnum," New York Times, 19 October 1975, Section 2, p.5.
[201] Richard Ellmann, James Joyce (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.439.
[202] Ibid., p.472.

theme"[203] around which he could weave his new play. He borrowed the plot from Oscar Wilde's Earnest, and allocated his major characters to those of Earnest. The already complex structure of the play is further complicated by the scheme that the whole play is intended to be Old Carr's retrospection, though his memory is by no means reliable.

This doubly complicated scheme inevitably poses fundamental questions which cannot easily be explained away by Carr's abnormal obsession with Wilde's play or his faulty memory. The first is whether the whole play is consistently composed to fulfill the basic assumption that it is Carr's fantasy. The second is to what extent Travesties is critically engaged with Oscar Wilde's Earnest.

The action of Travesties is occasionally seen to be disrupted and resume again where it was derailed. Early in the play, for example, Carr continually restarts his narration, cued by the repeated entrance of Bennett, as if he has rewound his memory. This is what Stoppard calls "time-slip" and it is the most prominent device to make Travesties look like Carr's fantasy. At other times when not directly engaged in the actions of the play, Carr is still seen on stage playing the piano or "*consulting a tattered book*"(58) so that the underlying assumption of Carr's fantasy can be maintained. However, using Carr as an intermediary in this way inevitably "invites confusion".[204] So the play gets out of Carr's control from time to time as in the cases of Cecily's lecture scene which opens the second act and the final scene where Carr and Cecily, now his wife, converse in a way improbable in a fantasy. More importantly, Carr's obsession with Earnest, to such an extent that he actually fantasizes historic figures in terms of Wildean characters and style, is simply out of the question. On these accounts, it will be fair to say that the inconsistency will eventually undermine the overall achievement of Travesties. However, the advantages of the Carr scheme far outweigh the harmful effect it could have. First of all, it helps to solve the enormous problem of coordinating the historical figures into a fantastic play based on Wilde's Earnest. As Paul Delaney points out, without Carr's faulty memory, the play's disjunctions would make Travesties look too

[203] Oleg Kerensky, p.169.
[204] Anthony Jenkins, The Theatre of Tom Stoppard, p. 120.

surrealistic.[205] More significantly, Carr's senile memory "*of his various prejudices and delusions*"(11) serves as an ideal smoke-screen, behind which Stoppard can hide himself and edit the presence and arguments of his historical characters.

The importance of the Earnest frame is unquestionable. The comic energy of Travesties owes a lot to its relationship with Earnest. Those who are well acquainted with Earnest, one of the world's most accomplished comedies, will be delighted to hear familiar lines from Earnest repeated on stage by totally different characters. Furthermore, at times, Stoppard even outwits Oscar Wilde himself in his masterly handling of the original plot and the delightful display of verbal virtuosity, a brilliant example of which is the bantering between Cecily and Gwendolen solely in the form of limerick in the second act. However, apart from the ingenious parallel, which is itself no small achievement, a real critical involvement between the two works is difficult to establish.

When Joyce asks Carr to play the role of Algernon, he describes the character by quoting a famous sentence in Earnest: "He says things like, I may occasionally be a little overdressed but I make up for it by being immensely overeducated. That gives you the general idea of him."(33) Later in Act Two, Carr quotes the same sentence again in a slightly changed version: "He may occasionally have been a little over-dressed but he made up for it by being immensely uncommitted."(49)[206] This is one of the rare moments when Travesties and Earnest are critically engaged. Carr's comment is significant because it functions in many ways. We can see that with a slight change of a word Wilde's innocuous dialogue suddenly becomes politically charged, and immediately triggers Cecily's declaration that, "The sole duty and justification for art is social criticism."(49) From this moment on, Carr and Cecily start a heated debate on art which will cover almost all the Second Act with the Lenins as the main characters. On the other hand, Carr's judgement causes us to refer back to Oscar Wilde and Earnest. So, quoting a paragraph in The Soul of Man Under Socialism, Michael

[205] Actually, this is Stoppard's own comment: "Indeed, without the faulty memory of Henry Carr to provide a realistic framework for the play's disjunctions, Travesties 'would be a surrealist play, and I would hate it', Stoppard declares." Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard; The Moral Vision of the Major Plays, p.68.

[206] By "He" Carr means Oscar Wilde.

Billington objects that Carr's comment does not do justice to Oscar Wilde.[207] Whether Carr is correct or not, the point I wish to make is that Carr's comment actually activates the reciprocal process between Travesties and Earnest. Moreover, it can even be understood as self-referential, because the implication is not entirely free from all the arguments on art in Travesties. Unfortunately, however, this multi-layered significance does not build up.

It can be said that the Lenin episode has the potential to force Travesties into a critical engagement with Earnest, simply because such a massive character like Lenin is unimaginable in a Wildean comedy.[208] Stoppard's comment in an interview with Ronald Hayman confirms this: "It would have been disastrous to Prismize and Chasublize the Lenins, and I believe that that section saves Travesties because I think one's just about *had* that particular Wilde joke at that point."[209] Because of Stoppard's unwillingness to trivialize Lenin, Lenin stands distinguished from the other characters. His dialogue is largely made up of direct quotations from his and his wife's works, reducing the whole episode to a sort of documentary. This must have worried Stoppard. So Carr warns the audience at the end of the First Act: "In fact, anybody hanging on just for the cheap comedy of senile confusion might as well go because now I'm on to how I met Lenin and could have changed the course of history etcetera [. . .]"(43)

It would be an exaggeration, however, if not entirely beside the point, that Stoppard is making a tacit judgement on Wilde by refusing to dramatize Lenin. On the other hand, Lenin is not totally free from Wildean influence. For example, Lenin's comment just before his high-handed speech on literature smacks of unmistakable Wildean flavour.

> Really, if the lower orders don't set us a good example what on earth is the use of them?! They seem as a class to have absolutely no sense of moral responsibility! To lose one revolution is unfortunate. To lose two would look like carelessness! (58)[210]

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[207] Michael Billington, p.104.

[208] "There is no way that Lenin can be fitted into the overall Wildean framework. He is simply too massive a figure [. . .] and his very presence fractures the play." Ibid., pp.104-105.

[209] Ronald Hayman, p.10.

[210] These sentences are imported from Earnest. The first two were first told by Carr at the end of the first act. In the last two, "parent" in the original is replaced by "revolution".

It is inconceivable for Lenin to continue his argument in this manner. It will make Lenin look completely harmless and innocent. Simply put, if the Lenin episode does not fit in the Earnest scheme, this dialogue by Lenin does not fit in the Lenin episode. Therefore, it could be said that the Wildean style is deployed here not to question itself, but to condemn Lenin.

Taken in all, the intertextual relationship between Earnest and Travesties enhances the overall dramatic effect of Travesties, revitalizing the Wildean tradition, but it is also true that it fails to form a highly significant, mutually beneficial referential network between them. In this context, Tim Brassell's comment is succinctly to the point concerning the controversial relationship between Earnest and Travesties.

> [. . .] the whole point of the 'play-within-a-play' concept is the absence of any real mutual dependence of the one on the other. Wilde's play is thus used to provide a steadily identifiable but essentially bogus focus, unifying the otherwise disparate strands of Stoppard's complicated subject and creating a narrative thrust that Carr alone cannot offer.[211]

There has been a strong current of Travesties criticism which argues totally otherwise. What underlies this criticism, which can be roughly labelled as "the formalistic approach", is the Wildean assertion that life imitates art. So, the primary emphasis is laid upon the formal aspects of the play, such as *style*, *structure* and *the process of organization*, and so on. Neil Sammells, for example, argues that "the play refuses to admit that any single *style* of writing enjoys a uniquely privileged relationship with what it purports to transcribe: the play is an argument between styles to match its argument between documents".[212] In a similar vein, John William Cooke also argues: "Travesties is, then an optical illusion in that Stoppard makes Carr's memory present to us. He does so to reinforce our sense of Carr as a 'maker', unifying random and

[211] Tim Brassell, p.140.
[212] Neil Sammells, pp.80-81.

historically unconnected sense experiences into the form of a play."[213] Alice Rayner's argument is another example to a similar effect: "Stoppard keeps all his ironies moving, as though he were juggling ideas. He never lets them rest in the indicative mood, never, at least in Travesties, lets them point at what they mean, for his meaning is in the act of 'juggling' itself."[214] Travesties no doubt provides abundant evidence for this kind of reading with its overtly self-conscious artificiality, foregrounded not only by the borrowed plot and innumerable literary styles, but also by the unmistakable structural concern even to the details. The problem with this approach, however, is that it contends formal concern is all Travesties is about, ignoring plenty of evidence which disproves its argument, and I should say, Stoppard would be the first to object to a strictly formalistic reading of Travesties at the expense of its content.

The way the term, "dada", is used in Travesties, graphically demonstrates the polemic in question. Understandably, the word, "the pair of sharply repeated, percussive syllables",[215] is subject to a lot of spinning from Stoppard. Dada is basically a meaningless word which designates the radical avant-garde art movement early in the twentieth century. So, to Tzara, the word "is without any meaning as Nature is",(38) and at one time, he bombards the audience with the word as he chants "dada" thirty four times. Curiously, however, we first hear "da, da" emphatically repeated not by Tzara, but by Nadya in her conversation with Lenin in Russian. Only in the beginning of the second act when the Lenins repeat the previous scene, do we realize that "da" means "yes" in Russian, as Cecily "*translates it for the audience, pedantically repeating each speech in English, even the simple 'No!' and 'Yes!'*".(46) The word also meets a comic twist when Carr, on seeing the card left by Tzara, comments, "'Tristan Tzara. Dada Dada Dada.' Did he have a stutter?"(12) and vaguely restores the original, literal meaning of the word as an "infantile sound".[216] However, a most endearing example is Gwendolen's variation of "da-da-darling" in Tzara's wooing scene.

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[213] John William Cooke, "The Optical Allusion: Perception and Form in Stoppard's Travesties," Modern Drama, (1981), p.531.

[214] Alice Rayner, Comic Persuasion: Moral Structure in British Comedy from Shakespeare to Stoppard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p.131.

[215] Robert Short, Dada & Surrealism (London: Octopus, 1980), p.7.

[216] "Till today that peculiarly dadaist uncertainty has persisted regarding the very origin of the word 'dada', which is termed an 'infantile sound' by the Concise Oxford Dictionary and a 'Cheval, dans le

TZARA: But have you ever come across Dada, darling?

GWEN: Never, da-da-darling!(37)

John William Cooke illustrates the meanings of the word as "the art movement", "yes, yes", and "a cute, lyrical endearment", before he makes his point: "While we may wince at such facility, Stoppard sneaks in a serious point: that an utterance gains meaning *only* within context, and can, therefore, explode into several meanings."[217] This is true, but what he fails to notice is that the word not only explodes but the exploded meanings of "dada" converge on the all-important meaning of "yes". The charm of the word, "dada", to the Dadaists was not exactly its meaninglessness. They were aware of all the meanings related to the word, as is illustrated in the 1918 Dada manifesto[218] and its implication of "yes, yes" was deemed particularly appropriate as Hans Richter enthusiastically attested: "Nothing could better express our optimism, our sensation of newly-won freedom, than this powerfully reiterated 'da, da'—'yes, yes' to life."[219] Nadya's utterance of "da, da" in the beginning establishes the paradoxical relationship between Tzara and Lenin as they share revolutionary sympathies, but the literal meaning of the word, "yes", is naturally linked to Joyce's "yes" in his speech: "If there is any meaning in any of it, it is in what survives as art, yes even in the celebration of tyrants, yes even in the celebration of nonentities. [. . .] And yet I with my Dublin Odyssey will double that immorality, yes by God *there's* a corpse [. . .]".(41-42) Gwendolen's "da-da-darling" anticipates Cecily's final "yes" to Carr: "and yes, I said yes when you asked me, [. . .]".(70) And this is an unmistakable echo of Molly Bloom's all-embracing "yes" in the final episode of Ulysses.[220] So Stoppard's juggling of the word "dada" is not a juggling for its own sake. Stoppard makes a clear statement even in his acrobatic juggling of the word.

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langage des enfants' by the 'Nouveau Petit Larousse'." Willy Verkauf, "Dada—Cause and Effect." in Dada: Monograph of a Movement, Willy Verkauf, ed. (London: St. Martin's Press, 1975), p.7.

[217] John William Cooke, "The Optical Allusion: Perception and Form in Stoppard's Travesties," pp.528-529.

[218] "We read in the papers that the negroes of the Kroo race call the tail of a sacred cow: DADA. A cube, and a mother, in a certain region of Italy, are called: DADA. The word for a hobby-horse, a children's nurse, a double affirmative in Russian and Roumanian, is also: DADA." Tristan Tzara, Tristan Tzara: Seven Dada Manifestos and Lampisteries, Barbara Wright, trans. (London: John Calder, 1977), p.4.

[219] Ronald Hayman quotes this from Hans Richter's Dada Art and Anti-Art. Ronald Hayman, p.126.

[220] "yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes." James Joyce, Ulysses, p.933.

The same can be said of style. Nile Sammells argues that Travesties "invokes style after style, exploits each to the point of exhaustion, and moves on."[221] The neat expression sounds particularly persuasive when we take into account the fact that "grab-bag of styles" or "pig's breakfast" are the words commonly applied to Travesties.[222] However, there are enough obstacles for Sammells's assertion. First of all, the presence of Lenin is a serious stumbling block to any kind of unqualified formalistic interpretation of Travesties, because he cannot be reduced to just a matter of style. In effect, Joyce, Tzara, and Lenin are all on different planes, and, therefore, a single measure of style cannot be identically applied to them; what he wrote is most important where Joyce is concerned, but how he wrote is more important than what he wrote, concerning Tzara, while, as for Lenin, what he did and the effect of his action is by far the most important. Lenin is the last character expected in a play the primary role of which is to demonstrate the artificiality of literary writing. Secondly, there are direct clashes between styles like the one between Shakespeare's famous sonnet and Tzara's curiously erotic rearrangement of it. In this case, it cannot be said that Shakespearean style is exhausted to be replaced by Tzara's love poem to Gwendolen. On the contrary, the function of the simultaneous presentation of Shakespeare's sonnet and Tzara's poem is to bring to the fore what Stoppard believes to be the universal, absolute artistic quality in Shakespeare's sonnet. Finally, there is a style which does not belong to any of the adopted or parodied styles in Travesties, that is, the authorial style. This surely poses a problem to Sammells, and he explains it as an irony.

> It is in Carr's opening monologue that Stoppard's dramatic prose denies and cancels itself most effectively. There is, indeed, an irony here. 'If there is any point in using language at all,' he insists to Tzara, 'it is that a word is taken to stand for a particular fact or idea and not for other facts or ideas.' This is a precept Carr can hardly be said to put into

[221] Neil Sammells, p.382.

[222] "Travesties is such a grab-bag of styles and incidents - Stoppard called it 'a pig's breakfast' - that to quote lines [. . .]." Anthony Jenkins, The Theatre of Tom Stoppard, p.116. Stoppard's phrase is from the first interview with Ronald Hayman. Ronald Hayman, p.12.

practice: his own speeches pay no such attention to the conventional division of sense and nonsense.[223]

Carr's opening monologue is Carr/Character's voice, and the style completely changes when he argues against Tzara about art and artist, and later in the second act, with Cecily about the Marxist doctrine. That is Carr/Author's voice.

> But that does not make you [Tzara] an artist. An artist is someone who is gifted in some way that enables him to do something more or less well which can only be done badly or not at all by someone who is not thus gifted. If there is any point in using language at all it is that a word is taken to stand for a particular fact or idea and not for other facts or ideas. I might claim to be able to fly . . . Lo, I say, I am flying. But you are not propelling yourself about while suspended in the air, someone may point out. Ah not, I reply, that is no longer considered the proper concern of people who can fly. In fact, it is frowned upon. Nowadays, a flyer never leaves the ground and wouldn't know how. I see, says my somewhat baffled interlocutor, so when you say you can *fly* you are using the word in a purely private sense. I see I have made myself clear, I say. Then, says this chap in some relief, you cannot actually *fly* after all? On the contrary, I say, I have just told you I can. (21)

An ironic style no less comic than that of Oscar Wilde, and reminiscent of James Joyce from time to time, has predominantly been Carr's style. Even when he mentions the First World War, his style is inappropriately saturated with his improper concern for his outfit: "You forget that I was there, in the mud and blood of a foreign field, unmatched by anything in the whole history of human carnage. Ruined several pairs of trousers. Nobody who has not been in the trenches can have the faintest conception of the horror of it."(20) The sudden change of style in Carr's earnest argument quoted above is undeniably striking. It has no trace of irony or aberration. Carr's metaphor of "flying" appropriately denounces Tzara as it associates Dada art with the preposterous

[223] Neil Sammells, p.384.

act of flying which is even worse than the "mental gymnastics" of the logical positivists in Jumpers.

Contrary to Sammells's argument, Carr's assertion of the proper use of the language is particularly important, not only because it reflects Stoppard's own belief as he will repeat later in The Real Thing,[224] but also because, as Delaney acutely points out, it is the basis of Carr's charge of both Dadaists and Leninists for their perverted use of the language: "By their words we know them. And in Travesties both Lenin and Tzara are convicted by their language. [. . .] Travesties leads us to see Lenin and Tzara not only as imprecise in their twisting of words but immoral."[225] As Carr successfully demonstrates, Tzara has transformed art into anti-art through his arbitrary use of the language, and as I will argue later in more detail, Lenin twists the concept of freedom to such an extent that it is virtually incomprehensible.

Travesties is one of the best examples of Stoppard's craftsmanship in terms of structure, as is analysed by Weldon B. Durham in a diagram.[226] According to him, each act of Travesties is made up of five episodes, mirroring each other curiously in a reversed way: "[. . .] the two halves of the play are related to one another the way Joyce's costume in Act I is related to his costume in Act II. In Act I, Joyce wears the jacket from one suit and the trousers from another; in Act II, he wears the other halves of the outfit. Imagine the visual effect, and one glimpses an emblem of the structure of the play."[227] Though it is questionable whether Joyce's unmatched clothes serve as a persuasive metaphor for the structure of the play, the structural symmetry of Travesties is impressive enough to evoke our wonder.

Stoppard also takes pains to give nearly identical dialogue in terms of length and style, when characters are condemning each other. So Carr rails at Tzara, "My God, you little Romanian wog - you bloody dago - you jumped-up phrase-making smart-alecy arty-intellectual Balkan turd!!!".(22) Later Tzara reacts to Carr with the same vituperative language: "My God, you bloody English philistine - you ignorant smart-arse bogus bourgeois Anglo-Saxon prick!"(29) Tzara also abuses Joyce in a similar way: "By

[224] In The Real Thing, Henry argues virtually to the same effect: "Words don't deserve that kind of malarkey. They are innocent, neutral, precise, standing for this, describing that, meaning the other, so if you look after them you can build bridges across incomprehension and chaos." The Real Thing, p.54.

[225] Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays, p.66.

[226] Weldon B Durham, "The Structure and Function of Tom Stoppard's Travesties." in John Harty, ed., Tom Stoppard, A Casebook, p.200.

God, you supercilious streak of Irish puke! you four-eyed, bog-ignorant, potato-eating ponce!"(41) In the second act, Cecily challenges Carr once again in the same style: "That's because I'm about to puke into your nancy straw hat, you *prig*! - you swanking canting fop, you bourgeois intellectual humbugger, you - *artist*!"(51)[228] More often than not, this sort of detailed symmetry along with the general symmetrical structure, has been cited as a proof that no one wins the debate in Travesties. For example, Katherine Kelly argues that, "In the symmetrical presenting of these scenes, neither Carr nor Tzara can be said clearly to win or lose."[229] However, to maintain that the formal structure is all that Travesties is about is as wrong as to claim that Joyce's Ulysses is nothing except for its structure. As I will argue shortly, the formal symmetry is just a balance on the surface. The seemingly objective presentation of different contentions in Travesties is incessantly betrayed by the way they are coloured by the author's subtle but deliberate efforts to direct sympathy. The main characters in Travesties are neither predominantly historical nor predominantly fictional. In this context, their views are not the real opinions of the historical selves. They are partial and constructed in such a way that they support Stoppard's own argument.

Tzara opens Travesties with an emphatically Dadaist poem freshly made out of his hat.

> Eel ate enormous appletzara
> key dairy chef's hat he'll learn oomparah!
> Ill raced alas whispers kill later nut east,
> noon avuncular ill day Clara! (2)

As Kenneth Tynan pointed out, this poem in fact is not as nonsensical as it sounds. To those who are accustomed to French, the meaning will be roughly as follows:

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[227] Ibid., pp.203-204.

[228] A possible explanation for this well-proportioned language may be that this is Carr's habitual way of denouncing people, as the play is assumed to be Carr's narration.

[229] Katherine Kelly, p.107.

Il reste à la Suisse parce qu'il est un artiste.

"Nous n'avons que l'art," il déclara.

(He lives in Switzerland because he is an artist.

"We have only art," he declared.)[230]

This extremely deliberate arrangement is no doubt quite alien to the Dada spirit. Tzara comes on the stage with meaningless nonsense, but at the same time the nonsense betrays Dada's principle, if it can be called a principle, of chance: "In point of fact, everything is Chance."(19) So, from the start, Tzara is doubly travestied, and the picture cannot be said to be favourable to Tzara. Stoppard repeats the tactic when Tzara offers to Gwendolen a poem on which "my [Tzara's] signature is written in the hand of chance".(35) What he actually offers is a hat in which words from a Shakespearean sonnet are placed. The historical Tzara actually made poems in a similar way,[231] but from papers and magazines. The sonnet Tzara is mangling is one of the most famous and cherished of Shakespeare's sonnets, starting "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day". The very idea of cutting up the sonnet into meaningless nonsense, and proclaiming it proudly as his own poem, may look revolting or at least, extremely silly. Before Tzara produces his poem, Gwendolen recites the whole sonnet, "*accompanied by a romantic orchestra*".(35) So, the result of Tzara's experiment will make a clear contrast to the original. However, once again it is not pure nonsense. Curiously, the reshuffling of the words turns out something which is no doubt highly charged with sexual connotation. The effect could be cheerful, but definitely at Tzara's expense.

This implicit handling of the Dada movement to negative effects carries on. Another graphic example is his clash with Joyce, notably in the form of Joycean catechism.

JOYCE: Huelsenbeck demanding, for example?

TZARA: International revolutionary union of all artists on the basis of

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[230] Kenneth Tynan, p.110.

[231] "One evening Tzara rummaged in his pockets and finally produced a small bit of paper, from which he proceeded to read a poem, articulating the words, not according to their meaning, but in accordance with their sound." Marcel Janco, "Creative Dada." in Dada; Monograph of a Movement, Willy Verkauf, ed., p. 18.

radical Communism.

JOYCE: As opposed to Tzara's demanding?

TZARA: The right to urinate in different colours.

JOYCE: Each person in different colours at different times, or different people in each colour all the time? Or everybody multi-coloured every time?

TZARA: It was more to make the point that making poetry should be as natural as making water -

JOYCE: (*Rising; the conjuring is over*): God send you don't make them in the one hat. (41)

Even in this dialogue, facts and fiction are mixed up. When Dadaism was taken to Berlin by Huelsenbeck in 1917, it was rapidly radicalized. And in a declaration signed by Raoul Haussman and Richard Huelsenbeck, the Berlin Dadaists announced "as their aim the international revolutionary union of all creative and intellectual men and women on the basis of radical communism".[232] On the other hand, Tzara attacked "Art" in one of his manifestos as "a PRETENSION warmed by the TIMIDITY of the urinary basin".[233] However, Tzara never demanded the right "to urinate in different colours". Even for a travesty, this is no doubt too much for Tzara. At the last remark by Joyce, which is adopted from Ulysses,[234] Tzara cannot contain his temper. So he pours verbal abuse on Joyce, smashing "*whatever crockery is to hand*", and subsequently "*strikes a satisfied pose*".(41) The clear impression is that Tzara represents destruction for its own sake. And he is immediately challenged by Joyce's long speech, the gist of which is that the role of art and artist is not to destroy, but to preserve and immortalize.

Tzara does not speak nonsense all the time. If he does, it will destroy the balance for the dramatic tension. Therefore, Stoppard "had to think very hard to give Tzara good

[232] C. W. E. Bigsby, Dada & surrealism (London: Methuen, 1972), p.17.

[233] Ibid., p.7.

[234] "Buck Mulligan, hewing thick slices from the loaf, said in an old woman's wheedling voice:/—When I makes tea I makes tea, as old mother Grogan said. And when I makes water I makes water. [. . .] Buck Mulligan went on hewing and wheedling:/—*So I do, Mrs Cahill*, says she. *Begob, ma'am*, says Mrs Cahill, *God send you don't make them in the one pot.*" James Joyce, Ulysses, pp.13-14.

arguments in the play", though he is "instinctively out of sympathy with Tzara and that kind of art".[235] So at one time Tzara comes up with a rather persuasive argument.

> When the strongest began to fight for the tribe, and the fastest to hunt, it was the artist who became the priest-guardian of the magic that conjured the intelligence out of the appetites. Without him, man would be a coffee-mill. Eat-grind-shit. Hunt-*eat*-fight-*grind*-saw the logs-*shit*. The difference between being a man and being a coffee-mill is art. But that difference has become smaller and smaller and smaller. [. . .] The artist has negated himself: paint-*eat*-sculpt-*grind*-write-*shit*. [. . .] Without art man was a coffee-mill: but *with* art, man is a coffee-mill: That is the message of Dada. - dada dada [. . .] (29)

Tzara's insistence on the importance of art as something that elevates human existence above the level of materialistic mechanism is in line with the central argument of Travesties. However, his argument turns round a rather loathsome formula of "eat-grind-shit" until it finally comes to a confusing, monstrous conclusion with his inordinate emphasis on the importance of art; the final impression of his argument is that man is a coffee-mill with or without art. More ominously, Tzara's logic reminds us of Lenin's perverse argument that men had been slaves, but now were free in the true sense of the word thanks to the revolution he had led. Tzara's argument also suffers from the lack of the emotional power and familiarity with which Carr's is usually embroidered, and finally degenerates into a chanting of "dada".

In general, what Tzara says does not convey the Dada spirit at all, and what he does invariably works in such a way that commonly-held stereotypical prejudice against Dadaism will be reinforced. The Dada movement, though short-lived, was a serious art movement, the legacy of which cannot easily be dismissed. It may have had its negative and positive sides, but the artistic spirit itself was never denied in the movement.

[235] Oleg Kerensky, p.169.

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[235] Oleg Kerensky, p.169.

> In truth, Dada was not really even anti-art. Considering the number of artists who flocked to its banner it would have been surprising if it had been. Its enemy was the abuse of art - the use to which it had been put by generations who seemed, to the Dadaists, to disregard the ability of art to capture the truth of life. Like all literary and artistic movements its aim was to penetrate to some transcendent truth visible only to the individual with the intuitive perception to touch the core of existence.[236]

In Travesties, Dada is depicted as more inclined to the abuse of art, because it is presented cut off from its historical context. The extreme gesture of Dada should be understood against the background of the First World War. The mass-destruction and carnage was perceived as an outward sign of the end of the traditions which had been the driving force of Western civilization. So those who were involved in the movement tried to negate the traditional way of art in a desperate aspiration to a new order. In Travesties the horror of the war is attenuated in the festive atmosphere in general and in Carr's chauvinism or his inappropriate care about his clothes in particular.

Another serious charge against Dadaism is Stoppard's continuous attempt to link it to the political left, and thus to Lenin. As a result, Tzara is once heard to say something which does not sound Dadaesque at all.

> As a Dadaist, I am the natural enemy of bourgeois art and the natural ally of the political left, but the odd thing about revolution is that the further left you go politically the more bourgeois they like their art. (28)

It is true that Dadaists had sympathy with the communists, but it is almost self apparent that Dadaism and Communism are incompatible. Robert Short clearly summarizes the question of the Dadaists' bias towards Communism: "But it is possible to exaggerate the political commitment of Berlin Dada. [. . .] there was a basic incompatibility between Dada and Marxism-Leninism, which had no time for the irrational well-springs of the personality. In the last analysis, most Dadas were sceptical of all programmes and ideologies. They stood for revolt and sided with the workers

[236] C. W. E. Bigsby, p.33.

because at this time the workers were in revolt. Beyond an attachment to the idea of an informally structured, anarchist community, the Dadas had no belief that the world could significantly be improved by politics."[237] Though Stoppard makes Tzara's comment sound like a matter of fact, with the repeated use of the word "natural", what Tzara is doing is to condemn unwittingly both Dadaists and the Communists; Dadaists are short-sighted to overlook the real threat of the Communists, and under a communist regime artistic freedom in the normal sense of the word would not be tolerated, not to mention the Dadaists' individualistic excesses. Tzara's comment also foreshadows Lenin's conflicting attitude towards art which will loom large in Act Two.

The controversial Second Act is mainly about the Lenins. As critics almost unanimously point out, the Lenin episode is not incorporated into the Earnest frame, seemingly damaging the propriety of the drama. However, it is no doubt part of the scheme. On artistic grounds, it can be argued that the Lenin part is deliberately constructed as different from Wildean extravaganza as possible so that a sort of "*defamiliarization effect*" may be achieved. Stoppard repeatedly commented that the sober opening of Cecily's lecture is a joke in itself.[238] With the sudden change of the tone and mood, the audience would be inevitably forced into reassessing the premises of the theatre as their expectation is severely betrayed, and the shocking effect could further complicate the complexities of the play in that, as I have already mentioned, the Wildean touch in the Lenin episode works towards a negative effect. All the while, Stoppard will be able to give the impression that the image of Lenin in the episode coincides with the historical Lenin. Despite the seemingly authentic presentation, however, Lenin in Travesties is rigorously manipulated into someone Stoppard perceives him to be.

The argument against Marxist-Leninism is conducted in a very similar way in its proportion and structure to the one against Dadaism, as Stoppard uses several time-slips

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[237] Robert Short, p.42.

[238] "There are several levels going here, and one of them is that what I personally like is the theatre of audacity. I thought, 'Right. We'll have a rollicking first act, and they'll all come back from their gin-and-tonics thinking 'Isn't it fun? What a lot of lovely jokes!' And they'll sit down, and this pretty girl will start talking about the theory of Marxism and the theory of capitalism and theory of value. And the smiles, because they're not prepared for it, will atrophy.' And that to me was like a joke in itself." Ronald Hayman, p.9. Kenneth Tynan also testifies to it: "On the other hand, he did think it would be

for the maintenance of the Earnest parallel, on the one hand, and for the debate on the other. The difference is that Carr is not directly involved in arguing with Lenin. Instead, the debate is conducted between Carr and Cecily, an ardent disciple of Lenin.

However, in the conversation between her and Carr, who has come to the library disguised as Tzara's decadent Dadaist brother, her sympathy with Marxist-Leninism is effectively undermined by the indication that her knowledge is either encyclopaedic or mechanical.

> CARR: It is rather that I wish to increase it. An overly methodical education has left me to fend as best as I can with some small knowledge of the aardvark, a mastery of the abacus and a facility for abstract art. An aardvark, by the way, is a sort of African pig found mainly -
>
> CECILY: I know only too well what an aardvark is, Mr Tzara. To be frank, you strike a sympathetic chord in me.
>
> CARR: Politically, I haven't really got beyond anarchism.
>
> CECILY: I see. Your elder brother, meanwhile -
>
> CARR: Bolshevism. And you, I suppose . . .?
>
> CECILY: Zimmervaldism! (47)

Four years after writing Travesties Stoppard said in an interview, "Most of Travesties—not as a structure and a play, but speech by speech—still seems as good as I can ever get."[239] This dialogue between Carr and Cecily is one of the convincing examples. It is not only pleasantly funny, but intricately functional. It enhances the Wildean plot in a similar comic spirit, foreshadowing Carr and Cecily's marriage in the end. Moreover, the travesty of Cecily's obsession with encyclopaedic knowledge stays amusingly within a reasonable limit, considering that she is a librarian. At the same time, it still functions in such a way as to corrode Cecily's creditability as an advocate of Marxist-Leninist doctrine.

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funny to start Act II with a pretty girl delivering a lecture on Lenin. 'And indeed it *was* funny,' he told an interviewer, 'except that I was the only person laughing.'" Kenneth Tynan, p.113.

[239] Ronald Hayman, p.135.

In a restarted scene after a time-slip which finished the first round of the debate amid Carr and Cecily shouting at each other, Carr, as he did in the first act with Tzara, delivers a definite blow to the Marxist doctrine in a typically Stoppardian style. He speaks with that familiar authorial voice of Stoppard before the authenticity is immediately undermined by some absurd or comic comments. The final result is that everything is said and done before the dismantlement. So, Carr argues:

> No, no, no, no, my dear girl - Marx got it wrong. He got it wrong for good reason but he got it wrong just the same. By bad luck he encountered the capitalist system at its most deceptive period. The industrial revolution had crowded the people into slums and enslaved them in factories, but it had not yet begun to bring them the benefits of an industrialized society. Marx drew the lesson that the wealth of the capitalist had been stolen from the worker in the form of unpaid labour. He thought that was how the whole thing worked. That false premise was itself added to a false assumption. Marx assumed that people would behave according to their class. But they didn't. In all kinds of ways and for all kinds of reasons, the classes moved closer together instead of further apart. The critical moment never came. It receded. The tide must have turned at about the time when *Das Kapital* after eighteen years of hard labour was finally coming off the press, a moving reminder, Cecily, of the folly of authorship. How sweet you look suddenly-pink as a rose. (51)

Once again, the change of the style is remarkable. Carr's words here are as expository as Cecily's, and uncannily reflect the very theoretical basis of Stoppard's attack on Marxism.[240] However, just at the end, Carr is saved from didacticism by a sudden

[240] Stoppard actually confirmed that this was exactly what he thought of Marxism: "The great irony about Marx was that his impulses were deeply moral while his intellect insisted on a materialistic view of the world. His theory of capital, his theory of value, and his theory of revolution, have all been refuted by modern economics and by history. In short he got it wrong. [. . .] It was only a matter of time before somebody—it turned out to be Bernstein in 1900—somebody with the benefit of an extra fifty years' hindsight, would actually point out that Marx had got it wrong, but that it didn't matter because social justice was going to come through other means. Bernstein reckoned that the class war wasn't the way, that human solidarity was a better bet than class solidarity." "Ambushes for the Audience", p.13.

change of subject, as he was moments ago, by asking Cecily if she knew Gilbert and Sullivan. Cecily's heated refutation follows, but the whole argument immediately degenerates into a strip-tease, toning down Carr's serious allegation. The comic spirit is restored, and Carr comes back to the normal self. Nevertheless, Lenin who will appear on the stage shortly after this ultimate judgement of Carr's, is destined to lose from the start in the battle of ideas. And the following Lenin episode proves that he does.

If Cecily gives the general background information about Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the actual Lenin part is more biased to direct the audience's sympathy. It is conducted not through distorting the real episodes and creed, but through combining them in such a way that they will contradict each other, only to negate the whole of Lenin's contention.

Just after Carr is dragged down behind Cecily's desk, Nadya enters "*wearing bonnet, severely dressed and carrying a book*," and reports that, on the news of the breakout of Revolution in Russia, Lenin made this plan to go back to Russia.

> 'I cannot wait any longer. No legal means of transit available. Whatever happens, Zinoviev and I must reach Russia. The only possible plan is as follows: you must find two Swedes who resemble Zinoviev and me, but since we cannot speak Swedish they must be deaf mutes. I enclose our photographs for this purpose.'(53)

At this moment, amazed by the absurdity of the plan, Carr "*surfaces from behind Cecily's desk*", asking, "Two Swedish deaf mutes . . . ??"(54) The irony is that this farcical plan is not an invention, but a historical fact, and seriously damages Lenin's stature and propriety. The whole business of the Russian Revolution is effectively being put into question with this episode, because we are led to wonder how a man who thought of this silly plan could bring about the revolution in which so many people's lives were at stake. Another idea Nadya reports seems even more improbable. Lenin ordered a Vyacheslav Alexeyevich to "disappear from Geneva for at least two or three

weeks" so that he could assume his identity and travel to "England and Holland to Russia", wearing a wig.(54)[241]

Seriously compromised with these episodes, Lenin makes his speech on a high rostrum, with "*Everything black except a light on* Lenin".(58) And the speech stands out for its self-cancelling illogicality.

> Today, literature must become party literature. Down with non-partisan literature! Down with literary supermen! Literature must become a part of the common cause of the proletariat, a cog in the Social democratic mechanism. [. . .] We want to establish and we shall establish a free press, free not simply from the police, but also from capital, from careerism, and what is more, free *from bourgeois anarchist individualism*!
>
> . . .
>
> Everyone is free to write and say whatever he likes, without any restrictions. *But* every voluntary association, including the party, is also free to expel members who use the name of the party to advocate antiparty views. (58-59)

As Tim Brassell correctly points out, Lenin "stands condemned"[242] here, as the fatuous circular argument virtually negates all Lenin is speaking about. Furthermore, we can detect a strong tendency to distort the usual meaning of a word, as is once again correctly pointed out by Paul Delaney: "Words become arbitrary, dictatorial - just as they do in Tzara's verbal anarchy."(66) Robert Payne in his biography of Lenin also poignantly points out this perverse use of words: "Already in What is To Be Done? Lenin has hammered out those definitions which seem so strange to western readers because he uses words in a way which crudely distorts their accepted meanings. [. . .] He has a very simple definition of democracy: 'the abolition of class domination.' He

[241] Robert Payne in his biography of Lenin makes this comment in his assessment of the letter to Vyacheslav Alexeyevich, the manager of the Russian library in Geneva: "[. . .] only one part of the plan is seen with any imaginative understanding, and this part is the most ludicrous of all - Lenin's appearance in a wig at the French consulate in Berne". Robert Payne, The Life and Death of Lenin (London: W. H. Allen, 1964), p.279.

has an equally simple and startling definition of liberty: 'bourgeois tyranny.' These definitions need to be remembered, because he is continually talking of his love for democracy and his hatred of liberty."[243]

The moment Lenin finishes the speech, Carr intervenes with the comment, "And a lot more like that",(59) literally dismantling Lenin's contention. Apart from the fact that the rest of the Lenin scene is not depicted in Lenin's favour, Lenin will not be able to recover from the blow here, because the speech stands at the centre of the whole Lenin episode.

One thing Stoppard does not take the trouble to mention, however, is that, though Lenin's speech here gives the impression that he is talking about literature in general, Lenin made it explicit in the original article that his concern was strictly limited to "Party Literature". So, Maynard Solomon warns in his introduction to the collection of Lenin's articles on literature that "It [the 1905 article, 'Party Organization and Party Literature'] must be read, therefore, in the context of Lenin's debates with the Menshevik parliamentarians on one side and the anarchists and Narodniks on the other."[244] However, he acknowledges the inherent difficulties of Lenin's concept in a situation "when the Party becomes the state".[245]

Corballis makes a cautious remark concerning this speech by Lenin that, "If we are not to read this speech into Old Carr's memory, then we must at least acknowledge that it is not the 'real' Lenin who delivers it but a public, 'clockwork' Lenin distinct from the private man whom we see with Nadya."[246] The episodes related by Nadya after the speech indeed look like balancing efforts to rescue Lenin from the condemnation. So Lenin is said to have enjoyed art and literature: "he laughed a lot at the clowns - and he was moved to tears when he saw *La Dame aux Camélias* in London in 1907."(59) It is, however, still questionable whether Lenin's laughing and crying can actually balance his previous speech in a positive way. It would be more appropriate to interpret these episodes as part of Stoppard's attempt to galvanize Lenin's conservative taste in art and his extreme distaste for "modern art".

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[242] "Here, and throughout the act, Stoppard's approach is to use Lenin's own recorded statements whenever possible so that he may stand condemned, literally, by his own words." Tim Brassell, p.159.

[243] Robert Payne, p.153.

[244] Maynard Solomon, ed. with commentary, Marxism and Art: Essays Classic and Contemporary (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p.168.

[245] Ibid., p.168.

NADYA: However, he respected Tolstoy's traditional values. The *new* art seemed somehow alien and incomprehensible to him. Clara Zetkin, in her memoirs, remembers him bursting out -

CARR & LENIN: Bosh and nonsense!

LENIN: We are good revolutionaries but we seem to be somehow obliged to keep up with modern art. Well, as for me I'm a barbarian.

CARR & LENIN: Expressionism, futurism, cubism . . . I don't understand them and I get no pleasure from them.

CARR: That's my point. There was nothing wrong with Lenin except his politics. (60)

Disdain for modern art is nearly the only point Stoppard shares with Lenin,[247] which can hardly be a tribute to him. And Carr once again interferes to divest Leninism of any prestige it might have.

In Lenin's denunciation of modern art we can detect a paradoxical relationship between Leninism and Dadaism which Stoppard has been trying to bring to the fore. Despite the Dadaists' bent towards Communism, they share nothing but a ferocious revolutionary temper. Furthermore, the extreme individualism embodied in the Dada movement and the extreme collectivist doctrine in Marxist-Leninism which stifles any sign of individual traits are the direct opposite to each other. Hence, Carr could assuredly tell Tzara that "multi-coloured micturition is no trick to those boys, they'll have you pissing blood".(57) On the other hand, Lenin also suffers from Tzara's implicit attack that "the further left you go politically the more bourgeois they like their art". Another episode that Nadya narrates before the play comes back to the Earnest frame is the final affirmation of Tzara's equation.

I don't know of anything greater than the Appassionata. Amazing, superhuman music. [. . .] But I can't listen to music often. It affects my nerves, makes me want to say nice stupid things and pat the heads of

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[246] Richard Corballis, Stoppard: The Mystery and the Clockwork, p.89.

[247] "[. . .], particularly since Lenin had no use for the kind of art represented by Dada, which is one of the few things Lenin and I agree on." Stanley Eichelbaum, "So Often Produced, He Ranks with Shaw." (San Francisco Examiner, 28 March 1977) in Paul Delaney, TSIC, p.105.

> those people who while living in this vile hell can create such beauty. Nowadays we can't pat heads or we'll get our hands bitten off. We've got to *hit* heads, hit them without mercy, though ideally we're against doing violence to people . . . Hm, one's duty is infernally hard . . . (62)

What is underlined in this passage is the greatness of Beethoven's Sonata, which even Lenin cannot but admire. And Lenin's admiration for it just reveals the discrepancy between his ideological belief and artistic taste.[248] Besides, the last Wildean touch,[249] which usually helps Carr out of excessive seriousness at critical moments, debunks all of Lenin's contentions.

After this episode, Lenin and Carr leave the stage while Beethoven's sonata continues. Nadya, left alone, narrates the final episode of Lenin's failed attempt to see Nadya while he was in prison. This is the only one which can be said to be favourable to Lenin to a certain extent.

> Once when Vladimir was in prison - in St Petersburg - he wrote to me and asked that at certain times of day I should go and stand on a particular square of pavement on the Shpalernaya. When the prisoners were taken out for exercise it was possible through one of the windows in the corridor to catch a momentary glimpse of this spot. I went for several days and stood a long while on the pavement there. But he never saw me. Something went wrong. I forget what. (62)

However, there is a hidden story behind this. In fact, it was not Nadya alone whom Lenin asked to come and stand outside his prison gate. Just before his arrest, Lenin proposed to a woman called Apollinaria, and Lenin asked both of them to come.

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[248] In my opinion, it must be pointed out that the question of literature is just a part of Lenin's concern, and it will be an exaggeration that the episodes illustrated here reveal the inner conflict between Lenin the man and Lenin the revolutionary. As for his literary taste, Lunacharsky gives a rather clear idea: "Since dilettantism was always alien and hateful to him, he did not like to express himself on artistic matters. Nevertheless, his tastes were very definite. He liked the Russian classics, liked realism in literature and the theatre, in painting, etc." Quoted from Peter Reddaway, "Literature, the Arts and the Personality of Lenin." in Lenin: The Man, the Theorist, the Leader; A Reappraisal, Leonard Schapiro and Peter Reddaway, ed. (London: Pall Mall Press, 1967), p.58.

[249] It is Lenin's own expression.

Apollinaria did not turn up, and her absence "meant that she had considered his proposal and rejected it".[250]

Carr, a non-entity in contrast to the other major characters, still comes up with his own argument as a decent participant in the debate. In fact, his is the most difficult argument to refute, being rooted in common-sense. For example, when Tzara argues that "the duty of the artist" is "to jeer and howl and belch" as he denies the existence of any meaningful order, Carr simply states, "It is the duty of the artist to beautify existence."(20) This may sound too general to be significantly meaningful, but, considering that Carr is no specialist in the question of art, it would be surprising if he indeed argues too convincingly.

Carr's most valuable contribution in terms of the art debate in Travesties is his role in Stoppard's "ongoing debate with myself over the importance of the artist".[251] Stoppard repeatedly said that he "used to have a slight guilt feeling about being an artist", and that it took years for him to overcome it.[252] Travesties is partly a dramatization of this process, and in it we can best see how the Carr-Joyce axis works; Carr attacks, and Joyce redeems. Carr's attack on the special status enjoyed by the artist in his heated debate with Tzara is a typical example.

> CARR: [. . .] Art is absurdly overrated by artists, which is understandable, but what is strange is that it is absurdly overrated by everyone else.
>
> TZARA: Because man cannot live by bread alone.
>
> CARR: Yes, he can. It's *art* he can't live on. When I was at school, on certain afternoons we all had to do what was called Labour - weeding, sweeping, sawing logs for the boiler-room, that kind of

[250] Robert Payne, p.202.

[251] Ross Wetzsteon, "Tom Stoppard Eats Steak Tartare with Chocolate Sauce." (Village Voice, 10 November, 1975) in Paul Delaney, TSIC, p.82.

[252] "I used to have a slight guilt feeling about being an artist, but I don't any more. When I tried to visualize a completely technological world without culture, I realized that one does not have to apologize for being an artist. It took me years to reach that understanding." Oleg Kerensky, p.169. In 1973, in his interview with Janet Watts, he also said, "I've never felt this—that art is important. That's been my secret guilt. I think it's the secret guilt of most artists." Janet Watts, "Tom Stoppard", p.12.

> thing; but if you had a chit from Matron you were let off to spend the afternoon messing about in the Art Room. Labour or Art. And you've got a chit for *life*? (*Passionately*) *Where did you get it?* What is an artist? For every thousand people there's nine hundred doing the work, ninety doing well, nine doing good, and one lucky bastard who's the artist. (28)

With Wildean paradox and an easily understandable metaphor, Carr is doing his utmost to denounce the privileged class of the artists represented here by Tzara who idly believes in his own self-importance as an artist. In doing this, Carr genuinely reflects not only lay people's sentiment, but also Stoppard's own guilty feeling. His attack culminates when he conclusively remarks, "The idea of the artist as a special kind of human being is art's greatest achievement, and it's fake!"(29)[253] The more convincing and persuasive Carr's attack sounds, the better will it be for the whole dramatic effect, for Joyce's apology for the artist will emerge vindicated to the utmost. Later, it is none other than Carr himself who gives the strongest back-handed endorsement to Joyce at the end of the first act.

> I dreamed about him, dreamed I had him in the witness box, a masterly cross-examination, case practically won, I *flung* at him - 'And what did you do in the Great War?' 'I wrote Ulysses,' he said. 'What did you do?' Bloody nerve. (44)

The conflict between Carr and Joyce is a personal and emotional one. As for art, "the perspectives of Carr and Joyce are not so much contradictory as complementary".[254] Moreover, Carr's view becomes virtually indistinguishable from Joyce's in the second act when he argues against Cecily that "in some way it [art] gratifies a hunger that is

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[253] "One of the points Stoppard enjoyed most of all in the performance of Travesties was the audience's audibly enthusiastic response to Carr's envious denunciation of the artist." Ronald Hayman, p.118. Stoppard also confirmed that "Henry Carr's skepticism about the valuation which artists put on themselves is very much my own skepticism. But then Joyce's defense of art is mine, too." Nancy Shields Hardin, "An Interview with Tom Stoppard," Contemporary Literature, 22, (1981), p.156.

[254] Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays, p.76.

common to princes and peasants" or "art doesn't change society, it is merely changed by it".(50)

Carr's strategic help to Joyce is particularly important, because the presentation of Joyce in Travesties also suffers from *travesty*. Joyce's episodes, as in the cases of Tzara and Lenin, are a mixture of facts and fiction. Joyce's repeated attempts to borrow money, let alone his habit of composing limericks, are based upon biographical facts, as Richard Ellmann provides ample examples in his biography of James Joyce. Similarly, Carr's shout to Joyce, "*why for God's sake cannot you contrive just once to wear the jacket that is suggested by your trousers??*"(68) is a light-hearted parody of Joyce, as episodes about Joyce's habit of wearing ill-matched clothes are scattered here and there in Richard Ellmann's biography, invariably causing laughter. These episodes are funny, because the pettiness of the episodes does not become such a great writer as James Joyce. Even his court-case with Carr itself is funny for the same reason.

The final image of Joyce emerging from these episodes is amusing rather than damaging as in the cases of Tzara and Lenin, but not equal to the importance of his argument strategically situated near the end of Act One. Nonetheless, the ultimate significance of Joyce's argument is undeniable, as it sums up Stoppard's own vision of art which he is trying to convey through Travesties.

> An artist is the magician put among men to gratify-capriciously-their urge for immortality. The temples are built and brought down around him, continuously and contiguously, from Troy to the fields of Flanders. If there is any meaning in any of it, it is in what survives as art, yes even in the celebration of tyrants, yes even in the celebration of nonentities. What now of the Trojan War if it had been passed over by the artist's touch? A forgotten expedition prompted by Greek merchants looking for new markets. A minor redistribution of broken pots. But it is we who stand enriched, [. . .] . . . It is a theme so overwhelming that I am almost afraid to treat it. And yet I with my Dublin Odyssey will double that immortality, yes by God *there's* a corpse that will dance for some time yet and *leave the world precisely as it finds it* - [. . .] (41-42)

What Joyce argues here for Stoppard can be summarized, first, that art is not necessarily involved in the current affairs of the world, because to change the world is not the direct objective of art, and, second, that art testifies to the human existence and beautifies it by presenting the world as it is in an artistically ordered form, and thereby transcends the vicissitude of human history. Understandably, this position, particularly Joyce's controversial claim of "*leave[ing] the world precisely as it finds it*" triggered strong voices of disagreement from a few critics. Kenneth Tynan's was the earliest and the strongest.

> So much for any pretensions that art might have to change, challenge, or criticize the world, or to modify, however marginally, our view of it. For that road can lead only to revolution, and revolution will mean the end of free speech, which is defined by Lenin, later in the play, as speech that is "*free from bourgeois anarchist individualism.*" Stoppard's idol—the artist's for art's sake—is, unequivocally, Joyce[255]

This is surely an over-simplification, though it highlights in a very clear manner how the Stoppardian position is irrevocably in conflict with the Marxist-Leninist view. What Tynan overlooked is Stoppard's own conviction, implicit in Joyce's argument, that the aim and role of art is fundamentally moral. Art cannot be free from social implications, and Stoppard is fully aware of it: "There is no such thing as 'pure' art—art is a commentary on something else in life—it might be adultery in the suburbs, or the Vietnamese war. I think that art ought to involve itself in contemporary social and political history as much as anything else."[256] Considering this, describing Stoppard as an artist for art's sake is far from being true. Art for art's sake would be just another extremism Stoppard will object to wholeheartedly.

As I discussed in the previous chapter on Jumpers, Stoppard's embarrassment at the huge claims for the so-called "committed theatre" does not mean that Stoppard is indifferent to the question of changing the world; the central question is not whether to

[255] Kenneth Tynan, p.112.
[256] Interview with Janet Watts.

change the world, but how. Michael Billington expresses disbelief by asking, "How can Ulysses be said to have left the world as it found it?" and further argues that "Joyce enlarged our vision; and that seems to me a legitimate way of changing the world."[257] In fact, I should say, this is exactly how Stoppard perceives the role of art in Travesties, and throughout his career. Furthermore, the historical James Joyce precisely represents Stoppard's own position. Joyce's argument quoted above is not purely fiction; the historical Joyce actually commented in a similar vein.[258] However, he never wavered in his moral commitment as is demonstrably seen in one of his letters to Grant Richards, a Dublin publisher: "I seriously believe that [by suppressing the book[259]] you will retard the course of civilisation in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having one good look at themselves in my nicely polished looking-glass."[260]

Joyce's speech in Travesties should also be understood in relation to the contentions of Tzara and particularly Lenin. By setting a clear, ultimate aim of art, Joyce refutes Tzara's self-indulgence, and his insistence on artistic autonomy disclaims Lenin's materialistic, functional art. Stoppard strikes a balance between two extremes of Dadaist Chaos and Marxist Order; art should be 'Ordered Chaos'.

The dimension of social criticism in Travesties which was first voiced by Carr in his cogent observation that "The easiest way of knowing whether good has triumphed over evil is to examine the freedom of the artist"(22) is further reinforced by Joyce's assertion of artistic freedom. What underlies this call for the freedom of the artist is the fundamental right of the freedom of the individual, because a society where the freedom of the artist is guaranteed while that of the individual is oppressed, is simply unimaginable. In this context, Stoppard's vision of art is inseparably interconnected with his moral and social vision, and his so-called political plays are not the betrayal of his artistic principle, but a legitimate extension of it.

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[257] Michael Billington, p.102.

[258] "'As an artist, I attach no importance to political conformity. [. . .] Today we see in the Greeks of antiquity the most cultured nation. Had the Greek state not perished, what would have become of the Greeks? Colonizers and merchants.' He went on to explain, 'As an artist I am against every state. [. . .] Naturally I can't approve of the act of the revolutionary who tosses a bomb in a theatre to destroy the king and his children. On the other hand, have those states behaved any better which have drowned the world in a blood-bath?'" Richard Ellmann, p.460.

[259] It is Dubliners.

[260] Quoted from S. L. Goldberg, The Classical Temper: A Study of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), p.228.

As previously mentioned, the problem of Joyce's speech is that its force has not been built up through convincing, moving development of the dramatic actions. In In the Native State, for example, Stoppard repeats the same argument when Flora quotes a line from "Ozymandias" and Das, the Indian painter, responds to it enthusiastically: "Oh, yes! Finally like the empire of Ozymandias! Entirely forgotten except in a poem by an English poet. You see how privileged we are, Miss Crewe. Only in art can empires cheat oblivion, because only the artist can say, 'Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!'"[261] And this basic argument is impressively paraphrased into the very artefact of Das's painting of Flora.

> MRS SWAN: (*Taken aback*) Oh, good heavens.
> ANISH: A second portrait of Flora Crewe.
> MRS SWAN: Oh . . . How like Flora
> ANISH: More than a good likeness, Mrs Swan.
> MRS SWAN: No . . . I mean *how like Flora*![262]

Though Flora and Das are both dead, art preserves both of them in their essence as the last words by Mrs Swan, her sister, show. In contrast, Joyce "*produces a rabbit out of his hat*"(42) when he has finished his speech, as if to confirm his own contention that an artist is a magician. Compared with the bits of paper Tzara produces from a hat, the image can be said to be more favourable to Joyce, but it is questionable whether the series of Joyce's hackneyed tricks of producing various things out of his hat is doing justice to what Joyce achieved with his works or successfully supports Joyce's argument in Travesties.

If not directly supported by his own argument or episodes, however, Joyce's position is immensely reinforced by the tribute paid to Joyce throughout the play. The examples are almost impossible to enumerate, literally demonstrating Stoppard's own admission that he "loaded the play for Joyce".[263] The structural symmetry, numerous literary or other styles, ingenious use of pun, not to mention the obvious Joycean form of limerick

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[261] In the Native State in Stoppard: The Plays for Radio, 1964—1991, p.243.
[262] Ibid., p.239.
[263] Stanley Eichelbaum, "So Often produced, He Ranks with Shaw." in Paul Delaney, TSIC, p.105.

and catechism, are all part of them. There is also a subtle, but direct use of Joycean style as in Carr's reminiscence[264] or in Tzara's first mention of Joyce to Carr.[265] Later, Tzara's challenge to Joyce is curiously undercut by his own acknowledgement of Joyce's genius and implicit mention of Joyce's Finnegan's Wake: "Your art has failed. You've turned literature into a religion and it's as dead as all the rest, it's an overripe corpse and you're cutting fancy figures at the wake. It's too late for geniuses!"(41)

In an interview with C.E. Mauves, Stoppard said that he is "on his [Joyce's] side", and further explained: "The side of logic and rationality. And craftsmanship. There's a correlation between craftsmanship and art—craftsmanship is what crystallizes art."[266] One of the reasons for Stoppard's disapproval of Dadaism is its lack of craftsmanship. To Stoppard to make poetry out of a hat is out of the question: "Writing a poem by taking words out of a hat may be amusing fun, but let's not call the result poetry."[267] So Stoppard laboured to make Tzara's chance-poems intelligible. The nonsensical opening poem by Tzara is rigorously engineered into a limerick in French,[268] linking Tzara to Joyce from the start and the other poem Tzara makes with the Shakespearean sonnet has also multi-layered meanings. The theme of the sonnet is love, but love eternalized by poetry. So it is a double tribute to love and art.

> Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
> When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
> So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
> So long lives this and this gives life to thee.

Tzara does violence to this quintessential gem of literary invention, only to make sexually-charged fragments.

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[264] "'Twas in the bustling metropolis of swiftly gliding trams and greystone banking houses, of cosmopolitan restaurants on the great stone banks of the swiftly-gliding snot-green (mucus mutandis) Limmat River"(8)

[265] "The war caught Joyce and his wife [. . .], all being the mismatched halves of sundry sundered Sunday suits."(24)

[266] C. E. Mauves, "A Playwright on the Side of Rationality." (Palo Alto Times, 25 March 1977) in Paul Delaney, TSIC, p.101.

[267] Bernard Weiner, "A Puzzling, 'Traditional' Stoppard." San Francisco Chronicle, 29 March 1977, p.40. Quoted from Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays, p.62.

[268] Paul Delaney reports that "Jim Hunter was the first critic to recognise Tzara's words as 'the play's first limerick - in *French*'" Ibid., p.168.

shake thou thy gold buds
the untrimm'd but short fair shade
shines --
see, this lovely hot possession growest
so long
by nature's course -
so . . . long - heaven! (36)

They are made of the same words. However, on the one hand, we have Shakespeare's sonnet, and on the other, Tzara's nonsense. This is a graphic example of the lack of craftsmanship, showing where a false concept of art will eventually lead. On the other hand, Shakespeare's sonnet supports the validity of Joyce's argument, as it eloquently demonstrates the immortalizing power of art. Beethoven's sonata in the second act is a parallel to Shakespeare's sonnet, representing the same kind of supreme artistry which defies time.

The strong evocation of Molly Bloom's "yes" is, no doubt, part of the tribute to Joyce, and Cecily's "yes" to Carr further corroborates Joyce's argument ("yes, even in the celebration of nonentities"), because Cecily knew that Carr had never seen Lenin and that he was not the Consul. Carr's closing monologue is also a strong confirmation of Joyce's position of "artistic autonomy".

> I learned three things in Zurich during the war. I wrote them down. Firstly, you're either a revolutionary or you're not, and if you're not you might as well be an artist as anything else. Secondly, if you can't be an artist, you might as well be a revolutionary . . . I forget the third thing. (71)

Stoppard said on several occasions that in Travesties he tried to answer the question whether "the words 'revolutionary' and 'artist' are capable of being synonymous, or whether they are mutually exclusive, or something in between"[269]. In spite of all the

[269] "The Ambushes for the Audience," p.11. In the same interview, Stoppard repeats the question: "The play puts the question in a more extreme form. It asks whether an artist has to justify himself in political terms *at all*." Ibid., p.16. "It's worth asking whether the artist and the revolutionary can be the

comic deviations, this question stays at the centre until the very end. And as far as the dialectic between art and revolution is concerned, it does not seem that one can be a revolutionary in art as well as in politics, and in all probability, "the third thing" Carr is reluctant to admit is Joyce's "evolutionary art".[270]

Interestingly, Stoppard had already used the format of Carr's closing dialogue in Dogg's Our Pet.[271] Corballis argues that "the Stoppard speeches are closer to a remark made (according to Ellmann) by Ettore Schmitz, who was a friend of Joyce's in Trieste: 'There are three things I always forget: names, faces, and—the third thing I forget.'"[272] According to Richard Ellmann again, there is also a slight variation of it made by Nora Joyce when the Joyces were in Paris just before they moved back to Zurich because of the Second World War: "I never get but three words out of him all day these days: in the morning, 'The papers!', at lunch, 'What's that?', and the third—Jim, what is the third, I can't remember it? Ah yes, about his bottle of water on the floor: 'Don't touch that!' Don't touch that! Goodness!"[273]

Ultimately, it is what Stoppard did with Hamlet and the two Elizabethan attendant lords and what he does now with Earnest, Ulysses, and a minor Consular official named Carr that materialize Joyce's, and Stoppard's own, argument about the highest goal of art; that is, to immortalize our existence and redouble its immortality.

Travesties is no doubt a play of ideas, but it also has an emotional quality. It largely emanates from the discrepancy between Carr's stubborn insistence that his life has been

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same person or whether the activities are mutually exclusive," "How would you justify Ulysses to Lenin? Or Lenin to Joyce?" Mel Gussow, Conversations with Stoppard, p. 20, p. 21. The interview with Mel Gussow took place in 1974.

[270] "It's[Travesties] sort of three-legged, and the three legs are Lenin, the political revolutionist; Tristan Tzara, the artistic revolutionist; and James Joyce, the artistic evolutionist." C. E. Mauves, "A Playwright on the Side of Rationality," in TSIC, p.101.

[271] "Three points only while I have the platform. Firstly, just because it's been opened, there's no need to run amok kicking footballs through windows and writing on the walls. . . . Secondly, I can take a joke as well as any man, but I've noticed a lot of language about the place and if there's one thing I can't stand it's language. I forget what the third point is." The (15 Minute) Dogg's Troupe Hamlet in Ten of the Best British Short Plays, Ed Berman, ed. (London: Inter-Action Imprint, 1979), p.94. The short play was first staged by Interaction in 1971.

[272] Richard Corballis, "Wilde . . . Joyce . . . O'Brien . . . Stoppard: Modernism and Postmodernism in Travesties." in Joycean Occasions: Essays from the Milwaukee James Joyce Conference, Janet E. Dunleavy, Melvin J. Friedman, and Michael Patrick Gillespie, ed. (Neward: University of Delaware Press, 1991), p.165.

[273] Richard Ellmann, p.723.

as meaningful as those of the historical celebrities he now reminisces about and his inevitable realization that it is not the case.

> Carr: [. . .] *What of it?* I was here. They were here. They went on. I went on. We all went on.
>
> Old Cecily: No, we didn't. We stayed. [. . .] They all went on. (71)

We felt it as a personal loss when Rosencrantz and Guildenstern disappeared, because we saw part of ourselves in them. Carr now strikes a sympathetic chord in us, as he also represents something of our own destiny. There is not much for us to do about our own destiny, but we can still say "yes" to ourselves, as Joyce demonstrated in his historic work, and as Stoppard does now with his celebration of Carr.

IV. Assertion of the Individual Ethic: Transitional Works

A. Professional Foul

Professional Foul, a TV drama first broadcast on BBC 2 in September 1977, was the most realistic of Stoppard's works up to then.[274] As to his choice of the realistic mode of the play, Stoppard made a very clear and helpful comment in one of his interviews: "The subject matter of the play determined the form of the play as much as the television medium determined it."[275] The realistic mode, as the most easily accessible form, has a sure advantage for a TV drama, and, considering that "the subject matter" of the play is the deplorable practice of human rights abuse in Communist countries, the realistic mode was a natural, if not necessary, choice. However, to understand that the drama is exclusively committed to the human rights cause, and therefore, marks a radical departure from Stoppard's earlier stage, would invite objections on several accounts. First, as I have been trying to demonstrate, Stoppard had been "committed" in his own way, as he had always been aware of, and indeed trying to assert, the significant role of art as building a moral matrix for society.[276] Secondly, Professional Foul is constructed with the typically Stopparidan tactic of "joining contexts" as the central plot of Prof. Anderson's conversion from indifference to commitment is closely interconnected with the other themes of Catastrophe Theory and the football ethic. Professional Foul, therefore, is a proper development of the Stoppardian theatre alongside Stoppard's conscious experiment with the realistic mode, anticipating the future victories of The Real Thing, In the Native State and Arcadia. Lastly, the difference between Professional Foul as a representative work of Stoppard's transitional period and his works up to Travesties lies more in Stoppard's absolute assertion of his own belief than in his choice of the hot, current issue, as John Bull succinctly

[274] The three short stories published in 1964 were written in the mode of realism. However, they are too short pieces to draw any proper attention. As for Enter a Free Man, it is difficult to say that it belongs to Stoppard's canon, as Stoppard himself acknowledged that it was a bogus attempt. Only in Professional Foul, was the realistic mode consciously chosen with sure hallmarks of Stoppardian Theatre. The text used is, Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul (London: Faber & Faber, 1978).

[275] Melvyn Bragg, "The South Bank Show" in TSIP, p.120.

[276] Stoppard said in an interview with Milton Shulman that "I was always morally, if not politically, involved". Milton Shulman, "The Politicizing of Tom Stoppard" (New York Times, 23 April 1978) in TSIC, p.108.

summarizes: "There is no doubting Stoppard's desire to bring the fate of East European dissidents to the fore, but the central thrust of the play remains with the resolution of the moral dilemma for the Oxbridge don."[277] There was indubitably an absolutist tendency in Stoppard's works from Jumpers on, and the individualist vision strongly voiced by Prof. Anderson and Professional Foul itself, is also an explicit manifestation of the idea which was already implicit in his earlier works. In this context, the difference is a matter of degree rather than a fundamental change. As Stoppard deals with the emotional and familiar subject of human rights oppression in Communist regimes, he has discarded his earlier efforts to present opposite ideas and positions simultaneously. Instead, he unconditionally sides with the individualist vision almost to the point of revealing his ideological bent. To demonstrate this is the main objective of this section.

In the middle of 1976, Mark Shivas, a BBC producer, commissioned a play from Stoppard, saying that "he would be interested in any ideas of mine [Stoppard's]".[278] It also happened that Amnesty International, a world-wide organization for monitoring human rights violations, made the year 1977 the "Prisoners of Conscience Year", and asked Stoppard to write something to mark the event. Early in 1977, Václav Havel, the famous Czech playwright and ardent proponent of the human rights movement, was arrested while trying to deliver what is now known as "Charter 77". Later the same year, Stoppard made a week's trip to the Soviet Union with the representatives of Amnesty International. All these circumstances, combined with Stoppard's natural concern for his home country, prompted Stoppard to write Professional Foul. In terms of the practical content of the play, however, the trip to the Soviet Union was the most note-worthy, as Stoppard himself acknowledged that the trip "unlocked"[279] the play. There is an unmistakable parallel between what Stoppard experienced during his trip to the Soviet Union and what Prof. Anderson is experiencing in Czechoslovakia.

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[277] John Bull, "Tom Stoppard: Open to the Public" in Stage Right: Crisis and Recovery in British Contemporary Mainstream Theatre (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1994), p.200.

[278] Milton Shulman, "The Politicizing of Tom Stoppard," p.109.

[279] Tom Stoppard, "Nothing in Mind," London Magazine, 17 February 1978, p.68. The article is virtually the same as the introduction to Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul.

> Instead of a Cook's tour, which I thought I was taking, one thing led to another and I came in contact with a number of Russians concerned with human rights. I met Irina Orlov, the wife of Yuri Orlov, who had been arrested three days before. She told us how eight KGB men searched their flat and when she tried to get help—she is entitled to two witnesses by law—she had her arm twisted behind her back. It was a very unpleasant experience in many ways, trying to talk to people who were on a precipice and simply didn't know if they were going to be there for breakfast the next morning. I am sure I was followed. A chap took my photograph in the street and the thorough search they gave me at the airport was rather frightening.[280]

Three months after the trip, Profession Foul "was ready for transmission in September 1977".[281] During the rehearsal, Stoppard visited his native country for the first time and "to everyone's relief, there was no need to change anything in the script because Mr. Stoppard felt that in mood, clothes and atmosphere they had got it right".[282]

The most striking aspect of the play is the character development[283] which we witness in Prof. Anderson, a Cambridge philosophy don, who visits Czechoslovakia to attend a philosophical colloquium. The whole play is indeed so constructed that Prof. Anderson's conversion stands out most dramatically, as Michael Billington rather enthusiastically comments that "it is [. . .] a classically constructed play in which the innocent hero acquires knowledge, experiences a spiritual turning-point and emerges purified".[284] In the first half, the emphasis is laid upon Prof. Anderson's innocence. As he experiences the stark realities in a Communist regime, however, he is under

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[280] Shulman, Milton, p.109. Though Stoppard did not mention in the interview, Stoppard also met in Leningrad "the teenaged son of Dr. Marina Voikhanskaya, a former psychiatrist in a Russian mental hospital who emigrated to Britain without her son in 1975 after discovering the political abuses of Soviet psychiatry". Stephen Hu, Tom Stoppard's Stagecraft (New York: Peter Lang, 1988), p.152. The meeting probably helped Stoppard to construct the scene of Prof. Anderson's meeting with Sacha in Professional Foul.

[281] Milton Shulman, p.111.

[282] Ibid.

[283] As I will argue later, Prof. Anderson emerges in the end as more or less the same person as he was in the beginning. So, 'character development' does not seem to be a totally appropriate term.

[284] Michael Billington, p.122.

increasing pressure to reassess his moral position before he dramatically changes his attitude. In the important park scene, "the Aristotelian turning-point of the whole drama",[285] he promises to Mrs Hollar and Sacha that he will do his best to help Hollar, the imprisoned dissident and his former student. The latter half is made up of a series of Prof. Anderson's calculated actions to demonstrate his outrage against the oppressive regime.

The basic dynamism of the play is further heightened by the authentic characterization to the details, concerning Prof. Anderson in particular, and the fast, closely interlocked events throughout the play. The opening scene set in the cabin of the aeroplane, for example, is a demonstrative piece of Stoppard's increasing dramatic skill. Without any trace of the extravaganza in the opening of Jumpers or Travesties, Stoppard displays his firm grip on the characters and the multiple plot of the play.

> ANDERSON: [. . .] Have you [McKendrick] noticed the way the wings keep *wagging*? I try to look away and think of something else but I am drawn back irresistibly . . . I wouldn't be nervous about flying if the wings didn't wag. Solid steel. Thick as a bank safe. Flexing like tree branches. It's not natural. There is a coldness around my heart as though I'd seen your cigarette smoke knock against the ceiling and break in two like a bread stick. By the way, that is a non-smoking seat. (44-45)

This is a rare moment in Stoppard's dramaturgy of exhibiting character through dramatic action. Prof. Anderson's uneasy feeling about the "wagging" wings superbly demonstrates his rather conventional, rigid mind set. At the same time, it gently but strongly pushes the plot forward, hinting at the unusual adventure Prof. Anderson will go through during his short stay in Czechoslovakia. As is foreshadowed by his mention of "a coldness around my heart", Prof. Anderson has some ill boding about his trip. His experiences in the republic could be unpleasant. In spite of his efforts, however, he cannot escape, because he will "be drawn back irresistibly". Prof. Anderson's concern for "solid steel flexing like tree branches" also demonstrates his rather unstable

[285] Ibid., p.119.

psychological state, on the one hand, and figuratively foretells future events, on the other. His moral principle will be under consistent strain, and in the end "break [. . .] like a bread stick" as McKendrick's cigarette smoke does. The dialogue, then, turns quite dextrously in such a way as to reveal that Prof. Anderson is *fastidious* enough to point out to McKendrick that he is smoking in a non-smoking seat, which in turn reveals McKendrick's rough, careless character.

Prof. Anderson's rather detached, don-like trait is also meticulously outlined in the first scene. When McKendrick mentions Prof. Anderson's photograph in the colloquium brochure, Prof. Anderson quips, "Young therefore old. Old therefore young. Only odd at first glance,"(44) and is seen to write it down for his colleagues. Prof. Anderson is also seen to be preoccupied with something else from time to time even while engaged in conversation with McKendrick. So, to McKendrick's question, "Do you know Prague?", he half-absentedly replies, assuming that McKendrick is talking about another academic: "Not personally. I know the name."(45) However, fastidiousness is just part of Prof. Anderson's character. His rather *flexible* side is also presented in conjunction with his fastidious side, adding authenticity to his character in general. He confesses that he does not "read the philosophical journals as much as I should," and calls philosophical colloquiums "international bunfights".(45) In due time, he also discloses that he has "an ulterior motive" for coming to Czechoslovakia, and heightens the expectation by adding that "I'm being a tiny bit naughty."(46) McKendrick is duly intrigued, as he himself has a literally *naughty* expectation for his trip. The subsequent dialogue is another example of Stoppard's masterly handling of the plot.

> MCKENDRICK: Naughty?
>
> ANDERSON: Unethical. Well, I am being paid for by the Czech government, after all.
>
> MCKENDRICK: And what . . . ?
>
> ANDERSON: I don't think I'm going to tell you. You see, if I tell you I make you a co-conspirator whether or not you would have wished to be one. Ethically I should give you the opportunity of choosing to be one or not.

MCKENDRICK: Then why don't you give me the opportunity?

ANDERSON: I can't without telling you. An impasse. (47)

Prof. Anderson brilliantly captures a style characteristic of the university don who is rather removed from reality, engrossed in theoretical questions, while his quizzical attitude arouses our expectation of the future development of the play. It will be revealed only at the last moment of the play in a more dramatic event how this sort of "impasse" can be solved. More importantly, Prof. Anderson here touches upon the central ethical question of the whole play, that is, the question of *earning consent*, as Professional Foul deals with the relationships between individuals and between the state and the individual.

Once in Prague, Prof. Anderson begins to experience directly "some dubious things happening in Czechoslovakia".(46) On his way to his hotel room, he meets Pavel Hollar, his former philosophy student at Cambridge. Prof. Anderson's pleasure in meeting Hollar, however, is instantly kept at bay, not only by his disturbing discovery that Hollar, whose "decent degree"(52) Prof. Anderson still vividly remembers, is now literally reduced to being a cleaner, but also by Hollar's unexpected request. When Hollar found out that Professor Anderson would be coming to the congress, he wrote a thesis in a month. Now he wants Prof. Anderson to smuggle the thesis out to be published in England. Prof. Anderson rejects Hollar's appeal on the ground that smuggling is "just not ethical",(56) especially when he has been invited by the government. Thus, Prof. Anderson's confusion over priorities in ethical matters, and his rather unusual detachment from the real state of things are continuously brought into relief. Prof. Anderson's response to Hollar's explanation of the gist of his thesis is another telling example.

HOLLAR: [. . .] The ethics of the State must be judged against the fundamental ethic of the individual. The human being, not the citizen. I conclude there is an obligation, a human responsibility, to fight against the State correctness. Unfortunately that is not a safe conclusion.

ANDERSON: Quite. The difficulty arises when one asks oneself how

the *individual* ethic can have any meaning by itself. [. . .]

HOLLAR: I mean, it is not safe for me. (55)

Prof. Anderson does not quite catch what Hollar means by "not safe", and takes his argument just from a philosophical point of view. However, when Hollar asks him to keep the manuscript and return it the next day to his apartment, in case he should be searched by the police on his way back, Prof. Anderson reluctantly accepts the offer.

The next day he manages to get out from the colloquium, and visits Hollar's apartment. His original plan was to return the thesis, and attend the World Cup qualifying match between England and Czechoslovakia, which is the ulterior reason Prof. Anderson mentioned in Scene One. To his astonishment, however, he finds that Hollar's apartment is being thoroughly searched by the Czech police, and he himself is detained there for some time, thus missing the match. In spite of the event, he is seen to be still in a state of indifference, as his desperate protest shows: "I do not know what they are doing here, I do not care what they are doing here—."(69) However, his understanding of the real situation of the state undoubtedly deepens through this experience, and Prof. Anderson's inner turmoil manifests itself in a perfectly timed dramatic action while he is dining with McKendrick and Chetwyn back at the hotel.

MCKENDRICK: So you end up using a moral principle as your excuse for acting against a moral interest. It's a sort of funk—

(ANDERSON, *under pressure, slams his cup back on to its saucer in a very uncharacteristic and surprising way. His anger is all the more alarming for that.*)

ANDERSON: You make your points altogether too easily, McKendrick. What have you need of moral courage when your principles reverse themselves so conveniently? (78)

McKendrick's pithy criticism almost catches Prof. Anderson's conscience, and pushes him a bit further to the edge, and Prof. Anderson's "uncharacteristic", hysteric response is proof of how much he was disturbed by the day's experience. By the time the dinner is almost over, Mrs Hollar and Sacha visit Prof. Anderson at his hotel. In the

subsequent park scene, Prof. Anderson's dramatic change of attitude takes place. Prof. Anderson, so much moved by the sufferings Mrs Hollar and her son are going through, decides to help the Hollars. From this point on, Prof. Anderson abandons his rather stand-offish attitude and engages himself in a variety of actions. Back in his hotel room, he borrows a typewriter from an English reporter, and rewrites his presentation paper. Originally, the title of the essay was "Ethical Fictions as Ethical Foundations", the contents of which can be conjectured from the precedent of George's in Jumpers. Now, he changes it to deal directly with "the conflict between the rights of individuals and the rights of community".(87) The actual delivery of the changed essay at the colloquium is the culmination point of Prof. Anderson's conversion. Astounded by the challenge Prof. Anderson poses, the Chairman sets off a false fire alarm, bringing the colloquium to a sudden halt. Before the drama ends, however, Prof. Anderson has one more surprise in store for us. He hid Hollar's thesis in "unsuspecting and unsuspected"[286] McKendrick's suitcase, and carries out his promise to help Hollar, and solves his "impasse" as well, by successfully bringing Hollar's thesis out of the country.

As this brief summary of the plot suggests, Professional Foul consists of rapid, successive events with Prof. Anderson at the centre. Still, other important themes, closely intertwined with the central theme of Prof. Anderson's conversion, enrich the fabric of the play and maximize the dramatic effect. If the popular whodunit frame was used to keep the audience's interest amid the abstruse, philosophical debates in Jumpers, Stoppard uses a no less popular theme of football in Professional Foul, not only to the advantage of entertainment, but as a fulcrum for delving into the serious question of the game ethic. Stoppard also uses Catastrophe Theory extensively to add extra dimension and flair to the question of ethical absolutism and relativism.

The title, Professional Foul, is itself football jargon, meaning a foul deliberately effected to prevent an apparent goal. Professional Foul is made up of a series of professional fouls in a literal and metaphoric sense. In fact, the play begins with Prof. Anderson's professional foul, as he is more eager to attend the football match than to

[286] Tim Brassell, p.190.

take part in the colloquium, and in this sort of foul, he is not a novice, because he took advantage of international conferences for a similar "ulterior reason" in the past.[287] The literal professional foul, however, occurs in the match between England and Czechoslovakia, when Broadbent, "an opportunist more than anything"(50) according to Prof. Anderson, tackles a Czech player, Deml, from behind, resulting in a penalty kick from which the Czech Republic scores the first goal. The match is being broadcast on the radio, while Prof. Anderson is detained in Hollar's apartment, and a Czech policeman asks Prof. Anderson what it is called in English.

> MAN 6: (*In English*) Broadbent—a bad tackle when Deml had a certain goal . . . a what you call it?—a necessary foul.
> ANDERSON: A professional foul. (71)

The irony is that more serious fouls are being committed by the Czech police as they not only infringe on fundamental human rights, but go so far as to fabricate Hollar's crime by hiding foreign currency in his apartment. Even while the police search is going on in Hollar's apartment, professional fouls on a smaller scale are being exchanged. A policeman, for the purpose of prying into the real cause for Prof. Anderson's visit, pretends that he met the taxi-driver who had driven Prof. Anderson to the apartment, and that he heard from the taxi-driver Prof. Anderson was going to deliver something to Hollar. Prof. Anderson is taken in by the trick, but denies it is money that he is delivering. However, Prof. Anderson, on his part, succeeds in cheating the policeman by presenting his and McKendrick's presentation papers, thus keeping Hollar's manuscript safe.

Prof. Anderson's most spectacular foul is of course his delivery of the changed manuscript at the Colloquium, and the chairman reacts with his own foul, deliberately setting off a false fire alarm. The play ends with Prof. Anderson's final foul on McKendrick. At the previous night of their departure, McKendrick got heavily drunk and his insulting remarks on the football ethic in general finally earned him a hit across the face by Broadbent. Prof. Anderson took subdued McKendrick to his room after the

[287] "BROADBENT: You've seen him [Jirasek], have you?/ ANDERSON: I've seen him twice. In the UFA Cup a few seasons ago. . . . I happened to be in Berlin for the Hegel Colloquium, er, bunfight. And then last season I was in Bratislava to receive an honorary degree."(59)

frenzy. It was at this time that he put Hollar's thesis into McKendrick's suitcase. The next day at airport customs, Prof. Anderson is being thoroughly searched by a plain-clothed official, while McKendrick goes through customs with only a cursory inspection. In the aeroplane, conversing with McKendrick, Prof. Anderson reveals that the thesis is in McKendrick's briefcase.

> MCKENDRICK: Why did they search you?
> ANDERSON: They thought I might have something.
> MCKENDRICK: Did you have anything?
> ANDERSON: I did in a way.
> MCKENCRICK: What was it?
> ANDERSON: A thesis. Apparently rather slanderous from the State's point of view.
> MCKENDRICK: Where did you hide it?
> ANDERSON: In your briefcase.
> (*Pause*)
> MCKENDRICK: You what?
> ANDERSON: Last night. I'm afraid I reversed a principle.
> (MCKENDRICK *opens his briefcase and finds* HOLLAR'*s envelope.* ANDERSON *takes it from him.* MCKENDRICK *is furious.*)
> MCKENDRICK: You utter bastard. (93)

Prof. Anderson's foul has worked perfectly at McKendrick's expense and with the tacit help of the Czech officials' inefficiency. This final touch just before the end of the play seems to be immaculate at first sight. It is not only ingenious but a highly enjoyable surprise. However, as in the case of Every Good Boy Deserves Favour,[288] for example, the ending here is subject to several objections. To conclude in advance, it is actually a serious anti-climax, about which I will argue later.

[288] Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, a unique play for actors and orchestra, was first performed at the Festival Hall in July 1977, with the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by André Previn.

While the theme of the professional foul goes parallel from the start with the main plot line, there is another no less important theme that also starts from the beginning; that is, the Catastrophe Theory theme. As the theory is said to be McKendrick's expertise, I think it is necessary to analyze his character critically as I discuss the Catastrophe Theory theme. McKendrick, "*a rougher sort of diamond*",(43) is no doubt depicted as a despicable person in many ways. However, a closer look into his character and the importance of his theory, will reveal some discrepancies in his description. When McKendrick is first introduced, his rough side can immediately be noticed in his conversation with Prof. Anderson. He speaks more frankly and casually, in contrast to Prof. Anderson's modesty.

> MCKENDRICK: At least my paper will be new to you. We are the only English, actually singing for our supper, I mean. I expect there'll be a few others going for the free trip and the social life. In fact, I see we've got one on board. At the back. (45)

The one McKendrick is referring to is Chetwyn. This totally misleading accusation which stems from his knowledge that Chetwyn wrote "letters to *The Times* about persecuted professors with unpronounceable names,"(46) demonstrates his rash temper, further undermining his credibility, as he has already been seen smoking at a non-smoking seat, to which Prof. Anderson aptly gave warning.

More arguably, however, we are told a couple of times through McKendrick's own mouth that he is a Marxist: "I sail pretty close to the wind, Marx-wise."(48)[289] But he tones down his statement by adding, "I don't mean I'm an apologist for everything done in the name of Marxism,"(48) and ends up giving quite the opposite impression by his avid interest in "any extra-curricular activities".(48) This impression is confirmed at the end of the first scene, not only by the revelation that he contributed to a girly magazine, but by his final murmuring question "if there'll be any decent women?"(49)

The fact that McKendrick is a Marxist caused not a few unfavourable comments from critics. Paul Delaney called him a "Marxist philosophical gadfly McKendrick",[290] and

[289] He also said a few lines before: "Marxists are a terrible lot of prudes. I can say that because I'm a bit that way myself."(48)

[290] Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays, p.86.

Joan Fitzpatrick Dean criticized that he "identifies himself as a Marxist but through most of the play pays little attention to the social or political situation in Czechoslovakia".[291] However, for that very reason, one cannot help feeling that McKendrick's self-professed Marxism seems rather gratuitous. His interest in a sexual adventure is verified throughout the drama, together with his roguish attitude. However, there is nothing in his actions which can particularly be attributed to his bias towards Marxism except some punning on "left-winger". The accusation that McKendrick is a Marxist, therefore, seems to have stemmed from Stoppard's own belief, as was already tacitly expressed in Jumpers, that Marxism as a materialism is a moral relativism.

McKendrick's Catastrophe Theory turns out to be indeed a moral relativist theory. However, it has far wider significance in the construction of the play than McKendrick's bad image would suggest.[292] McKendrick explains the gist of the theory, or rather "an audacious application of it", at the dinner table with Anderson and Chetwyn.

> It's like a reverse gear—no—it's like a breaking point. The mistake that people make is, they think a moral principle is indefinitely extendible, that it holds good for any situation, a straight line cutting across the graph of our actual situation—here you are, you see—(*He uses a knife to score a line in front of him straight across the table cloth, left to right in front of him.*) 'Morality' down there; running parallel to 'Immorality' up here—(*He scores a parallel line.*)—and never the twain shall meet. They think that is what a principle means. (77-78)

McKendrick's explanation understandably attracts Prof. Anderson's attention and suspicion, because it is in conflict with his ethical premises. Still, McKendrick elaborates on his theory in more detail.

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[291] Joan Fitzpatrick Dean, p.90.

[292] Evelyn Cobley persuasively demonstrates in her article that Catastrophe Theory "dominat[es] the thematic and structural dimensions of Professional Foul". Evelyn Cobley, "Catastrophe Theory in Tom Stoppard's Professional Foul," Contemporary Literature, 25, No.1 (1984), 54. My argument related to Catastrophe Theory is heavily indebted to her essay.

> The two lines on the same plane. [. . .] They're the edges of the same plane—it's in three dimensions, you see—and if you twist the plane in a certain way, into what we call the catastrophe curve, you get a model of the sort of behaviour we find in the real world. There's a point—the catastrophe point—where your progress along one line of behaviour jumps you into the opposite line; the principle reverses itself at the point where a rational man would abandon it. (78)

Evelyn Cobley denounces McKendrick here as "pretentious and fumbling", concerned more with Stoppard's parodic intention of "poking fun at academics who pontificate on undigested ideas".[293] However, she does not quite point out what is the problem with McKendrick's explanation. In general, it seems to me, McKendrick summarizes the theory in an easy, memorable way. What is unique or problematic about his explanation is that, as he calls it "an audacious application", he tries to apply the theory to a highly complex area of ethics. As a result, something similar to the logical positivists' jumping happens.

Catastrophe Theory was originally created by René Thom, Professor of Mathematics at the Institut des Hautes Etudes Scientifiques in Paris, and according to E. C. Zeeman, is "a new mathematical method for describing the evolution of forms in nature".[294] It can be applied to various areas, as is indeed demonstrated by E. C. Zeeman himself. What is important to note, however, is that all the applications are based upon actual phenomena. For example, E. C. Zeeman applies the theory to anorexia to find an effective therapy.

> A striking feature of anorexia is that it sometimes develops a second phase after about two years, in which the victim finds herself alternately

[293] Ibid., p.65.

[294] E. C. Zeeman, Catastrophe Theory: Selected Papers 1972-1977 (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1977), p.1. Zeeman applies the theory to such diverse areas as elasticity, aggression, emotion, war, economics, and so on, in the book.

fasting and secretly gorging; the medical name for this is bulimia, and anorexics often call it stuffing or bingeing.[295]

This is "a catastrophic jumping between two abnormal extremes", and the therapy based upon the catastrophe model will try to "open up a new pathway back to normality".[296] In this case, we can see that McKendrick's understanding of the theory is not ostensibly wrong. However, it is apparently questionable whether a similar kind of catastrophic jumping, "reversing of a principle" in McKendrick's equivocal terms, can naturally happen in the area of ethics. McKendrick, therefore, may well be called a moral relativist, and he freely admits it: "There aren't any principles in your [Chetwyn's] sense. There are only a lot of principled people trying to behave as if there were."(78) He also criticizes Prof. Anderson from his point of view: "You're a worse case than Chetwyn and his primitive Greeks. At least he has the excuse of *believing* in goodness and beauty. You know they're fictions but you're so hung up on them you want to treat them as if they were God-given absolutes."(78) Whether McKendrick's indictment is just or not, it at least neatly sums up Prof. Anderson's basic moral premise. McKendrick, however, as is typical of him, goes a bit further to the extreme.

MCKENDRICK: So you end up using a moral principle as your excuse for acting against a moral interest. It's a sort of funk—. (78)

As I mentioned earlier, Prof. Anderson loses his temper at this remark by McKendrick. Prof. Anderson has certainly been disturbed by what he saw at Hollar's apartment, and is undergoing a moral struggle in himself. However, there is no denying that McKendrick here is levelling a penetrating charge at Prof. Anderson's moral stance. Prof. Anderson indeed declined Hollar's request on the grounds of "a moral principle", which may be an excuse "for acting against a moral interest". Prof. Anderson's heated retort follows, and McKendrick quite good-humouredly admits his mistake,[297] and takes on his roguish mask, commenting, "There's quite an attractive

[295] Ibid., p.34.
[296] Ibid.
[297] "All right! I've gone too far. As usual. Sorry. [. . .]"(79)

woman hanging about outside, loitering in the vestibule."(79) As for Prof. Anderson, there is no choice but to calm down and apologize to McKendrick.

> ANDERSON: (*Chastened*) I'm sorry . . . you're right up to a point. There would be no moral dilemmas if moral principles worked in straight lines and never crossed each other. One meets test situations which have troubled much cleverer men than us. (79)

What Prof. Anderson refers to as a "test situation" has an indubitable echo of Catastrophe Theory. The test situation he is in is, if anything, the "semistable state" where a catastrophic jump is most likely.

> Thom demonstrates that virtually all living systems are torn between their dynamic drive toward a potential and their counter-tendency toward inertia. They are bimodal, and any stable state is always temporary, as a system's overall equilibrium depends on cycles of stable and unstable states. [. . .] When the system leaves one stable state, it enters a divergent zone where it is influenced by two or more equally strong forces. It is in this semistable state that a catastrophe is a likely result.[298]

Prof. Anderson's conversion can be nicely explained by this catastrophic jump, as it has been scrupulously prepared from the start. The play starts with McKendrick's interjectional word "Snap!". As Evelyn Cobley points out, "the word's double meaning" is undoubtedly intended "to alert the reader to the presence of the game analogy and of Catastrophe Theory."[299] Prof. Anderson's uneasy feeling about the wagging wing of the aeroplane not only foreshadows an unusual adventure in store for him in a rather traditional way, but still carries forward the Catastrophe Theory connection. Stoppard further confirms it not only by Prof. Anderson's concern for "solid steel flexing like tree branches", but also by McKendrick's cigarette smoke

[298] Evelyn Cobley, p.57.
[299] Ibid., p.56.

"break[ing] in two like a bread stick", as both cases are all examples of Catastrophe Theory at work. It was at his meeting with Hollar that Prof. Anderson begins to enter the test situation. According to Evelyn Cobley, Prof. Anderson is caught in a dilemma; "If Anderson takes the thesis, he acts against his conviction that civil laws should be obeyed; if he doesn't take it, he acts against his natural or humanitarian instinct to help a victim of political oppression."[300] Evelyn Cobley's interpretation quite faithfully reflects the surface logic of the play. However, if it is the case, Prof. Anderson's remarkable naiveté will effectively put the credibility of his character into question. Professional Foul is not Jumpers, nor is Prof. Anderson George who, so engrossed in his theoretical, ethical concerns, is not even aware of the recent coup which placed his opponents into power. Though Prof. Anderson is depicted as somewhat removed from everyday realities, his knowledge of football is surprisingly practical. He is also aware of "some rather dubious things happening in Czechoslovakia". Shortly after meeting Hollar, he remarks, as if seeking reassurance, "I hope you're not getting me into trouble."(53) Therefore, it will be more reasonable to interpret Prof. Anderson's dilemma as a conflict between self-interest and moral interest. Prof. Anderson came to Czechoslovakia not to get into trouble, but to attend a football match. If it were not for the personal challenge presented by Hollar, he would willingly choose to be left in comfortable ignorance, not bothering to know more about "the dubious things" in the republic. The first shock, however, leads to another, and the next day he witnesses the abuses done by the police at Hollar's apartment. After being detained there for sometime, Prof. Anderson "*out of depth and afraid, decides abruptly to leave and does so*".(73) His nerves no doubt get strained after these consecutive shocks. It is at this time that Prof. Anderson's meeting with Mrs Hollar and Sacha results in his dramatic conversion. This event testifies to the application of Catastrophe Theory to a finer detail in that a catastrophic jumping happens with just a little more additional pressure.[301] Hence, "the relatively insignificant park scene" leads to "what seems a

[300] Ibid., p.55.

[301] Evelyn Cobley explains the process as follows: "It is important to understand that the factors changing the process themselves change continuously, that steady pressure suddenly causes a rubber band to snap. A small increase in the fear factor can thus result in the dog's dramatic flight." Ibid., pp.58-59.

disproportionately important change in Anderson's philosophical and political attitude".[302]

Considering Catastrophe Theory is largely justified in the actions of the play,[303] it seems that McKendrick's notoriety is imposed upon him rather than developed out of his natural characteristics. If McKendrick makes any mistake, he does so because of his tendency to be too honest, a bit too extreme. His rough spot finally involves him in a mess with English footballers.

> MCKENDRICK: [. . .] Well, one thing I remember clearly from my years and *years* of soccer is that if two players go for a ball which then goes into touch, there's never any doubt *among those players* which of them touched the ball last. I can't remember one occasion in all those years and *years* when the player who touched the ball last didn't realize it. So, what I want to know *is*—why is it that on Match of the Day, every time the bloody ball goes into touch, *both* players claim the throw-in for their own side? I merely ask for information. Is it because they are very, very stupid or is it because a dishonest advantage is as welcome as an honest one? (84)[304]

A game must be played according to its rules, but more often than not, a sort of moral vacuum results from the catastrophic conflict between the rules of the games and a player's will to win by all means.[305] McKendrick's drunken jibe may sound particularly provocative to Broadbent who committed the professional foul himself. However, it is

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[302] Ibid., p.61.

[303] Prof. Anderson's foul on McKendrick at the end of the play is the result of his adoption of McKendrick's theory.

[304] The issue is one of Stoppard's long-standing interests which finally finds its way into Professional Foul: "[.....] I'd always sort of had a vague idea that there was some sort of play to be written about the suspension of moral conduct on the sports field. I am fascinated by matches. I remember when I was at school-it's in the play-that when you play football, and the ball goes into touch, you *know* who touched it last, and you don't try to pretend that *he* did if *you* did. It just occurred to you to do it. And yet, you know, we all are sitting there watching everybody being applauded for trying to steal some dishonourable advantage. And you know perfectly well, that when both players claim the throw-in for themselves they both know whose it actually is. Now, what is going on? There is a complete suspension of code." Melvyn Bragg, "The South Bank Show," p.120.

[305] In that particular moment of the foul, Broadbent was in a Catastrophic condition "which is controlled by the rules of the soccer game on the one hand and by the pressure to win at all costs on the other". Evelyn Cobley, p.62.

also true that McKendrick here raises no insignificant moral question, and quite unbecoming to a moral relativist, he, by questioning the game ethic itself, shows a sincere moral concern which is undoubtedly shared with Stoppard himself. Moreover, it does not seem likely that Prof. Anderson himself absolutely disagrees with McKendrick's argument, because earlier in the play he derisively calls Broadbent "an opportunist more than anything". Unfortunately, however, Stoppard draws our attention to this serious question of the game ethic, and then, sidesteps the issue without further pursuing its implications, by simply putting all the blame on McKendrick's bad manners.

> MACKENDRICK: Ah! Grayson here has a fine logical mind. He has put his finger on the flaw in my argument, namely that the reason footballers are yobs may be nothing to do with being working class, or with financial greed, or with adulation, or even with being footballers. It may be simply that football attracts a certain kind of person, namely yobs— (85-86)

As usual, McKendrick goes further to an extreme, and the serious issue he raised earlier gets nowhere. It is at this moment that Broadbent "*smashes him in the face*", another example of a Catastrophic "snapping" after continuous pressure. However, considering the final ending of the play, a slight doubt still remains whether McKendrick's fuss naturally happened. It seems quite likely that the scene was rather conveniently contrived by the author to give Prof. Anderson the chance to insert Hollar's thesis in McKendrick's suitcase.

If a foul can be permitted in a particular situation of game-playing, it is still undoubtedly unethical, considering the possibility of injury it could incur upon the player fouled. And if everyone in the world acts on this particular game ethic, the result would be moral chaos. So, when McKendrick, after finding out Prof. Anderson's professional foul, asks Prof. Anderson, "It's not quite playing the game is it?", Prof. Anderson cannot but reply, "No, I suppose not."(93) Still, it cannot be denied that it was a game, and a worse game, considering the harm it could have done to McKendrick.

It is no doubt to Stoppard's immense credit that all these various themes are welded together alongside the central actions of Prof. Anderson's adventure. Michael Billington confirms this by commending Professional Foul as "the best play Stoppard had written at this stage of his career".[306] Tim Brassell also joins the eulogy, describing it "as accomplished a work as any Stoppard has yet given us, passionate, technically immaculate and replete with the fast, witty humour of the mature Stoppard".[307] However, it is also undeniable that with so many strands of themes, a difficulty arises where to focus our attention. And inevitably we can detect some jarring effects as in the description of McKendrick who is to blame for his moral relativism on the one hand, and for his inflexibility in the realm of game ethics on the other. Most importantly, if read as a serious indictment of a Communist regime, Professional Foul along with his other so-called political plays, reveals some inherent problems. It is, of course, undeniable that Professional Foul succeeds in publicizing the urgent and serious issue of human rights abuses in the Communist block, but only to a certain extent, as I will argue.

Professional Foul lacks dramatic tension in a way somewhat similar to Every Good Boy Deserves Favour. In Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, the mounting emotional tension, thanks to the moving scene of Alexander's meeting with his son, Sacha, while on hunger strike, quickly deflates when it becomes apparent that he will be released in the near future.

> ALEXANDER: —and then they gave in. And when I was well enough they brought me here. This means they have decided to let me go. It is much harder to get from Arsenal'naya to a civil hospital than from a civil hospital to the street. But it has to be done right. They don't want to lose ground. They need a formula. It will take a little time but that's all right. I shall read *War and Peace*.

[306] Michael Billington, p.115.
[307] Tim Brassell, p.200.

Everything is going to be all right. (25)

This is a prefiguration of Alexander's final release. Stoppard went to great lengths to prepare the audience for it, as his release in a right formula, Stoppard thought, was so vital to the overall effect of the play. As we see here, however, the scheme apparently backfires. Alexander's optimism debunks the dramatic tension, as his release is already secured, and he will read War and Peace while waiting for it.

In Professional Foul we know that Prof. Anderson will never be daring enough to risk anything on his part. Like Ruth Carson in Night and Day, he "walk[s] along the top board knowing you don't have to jump".[308] Instead of properly arguing against the human rights violation, Prof. Anderson's protest against his detention at Hollar's apartment starts by citing his connections with important people in England.

> ANDERSON: Thank Christ—now listen to me—I am a professor of philosophy. I am a guest of the Czechoslovakian government. I might almost say an honoured guest. I have been invited to speak at the Colloquium in Prague. My connections in England reach up to the highest in the land—
>
> MAN 6: Do you know the Queen?
>
> ANDERSON: Certainly. (*But he rushed into that.*) No, I do not know the Queen—but I speak the truth when I say that I am personally acquainted with two members of the government, one of whom has been to my house, and I assure you that unless I am allowed to leave this building immediately there is going to be a major incident about the way my liberty has been impeded by your men. I do not know what they are doing here, I do not care what they are doing here—. (69)

Even though Prof. Anderson is extremely confused at the moment, this high-handed attempt to get out of trouble at all costs does not become a morally integrated person.

[308] Tom Stoppard, Night and Day (London: Faber & Faber, 1978), p.69. Night and Day is Stoppard's fourth major play. The first performance was given at the Phoenix Theatre in November 1978.

Nor is it effective, as it is well countered by the policeman's curt question. Prof. Anderson reiterates the same words in the crucial moment of his meeting with Mrs Hollar and Sacha.

> ANDERSON: I will, of course, try to help in England. I'll write letters. The Czech Ambassador . . . I have friends, too, in our government— [. . .] Now listen—I am personally friendly with important people— the Minister of Education—people like that. (82)

Prof. Anderson is not ready and willing to put himself at risk. He will help only if he can do it safely. If his help effects any real consequence, it will be good for him and for those few who were lucky enough to attract his attention. However, to fight against a dictatorial regime invariably involves risks. We know it from Chetwyn, who acts in his full commitment to his cause, making a clear contrast to Prof. Anderson's shrewd, pragmatic attitude.[309] Unfortunately, however, we are not told much about him. His character is least materialized of the three English dons representing three different moral positions, and as a foil to Prof. Anderson, he simply stands at the furthest end of moral absolutism. At the airport customs, he is also thoroughly searched like Prof. Anderson. Unlike Prof. Anderson, however, he gets arrested by the secret police, as he is carrying a letter to Amnesty International. Prof. Anderson's response to the incident is once again typical of him.

> MCKENDRICK: Silly bugger. Honestly.
> ANDERSON: It's all right—they'll put him on the next plane.
> MCKENDRICK: To Siberia.
> ANDERSON: No, no, don't be ridiculous. It wouldn't look well for them, would it? All the publicity. I don't think there's anything in Czech law about being in possession of letters to Amnesty International and the U.N. and that sort of thing. They couldn't treat Chetwyn as though he were a Czech national anyway. (93)

[309] Richard Buhr even argues that "Anderson does not accept duty or correct behavior as a priori principles; he appears to adopt them as utilitarian system of rules." Richard J. Buhr, "Epistemology and Ethics in Tom Stoppard's Professional Foul," Contemporary Drama, 13, (1979), p.324.

Prof. Anderson's comfortable comment demonstrates where he is. Moreover, in a curious twist in the logic of the play, Chetwyn's brave act is transformed into a silliness. Surprisingly, Tim Brassell argues that "Anderson's 'tactics' are finally and most conclusively vindicated by the fate of Chetwyn, the shadowy third member of the trio of British philosophers."[310] However, it should be pointed out that Prof. Anderson's tactic is based upon at least two assumptions; the first is that the Czech police will never be clever enough to think of the possibility that McKendrick may be used as a medium and the second is that, even if the scheme fails, McKendrick, as an English national, will not be treated like "a Czech" anyway.

Though Prof. Anderson's trick tends to be justified as a professional foul for a higher moral interest,[311] it effectively cancels out his own moral argument. When Hollar suggests the idea of putting his thesis in Prof. Anderson's suitcase without Prof. Anderson's knowledge, he clearly condemns it as an unethical act: "Your action would be unethical on your own terms—one man's dealings with another man."(56) This is, of course, before Prof. Anderson's conversion. However, his speech at the colloquium is also based upon the same ethical premise: "There is a sense of right and wrong which precedes utterances. It is individually experienced and it concerns *one person's dealings with another person.* From this experience we have built a system of ethics which is the sum of individual acts of recognition of individual right."(90, italics mine) In his dealing with McKendrick, Prof. Anderson infringes on the very fundamental ethical code, and as John Bull poignantly points out, "moral expediency literally carries the day".[312] It is true that Prof. Anderson has undergone an unusual transformation during his stay in Czechoslovakia, but emerges as more or less the same in the end, and his trick on McKendrick plays not a small role in bringing out this final impression.

The problem of the ending of Professional Foul is not an isolated event. The serious intent in almost all of Stoppard's political plays is undermined by this sort of extremely ingenious, but ultimately unjustifiable endings. Alexander's release in Every Good

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[310] Tim Brassell, p.200.

[311] For example, Bobbi Rothstein argues that "he plays the game not in accordance with private rules or gentlemen's agreements, but in accordance with higher moral rules". Bobbi Rothstein, "The Reappearance of Public Man: Stoppard's Jumpers and Professional Foul," Kansas Quarterly, 12, (1980), p.42.

[312] John Bull, p.200.

Boy Deserves Favour is the most prominent example. Alexander is released through an ingenious tactic by the Colonel, "or rather Doctor",(27) Rozinsky, who has taken over Alexander's case from the Doctor. According to Stoppard, the Colonel put the two men, Ivanov and Alexander, in the same cell on purpose, because they happen to have the identical name, Alexander Ivanov. The Colonel's intention was that if there were no other choice but to release Alexander, a simple trick of *mistaken identity* would solve the awkward situation without him losing face. So, near the end the Colonel deliberately asks both Ivanov and Alexander irrelevant questions; of Ivanov, "Would a Soviet doctor put a sane man into a lunatic asylum, in your opinion?", and of Alexander, "Do you hear any music of any kind?" Naturally, he gets both negative answers, and declares, "There's absolutely nothing wrong with these men."(36-37) Subsequently, their releases are ordered, and the Colonel achieves his objective.

In spite of Stoppard's assertion that "the colonel understood what he was doing",[313] the audience and many critics understood the ending simply as a bureaucratic confusion. Susan Rusinko's interpretation is a clear example: "The conclusion one can draw is that repressive institutions, if they fall, may do so from the weight of their own bureaucratic bungling."[314] Viewed in this way, the ending may seem ingenious and comic, but the original intention of indicting the inhuman brutalities of the Soviet system is certainly weakened, as the simple solution blinds people to the real horror behind the iron curtain. Stoppard saw through the danger, and tinkered with the play for the new production at the Mermaid Theatre to make his intention clearer, but to no avail: "I really thought we had it licked for the Mermaid. I'm baffled that a substantial number of people still misunderstand the ending."[315] Interestingly, Michael Billington later changed his opinion: "Like many people seeing the first production at the Royal Festival Hall, I myopically concluded that the Colonel himself was acting out of confusion. Of course, the real point is that he has deliberately put the two prisoners together and knows full well what he is doing in asking them inappropriate questions."[316] On the other hand, Richard Corballis suggested that the mistaken ending could even be more effective, as he witnessed at an New Zealand production: "This

[313] Joost Kuurman, "An Interview with Tom Stoppard," Dutch Quarterly Review of Anglo-American Letters, 10, (1980), p.53.

[314] Susan Rusinko, Tom Stoppard (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986), p.83.

[315] Martin Huckerby, "Arts Diary: KGB to Blame in the End," The Times, 17 August 1978, p.12.

interpretation seems to me as effective as Stoppard's own in underscoring the 'clockwork' mentality of the Soviet state."[317]

The poignant fact about the ending is that despite the author's efforts, the audience were unable to see the ending as the author intended. So, the problems of the play, it can be argued, lie in the very structure of the play. Furthermore, in my opinion, interpreted in either way, the ending will not make the play "at once more menacing and more bracing" as Paul Delaney argues.[318] Alexander's release cannot be said to be a significant victory anyway, on two major accounts. First, it is not achieved in the right formula. The aim of Alexander's fighting is not just his release, but bringing the authorities to admit their own wrongdoing and more importantly, to give up the preposterous practice of psychiatric oppression. Even though he did not want to go to prison anymore,[319] Bukovsky, whom Alexander refers to as "my friend, C", was last arrested for his protest against the psychiatric oppression, as it "presented a deadly threat to our movement".[320] In Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, Alexander's achievement through his heroic efforts comes to almost nothing, as he is thoroughly manipulated by the Colonel who happily disposes of Alexander without any compromise on his part concerning the issue of the human rights abuse. Secondly, Alexander's release is also tarnished by Ivanov's release for his sake. As a pure case of mental disorder, Ivanov needs care and treatment more than anyone else, but is simply discharged from the hospital. Alexander gets his freedom as a brave, worthy individual, but Ivanov in a way is a worse victim, reminding us one of Stoppard's character, Brown in A Separate Peace, who, in spite of his will, is forced out of a hospital "*into the night*".[321] It can still be contended that Ivanov's case is yet another example of the Soviet Union's maltreatment of its subjects, but this reasoning is simply

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[316] Michael Billington, p.114.

[317] Richard Corballis, p.111.

[318] Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral vision of the Major Plays, p.99.

[319] "That year I decided not to go to prison anymore. Enough. It was 1970, I would soon be thirty, and I still hadn't lived. Hadn't lived as a normal human being. I had no profession, no family, and whenever I was introduced to someone I would wait miserably for them to ask: 'Tell me, what do you do?'" Vladimir Bukovsky, To Build a Castle: My Life as a Dissenter (London: André Deutsch, 1978), p.275.

[320] Ibid., p.283.

[321] A Separate Peace, in Stoppard: The Television Plays 1965-1984, p.22.

unsustainable, not only because he is often seen as a victimizing agent as he bullies Alexander and Sacha, but also because he joins the orchestra at the end.[322]

Whatever Stoppard's intention was concerning the ending of Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, we witness other similar solutions in the works which belong to this transitional period. In Dirty Linen, New-Found-Land,[323] "a very sensitive and difficult case"(134) of Ed Berman's application for British naturalization is settled in a moment when the Home Secretary sees Miss Gotobed; he "*whips out a pen and signs with a flourish*," saying, "One more American can't make any difference."(135) In Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth, the dissident actors in Czechoslovakia successfully block the authorities' attempt to suppress them by performing Macbeth in the Dogg, a language introduced by the inexplicable advent of Easy.

Stoppard usually describes a dissident (or dissidents) as cut off from people in general. Alexander in Every Good Boy Deserves Favour is, like an island, totally surrounded by the hostile forces including even a mad man. In Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth,[324] the brave dissident actors are presented as humiliated intellectuals without any indication at all of a link between them and the public. It must be conceded that in such short plays there is no way to deal properly with the enormous question of the human rights movement in Communist countries. Still, the plays not only expose Stoppard's loose grasp of the actual realities of a communist regime, but also demonstrate his fundamentally individualistic vision. In this context, Kenneth Tynan's comment on Every Good Boy Deserves Favour is penetratingly to the point, though it was made when he had read only the manuscript.

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[322] Ivanov's victimizing and his joining in the orchestra strains credibility to the extreme. It is not likely that such a brave person like Alexander is bullied by a pure mental patient. Bukovsky, who had been detained both in the special and civil hospital, testifies that he "had never seen a patient attack someone without reason," though "the reason was not always easy to guess". He goes on to say, "It was extremely important to find out your neighbours' quirks as quickly as possible, so that you could live in safety, and the main thing was never to fear them. They could smell fear and hostility like animals." Moreover, it is usually the sane rather than the insane who bully the other: "Their attitude to their insane fellow-inmates was usually every bit as hostile as [. . .], and they were often even crueller to them than the orderlies, as if to underline their superiority and sanity. Savage jokes and mockery at the expense of the madmen became almost a necessity." Vladmir Bukovsky, p.169 and pp.165-166.

[323] Dirty Linen, New-Found-Land was first presented at Inter-Action's Almost Free Theatre, in April 1976, by Ambiance Lunch-Hour Theatre Club.

[324] Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth was first presented at the Arts Centre of the University of Warwick, Coventry, in May 1979, by BARC, British American Repertory Company.

> E.G.B.D.F rests on the assumption that the difference between good and evil is obvious to any reasonable human being. What else does Stoppard believe in? For one thing, I would guess, the intrinsic merits of individualism; [. . .][325]

As Professional Foul deals with the familiar, apparent question of human rights abuse in a Communist country, we are likely to take Prof. Anderson's argument for granted, but a closer scrutiny of his argument will also reveal some inherent defects. When Prof. Anderson first meets Hollar, Hollar explains the gist of his thesis as follows:

> The ethics of the State must be judged against the fundamental ethic of the individual. The human being, not the citizen. I conclude there is an obligation, a human responsibility, to fight against the State correctness. Unfortunately that is not a safe conclusion. (55)

Hollar's argument is apparently "not a safe conclusion", not just because his view is in conflict with that of the regime, but also because it is "clearly debatable" as Joan Fitzpatrick Dean points out.[326] Hollar establishes the almost crude binary opposition of the state and the individual without paying any attention to the inseparable relationship between the two entities, and unequivocally sides with the individualist position, implicitly equating the human being with the individual as he says "the fundamental ethic of the individual," instead of, say, the fundamental *human* ethic. And then, he suddenly jumps to the division of "the human being" from "the citizen" and asserts the right to fight against the state ethic. Besides the inherent question of how to tell the human being from the citizen, Hollar's argument here clearly ignores the historical

[325] Kenneth Tynan, p.56.

[326] Joan F. Dean, p.91. Richard Corballis also commented that "Hollar, Anderson and Alexander are not absolutely irrefutable, of course; [. . .] But **within the context of the play** no effective challenge is offered to their arguments" (emphasis in the original). Richard Corballis, "Tom Stoppard's Children." in John Harty, ed., Tom Stoppard, A Casebook, p.267.

context that the very concept of the inalienable individual human rights came into being with the advent of the citizen.[327]

Hollar's argument, I should say, generally lacks authenticity for one from a dissident in a Communist country. To cite Bukovsky again, he gives an arresting explanation about the almost paradoxical relationship between the individual and the community.

> To be alone is an enormous responsibility. With his back to the wall, a man understands: 'I am the people, I am the nation, I am the party, I am the class, and there is nothing at all.' He cannot sacrifice a part of himself, cannot split himself up or divide into parts and still live. There is nowhere for him to retreat to, and the instinct of self-preservation drives him to extremes - he prefers physical death to spiritual death.
>
> And an astonishing thing happens. In fighting to preserve his integrity he is simultaneously fighting for his people, his class or his party. It is such individuals who win the right for their communities to live - even, perhaps, if they are not thinking of it at the time.[328]

Hollar will argue, together with Stoppard, that securing individual human rights is the way to secure "the right for their communities to live", but there is a crucial difference between Hollar's and Bukovsky's position in that Bukovsky basically thinks of himself and the individual in closely related terms with the community, while Hollar presupposes the two as two separate entities and establishes an absolute hierarchy between the two.

Prof. Anderson, if confused about the meaning of "safe conclusion", rightly points out the obvious problems in Hollar's argument.

> Quite. The difficulty arises when one asks oneself how the *individual* ethic can have any meaning by itself. Where does *that* come from? In

[327] "[. . .] it was only in these periods [the early modern and modern world] that arguments about freedom assumed a central place in the history of the political thought. For ancient and medieval thinkers freedom was a secondary value relating to conceptions of the good life, or to the requirements of religious notions of virtue." John Morrow, History of Political Thought: A Thematic Introduction (London: Macmillan, 1998), p.74.

[328] Vladimir Bukovsky, p.198.

> what sense is it intelligible, for example, to say that a man has certain inherent, individual rights? It is much easier to understand how a community of individuals can decide to give each other certain rights. These rights may or may not include, for example, the right to publish something. In that situation, the individual ethic would flow from the collective ethic, just as the State says it does.
>
> (*Pause*)
>
> I only mean it is a question you would have to deal with. (55)

This is the only moment when the important question of individual versus state/community is presented in the familiar pattern of Stoppardian debate drama. Instead of pursuing the issue any further, however, Stoppard simply discards it and transforms the question into a simple, monolithic truth even a child could know.

> HOLLAR: It is not the main line. You see, to me the idea of an inherent right is intelligible. I believe that we have such rights, and they are paramount.
>
> ANDERSON: Yes, I see you do, but how do you justify the assertion?
>
> HOLLAR: I observe. I observe my son for example. (55)

In terms of the plot development, this is surely a dextrous touch, prefiguring Sacha's vital role in Prof. Anderson's conversion. In terms of the debate, however, this effectively marks the end of it. Stoppard supports Hollar's and Prof. Anderson's argument later at the colloquium, not with a debate between oppositions as in Jumpers or Travesties,[329] but with emphases upon the central assumption that "t[T]here is a sense of right and wrong which precedes utterance."(90) In this, however, Stoppard shows no meagre skill. For example, the intense, if minor, moment of exchanging the professional fouls between a Czech police-officer and Prof. Anderson in Hollar's apartment also drives the point home.

[329] Stoppard commented in his interview with Melvyn Bragg that "I prefer Professional Foul to Jumpers but the interesting thing to say about that is—and the implications for me are horrifying—is that compared to writing Jumpers, Professional Foul is a doddle." Melvyn Bragg, The South Bank Show, pp. 121-22.

MAN 6: Still, he is very unhappy. You told him you would be five minutes you were delivering something—.

ANDERSON: How could I have told him that? I don't speak Czech.

MAN 6: You showed him five on your watch, and you did all the things people do when they talk to each other without a language. He was quite certain you were delivering something in your briefcase. (*Pause.*)

ANDERSON: Yes. All right. But it was not money. (72)

This sort of minor detail which is intricately related to a bigger theme, helps to build up the dramatic force of the play. Stoppard's parody of the philosopher who is inordinately sophisticated in his argument, but actually does not say anything valuable about the everyday life of real significance, not only provides sequences of genuine pleasure, but also joins its force in underscoring the validity of Prof. Anderson's argument. Stone, the American linguistic philosopher, is presented as the worst example. He pursues the subject of the ambiguities of the language to such a preposterous extent that in the end he gets nowhere. His baffling use of the word, "well", in his presentation at the colloquium leaves the translators at a loss, and entails criticism both from Prof. Anderson in the session of the colloquium[330] and McKendrick at the dinner table.[331] With his usual verbal ingenuity, Stoppard also parodies the reporters' overblown, clichéd style as another example of language use which "is as capable of obscuring the truth as of revealing it".(63) Grayson, an English reporter, sent to cover the match between England and Czechoslovakia, is seen to make an elaborate report, capitalizing on the word *Czechs* for its punning effect, while paying no attention at all to the social or political realities of the republic.

As I have already mentioned, Hollar first puts forwards the idea of a child's intuition to support the validity of his assertion that "the idea of an inherent right is intelligible".(55) Chetwyn virtually repeats the same words to Prof. Anderson just

[330] "The importance of language is overrated. It allows me and Professor Stone to show off a bit, and it is very useful for communicating detail—but the important truths are simple and monolithic. The essentials of a given situation speak for themselves, [. . .]."(63)

[331] "You [Stone] eat well but you're a lousy eater."(76)

before he meets Mrs Hollar and Sacha: "A good rule, I find, is to try them out on men much *less* clever than us. I often ask my son what *he* thinks."(79) In the vital presentation at the colloquium, Prof. Anderson resorts to a child's intuitive knowledge of right from wrong for his argument.

> A small child who cries 'that's not fair' when punished for something done by his brother or sister is apparently appealing to an idea of justice which is, for want of a better word, natural. [. . .], it is well to be reminded that you can persuade a man to believe almost anything provided he is clever enough, but it is much more difficult to persuade someone less clever. (90)

This is a view undoubtedly cherished by Stoppard himself[332] and sounds persuasive in its own right. Still, it seems risky to base the argument of the fundamental human rights on a child's innocence and intuition. Stoppard himself, it seems, recognized this inadequacy in the end. So, Witness, a commenting character in Squaring the Circle,[333] repeats twice that using a child is "a cheap trick".

> WITNESS: (*Voice over*) A cheap trick, in my opinion . . . Out of the mouths of children . . .
>
> ------
>
> WITNESS: [. . .] Right and wrong are not complicated - when a child cries, 'That's not fair!' the child can be believed. Children are always right. But it was still a cheap trick.[334]

Sacha in Professional Foul is not a child in a normal situation. He may have developed the sense of right and wrong much earlier than other children because he had directly witnessed the maltreatment of his own father. However, it is also true, and

[332] Stoppard himself repeated the same argument in his interviews with David Gollob and David Roper, ("Trad Tom Pops in") and later with Michael Billington ("Stoppard's Secret Agent", The Guardian, 18 March 1988, p.28).

[333] Squaring the Circle was first transmitted in May 1984 by TVS.

[334] Squaring the Circle in Tom Stoppard: The Television Plays 1965-1984, p.251.

probably more significant, that almost a whole generation of children had been totally brainwashed by the communist state propaganda.

According to Paul Delaney, "Professional Foul begins where the 'Coda' of Jumpers concludes."[335] This comment is of course not intended to underscore just the difference. What he argues is that both works basically share the same moral concerns, but in Professional Foul, "The Word" is made "Flesh" through Prof. Anderson's ethical actions. At first sight, Prof. Anderson's speech at the colloquium, the structural centre piece of the play, looks like a perfect example. On second thoughts, however, a doubt lingers as to what can really be achieved by pointing out constitutional rights, citing Locke, Paine, and "the American Founding Fathers", to the selected audience made of foreigners and those who are part of the communist state machine. Besides, Prof. Anderson's argument, like Hollar's, is not without problems. A considerable part of it is basically a repetition of George's argument in Jumpers.

> ANDERSON: [. . .] I will be defining rights as fictions acting as incentives to the adoption of practical values; and I will further propose that although these rights are fictions there is an obligation to treat them as if they were truths; and further, that although this obligation can be shown to be based on values which are based on fictions, there is an obligation to treat *that* obligation as though it were based on truth; and so on *ad infinitum*. (87)

George in Jumpers tries to prove the existence of God, not because he himself is a believer, but because it is a logical necessity for the absolute moral standard. However, God remains more or less a fiction, because the existence cannot be demonstrated once and for all in a clearly logical way. Prof. Anderson here attributes a God-like authority to his "moral fictions", and in this context there is no basic difference between his and George's argument. Prof. Anderson's criticism of "linguistic philosophy" is also

[335] Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of Major Plays, p.95.

similar to George's.[336] When he applies the absolute moral appeal to the question of "the conflict between the rights of individuals and the rights of the community", his argument diverges from George's. This time, he rather faithfully follows Hollar's argument.

> I will seek to show that rules, in so far as they are related to rights, are a secondary and consequential elaboration of primary rights, and I will be associating rules generally with communities and rights generally with individuals. (87)

Like Hollar, Prof. Anderson makes a clear distinction between rights/individual and rules/community, and regards the one as "primary" and the other as "secondary" without any supporting explanation. Then, he elaborates on his argument further, citing Locke and the American Founding Fathers.

> Firstly, humans might be said to have certain rights if they had collectively and mutually agreed to give each other these rights. This would merely mean that humanity is a rather large club with club rules, but it is not what is generally meant by human rights. It is not what Locke meant, and it is not what the American Founding Father meant when, taking the hint from Locke, they held certain rights to be unalienable—among them, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. (88)

The surprising aspect of Prof. Anderson's argument here is that he cites Locke and the American Founding Fathers instead of "the Final Act of the Helsinki conference" and "the UN Universal Charter of Human Rights" on which Charter 77 is based. Though Locke's "sincerity, his profound moral conviction, his genuine belief in liberty, in human rights, and in the dignity of human nature, united with his moderation and good sense, made him the ideal spokesman of a middle-class revolution",[337] the same Locke

[336] "In our own time linguistic philosophy proposes that the notion of, say, justice has no existence outside the ways in which we choose to employ the word, and indeed *consists* only of the way in which we employ it."(89-90)

[337] George H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory (Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press, 1973), p.497.

did not grant such unalienable individual human rights to women and slaves, to say the least. In this context, it is indeed questionable whether the dissenters in the Communist block fought against the government to secure the fundamental human rights "as Locke meant". Not surprisingly, Dante Germino's criticism of Locke's legacy is equally applicable to Prof. Anderson's argument.

> Locke sweeps many problems under the rug. He tells us that government rests on consent, but fails to show that consent is often manipulated so that many things that are said to originate in the consent of the governed actually stem from the interests of the economically privileged. With his concept of "tacit consent" he makes the idea of consent itself so loose that it can cover a multitude of sins. [. . .] He acknowledges only one set of political arrangements and rationalizing principles—that is, his own doctrine of what has come to be known as liberalism, based on individualism, consent, the contractual basis of society, the rule of law (as he understood it), the distinction of powers, the primordial importance of individual property rights. He sees all these as valid for all men and societies, without perceiving the worth of alternative political myths grounded on a more solidaristic concept of man's relation to the community and on aesthetic and contemplative values in some ways at variance with the productive ethos he had subsumed under the name of property.[338]

Individual human rights as such, whether Lockean or modern, cannot be denied. However, in Prof. Anderson's ardent support of individual rights lies his bias towards "Individualism", which is implied from the start in his strong binary opposition of individual versus community. Prof. Anderson disregards the larger context in which individual rights should be placed. As I have already argued, a dissident cannot mean a single discordant note. He will never succeed in his movement by and for himself without the backing of the people who vaguely or instinctively sympathize with him.

[338] Dante Germino, Modern Western Political Thought: Machiavelli to Marx (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co, 1972), p.148.

And only when he represents the desires of the people, is his brave, if lonely, voice, precious and worth securing. Prof. Anderson goes only as far as to criticize human rights abuse in terms of a conflict between individual and state, faithfully representing "the English liberal tradition",[339] while the conflict is actually between the people and a handful of powerful individuals who suppress the people for their own interests.

Professional Foul is, no doubt, a highly accomplished work. The economy of the structure and the dextrous integration of all the sub-current themes into a whole, rank it as one of the best Stoppard has written. The real significance of it, however, lies more in its role as a bridging work between Stoppard's earlier stage and later maturer stage. Stoppard's increased dramatic expertise will reap a rich harvest in his future plays with more consistent characterization and more complicated, but organically integrated, plot. The objection to Professional Foul in terms of its political import is that, as I have been trying to demonstrate, Stoppard applies his own ideological belief in individualism to a different society without a necessary contextual consideration. What underlies this is Stoppard's practical, but strong, conviction that with the guarantee of individual human rights, a totalitarian system, at least, can be avoided. It goes without saying that what Stoppard argues is true. The problem is that it is too true to be specifically significant. As a result, instead of tackling the important issue of human rights from the common ground of humanity, Stoppard ends up in establishing an unbridgeable gap between East and West.[340] Paradoxically, because of this absolute division of good from evil, Stoppard fails to bring out the real horror of the Communist regime.

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[339] "- but the English gentleman will achieve a small victory by his 'professional foul'. As always, the game is fixed, as the consummate stylist - admittedly more alert to the realities of the outside world - weaves his way past an unthinking, uneducated defence. The ball is a thesis on the importance of the individual, and the goal will be credited to the English liberal tradition." John Bull, p.200.

[340] In Squaring the Circle, a TV drama which was first transmitted in May 1984 by TVS, Stoppard states this perception in the clearest possible way: "Between August 1980 and December 1981 an attempt was made in Poland to put together two ideas which wouldn't fit, the idea of freedom as it is understood in the West, and the idea of socialism as it is understood in the Soviet empire. The attempt failed because it was impossible, in the same sense as it is impossible in geometry to turn a circle into a square with the same area - not because no one has found out how to do it, but because there is no way in which it can be done. What happened in Poland was that a number of people tried for sixteen months to change the shape of the system without changing the area covered by the original shape. They failed." Squaring the Circle in Stoppard: The Television Plays 1965-1984, p.193.

B. Night and Day

Stoppard's work usually contains some aspects of his former works in the form of variation and expansion, and some of the aspects which are first introduced but not fully developed, will be further explored and exploited in the future. Night and Day[341] is exemplary in this respect, though John Barber, for example, commented in his Telegraph review that Stoppard "abandons . . . fancy intellectual footwork . . . to write a savagely serious drama . . [which] makes all Stoppard's other plays look like so many nursery games".[342] The review is a gross exaggeration, but not without its reasons: Stoppard again deals with the highly topical subject of freedom of the press including the controversial issue of the closed shop of the press under the Labour government in the 1970s, and unlike his former debate plays, Stoppard's position seems to be unequivocally clear. The realistic mode of Night and Day also makes a sharp contrast to his former works such as Jumpers and Travesties.

As in the case of Professional Foul, however, Stoppard's own vision of freedom and morality which he had set forth in Jumpers and Travesties, is thoroughly maintained in Night and Day. Even the press debate rather faithfully follows the pattern of the art debate in Travesties, as Stoppard repeats the attack-redemption formula with the familiar triad structure. The strong denouncement of some popular journalistic practices is part of the tactic to emphasize the important role of the free press. Stoppard also warns of individual arbitrariness and collective oppression with Mageeba and Wagner at opposite extremes and Milne, Guthrie and Ruth all roughly cut along a middle way, most faithfully reflecting Stoppard's own views. Furthermore, Stoppard's seemingly definitive position concerning the issue of freedom of the press is also betrayed by his pragmatic and realistic considerations. The idealistic belief voiced by Milne, the aspiring, young reporter, is effectively cancelled out, not only by the impression that he seems to be created according to an idea, but also by his premature death. Though Guthrie, the seasoned photo-journalist, memorably expresses a similar belief in the free press near the end of the play, he also suffers from the fact that he is

[341] Night and Day was first performed at the Phoenix Theatre in 1978. All the subsequent quotations from the play are from 1978 Faber edition.

[342] John Barber, "Newspaper Drama is Year's Best New Play", Daily Telegraphy, 10 November 1978. Quoted from Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral vision of the Major Plays,p.85.

least involved in the actions of the three journalists. Ultimately, the play ends with rather a sinister note as Ruth succumbs to her self-destructive sexual desire once again with Wagner, the career-pursuing Stoppardian villain.

As I will argue shortly, even the realism of Night and Day is seriously compromised by the general lack of authenticity and recycling of dramatic tactics Stoppard previously used particularly in Travesties, though there are indications of Stoppard's increasing grip of the realistic mode of drama.

A most remarkable aspect of Night and Day is the introduction of the love theme which will increasingly dominate his later works. Stoppard, for the first time, is trying to delve deeply into the female psyche as Ruth's complicated psychology concerning her real and imaginary adultery with Wagner and Milne, respectively, provides a major dramatic tension. However, as is pointed out by many critics, the love theme does not sit comfortably with the press debate,[343] and Ruth's romances themselves lack the gravity to attract our full attention. In this context, Night and Day is more impressive as a transitional work bridging Stoppard's former, non-representational plays with his later, highly accomplished realistic plays such as The Real Thing and Arcadia where Stoppard presents authentic characters around a convincing plot.

Night and Day is set in an imaginary African country, Kambawe, which is a former British colony. Whether the setting itself is particularly adequate is questionable, as the play has little to do with the African republic, but the setting abroad gave Stoppard "one piece of solid ground for my extremely abstract play about journalism".[344] This may be that it has some bearings with Stoppard's own past. As is well known, Stoppard used to have an aspiration to be a "big-name, roving reporter" as a teenager.[345]

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[343] "[. . .], two objectives are falling short of the mark: the evocation of a physical and mental attraction between Milne and Ruth, and the containing of the 'Press Debate' within authentic naturalistic dialogue." Tim Brassell, p.220. Anthony Jenkins also commented, "Later still, her final outburst is motivated only if we allow that her 'thing' for Milne was strong enough to provoke it; even then, the emotion and the ideas jostle together." Anthony Jenkins, p.148.

[344] Robert Berkvist, "This Time, Stoppard Plays It (Almost) Straight." (New York Times, 25 November 1979) in TSIC, p.139. Stoppard is not clear at all about the motives behind the setting. In the previous year in the television interview with Melvyn Bragg, he simply said that "Driving down the M-4, suddenly I thought, 'Oh. It's got to be abroad.'" "The South Bank Show," p.116.

[345] "Well, come 1956, when the British and French went into Suez and the Russians went into Budapest, then I wanted to be Noel Barber on the Daily Mail or Sefton Delmer on the Daily Express—

He also started his professional career as a cub-reporter in a local city like Milne.[346] More significantly, however, Evelyn Waugh had already used a similar setting in his press novel, Scoop, with which Stoppard was quite familiar from a very early stage. Stoppard even used "Boot", the name of the protagonist of the novel, as his own pseudonym for his Scene reviews,[347] and some of Stoppard's early characters have the identical name.[348] Stoppard explained the attraction of the name as follows in his Theatre Quarterly interview: "I've always been attracted to the incompetence of William Boot in Evelyn Waugh's Scoop-he was a journalist who brought a kind of innocent incompetence and contempt to what he was doing. I'd always thought that William Boot would be quite a good pseudonym for a journalist, [.....]."[349] To argue that Milne is a different version of William Boot would be over-simplifying, but an analogy between them is unmistakable: "innocent incompetence" and "contempt" for some journalistic practices are surely shared characteristics.

Night and Day is not based upon Scoop as Enter a Free Man is upon Death of a Salesman and The Cherry Orchard, but there is no denying that Night and Day owes to Scoop its overall background design and some minute details. Evelyn Waugh uses Ishmaelia, an imaginary African country, as the battleground, not for the Soviet-backed rebels and the government, but for the reporters who are eager to outscoop others. Stoppard repeats the same format in Night and Day to such an extent that, though it is set in Africa, it seems as if all the actions were taking place in the living room of an English country house. William Boot, the inexperienced foreign correspondent sent by The Beast, got a scoop by chance, and fell in love with the wife of a German mining engineer. In Night and Day the young, innocent Milne outscoops other more experienced reporters with his exclusive interview with General Shimbu by sheer luck, and Ruth, the wife of an English mining engineer, is strongly attracted to him.

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that kind of big-name, roving reporter. Noel Barber actually got shot in the head in Budapest, which put him slightly ahead of Delmer as far as I was concerned." "Ambushes for the Audience", p.4.

[346] Stoppard first joined the Western Daily Press in Bristol straight from school.

[347] "When Stoppard was drama critic for the understaffed Scene magazine, he also contributed pieces he felt ought not be published under the same name. These he signed "William Boot", a pseudonym borrowed from Evelyn Waugh's novel Scoop." Felicia Hardison Londré, p.108.

[348] The name Boot appeared in The Dissolution of Dominic Boot, and in the television play This Way Out with Samuel Boot (This was unpublished and unproduced). Lord Malquist's butler is named Birdboot, a variation of Boot, and one of the two drama critics in The Real Inspector Hound has the same name.

[349] "Ambushes for the Audience", p.17.

The most striking analogy, however, is the description of the reporter routine and the general state of affairs in the African republic. The reporters have gathered in Jacksonburg, the capital of Ishmaelia, to cover the war, but "in the first place there isn't any front, and in the second place we couldn't get to it if there was. You can't move outside the town without a permit, and you can't get a permit."[350] In Kambawe, Wagner complains, "Bloody thing won't catch fire",(23) and Milne is seen to be chided for coming out from the rebels, because "no one's going to get into Malakuangazi now without a tank".(36) The reporters in Ishmaelia send "colour stuff", while those in Kambawe, "All facts and no news",(31) as there is no concrete news. The Hotel Liberty in Jacksonburg cannot accommodate all of the reporters properly: "The bunch now overflowed the hotel."[351] In Jeddu, the capital of Kambawe, "There's two hotels, both dumps. Journalists hanging out the windows, and a Swedish TV crew sleeping in the lobby, and a lot of good friends from home too."(27)

Stoppard acknowledges his debt to Scoop here and there in Night and Day. Wagner reports to Guthrie that in Jeddu the hotel "doesn't have cleft sticks,"(24) and the cleft stick was the first item William Boot bought to prepare his job in Africa. Wagner even answers Geoffrey's question with, "Up to a certain point, Lord Copper,"(72) an expression Mr Salter, foreign editor of The Beast in Scoop, repeats again and again throughout the novel when he disagrees with Lord Copper. Ruth also makes a comment which contains an allusion to Scoop.

> CARSON: Ruth has mixed feelings about reporters.
>
> RUTH: No, I haven't. I despise them. Not foreign correspondents, of course—or the gardening notes. The ones in between. I'm sure you know what I mean.
>
> WAGNER: You've met one or two, have you? (50)

Ruth's comment has an ironic sub-textual reference to her previous meeting of Wagner in London, but the allusion is unmistakable because William Boot contributed

[350] Evelyn Waugh, Scoop (London: Chapman & Hall, 1938; reprint ed., Penguin Books, 1943), p.85.
[351] Ibid., Scoop p.107.

the gardening notes to The Beast before he was appointed foreign correspondent out of confusion.

Tim Brassell correctly points out that comparisons between the two works are unsustainable, because there is "no hint of the kind of structural relationship that, say Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead has with Hamlet or Travesties with The Importance of Being Earnest", while acknowledging that "something of the spirit of Waugh's novel is omnipresent in Night and Day".[352] The very lack of "structural relationship", however, feeds the impression that Stoppard is simply borrowing the general design of his work from Evelyn Waugh, undermining the authenticity of the play in general.

The plot itself has some fundamental defects. For example, Ruth's previous meeting with Wagner in London, her subsequent affair with him, and Wagner's appearance at the Carsons' estate in Kambawe, are just a series of chance happenings which leave the impression of deplorable contrivance. So, when Wagner gives an account of his appearance to Ruth, it seems that he speaks on behalf of the author.

> WAGNER: This is a cable I got on Sunday, from my editor. I didn't come here to sniff at your skirts. (*While* RUTH *is reading the cable.*) Believe it or not, I like to read. I like modern fiction and historical biography best. One of the things that makes novels less plausible than history, I find, is the way they shrink from coincidence. (*He waits until* RUTH *looks up.*) And also the way that so few women in fiction are in love with their husbands. (54)

This is surely a weak excuse. A chance event in "historical biography" is part of inevitability, and, therefore, it can hardly justify the gratuitous chance happenings in a literary invention. Besides, Wagner's pleading for "coincidence" seems to be an attempt to level the ground for the next happening. Wagner gets invaluable information about the meeting between Mageeba and Shimbu from none other than Alystair, Ruth's

[352] Tim Brassell, p.206.

son. Even though Ruth is a somewhat cynical and unpredictable character, it sounds improbable that she told her son about the meeting while reporters were around.

More improbable, however, is the way Ruth and Guthrie give vent to their anger in front of Mageeba. Granted that the Carsons are on extremely personal terms with Mageeba, Ruth's casual expression of her fury breaches the decorum of the occasion, totally ignoring Mageeba's status as the president. It is all the more difficult to understand, because Mageeba is not only whimsical but extremely violent. Guthrie's challenge at him is, if anything, still more improbable.

> GUTHRIE: Are you the President of this shit-house country?
>
> WAGNER: George . . .
>
> GUTHRIE: Is it you runs that drunken duck-shoot calls itself an army? [. . .] (*Shouts*) I don't call that a fucking cease-fire! I hope they blow their fucking heads off! (85-86)

Guthrie's anger and frustration is partly understandable because of Milne's death, and his courage makes a dramatic contrast to Wagner's cowardly behaviour. However, Stoppard ignores any consideration for realistic consistency. While this verbal abuse is going on, Mageeba remains passive without any response, swallowing all the insults. This, in turn, impinges on Mageeba's image built up so far.

A realistic drama need not be *realistic* in every minute detail. In Harold Pinter's Homecoming, for example, the motives are not clear why Ruth consents to the preposterous proposal of prostitution from her father-in-law and brothers-in-law and why she decides to stay even when her three children are left behind in the States. Still, the unusual turn of events and the powerful rendering of the characters' emotions with a strong suggestion of incest leave no room for idle suspicion about the realistic details. Instead, we are intrigued about the mysteries, trying hard to understand the true nature and possible significance of them. We even wonder if Ted and Ruth's story that they live in the States and that they have their children their is real at all.[353] Night and Day,

[353] The Homecoming, however, is closer to the real lives than it appears to be: "What seems clear is that Morris Wernick's situation - that of a Jewish East Ender who married a Gentile girl, emigrated to Canada and kept his marriage secret from his family - acted as a springboard for Pinter's dramatic imagination. Wernick's 'homecoming' in 1964 coincided with the writing of the play and indeed Pinter

lacking the strong gravitational centre either for the romance or for the press debate, lays bare incongruities between the realistic form and the convincing, authentic actions, and even the highly dramatic ending of the play leaves a slight doubt whether it is another rather convenient solution like those in Stoppard's political plays.

Realism in Stoppardian theatre has certain features which allow the author scope for flexibility. It is the stock-of-the-trade tactic of the-play-within-the-play and the organic allusions in The Real Thing and the juxtaposition of the present and the past in Arcadia that are the main devices, among other things. Night and Day, a transitional work in terms of realism, is also lined with some non-illusionistic devices.

Both acts of Night and Day are marked by highly dramatic openings. The play opens with a calm "African sunset", which is immediately followed by darkness, and a jeep appears "*with its headlights on*", while a spotlight from a helicopter traverses the stage. Amid the roaring sound of a helicopter and machine-gun, Guthrie is eventually located by a spotlight and killed by a burst of the machine-gun. In no time, however, it turns out that the whole scene is Guthrie's dream, while the telex is "chattering in bursts like the machine gun".(18)[354] The role of this fusion of dream and reality, however, is just to alert the audience to the impending war and the perils involved in the journalist's job to cover war. It also foreshadows Milne's death, as this opening scene must be most similar to the real situation in which Milne is killed.

Guthrie's nightmare in the daytime makes a structural symmetry to Ruth's daydream at night at the beginning of the Second Act. By the time Ruth fantasizes a romance with Milne, he is already dead, but the audience are deliberately led to believe that the fantasy is a real event. To maximize the dramatic shock effect, Stoppard even lets Ruth use "double voices" in the same way as she does in the First Act.

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sent his old friend a first draft, freely acknowledging that he had expanded on the idea." Michael Billington, The Life and Work of Harold Pinter (London: Faber and Faber, 1996), p.164.

[354] This metaphor was also used in Scoop, when the internationally acclaimed American reporter, Wenlock Jakes, with whom Milne shares part of his name, is said to have invented a fake story about a revolution in one of the Balkan capitals, and have "cabled off a thousand-word story about barricades in the streets, flaming churches, machine-guns answering the rattle of his type-writer as he wrote, a dead child, like a broken doll, spreadeagled in the deserted roadway below his window". Thanks to the report, "in less than a week there *was* an honest to God revolution underway, just as Jakes had said". Evelyn Waugh, Scoop, p.67.

RUTH: [. . .] It's nice that you've got us to come back to.

MILNE: Yes—a line to London on tap—one couldn't ask for more.

Oh—and present company included, of course.

'RUTH': Help.

MILNE: Well, I expect you'd like to go to bed.

'RUTH': I'm over here.

MILNE: I've got a piece to write.

'RUTH': To hell with that.

MILNE: You won't mind if I try to get London later?

'RUTH': And to hell with London.

MILNE: I'm sure Geoffrey wouldn't mind. Is he in KC?

'RUTH': Why don't you shut up and kiss me.

MILNE: He said I could help myself.

'RUTH': So kiss me. (65)

Ruth is in a privileged position throughout the play, because she is the only character whose inner thoughts are directly available to the audience through her double voices.[355] Through the technique, Stoppard carves out Ruth's complex, divided psyche, as Ruth's witty, ironic comments usually come from 'Ruth'. However, it is not only technically disturbing, but, compared with Pinter's subtext, for example, leaves no room for imagination and dramatic depth. Moreover, in the above-quoted fantasy, Ruth is doubly removed from reality as the fantasizing self itself is still divided. On the other hand, Milne remains the same, highly moralistic and idealistic character with no sign of his being someone Ruth perceives him to be. This is the same problem with the Coda scene of Jumpers where George's dream shows no difference in terms of characterization and style except for the introduction of some fantastic figures.

[355] Stoppard gives a special note on this in the printed text of the play: "The audience is occasionally made privy to RUTH's thoughts, and to hers alone. This text makes no reference to the technique by which this is achieved. (It may be that—ideally—no technical indication is necessary.) When RUTH's thoughts are audible she is simply called 'RUTH' in quotes, and treated as a separate character. Thus, RUTH can be interrupted by 'RUTH'. This rule is also loosely applied to the first scene of Act Two, where the situation is somewhat different."

Ruth also adopts Carr's technique of "time slip" for a brief moment. It is the only token effort on the part of Stoppard to alert the audience that the scene is Ruth's fantasy.

> MILNE: What's PCR?
>
> RUTH: Post-coital remorse. Post-coital ruth. Quite needlessly—I mean, it's a bit metaphysical to feel guilt about the idea of Geoffrey being hurt if Geoffrey is in a blissful state of ignorance—don't you think?
>
> MILNE: No.
>
> RUTH: *No. Fresh start. Hello!--had a good trip?* (*Pause*) I don't know. I got into a state today.
>
> MILNE: What sort of state? (68, italics mine)

It would be virtually impossible for an audience to detect this in a performance, unless they were extremely familiar with Stoppard's works, particularly with Carr's technique of "time-slip". This recourse to the trick Stoppard used exhaustively in Travesties is a sign that Stoppard is not yet in a firm grip of the highest standard of the realistic mode itself.

The-play-within-the-play of Ruth's fantasy also has a very limited significance, compared with those in such works as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead and The Real Thing, where the tactic has vital thematic and structural importance. In Night and Day, Stoppard uses it for a simple dramatic shock effect, while prolonging the presence of Milne who, for a protagonist, departs the stage too early.

What is interesting to note, however, is the change of style we witness in Ruth's dialogue in her fantasy. A couple of times, Ruth adopts a short, realistic conversational style, which is almost unprecedented in Stoppardian theatre. The following is a most remarkable example.

> MILNE: [. . .] There are no free rides. You always pay.
>
> RUTH: Take it, then, and pay. Be a bastard. Behave badly.
>
> MILNE: That's better.
>
> RUTH: Betray your benefactor.

MILNE: That's right.

RUTH: Corrupt me.

MILNE: Put it like that, I might.

RUTH: Steal me.

MILNE: I want to.

RUTH: Good. Mess up my life. I'll pay.

MILNE: Stupid.

RUTH: Don't be frightened.

MILNE: And tomorrow—

RUTH: I'll pack if you like. If you don't like, I'll stay and deadhead the bougainvillaea. Either way I'll pay.

(*They kiss on the mouth, but not passionately and not holding each other.*)

MILNE: Leave me alone. You should know better.

RUTH: I do know better. To hell with that. (69)

Though this is happening only in Ruth's head, Stoppard's desire to "simplify questions and take the sophistication out",[356] seems to have found a corresponding style. Ruth's strong wish to get out of her present situation is convincingly portrayed in the decisive tone, while her boldness in fact betrays her rather traditional, guilt-ridden mind, because it is constantly kept at bay by Milne whose responses are also Ruth's creation. Later in The Real Thing we will come across similar, but more effective exchanges as Stoppard will use them in a more clearly defined dramatic situation. The elaborately constructed scene in The Real Thing where Henry and Annie manage to converse with each other even in the presence of Charlotte, would not have been possible without Stoppard's experiment with Ruth's double voices.

The press debate in Night and Day, though it occupies a great part of the whole play, is in fact rather simple. Milne declares in the first act what could be interpreted as the definite argument concerning the whole debate: "A free press, free expression—it's the

[356] David Gollob and David Roper, "Trad Tom Pops In," p.16.

last line of defence for all the other freedoms."(58) This is so from Milne's point of view because, "No matter how imperfect things are, if you've got a free press everything is correctable, and without it everything is concealable."(60)[357] The freedom of the press, however, is under threat both from inside and outside. Wagner with his "right thinking press" represents the threat from the inside as he is a strong proponent of the closed shop of the press, and Mageeba with his "relatively free press" represents the threat from the outside as he is in absolute control of the press in his country. Though Wagner and Mageeba are supposed to be diametrically opposite in terms of ideology, the difference between Wagner's "right thinking press" and Mageeba's "relatively free press" is just a matter of degree. In principle, they are identical threats, as they infringe on the fundamental freedom and right of individual choice.

The press-debate at one time finds quite an unexpected turn when Milne tries to justify junk journalism. After citing a number of typical tabloid headlines, Milne surprisingly concludes, "It's the price you pay for the part that matters."(61) And he goes on to argue:

> I felt part of a privileged group, inside society and yet outside it, with a licence to scourge it and a duty to defend it, night and day, the street of adventure, the fourth estate. And the thing is—I was dead right. That's what it was, and I *was* part of it because it's indivisible. Junk journalism is the evidence of a society that has got at least one thing right, that there should be nobody with the power to dictate where responsible journalism begins. (61)

Milne's argument, whether it is right or not, has at least a definite advantage that it makes the press debate in Night and Day unequivocally clear. To free the press from any kind of restriction, Milne is even ready to accept junk journalism as a sign of the free state of affairs. This rather simplified argument quite naturally reminds us of Prof. Anderson in Professional Foul where he puts everything down to the question of

[357] Milne's view is exactly identical to Stoppard's own: "I had always felt that no matter how dangerously closed a society looked like it was getting, as long as any newspaper was free to employ anybody it liked to say what it wished within the law, then any situation was correctable. And without

individual human rights. In fact, the way Milne acted concerning his journalistic career is the strongest vindication imaginable of the individual right.[358]

Ruth is no less vehement in her criticism of the popular press because of her bitter experience with the press in the past, and her guilty conscience about her one-night-stand with Wagner. In general, however, hers is no different from Milne's argument, and at one time, she also plays exactly the role of Stoppard's own mouthpiece.

> RUTH: You [Wagner] are confusing freedom with ability. The *Flat Earth News* is *free* to sell a million copies. What it lacks is the ability to find a million people with four pence and a conviction that the earth is flat. Freedom is neutral. Free expression includes a state of affairs where *any* millionaire can have a national newspaper, if that's what it costs. A state of affairs where only a particular, approved, licensed and supervised non-millionaire can have a newspaper is called, for example, Russia.
>
> MAGEEBA: Or, of course, Kambawe. (83)

This is a recapitulation of the letter Stoppard sent to The Times concerning the issue of the closed shop of the press.[359] And Ruth's assertion of "neutral freedom" anticipates Guthrie's final conclusive comment.

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that any situation was concealable. I felt that very strongly; I feel it strongly now." Melvyn Bragg, "The South Bank Show", p.123.

[358] When Milne was working for the Grimsby Evening Standard, a reporters' strike broke out. Out of his idealistic conviction, Milne decided not to join in. However, a more serious problem arose after the strike was settled. Though the other colleagues who did not join the strike appealed to the union and were reinstated with a fine, Milne decided not to appeal. This caused a problem to the union, and this time because of Milne, the newspaper was once again going to shut down. There was no other choice for Milne but to leave, even though the management refused to sack him. Subsequently, Milne came to Africa looking for a story. Unfortunately, the whole story of Milne's past does not sound convincing at all, and Michael Billington in particular argued, "I would call such a man bloody-minded rather than high-principled." Michael Billington, Stoppard: The Playwright, p.126.

[359] "An unclosed shop is a state of affairs where if, for example, I want to publish my own paper, all I need is wealth, which may indeed have to be enormous if I want my own *Daily Express* but not so enormous if I want my own *Iver Heath Bugle*, or, for that matter, my own *Socialist Worker*. If I don't have the money I can try to raise it, and neither Mr Victor Matthews nor Mr Kenneth Morgan can stop me. This is called freedom of expression. A closed shop is a state of affairs where if, for example, I want to work for a newspaper, all I need is to avoid offending some person or group in a position to withdraw my right to do so, on that paper or any other. This is called absence of freedom of expression." Tom Stoppard, "Journalists' Closed Shop," Letter to the editor of The Times, 11 August 1977, p.13.

> I've been around a lot of places. People do awful things to each other. But it's worse in places where everybody is kept in the dark. It really is. Information is light. Information, in itself, about anything, is light. That's all you can say, really. (91)

Guthrie does not cut a prominent figure like Milne because of his reservedness and professional independence. However, he has been depicted throughout the play as a man of cool judgement. On this account, Guthrie's claim has the weight of a seasoned journalist, while Milne's is restricted by his rash idealism. Guthrie's comment is also simpler and more crystallized, reflecting the character difference between him and Milne. On second thoughts, however, in spite of its aphorism-like clarity, a question arises, what "information in itself" is, or Ruth's "neutral freedom", for that matter. The neat expression betrays its vacuousness as there seems to be no real equivalent to it in the real world. In this context, it reflects Stoppard's absolutist tendency which stretches back to George's moral argument in Jumpers

Milne's, Ruth's and Guthrie's arguments all have the same problem as Prof. Anderson's in that they are too general to have any palpable substance. They simplify the complex question of freedom of the press almost to the point of stark declaration. However, real problems can arise where the press debate of Night and Day stops short, as Howard Brenton and David Hare powerfully demonstrate in Pravda in which the threat of a journalistic entrepreneur with means and ambition to have the press machine at his will is driven home amid intrigues and human vulnerabilities.

Mageeba's argument crumbles exactly the way Lenin's did in Travesties when Mageeba says that his relatively free press is the one "which is edited by one of my relatives".(85) On the other hand, Wagner, like Tzara in Travesties, is given a good argument once in a while, the best example of which is when he refers to himself as "a fireman".

> I am a fireman. I go to fires. Brighton or Kambawe—they're both out-of-town stories and I cover them the same way. I don't file prose. I file facts. So don't imagine for a moment you've stumbled across a fellow

member of the Travellers' Club. To me you're the Grimsby scab. Jacob Milne. (40)

However, this is a very rare moment when the debate is rather well balanced between the two opposite parties. Though Stoppard said of Wagner in an interview that he admires Wagner "as a person, because he takes his job seriously and is good at it and isn't a hack,"[360] Wagner is consistently subjected to a detrimental public-relations spin from the author, and his single action of protest against Milne's employment as a special correspondent, which in the end results in a temporary close of The Sunday Globe, is enough to make him despicable.

Taken in all, the press debate in Night and Day is sporadic, rather than coherently orchestrated so that a final conclusion may emerge as the result of rigorous debates and dramatic actions. The application of the term "Shavian" to Night and Day, therefore, seems a bit beside the point in the respect. The characters do not undergo any meaningful transformation. To the end, they stick to their own opinions which are pre-conceived.

The questionable aspect of the press debate leaves Ruth as the most admirable asset of the play, alongside a minor achievement of a realistic description of the character of an African dictator, Mageeba. Stoppard has long been accused of his inability to create a reliable female character, and by the time he started writing Night and Day, as he freely admitted, he was sick of the accusation.[361] Ruth is Stoppard's response to it.

In Night and Day there is evidence that Stoppard has come to understand the female psyche more fully than before. Ruth's response to Alystair's interest in Guthrie, for example, sounds wholly convincing, as she says, "Oh dear, he's taken rather a fancy to George. Next thing, he'll want to be a journalist when he grows up. What is a mother to do?"(47) However, the best part is the explanation of her motive to have a sexual affair with Wagner in London.

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[360] David Gollob and David Roper, "Trad Tom Pops In," p.15.

[361] "I'd also been told repeatedly, by actresses and others, that I hadn't ever written a really good part for a woman." Robert Berkvist, "This Time, Stoppard Plays It (Almost) Straight", p.136.

> [. . .] if I fancied you *at all* when you chatted me up in the visa office, I would have run a mile. That's what we honourable ladies with decent husbands do—didn't you know that? Every now and again we meet a man who attracts us, and we run a mile. I let you take me to dinner because there was no danger of going to bed with you. And then because there was no danger of going to bed with you a second time, I went to bed with you. A lady, if surprised by melancholy, might go to bed with a chap, once; or a thousand times if consumed by passion. But twice, Wagner, *twice* . . . a lady might think she'd been taken for a tart. (54)

If a bit too articulate, Ruth here reveals quite persuasively the complex psychology of a mature woman. Ruth is a divided character like night and day; her darker side of a tart lies beneath the facade of a lady. Her contempt for Wagner seems to be genuine, as her strong denial of any feeling for Wagner suggests. At the same time, however, Ruth's whole contention rings a bit hollow, because, whatever the excuse is, she did have an affair with Wagner and the experience weighs heavily in her mind.

She can play safe with Wagner if only because of her contempt for him. She may suffer from "post-coital ruth", but she can still maintain her dignity. Unlike Wagner, however, Milne can pose a real threat to her life. Therefore, when she finds herself more and more attracted to Milne, she desperately says to herself, "Run. Run. You stupid bitch,"(62) which ironically demonstrates that she is emotionally engaged to him.

Ruth's complex, rather traditional, mindset is further confirmed in her fantasy. She, while boldly imagining an affair with Milne, still maintains her moral austerity which is largely voiced by Milne in her imagined dialogue. Her longing for "a parallel world" with "No day or night, no responsibilities, no friction, almost no gravity", therefore, ironically betrays her moral struggle. Deep down in her mind, she instinctively knows that that sort of ideal world is just an illusion and that she will not leave Geoffrey in the end. This inner conflict is precisely captured by Ruth in a most effective metaphor of the whole play.

> Woke up fluttering with imminent risk. Quite a pleasant feeling, really. Like walking along the top board knowing you don't have to jump. But a desperate feeling, too, because if you're not going to jump what the hell are you doing up there? So I got dressed to say goodbye to you [Milne]. Really. (68)

Ruth, in the end, is realistic enough in her mental outlook. She sincerely desires to escape from the present, but she will not commit herself to an uncertain future. She can spare a few innocuous affairs with Wagners, but the prospect of a real affair with someone she can be "consumed by passion" seems to be out of the question. Hence, she prepares herself for Milne's departure even in her fantasy.

Milne's actual death, however, is a different matter. It comes as a great shock to her, because it signifies, by implication, the collapse of her ideal world altogether. In this context, her impulsive decision to have one more affair with Wagner is understandable, because he is the only choice left as Ruth is now left entrapped in her grim world.

Ruth, though a complex and far more rounded character, is the result of the progressive development of Stoppard's former heroines. Sensuality and romantic temper are typical female characteristics in the Stoppardian world. Jane Moon, Lady Malquist, and Dotty all share them to a different degree, and Ruth no doubt belongs to this category. Ruth's citing of several famous actresses like Deborrah Kerr and Elizabeth Taylor is particularly reminiscent of Dotty's charade games in Jumpers, and like Dotty, she cries for "help" several times.

What remains rather unclear is why Ruth is so desperate to break out of her marriage with Geoffrey. As Geoffrey is deplorably marginalized throughout, we are kept in the dark as to the real picture of their married life, which somewhat attenuates the dramatic effect of Ruth's dilemma and romance.

Mageeba is also a minor realistic success of the play. Geoffrey's repeated warnings about the dictator to Wagner quite effectively build up the image of the whimsical and extremely violent dictator: "Journalists here get hung up by their thumbs for getting his

medals wrong."(72)[362] During the interview with Wagner, Mageeba indeed reveals his true nature by suddenly hitting Wagner on the head with his iron-headed cane. However, the real success lies, as in the case of the Inspector in Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoots Macbeth, in his unmistakable sub-textual threat. To the fearful and flattering Wagner, Mageeba asks in a casual way amid normal conversation some deliberate questions which have double entendre.

> MAGEEBA: What did you think of the interview by the way?
>
> WAGNER: Ah, well, (*He looks for safe ground.*)—these chaps, they even talk like puppets, don't they? [.....]
>
> MAGEEBA: You would give me equal space?
>
> WAGNER: Oh—absolutely—
>
> MAGEEBA: That's very fair. Isn't it Geoffrey? Mr Wagner says I can have equal space.
>
> WAGNER: And some space is more equal than others. I think, sir, I could more or less guarantee that an interview with you at this juncture of the war would be treated as the main news story of the day, and of course would be picked up by newspapers, and all the media, round the world.
>
> MAGEEBA: What war, Mr Wagner?
>
> WAGNER: Sorry?
>
> MAGEEBA: Kambawe is not at war. We have a devolution problem. I believe you have one, too. (78)

Mageeba is particularly displeased that the Shimbu interview first appeared in The Sunday Globe, and his resentment is convincingly conveyed through this exchange. Mageeba is also seen to enjoy his power and a sort of intellectual sadism as he teases Wagner. Only Wagner fails to notice it amid fear and ambition. It is when this contained, cogent language turns into a lengthy exposition that Mageeba begins to be

[362] Geoffrey's short warning to Wagner just before Mageeba enters, is another example which perfectly expresses the character of the unpredictable dictator: "Be careful if he laughs."(74)

"the only African president who speaks like me [Stoppard]",[363] as did the Inspector in Cahoot's Macbeth.

> I did not believe a newspaper should be part of the apparatus of the state; we are not a totalitarian society. But neither could I afford a return to the whims of private enterprise. I had the immense and delicate task of restoring confidence in Kambawe. I could afford the naked women but not the naked scepticism, the carping and sniping and the public washing of dirty linen which represents freedom to an English editor. What then? A democratic committee of journalists?—a thicket for the editor to hide in. (84)

The dramatic force unmistakably diminishes as the character and the language separate. Mageeba here docilely follows the author's debate scheme as he explicates his theory of the press which crumbles because of its sheer irrelevancy.

The title Night and Day, a mundane everyday phrase, surprisingly has multiple meanings as the play unfolds. When Ruth first meets Guthrie in the beginning, she uses it in a very indicative meaning.

> GUTHRIE: It moved.
> RUTH: It does that. It's called night and day. (8)

Here, "night and day" simply signifies the natural procession of the days. When Milne mentions it in his heated, long-winded talk to Ruth on the role of the press, the phrase begins to expand its metaphoric meaning.

[363] Mel Gussow, "Stoppard's Intellectual Cartwheels Now with Music." (The New York Times, 29 July 1979) in Mel Gussow, Conversations with Stoppard, p.35.

> I felt part of a privileged group, inside society and yet outside it, with a licence to scourge it and a duty to defend it, night and day, the street of adventure, the fourth estate. (61)

The "night and day" inserted here underscores the journalist's absolute dedication to the all-important role and cause of the free press. In Ruth's fantasy, however, the phrase begins to unfurl its symbolic meaning as Milne mentions it again.

> RUTH: I kept my clothes on?
> MILNE: You undressed yourself.
> RUTH: Ah. Was it dark or daylight? On a bed? On the floor? Long grass? In the jeep? (*Pause*) It was in the jeep.
> MILNE: (*Sharply*) No, it wasn't. (*Pause*) It was in a parallel world. No day or night, no responsibilities, no friction, almost no gravity. (67)

It is now being used paradoxically to signify the ideal world free from all the conflicts and competitions. On the other hand, the fact that this is uttered by Milne makes it a tacit, but acute, foreboding of Milne's destiny, because by this time he is not in the normal world of night and day.

Stoppard, with his cautious conservatism and pragmatism, has always known how limited a radical attempt to change the world is, and how destructive of oneself and the others around him a rash idealist can be. The idealists in the Stoppardian world like Mr Moon, Albert and Milne invariably end up in death. However, this does not mean that Stoppard discredits idealism itself. On the contrary, Stoppard shares with all the moral absolutists like George and Prof. Anderson, the knowledge that, without the idealistic passion for the good and the better, the world will easily degenerate into the chaos of moral inanity and the shameless pursuit of naked self-interest. Stoppard's continuous probing into the meanings of morality, art and individual freedom is the most eloquent evidence of his passion to improve his own life and the world.

Even so, however, Stoppard ultimately fails to strike a balance between the ideal and the real in Night and Day. For an explicitly committed play, it paradoxically favours

the status-quo. Milne's argument for extremely popular journalism, in particular, cannot be justified in any other way. It is either too naïve or fundamentally flawed in its reasoning, providing a rationalization of the present state of affairs instead of calling for actions to better it. The present state may have its disadvantages, Stoppard seems to conclude, but it could have been far worse. In this context, while the "night and day" signifies both the harsh realistic world inhabited by Wagners and the ideal world by Milnes, it tacitly presupposes a world in between, by implication, the present, grey world, where those who have some ideal bent continue to live on, bearing the burden of life.

V. Reconciliation: Love and the World of Chaos and Order

A. The Real Thing

In 1982, at the Strand Theatre, London, The Real Thing was first staged, and subsequently, was subjected to a variety of critical responses ranging from Michael Billington's extreme eulogy that "the play will be one of the handful written since the war that may be performed in the next century when manners and *mores* have changed,"[364] through Richard Corballis's rather unfavourable verdict that "he [Stoppard] has produced a rather dull play,"[365] to Neil Sammells's vitriolic attack that Stoppard "has put his work at the service of a political thesis which is at best self-contradictory and banal and, at worst, cynical and dishonest".[366] However, the diversity of criticism itself in a way confirms the unusual depth of the play.

As usual with Stoppard's dramas, The Real Thing is a natural development from his earlier works. The basic formula of the marital crisis is basically the same in Jumpers, Night and Day and The Real Thing. The husband is rather too much preoccupied in his own business to pay enough attention to the emotional demands of his wife, and the frustration drives the wife to a reluctant affair. On the other hand, the intricate mirror-like structure of The Real Thing quite naturally reminds us of Stoppard's whole practice of the-play-within-the-play technique. As in The Real Inspector Hound, drama and life merge in The Real Thing. As in Cahoot's Macbeth, a literary text sweeps into real life. More significantly, we can see the actions move forwards amid the network of mirrors, as in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, where the two hapless protagonists are always on the move towards the final ending, though they seem to be engaged in seemingly endless and meaningless games.

The Real Thing, however, marks a significant departure from Stoppard's previous stages on several accounts. First, it is built around a convincing, original plot with authentic characters with distinctive characteristics. Compared with Night and Day, for example, The Real Thing demonstrates a veritably higher standard of realism. Second, it combines emotion and intellect into a unifying dramatic whole, as it deals with the

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[364] Michael Billington, Stoppard: The Playwright, p.156
[365] Richard Corballis, Stoppard: The Mystery and the Clockwork, p.148.
[366] Neil Sammells, p.142.

highly emotional subject of love relationships on the one hand, and the highly intellectual subject of art, on the other. Still, the questions of both love and art are inseparably entwined with each other as the lives of playwrights and actors/actresses criss-cross the works they write and perform. Lastly, The Real Thing is radically different from Stoppard's previous works because of its optimism. Though it is difficult to notice because of the comic and fantastic aspects, the Stoppardian world has been surprisingly violent and gloomy. Protagonists, as often as not, end up dead, and the debates are usually based upon attacks between mutually exclusive oppositions. It is true that the various human relationships depicted in The Real Thing are plagued by conflicts, competitions and frustrations. However, we, almost for the first time, witness the fusion of different souls in the renewed love relationship between Henry and Annie, while the other characters still maintain their own integrity. This note of positive optimism is what I call *reconciliation*. Stoppard at last, it seems, feels at ease with the world, catching a glimpse of "nature as a reassuring union of the fortuitous and the ordained".[367]

The opening scene of The Real Thing is a play-within-the-play. The closest example is, of course, the scene of Ruth's imaginary affair with Milne in the second act of Night and Day. However, the "House of Cards" scene in The Real Thing is a master-stroke, far more surprising and organically integrated into the whole play. In an interview with Angeline Goreau, Stoppard said that the first idea of The Real Thing was "to write a play in which the first scene turned out to have been written by a character in the second scene".[368] The scheme exactly carries off in such a rich dramatic context that only after the middle of the second scene do we realise that Henry is not Charlotte's lover as we were led to believe, but her husband and playwright, and that Charlotte is a leading actress in Henry's play titled "House of Cards", which is actually the first scene.

"House of Cards" is the first of a series of mirrors in The Real Thing. In "House of Cards" Max has just discovered Charlotte's infidelity (or he deduces it), because it turns

[367] Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, p.14.

[368] Angeline Goreau, "Is The Real Inspector Hound a Shaggy Dog Story?" (New York Times, 9 August 1992) in TSIC, p.259.

out that Charlotte went on a business trip to Switzerland without her passport. The flimsy construction with cards which Max, an architect in the play, was making, serves as a visual symbol for the precarious relationship between Max and Charlotte, and like the human pyramid in the opening scene of Jumpers, it crumbles when Charlotte enters the living room. A verbal battle ensues:

> CHARLOTTE: Why were you looking for it?
>
> MAX: I didn't know it was going to be your passport. If you see what I mean.
>
> CHARLOTTE: I think I do. You go through my things when I'm away? (*Pause. Puzzled.*) Why?
>
> MAX: I liked it when I found nothing. You should have just put it in your handbag. We'd still be an ideal couple. So to speak.
>
> CHARLOTTE: Wouldn't you have checked to see if it had been stamped?
>
> MAX: That's a very good point. I notice that you never went to Amsterdam when you went to Amsterdam. I must say I take my hat off to you, coming home with Rembrandt place mats for your mother. It's those little touches that lift adultery out of the moral arena and make it a matter of style. (13)[369]

Max and Charlotte are in a marital crisis, but curiously the whole scene lacks emotional intensity that is normally expected of such an occasion. Though Charlotte is not as articulate as Max in the whole scene, their dialogue is made up of clever badinage. Max is once seen to deride Japanese digital watch at length, which in fact has nothing to do with his present crisis. The implication in a nutshell is that "House of Cards" is *all style but no substance*.

As early as in the second scene, life imitates drama. The relationship between Henry and Charlotte is somewhat similar to that between Max and Charlotte in "House of

[369] Stoppard, Tom. The Real Thing (London: Faber and Faber, 1986; reprint & rev. edition, 1988) All the subsequent quotations are from this edition.

Cards". Her pungent criticism of Henry and his work suggests that their marriage is also on the brink of disintegration. But they manage to hide their real feelings behind the clever talks quite reminiscent of those between Elyot and Amanda in Noël Coward's Private Lives. In fact, early in the second scene, Stoppard deliberately parodies Private Lives.

> HENRY: [...] Do you remember when we were in some place like Bournemouth or Deauville, and there was an open-air dance floor right outside our window?
>
> CHARLOTTE: No.
>
> HENRY: Yes you do, I was writing my Sartre play, and there was this bloody orchestra which kept coming back to the same tune every twenty minutes, so I started shouting out of the window and the hotel manager—
>
> CHARLOTTE: That was Zermatt. (*Scornfully*) *Bournemouth.*
>
> HENRY: Well, what was it?
>
> CHARLOTTE: What was what?
>
> HENRY: What was the tune called? It sounded like Strauss or somebody. (16-17)

Henry has to choose eight records for the radio programme, "Desert Island Discs", and is rummaging among the records, testing each one on the record player. That is why he is asking Charlotte these questions, but the allusion is unmistakable. The "recurrent tune" is no doubt derived from Private Lives.

> ELYOT: Nasty insistent little tune.
>
> AMANDA: Extraordinary how potent cheap music is.
>
> ELYOT: What exactly were you remembering at that moment?
>
> AMANDA: The Palace Hotel Skating Rink in the morning, bright strong sunlight, and everybody whirling round in vivid colours, and you

kneeling down to put on my skates for me.[370]

In Private Lives, an unbelievable coincidence has brought Elyot and Amanda, now remarried to Sybil and Victor, respectively, after four years of divorce, to the same hotel for their honeymoons, and it happens that they realize they are still in love with each other more than with their newly-married partners.[371] However, the problem with the relationship between Elyot and Amanda is that, even though they love each other, they always try to hide their real feelings in a very clever language. In The Real Thing the Henry-Charlotte relationship is generally alluded to that of Elyot-Amanda, "two violent acids bubbling about in a nasty little matrimonial bottle".[372]

This is strongly supported by another allusion to Private Lives.

> HENRY: (*Fascinated*) You have a cottage in . . .?
>
> ANNIE: Norfolk.
>
> HENRY: Norfolk! What, up in the hills there?
>
> ANNIE: (*Testily*) *What* hills? Norfolk is absolutely—
>
> (*She brings herself up short.*)
>
> CHARLOTTE: Oh, very funny. Stop it, Henry. (31)

The reason why Annie suddenly stops her talking is that the missing word "flat" might have an unpleasant connotation. In Private Lives Amanda uses the word as a displeasing comment on Sybil's figure.[373] It seems that Annie is aware of the connotation. At any rate, her sudden silence is suggestive of her disapproval of the "debonair relationship"[374] between Elyot and Amanda.

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[370] Noël Coward, Coward: Plays Two (Private Lives, Bitter Sweet, The Marquise, Post-Mortem) (London: Eyre Methuen, 1979), p.32. The tune in The Real Thing is the Skater's Waltz, and Charlotte makes the connection clear by remarking, "They don't have open-air dance floors in the Alps in mid-winter. They have skating rinks. Now you've got sit."(18)

[371] The music was instrumental in the realization.

[372] Private Lives, p.16.

[373] "AMANDA: Have you known her long?/ ELYOT: About four months, we met in a house party in Norfolk./ AMANDA: Very flat, Norfolk." Private Lives, p.30.

[374] Later, Henry also makes it clear that he disapproves of it while he is appealing to Annie: "I don't believe in debonair relationships. 'How's your lover today, Amanda?' 'In the pink, Charles. How's yours?'"(72)

With the introduction of Annie, it becomes apparent that the marital relationship between Henry and Charlotte is at a dead end. Henry is having an affair with Annie, which is revealed by a sudden and daring move by Annie, the moment Henry and Annie are left by themselves while Max and Charlotte are in the kitchen preparing a quick dip.

HENRY: Are you all right?

(ANNIE *nods*.)

ANNIE: Are you all right?

(HENRY *nods*.)

Touch me.

(HENRY *shakes his head*.)

Touch me.

HENRY: No.

ANNIE: Come on, touch me.

Help yourself.

Touch me anywhere you like.

HENRY: No.

ANNIE: Touch me.

HENRY: No.

ANNIE: Coward.

HENRY: I love you anyway.

ANNIE: Yes, say that.

HENRY: I love you.

ANNIE: Go on.

HENRY: I love you.

ANNIE: That's it.

HENRY: I love you.

ANNIE: Touch me then. They'll come in or they won't. Take a chance.

Kiss me. (26-27)

The style of dialogue here is quite shocking for a Stoppard's play. The simple, short sentences without any ornamental flourish successfully convey the intense, loving feelings between the two lovers. On the other hand, the elaborate, witty badinage between Max and Charlotte in "House of Cards" and between Henry and Charlotte in real life is outstanding for the absence of any emotional engagement, making such a strong contrast to these monosyllabic utterances. With these sudden bursts of emotion, Henry and Annie are surely demonstrating a different sort of love relationship.

If The Real Thing lacks Stoppard's early verbal fireworks, it still contains quite a number of witty remarks to keep the audience interested, and furthermore, develops a very intricate mode of conversational techniques which have so far been very rare in Stoppard's works. For example, the rather mechanical comic trick of misunderstanding in his early works is transformed into this subtle, sub-textual dialogue.

> HENRY: [...] Been shopping?
>
> ANNIE: Not exactly. I saw a place open on my way back and . . .
> Anyway, you might as well take it as an offering.
>
> CHARLOTTE: (*Taking the bag from her and investigating it*) Darling,
> there was absolutely no need to bring . . . mushrooms?
>
> ANNIE: Yes.
>
> CHARLOTTE: (*Not quite behaving well*) And turnip . . .
>
> ANNIE: (*Getting unhappy*) And carrots . . . Oh, dear, it must look as
> if—
>
> HENRY: Where's the meat?
>
> CHARLOTTE: Shut up. (23-24)

Besides being comic, this is also dramatically informative. The characteristic difference between Charlotte and Annie is highlighted through their different tastes. And, it seems, it is not just what Annie brought that Charlotte disapproves of, though it is not clear whether she is aware of Henry's affair with Annie.[375] Henry, on the other

[375] As we shall know, Charlotte is a very experienced lover, and, therefore, she must be aware of it in all probability.

hand, intervenes to rescue Annie from the embarrassing situation with his well-timed, well-phrased question.

Just after Charlotte has come back to the living room with the dip, a most complicated and bold attempt in conversation is made. Annie has been urging Henry to make a clean breast of their affair, because it is just a matter of "a couple of marriages and a child",(28) so to speak. Henry cannot bring himself to a confession, and the conversation goes on between Henry and Annie even in the presence of Charlotte.

> CHARLOTTE: [...] I do envy you [ANNIE] being married to a man with a sense of humour. Henry thinks he has a sense of humour, but what he has is a joke reflex. Eh, Henry? His mind is racing. Pineapple, pineapple . . . Come on, darling.
>
> HENRY: (*To* ANNIE) No. Sorry.
>
> ANNIE: It's all right.
>
> CHARLOTTE: (*Busy with cutlery*) Is Debbie expecting lunch?
>
> HENRY: (*To* ANNIE) No.
>
> CHARLOTTE: What?
>
> HENRY: No. She wants to stay out. (29)

Though the whole dialogue seems a bit over-articulate (in this way the conversation goes on a bit longer), it demonstrates Stoppard's increased confidence in his skills in dramatic conversation. The dialogue successfully establishes once again the special chemistry between Henry and Annie, and in a way makes a critical comment of the Pinteresque subtext in that the dialogue can best be described as, if anything, *overtext*.

In Scene Three, the deliberate mirroring effect between life and drama is revealed in a more recognizable way, as Max and Annie in real life repeat the same situation of "House of Cards"; Max has just discovered Annie's adultery with Henry, and confronts her. While Max was preparing the dip with Charlotte in Henry's house, he cut himself, and Henry lent him his handkerchief. Max found the self-same handkerchief in Annie's car smeared, not just with his blood, but with Henry's semen as well.

The difference between Scene One and Scene Three, i.e. the illusion of "House of Cards" and the reality of Max and Annie, is that in an actual situation, the seemingly detached language of Max's in "House of Cards" completely fails. He actually starts with a somewhat similar, sarcastic-cum-detached comment about Miss Julie whose role Annie is rehearsing at the moment, but in no time the posture goes to pieces. He can neither contain his emotion, nor find proper articulation.

> MAX: [...]
>
> It [The handkerchief] looks filthy. It's dried filthy.
>
> You're filthy.
>
> You filthy cow.
>
> You rotten filthy—
>
> (*He starts to cry, barely audible, immobile.* ANNIE *waits. He recovers his voice.*)
>
> It's not true, is it?
>
> ANNIE: Yes. (36-37)

In contrast to the artificially elaborate "House of Cards" scene, this scene seems to say that the more real and intense a feeling is, the less articulate it becomes. So it partly supports Leslie Thomson's argument that The Real Thing "juxtaposes several love relationships, some more real than others both theatrically and emotionally, while the language suggests an inverse relationship between real and artificial love: the more real, the less articulate."[376] However, this is too simple an equation to be applied to such a complex play as The Real Thing. The implication of the scene finds an unusual turn which cannot be explained but as "an ambush" because of the highly dramatic prop of the handkerchief. It unmistakably alludes to the fatal handkerchief in Othello which costs Othello and Desdemona their love and lives, and makes us wonder whether the pain and love Max feels is greater than Othello's which was expressed in blank verse.

[376] Leslie Thomson, "The Subtext of The Real Thing: It's 'all right'," Modern Drama, 30 (December 1987): 535.

As Hersh Zeifman puts it, "At the very heart of this 'real' scene, we are implicitly reminded of theatre."[377]

From Scene Four, the main plot of the play unfolds, as The Real Thing largely focuses on Henry and his relationship with Annie. We now see Henry and Annie married. Immediately, however, we detect something has gone wrong in their relationship. Passionate as their love is, there is the sign of a crack and of its widening, as Annie reports, "Well, I thought, the honeymoon is over. Fifteen days and fuckless to bye-byes."(39) And at this moment, a most bizarre account of their sexual relationship is given by Henry. It is that Henry "managed" while Annie was totally "zonked": "Only your reflexes were working."(39) Henry's excuse may be that he can do anything to his partner when they are in love with each other. If it is the case, however, it can only reveal how superficial and dangerous his idea of love is. This episode strongly suggests Henry's will, if unconscious, to dominate his partner completely, and provides some clue to Charlotte's acrimoniousness and also to the failure of their marriage.

In Scene Six, Henry gives a lecture on love to his precocious daughter, Debbie, which is a central piece of the whole drama: "Carnal knowledge. It's what lovers trust each other with. Knowledge of each other, not of the flesh but through the flesh, knowledge of self, the real him, the real her, *in extremis*, the mask slipped from the face."(63) However, it does not seem that Henry is getting this "knowledge of each other" in his carnal knowledge of Annie, as the above-mentioned episode testifies. Citing this episode, Susanne Arndt, in her penetrating essay on The Real Thing, strongly and convincingly criticises Henry from a feminist point of view, arguing that "his 'experimentation with an unconscious partner' expresses his desire to entirely mute and reify Annie as his sexual object and to reduce her to a receptacle of his lust".[378] However, in her analysis of "the question as to what kind of premises their [Henry and Annie's] allegedly 'real' relationship is built on", she missed an important aspect of The Real Thing, that is, the *underlying dynamism* of the play. By underlying dynamism I mean that The Real Thing depicts a dynamic process in which the main

[377] Hersh Zeifman, "Comedy of Ambush: Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing," Modern Drama, 26 (June 1983), p.148,

[378] Susanne Arndt, "Gender and Ideology in Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing," Modern Drama, 40, (1997), p.489.

characters undergo a transformation unlike some other Stoppard plays of ideas, for example, Travesties or even Night and Day, where each major proponent of an idea sticks to his or her own position throughout the play. In other words, Henry in this scene is different from the one who eventually emerges at the end of the play. The process is not straightforward or easily recognisable by any means, as a sort of countermove sets in later in the play.[379] Even so, there is no denying that the final resolution is only reached after a serious crisis between Henry and Annie. In this context, the episode clearly shows where Henry stands at the moment.

Another thing we have to consider is that the episode implicitly echoes Strindberg's Miss Julie. The scene actually begins with Henry and Annie imitating Jean and Miss Julie as is correctly pointed out by Susanne Arndt herself.[380]

> ANNIE: I'm not here. Promise.
>
> [(...)]
>
> HENRY: You're a bloody nuisance.
>
> ANNIE: Sorry, sorry, sorry. I'll be good. I'll sit and learn my script.
>
> HENRY: No, you won't.
>
> ANNIE: I'll go in the other room
>
> HENRY: This room will do. (38)

Strindberg also explores the meaning of love in Miss Julie, as is clearly shown when Miss Julie, coming under the spell of Jean, asks: "What terrible power drew me to you? [...] Or was it love? Was that love? Do you know what love is?"[381] However, Jean's love for Miss Julie has more to do with his struggle for power, and in the end, he completely dominates Miss Julie, driving her out of her estate to a possible death.

The script Annie mentions is Miss Julie as is foreshadowed by Max's comment in the earlier scene,[382] and while this scene imitates Miss Julie, Henry is impersonating Jean with his complete dominion of Annie in the said episode.

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[379] I will return to this later.

[380] Susanne Arndt, p.494.

[381] August Strindberg, Miss Julie and Other Plays, Michael Robinson, trans. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.89.

[382] See The Real Thing, p.36.

The interesting thing is that after Henry and Annie covertly imitate Miss Julie, they overtly play the roles of Jean and Miss Julie as Henry helps Annie to practice the script.[383] Understandably, however, the private rehearsal does not go well. They now lack the special chemistry they enjoyed so much earlier in the play, and the play, Miss Julie, acutely reminds Henry of his inability "to write love". Henry promised Annie to write a play about love, but so far, he has been unable to keep his promise. The reason does not seem to be that loving and being loved is "unliterary", or that love is "happiness expressed in banality and lust",(40) as Henry argues. It is more likely that Henry does not know, nor has ever experienced, *real love*. He lacks "the real thing". Hence, Annie's advice "to do sub-text" is likely to be of no avail, because to do it, one needs something to do sub-text about.

> ANNIE: You'll have to learn to do sub-text. My Strindberg is steaming with lust, but there is nothing rude on the page. We just talk round it. Then he sort of bites my finger and I do the heavy breathing and he gives me a quick feel, kisses me on the neck . . .
>
> HENRY: Who does?
>
> ANNIE: Gerald. It's all very exciting.
>
> (HENRY *laughs, immoderately, and* ANNIE *continues coldly.*)
>
> Or amusing, of course.
>
> HENRY: We'll do that bit . . . you breathe, I'll feel . . . (*She pushes him away.*) (40-41)

Henry's response is typical of him at this stage. He does not catch what his problem is in his writing love, nor does he feel any jealousy while Annie is deliberately provoking it. Nothing seems to arouse jealousy in Henry, which in turn seems to Annie that Henry does "not care enough to *care*".(43) Annie understandably bursts out, "You don't love me the way I love you. I'm just a relief after Charlotte, and a novelty."(43) This dispute induces Henry to make a rather long monologue about the kind of love he has in mind.

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[383] The part they are rehearsing also brings the theme of the life/drama analogy to the fore, as Julie/Annie asks Jean/Henry "where did you learn to talk like that? Do you spend a lot of time at the theatre?"(40)

HENRY: [...] I love love. I love having a lover and being one. The insularity of passion. I love it. I love the way it blurs the distinction between everyone who isn't one's lover.

Only two kinds of presence in the world. There's you and there's them.

I love you so. (44)

This confession of love leads to a reconciling kiss. However, while they kiss, "*The alarm on* HENRY'*s wristwatch goes off.*"(44) The well-timed alarm must have come from a Japanese digital watch, tacitly reminding the audience of the "House of Cards" scene.[384] Henry's concept of love, though expressed in a very neat way, betrays serious flaws on close inspection. First of all, it is too vague. Henry seems to be more in love with "love" and "having a lover and being one" than with Annie herself. In other words, Henry thinks he loves Annie, while in actuality it is not Annie as she is but the abstract quality of love, "the insularity of passion", that he loves. Another problem is that Henry's idea of love is the crudest sort of romantic love which is neither possible in the real world nor advisable.[385] He explains to Annie that he does not feel jealousy, not because he does not care but because he feels superior, knowing that "you're coming home to me",(44) in any case. But this over-confidence can easily degenerate into a false conviction that he can do anything he wants as his sort of rape of Annie attests. The scene ends with ominous words from both sides even just after their kiss.[386]

It is after two years when Scene Five starts. Now, Henry and Annie seem to have settled down in their normal marriage relationship. However, the conversation with which Henry and Annie open the scene most ingeniously illustrates that their

[384] As I mentioned before, in the "House of Cards" scene, Max derisively comments on Japanese digital watch.

[385] Later in scene nine, Henry admits that this version of extreme romanticism is untenable: "We start off like one of those caterpillars designed for a particular leaf. The exclusive voracity of love. And then not. How strange that the way of things is not suspended to meet our special case. But it never is."(70) Henry's exposition of his idea of love here is the first of its kind, and surely belongs to Henry himself. However, Henry's lecture on love in scene seven betrays Stoppard's chronic problem of authorial intervention as Henry is used as the author's mouthpiece. I will argue about this later at the end.

[386] "ANNIE: Don't get kicked by the horse./ HENRY: Don't get kicked by Brodie."(44)

relationship has been worn out and is under strain. It is a replica of what passed between Henry and Charlotte in Scene Two.[387]

> ANNIE: Well?
>
> HENRY: Oh—um—Strauss.
>
> ANNIE: What?
>
> HENRY: Not Strauss.
>
> ANNIE: I meant the play.
>
> HENRY: (*Indicating the script.*) Ah. The play.
>
> ANNIE: (*Scornfully*) *Strauss*. How can it be Strauss? It's in Italian.
>
> HENRY: Is it? (*He listens.*) So it is. (45)

In this curious world of The Real Thing, reality imitates not only illusion but also reality. As the definite analogy suggests, Henry and Annie have come to the point where Henry and Charlotte were just before their divorce.

At the beginning Henry and Charlotte must have been in love with each other as Henry and Annie were, because in the printed text of the play, there is a note at the beginning of the second scene that "ANNIE *is very much like the woman whom* CHARLOTTE *has ceased to be*."(15) This not only underscores the characteristic difference between Charlotte and Annie, but also implies that Charlotte was different at the beginning of her marital relationship with Henry, and that she, whoever's fault it is (probably both are to blame), has somehow changed into the kind of woman that she is now. Interestingly, Annie in this first scene of Act Two is in a situation in which she might be very much like the woman whom Charlotte was in Scene Two. Hence, the future of the relationship between Henry and Annie depends on how they will cope with the situation. To his credit, however, Stoppard carefully maintains the character difference between Annie and Charlotte. This is most convincingly demonstrated by the way they talk. Annie and Charlotte have distinct voices, and this suggests that Annie will be different in the tackling of her problem. Indeed, Annie is seen as more tenacious in, and more insistent on, her concern than Charlotte who is sarcastic and refined.

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[387] Refer to p.200.

ANNIE: Get *on.*

HENRY: Right.

(*He turns his attention to the script.*)

Stop me if anybody has said this before, but it's interesting how many of the all time greats begin with B: Beethoven. the Big Bopper . . .

ANNIE: That's all they have in common.

HENRY: I wouldn't say that. They're both dead. The Big Bopper died in the same plane crash that killed Buddy Holly and Richie Valens, you know.

ANNIE: No, I didn't know. Have you given up on the play or what?

HENRY: Buddy Holly was twenty-two. Think of what he might have gone on to achieve. I mean, if Beethoven had been killed in a plane crash at twenty-two, the history of music would have been very different. As would the history of aviation, of course.

ANNIE: *Henry.*

HENRY: The play.

(*He turns his attention back to the script.*)

ANNIE: How far have you got? (46-47)

Henry tries to avoid and ignore Annie's core interest, while being funny and clever. A similar situation would surely have invited some sarcastic, or even cleverer, comments from Charlotte. In all probability, Henry's self-righteous and distracting attitude shown here must have pitted Charlotte against Henry.

An interesting aspect of the dialogue above is that it is *formally* disproportionate.[388] While Henry talks far more, Annie's remark is largely made up of a word or so. This is simply unimaginable, for example, in Travesties, where formal consideration penetrates even to the length and content of the major characters' arguments. The result is that in The Real Thing, the dialogue sounds more life-like.

[388] This may not be a typical example, but The Real Thing provides many. The most convincing example is Annie's retort that, "Or such is your perception" after Henry's long argument about people's perceptions about "politics, justice, patriotism," with a coffee mug at hand. Refer to The Real Thing, pp.52-54.

What Annie and Henry are arguing about is the play Brodie has written. Brodie is a soldier whom Annie met in a train on her way to an anti-missile demonstration. In London, Brodie tried to set fire to the Cenotaph with wreaths on it, and was sent to prison on the charge of arson. Later, Annie set up the Brodie Committee to save him, and as the Brodie affair was losing people's interest, Annie hit upon the idea that if he wrote a TV play (as Stoppard did for the dissident cause in Eastern European Communist countries), it would probably help to get his case reopened. Though Brodie could not even read properly in the beginning, he managed to write a play after he studied in prison. Still, the play is unpresentable, and therefore, Annie is asking Henry to polish it. Henry, as a professional playwright, is reluctant to do the job, as he sees through its poor quality. More importantly, he objects to a play serving a direct and immediate purpose, as in here, for example, to secure an early release for Brodie. However, there seems to be no other choice left for Henry but to do the job, at least to prove to Annie his love for her.[389] He actually does it, but only too late. At the end of this scene where the conflict between Henry and Annie drives them further towards a crisis, Henry makes the mistake of asking Annie, "Do you fancy him or what?" Instantly, he realizes that he has gone too far, and tries to retract what he said. But Annie only replies, "Too late,"(55) and from the next scene on she begins an affair.

Another important role of the Brodie play is that it naturally places the theme of play writing in the context of The Real Thing. So, in this scene, as Henry wages a battle of ideas with Annie, he is given a perfect chance to explicate at length his own ideas on play and play-writing.

It is impossible for Annie to win the battle simply because the Brodie case is inadvocatable, at least in artistic terms. When Annie blames Henry, "You're jealous of the idea of the writer. You want to keep it sacred, special, not something anybody can do,"(51) Annie does seem to score some points. However, her argument was previously dealt with in full in Travesties. If Henry denounces Brodie's play solely on the grounds that Annie is accusing him, Henry is nothing more than "a snob". Annie

[389] Annie is using Brodie's play as a leverage to find out Henry's love for her: "ANNIE: [...] We'll get Brodie's play off the ground. I want to do it. *I* want to do it. Don't *I* count? Hen? [...]"(55)

actually calls him so, only to be given a cool reply from Henry that he is "a snob, and he [Brodie] can't write."(49)[390]

The real point Annie is making, however, is that Brodie "really has something to write about, something real, and you [Henry] can't get through it."(51) This is where The Real Thing by Henry James joins its context with The Real Thing by Tom Stoppard. In Henry James's short story, the paradox of illusion and reality is compellingly conveyed through the case of Major and Mrs Monarch. They are the real gentleman and lady, but the problem is that the pictures drawn by the narrator/painter with them as models curiously lack a sense of reality. The narrator, who agreed to employ them out of his generous intention to help them out of their predicament (and he surely has some expectations about "the real thing"), in the end is forced to dismiss them and use Miss Churm, "only a freckled cockney",[391] and Oronte, an Italian who has "the manner of a devoted servant".[392]

> They [Major and Mrs Monarch] had bowed their heads in bewilderment to the perverse and cruel law in virtue of which the real thing could be so much less precious than the unreal; but they didn't want to starve. If my servants were my models, then my models might be my servants. They would reverse the parts—the others would sit for the ladies and gentlemen and *they* would do the work[393]

As Henry James argues, the real thing per se does not necessarily make art. In fact, it is out of the question.[394] Brodie indeed has had real experience and has something to write about. However, real experience alone will not make a convincing drama. Henry, in the final scene, makes this point clear by sarcastically commenting to Brodie,

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[390] Charlotte accused him of being a snob: "The problem is he's a snob without being an inverted snob."(24)

[391] Henry James, The Portable Henry James, Morton Dauwen Zabel, ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), p.114.

[392] Ibid., p.123.

[393] Ibid., p.134.

[394] James Gleick in his famous work Chaos uses an interesting metaphor concerning a scientific model which is directly relevant here: "Only the most naïve scientist believes that the perfect model is the one that perfectly represents reality. Such a model would have the same drawbacks as a map as large and detailed as the city it represents [...]. Were such a map possible, its specificity would defeat its purposes." James Gleick, Chaos: Making a New Science (London: Vintage, Random House, 1998), p.278.

while he was watching the Brodie play on TV, that "they'll probably improve them [TV and Video player sets with timer facilities] so that you can have it recording concurrently with your sentence".(79) The implication is that Brodie's play is *all substance but no style.*

Henry refutes Annie's argument in the famous "cricket bat scene". The gist is that a cricket bat is better than a lump of wood in playing cricket, not because "someone says it's better, or because there's a conspiracy by the MCC to keep cudgels out of Lords," but simply "because it's better". What a dramatist is trying to do, according to him, is "to write cricket bats".(52) Annie is left short of words, and simply retorts, "I hate you," which is no more than an acknowledgement of her defeat. Still, Annie is not completely defeated in the arguments. She knows basically that Brodie's play is incomplete. If it is not, she will not ask Henry to help her and Brodie. Moreover, it is also true that art is impossible without something real to write about. This is probably the reason why the narrator in The Real Thing by Henry James concludes that "I'm content to have paid the price—for the memory", despite his friend's repeated argument that "Major and Mrs Monarch did me a permanent harm".[395]

Granted that Henry has a near perfect idea about play-writing, it does not automatically guarantee that he is able to write a good drama, either. Henry does have some ideas on love, but it is not likely that he knows, nor has experienced, real love. That is the reason among other things why he finds it so difficult "to write love". If he had experienced real love, he at least would not have written "House of Cards" which stands opposite Brodie's play, at the other end of the spectrum; it is well-written, but lacks reality. However, Henry does not seem to be aware of the drawbacks of his play, because later in Scene Seven, he advocates "House of Cards" as a play "about self-knowledge through pain" against the disparaging comment by his daughter, Debbie that the play "wasn't about anything, except did she have it off or didn't she?"(62)

As a matter of fact, Henry has not written "a play about self-knowledge through pain", but he is in one, that is, The Real Thing. As it will be known later, when his rather blind, groundless belief in love is shattered in the face of Annie's betrayal, he comes to a deeper knowledge of himself through pain that his outward composure is not the real

[395] Henry James, p.134.

thing, nor is sustainable, and the realization in turn forms the basis for the renewed, more real love with Annie.

In this context, Henry's lengthy arguments in scene five reveal a serious problem, though they make one of the most impressive moments of the play with intimate metaphors, memorable phrases, and the heavy emphasis laid upon them as the central arguments of the play. "Henry Ibsen" who wrote "House of Cards" is shamelessly being used as a mouthpiece for Stoppard himself, the author of The Real Thing. Stoppard's failure to maintain an ironic distance from Henry, imperceptibly but indubitably, makes him an inconsistent character who is wonderfully coherent otherwise. On the other hand, as the failure blurs the distinction between Stoppard and Henry, it makes the play vulnerable to the attack of didacticism.[396] More seriously, some comments which should be more justifiably attributed to Henry rather than to Stoppard, for example, the notorious remark, "Public postures have the configuration of private derangement,"(33) have been often quoted as Stoppard's own.

Henry's statement, understood literally, cannot be Stoppard's, if we only remember Stoppard's active involvement in the human rights issues. But, it has wide-reaching implications in the play, even with the possibility that it can be interpreted as an ironic comment on Henry himself. First of all, the comment should be understood as directed at Brodie. It was made by Henry just after the introduction of the Brodie issue in Scene Two. Henry, unlike himself otherwise in the scene, showed quite an avid and instant interest in the issue, and Annie, unlike her open attitude in the scene, showed unmistakable unease at Henry's interest. At this stage, his comment may sound like a hopeless exaggeration, but even as early as at the end of the scene it is strongly hinted that there is something dubious about the whole Brodie issue. Max, while praising Private Brodie's "pure moral conscience", refuses to join the committee meeting for fear of "letting down my squash partner,"(32)[397] and Annie is also seen to be more eager to meet Henry than to attend the meeting, simply saying, "Let him [Brodie] rot."(35) Only at the end of the play, quite surprisingly, it is revealed that Brodie's

[396] For example, Neil Sammells argued: "In sealing itself against criticism, Stoppard's work has come to promote a politics of disengagement, which attempts to prevent its audience *engaging* with contrary opinion." Neil Sammells, pp.141-142.

[397] It seems that Stoppard is making a tacit allusion to Pinter's Betrayal in that Jerry and Robert in Betrayal were squash partners.

posture has its origin only in his crush on Annie, having nothing to do with the anti-armament cause. In this context, his arson on the Cenotaph does seem to have "the configuration of private derangement".

Annie is not free from Henry's accusation, either. Annie has been deceiving the public and everyone around her with her Brodie cause, since she has known the truth about Brodie from the start, and this seems to be more like a private derangement than Brodie's naive act of arson to impress Annie.

The comment also bounces back to Henry himself. His public posture at the *Desert Island Discs* program does not reflect his private taste in music at all. To Charlotte's advice to "pick your eight all-time greats and then remember what you were doing at the time," Henry responds, typically displaying his prejudices: "I'm supposed to be one of your intellectual playwrights. I'm going to look a total prick, aren't I, announcing that while I was telling Jean-Paul Sartre and the post-war French existentialists where they had got it wrong, I was spending the whole time listening to the Crystals singing 'Da Doo Ron Ron'".(17) The popular music, however, "*moves*" him in "the way people are supposed to be moved by *real* music".(25)

In a sense, Henry's marriage with Charlotte, the relationship which is supposed to be the most intimate and private, was marred by public postures from both Henry and Charlotte, and derailed to divorce.

In Scene Six, Stoppard has stored another shock for the audience. According to Hersh Zeifman, "Stoppard is teasing us mercilessly here."

> When the scene begins, we *think* what we are watching is a scene from a play - Brodie's play, from which Henry has just finished reading. We have been fooled once before, after all, and are not about to make the same mistake twice. In fact, we make the *opposite* mistake; it turns out that the scene is *not* part of Brodie's play, it is "really" happening.[398]

Scene Six once again begins with something like a play-within-a-play. But, as Hersh Zeifman points out, it is a real happening. Billy, a young actor who is going to play

[398] Hersh Zeifman, "Comedy of Ambush," p.142.

Giovanni, the counterpart of Annie's Annabella in John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's A Whore,[399] becomes enamoured of Annie like Brodie (he found Annie "smashing"), and deliberately took the same train with Annie. His interest in Annie probably led him to read Brodie's play, and now he is using Brodie's play as an excuse to open a spontaneous conversation with Annie. Hersh Zeifman explains the significance of this dramatic opening as follows:

> This scene *reverses* the Pirandellian trick of the opening scene, but the point, of course, is the same: what appears to be "the real thing" may be an illusion, and vice versa.[400]

Later in the scene, we also witness a play-within-a-play, as Annie and Billy quote from Ford's play. Billy, this time, uses 'Tis Pity as an excuse to confess and pour out his love for Annie. Annie responds to Billy's advance by assuming the role of Annabella.

> ANNIE: O, you are a trim youth!
>
> BILLY: Here!
>
> (*His 'reading' has been getting less and less discreet. Now he stands up and opens his shirt.*)
>
> ANNIE: (*Giggling*) Oh, leave off.
>
> BILLY: (*Starting to shout*) And here's my breast; strike home!
>
> Rip up my bosom; there thou shalt behold
>
> A heart in which is writ the truth I speak.
>
> ANNIE: You daft idiot.
>
> BILLY: Yes, most earnest. You cannot love?
>
> ANNIE: Stop it.
>
> BILLY: My tortured soul
>
> Hath felt affliction in the heat of death.
>
> Oh, Annabella, I am quite undone!

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[399] John Ford, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, N. W. Bawgutt, ed. (London: Edward Arnold, 1966) From now on, the title will be reduced to "'Tis Pity."

[400] Hersh Zeifman, p.143.

ANNIE: Billy! (59)

As the note ("*His 'reading' has been getting less and less discreet*") suggests, drama once again merges with life. So the distinction between Billy and Giovanni vanishes, and Billy is directly talking to Annie in Giovanni's words. Annie, on her part, is seen to be more attracted towards Billy.

Scene Eight is the actual rehearsal scene of 'Tis Pity. At the end of the short rehearsal scene, Giovanni/Billy asks Annabella/Annie to kiss him.

BILLY: [...]
Kiss me:—
(*He kisses her lightly.*)
ANNIE: (*Quietly*) Billy . . .
(*She returns the kiss in earnest.*) (67-68)

By this time, Annie is no doubt infected with Annabella's passion. Though it is not clear whether "she has it off, or not, with Billy," Annie has become "a whore" as the love affair is now a mutual passion. Hersh Zeifman neatly summarizes the sequences: "In Scene Six, Annie and Billy are shown rehearsing the scene in which Ford's lovers first declare their mutual passion; in Scene Eight, they enact the scene in which Annabella and Giovanni have just consummated their love. What is the point of such specifically theatrical interpolations?"[401] And he goes on to answer his own question: "It is *Annie*, as well as Annabella, who is expressing her love here; *Annie*, as well as Annabella, who has become a whore. The 'artificial' and the 'real', theatre and life, have begun to overlap and merge, to bleed into one another: which is 'the real thing'?"[402]

In its philosophical, theatrical implications, Hersh Zeifman's comment must be true, but it is true only partially. There is another play-within-the-play which Zeifman does not take the trouble to mention. The short Scene Ten is a filming scene where Annie

[401] Ibid., p.144.
[402] Ibid., p.145.

and Billy are acting for Brodie's TV play. In it, life and drama merge again, but Annie and Billy are shown to be not as passionate as they were.

> BILLY: You put me in mind of Mussolini, Mary. People used to say about Mussolini, he may be a Fascist, but—
>
> ANNIE: No—that's wrong—that's the old script—
>
> BILLY: (*Swears under his breath.*) Sorry, Roger . . .
>
> ROGER: (*Voice off*) Okay, cut the tape.
>
> ANNIE: From the top, Roger?
>
> ROGER: (*Voice off*) Give me a minute.
>
> (*A light change reveals that the setting is a fake, in a TV studio.* ANNIE *gets up and moves away.* BILLY *joins her. They exchange a few words, and she moves back to her seat, leaving him estranged, an unhappy feeling between them.* [...]) (74)

It is clear by now that Annie's affair with Billy is over. It is further supported by the fact that the final reconciliation between Henry and Annie takes place in the next scene. So, the scheme of the series of play-within-the-plays from Scene Six to Scene Ten emerges. They do not just reflect the paradoxical relationship between life and drama, but are part of the plot. They cover Annie's affair with Billy from the beginning to the end. Even in the middle of intricate mirroring, the whole play has been moving. This can be illustrated by probing the significance of 'Tis Pity in the context of The Real Thing.

'Tis Pity, like August Strindberg's Miss Julie, poses a delicate question concerning love: can the love between Giovanni and Annabella be said to be "the real love"? Their mutual passion is unquestionable, but their love is incestuous. In Scene Six, when Billy first reveals his feeling towards Annie, it in a way anticipates 'Tis Pity.

> BILLY: You seem right to me.
>
> ANNIE: I'm older than you.
>
> BILLY: That doesn't matter.
>
> ANNIE: I'm a lot older. I'm going to look more like your mother than

your sister.

BILLY: That's all right, so long as it's incest. Anyway, I like older women. (57)

Shortly after, when Annie asks Billy, "What will you do if he [the conductor] comes back?" since they are in a first class carriage with wrong tickets, Billy answers, "I'll say you're my mum."(57) The implication of incest is no doubt gathering.

From the first moment of 'Tis Pity we know that Giovanni's love for Annabella is doomed. Their love is impossible.[403] So, if Giovanni and Annabella's love is intermingled with that of Billy and Annie, the love between Billy and Annie is also doomed from the start. Their love is impossible. Billy will not be able to cope with Annie in their love relationship because of his immaturity and instability as is suggested by his love of "older women". Later, Annie explains to Henry, "How can I need someone I spend half my time telling to grow up?"(76)

It is no wonder that Zeifman's analysis of the play ends in a question as he views The Real Thing as a series of "ambushes" which only lay bare the paradox of illusion and life: "Love speaks in many different tongues, with many different accents. Which of them, finally, is 'the real thing'?"[404] However, by inquiring into the validity of Henry's final reconciliation with Annie, we can grasp a certain significant meaning of Henry's whole experience of love with Annie. Of course, it would be extremely naive and irrelevant to ask whether they will live happily ever after.[405] A more relevant, meaningful question would be, "If Henry writes another play about love, will it be like 'House of Cards'?" Then, we can say with some certainty that he will not. The next one will be more like, if anything, The Real Thing. And it suggests that something has happened to Henry in the course of the play, and The Real Thing is not just "a two-way mirror" where "theatre keeps ambushing 'real life'" and "'real life' constantly evokes

[403] It is highly significant that 'Tis Pity begins with Friar's warning against Giovanni's incestuous love for Annabella: "Dispute no more in this, for now, young man,/ These are no school-points; nice philosophy/ May tolerate unlikely arguments,/ But Heaven admits no jest: [...]" John Ford, p.5.

[404] Hersh Zeifman, "Comedy of Ambush," p.148.

[405] Anthony Jenkins is pessimistic about this: "The final scene resolves both those relationships when she slams a bowl of dip into the 'real' Brodie's face and refuses to answer what she thinks to be a phone-call from Billy. But our own ambiguous feelings towards Annie can not be tidied away so neatly. If this is the real thing between herself and Henry, there appear to be rocky times ahead." Anthony Jenkins, p.171.

theatre."[406] What Hersh Zeifman misses is what I mentioned earlier as the underlying dynamism of the play.[407]

Dynamism is not a term usually applied to Stoppard's works. Prof. Anderson's conversion comes first as an example, but as I argued before, he emerges as more or less the same person in the end. Even in The Real Thing itself, as I will argue later in more detail, there is a serious conflict between the dynamic process of Henry's education in love and his, and Stoppard's, absolutist stance. Even so, however, the underlying dynamism is a factor which should be reckoned with in appreciating Stoppardian theatre. We can detect it, for example, in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Stoppard's best known play. In it, there is always a progress among the seemingly meaningless games in which Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are repetitively engaged. If we miss the progress, the world of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead is an absurd void, the world of Didi and Gogo. If we understand the progress only in terms of Shakespeare's Hamlet, Stoppard will be subject to the criticism that he is "a theatrical parasite", and he may well be. However, the kind of death Rosencrantz and Guildenstern die is quite unprecedented in the history of theatre, and it is death emphatically defined by Guildenstern himself. In the small space they can manoeuvre, as their destiny is already written by someone else, they somehow assert themselves with the mode of death they choose.

There are many deaths in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. In other words, mirrors: the heroic deaths of Hamlet and the Hamlet characters, the fake death by the Player, and the execution on stage which the Player narrates. However, the death of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the simple disappearance from the stage, is the most real of all the deaths in the play, because it most dramatically captures the meaninglessness and frustration of the modern world.

Even in Jumpers there is a fundamental tension which could have been interpreted as a dynamic process had it been pursued properly and thoroughly. The tension is between the will to know and the will not to know: in other words, the will to clarify and the will to mystify. The real threat the logical positivists pose is that in their over-zealous attempts to clarify everything, they inevitably end up in ruling out the mysteries of life

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[406] Hersh Zeifman, p.145.

[407] I am not taking Hersh Zeifman's criticism as a special example. As far as I know, the critical analyses of The Real Thing in general fail to deal with the dynamic aspect of the play properly.

which cannot empirically be verified. So, some traditional metaphysical questions were driven out from the realm of philosophy. From a different point of view, however, it is these mysteries of life that make life meaningful and worth living. Take 'love', for example. Can 'love' be empirically verified or be logically explained away? More importantly, can we imagine a world without love? A world without love is the world mechanised, absolutely devoid of the vital mysteries. It is this vision that Prof. George, alongside Tom Stoppard, is so desperately fighting against in Jumpers. However, the focus of attention imperceptibly moves away from this fundamental question to the question of morality: of the two Gods, that is, "the God of Creation to account for existence" and "the God of Goodness to account for moral values,"[408] the latter quickly takes centre stage. And this causes a serious jarring effect in the end. On the one hand, Stoppard has to provide examples which cannot easily be solved or "verified". On the other hand, he has to establish an absolute moral standard. So, the relationship between Dotty and Archie is presented ambiguously, even though it is simply an affair. Even the murder of McFee is not clearly solved, even though it is clear that the jumpers headed by Archie killed him. Some critics responded that the world of Jumpers is the world of mystery where nothing can clearly be solved. If so, Jumpers is a very curious play, as it tries to establish an absolute standard of morality, while those who committed the foulest crime can simply get away with it.

It is this conflict which makes the formal consideration at the last scene of Jumpers, where George and Archie make equally important speeches, look like a compromise. On close inspection, Archie's language does not sound convincing at all as one from a logical positivist, when he concludes: "No laughter is sad and many tears are joyful. At the graveside the undertaker doffs his top hat and impregnates the prettiest mourner."[409] Rather, it sounds like one a Logical Positivist would shun most.

In The Real Thing there are no such formal considerations as we witnessed in Jumpers or Travesties. Still, all the characters have their own vital roles. It is true that many characters are marginalized. Debbie, for example, not to mention Brodie, makes just one appearance. However, their marginalization is inevitable for the simple reason that

[408] Jumpers, p.17.
[409] Jumpers, p.78.

they are not the protagonists. In a sense, it is all the more wonderful that, in spite of the marginalization, the minor characters still remain distinct, contributing in one way or other to the whole effect of the play. Max, for example, who is largely depicted in a negative way throughout the play as a pathetic mirror of Henry, is once seen to deliver an acute criticism of Henry.

> MAX: Right.
> (*He puts down his glass definitively and stands up.*)
> Come on, Annie.
> There's something wrong with you.
> You've got something missing. You may have all the answers, but
> having all the answers is not what life's about.
> HENRY: I'm sorry, but it actually *hurts*. (34)

Max's criticism is so penetratingly to the point that it almost unsettles Henry's composure, and Henry, a man of great verbal versatility, is left with no other choice but to accept the criticism.

Billy, another minor character of the play, plays a brilliant role in strengthening and weakening Henry's position at the same time. In Scene Six, Billy proposes to Annie that he will do a job on Brodie's play only if Annie is doing it.

> ANNIE: Why won't you do his play, then?
> BILLY: I didn't say I wouldn't. I'll do it if you're doing it.
> ANNIE: You shouldn't do it for the wrong reasons.
> BILLY: Why not? Does he care? (58)

This unmistakably echoes Henry in Scene Two when he half-jokingly reveals his intention of joining the Brodie Committee.[410] More significantly, Billy repeats Henry's verdict on Brodie's play.

[410] "CHARLOTTE: They don't want dilettantes. You have to be properly motivated, like Annie./ HENRY: I don't see that my motivation matters a damn. Least of all to Brodie. He just wants to get out of jail. What does he care if we're motivated by the wrong reasons."(33)

ANNIE: All right. I gather you read it, then.

BILLY: Brodie's play? Yes, I read it.

ANNIE: And?

BILLY: He can't write. (56)

On the other hand, Billy undermines Henry's position unambiguously and uncompromisingly. In spite of her struggle, Annie undoubtedly has been under Henry's intellectual influence. So, when she talks about the question of class with Billy, she virtually repeats Henry's argument: "There's no system. People group together when they've got something in common. Sometimes it's religion and sometimes it's, I don't know, breeding budgies or being at Eton. Big and small groups overlapping. You can't blame them. It's a cultural thing; it's not *classes* or *system*. [(. . .)] There's nothing really *there*—it's just the way you see it. Your perception."(57-58) It is at this moment when Billy levels the sharpest attack at Annie, the sting of which, if Annie sincerely believes in her own argument, will find hurting.

BILLY: Where do you get all that from? Did you just make it up? It's daft. I prefer Brodie. He sounds like rubbish, but you know he's right. You sound all right, but you know it's rubbish. (58)

Not only does the question of class but also that of the real material and artistic treatment run parallel again. It is true that Henry is in a privileged position at the expense of the others, but due attention is paid to make all the issues balanced. Even Brodie, a lout in language and manners, is depicted as a man of insight in his own way just before he leaves Henry's house in the last scene.

I don't really blame you, Henry. The price was right. I remember the time she came to visit me. She was in a blue dress, and there was a thrill coming off her like she was back on the box, but there was no way in. It was the first time I felt I was in prison. You know what I mean. (81)

We cannot help wondering if he is the worst victim in the play. He has been manipulated into the Brodie figure by Annie with all the Brodie committee and the TV play. In the last scene, however, he is largely presented in such a way as to demonstrate that Henry has been correct in his opinion and judgement throughout. He is even hit in the face with a bowl of dip by Annie, only to show that the crisis between Henry and Annie is over. Still, as the quotation shows, he knows where he stands. He does not even blame Annie or Henry. Moreover, he demonstrates that class is not just a cultural thing, because there is no way in for him. He was just haplessly caught in the infidelity case among the playwright and actress class.

The very fact that even the minor characters have distinct views and characteristics of their own successfully disclaims any rash attempt at an easy categorization, for example, of Max, Billy, and Brodie as a set of inferiors who are put against Henry. It also evokes the delicate question of human identity itself which defies an easy, established cliché. In The Real Thing, in spite of so many repetitions and reflections, human beings are shown to be different not only from one another, but even from their own past selves.

Scene Seven, together with Scene Five, is a central scene of utmost importance. At the beginning of the scene we see Henry as fastidious as ever. He instantly objects to Debbie's use of "me" as the subject of a sentence, and admonishes Debbie that the use of 'I' "doesn't sound right, but it's correct".(60) Small episode as it is, it prefigures different attitudes of father and daughter towards love, and in the scene, they are shown to be critically engaged with each other.

Debbie, whose astonishing articulateness will no doubt give credit to her father, a well-known playwright, makes a piercing critique on "House of Cards", Henry's latest work.

> DEBBIE: What, *House of Cards*? Well, it wasn't about anything, except did she have it off or didn't she? What a crisis. Infidelity among the architect class. Again. (62)

Debbie goes on to explain that the reason why Henry is making a crisis out of the question of infidelity is because Henry was trying to make "such a mystery of it [sex]", while, in fact, "what free love is free of" is "propaganda".(63) Henry, understandably, denounces it instantly as "persuasive nonsense". However, Henry demonstrates his tendency to mystify love as he warms himself up to give a lecture on love to Debbie.

> HENRY: Yes. Well, I remember, the first time I succumbed to the sensation that the universe was dispensable minus one lady— (63)

Immediately follows Debbie's retort: "Just say it. The first time you fell in love. What?" In his reply, however, Henry proves himself as one up on Debbie at least in the art of articulateness.

> HENRY: It's to do with knowing and being known. [...] Knowledge of each other, not of the flesh but through the flesh, knowledge of self, the real him, the real her, *in extremis*, the mask slipped from the fact. Every other version of oneself is on offer to the public. [...] A sort of knowledge. Personal, final, uncompromised. Knowing, being known. I revere that. (63)

As far as The Real Thing is concerned, this is the true definition of love on which the whole play turns. Now, in a way, there emerges a sort of the pattern of The Real Thing; both "House of Cards" and The Real Thing are plays about "self-knowledge through pain",(62) but "House of Cards" is a failed attempt, while The Real Thing is far more successful.

What Henry feels dubious about Debbie's version of love is that it might lack this sort of all important knowledge about each other. Henry's argument, however, does not necessarily nullify Debbie's contention in that Debbie's version of love also converges on the assertion that love is not just a matter of sex. What she objects to is the

mystification of sex, because the disproportionate importance laid on the matter of sex can actually limit the full range of possibilities a love relationship may have.[411]

Debbie's argument is, of course, incomplete, but it should be taken into account that she is just teen-ager, and as such, she is far more adventurous in her approach to love. And to her enormous credit, she is exceptionally intelligent and sensitive, as she instantly catches on that something has gone wrong between Henry and Annie after Henry's somewhat enigmatic comment.

> HENRY: [...]; knowledge is something else, [...], and when it's gone everything is pain. Every single thing. Every object that meets the eye, a pencil, a tangerine, a travel poster. As if the physical world has been wired up to pass a current back to the part of your brain where imagination glows like a filament in a lobe no bigger than a torch bulb. Pain.
>
> DEBBIE: Has Annie got someone else then?
>
> HENRY: Not as far as I know, thank you for asking. (64)

Henry may not know it, but he feels it. The main actions of the play are still heading towards the critical moment of Annie's revelation of her betrayal. The affair between Annie and Billy must be gaining momentum, as is demonstrated in the very next scene by their mutually passionate kiss during the rehearsal of 'Tis Pity. Early in this scene, Charlotte talked about her loss of virginity to the player of Giovanni while she was playing the role of Annabella on a British Council tour. Henry managed to remain indifferent, but he showed his unease by changing the subject abruptly: "Look, we're supposed to be discussing a family crisis."(61)

The sense of pain which Henry mentions to Debbie must be the result of the deteriorating relationship between him and Annie, because there is no hint at all that he felt pain when he divorced from Charlotte. Even when Charlotte reveals she had nine

[411] Debbie makes the point clear: "Most people think *not* having it off is *fidelity*. They think all relationships hinge in the middle. Sex or no sex. What a fantastic range of possibilities."(62) It should be clearly understood that Debbie is not arguing for reckless, whimsical free sex outside a marital relationship.

affairs, he does not feel betrayed, but just "surprised". At the end of the scene Charlotte warns him, "You've still got one to lose, Henry,"(67) foretelling the imminent crisis.

Just before Debbie disappears from the stage, she cracks another quip, as she advises Henry not to worry too much: "Exclusive rights isn't love, it's colonization."(64) This must be an exaggeration, but, even as it is, it is more than a persuasive nonsense, considering the danger of exclusive love which could degenerate into a false conviction that one can do anything to one's partner. Charlotte's extreme comment, "There are no commitments, only bargains,"(65) should also be understood in a similar way. Without doubt, being committed does not just mean that a couple have had a wedding ceremony.

To Henry, Debbie's quip is just another "*ersatz* masterpiece", like "Michelangelo working in polystyrene".(64) To Paul Delaney, it is worse: "Debbie's burblings about free love and non-exclusive rights," and her "glib sophistries are finally faulted much as Charlotte's sardonic crudities, not merely as glib or wrong-headed or deductivist - though they are all of those - but because they are unreal. They lack reality."[412]

Paul Delaney correctly points out, "Henry quotes his daughter's epigram but does so with bitter irony,"[413] but does not see that his own emphatic assertion, "What free love is free of is love because not to care is not to love,"[414] is also an ironic comment from Henry.

> Persuasive nonsense. Sophistry in a phrase so neat you can't see the loose end that would unravel it. It's flawless but wrong. A perfect dud. You can do that with words, bless 'em. How about 'What free love is free of, is love'? Another little gem. (63)

As for caring, Henry was not very good at it, as Charlotte testifies,[415] and Henry himself admits.[416] Quite contrary to Paul Delaney's indictment of "Charlotte's sardonic

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[412] Paul Delaney, Tom Stoppard: The Moral vision of the Major Plays, p.56.

[413] Ibid., p.57.

[414] Ibid.

[415] "You think making a commitment is *it*. Finish. You think it sets like a concrete platform and it'll take any strain you want to put on it. You're committed. You don't have to prove anything. In fact you can afford a little neglect, indulge in a little bit of sarcasm here and there, isolate yourself when you want to."(65-66)

crudities", Charlotte in this scene is seen to be well-meaning, trying to help Henry in his new marriage, because she knows that Henry's certain qualities do strain the marriage relationship. On the other hand, Henry, even with his knowledge of the "personal, final, uncompromised" knowledge, did not know that Charlotte was having affairs, and instead of seeking the knowledge with Charlotte, he himself was having an affair with Annie.

What is important to note, however, is that a counter move to the development of the basic plot sets in during this scene as a preparation for the final resolution as the play is nearing the end. It is, more than anything else, to do with strengthening Henry's position and his views on love. Henry's version of love gradually emerges as the real thing even before the major crisis of the play.

Charlotte in this scene is seen to be giving a huge boost to Henry's argument on love.

> CHARLOTTE: Who's playing Giovanni?
> HENRY: I don't know.
> CHARLOTTE: Aren't you interested?
> HENRY: Should I be?
> CHARLOTTE: There's something touching about you, Henry. Everybody should be like you. Not interested. It used to bother me that you were never bothered. [...]
> HENRY: You've gone off again.
> CHARLOTTE: Yes, well, it didn't bother you so I decided it meant you were having it off right left and centre and it wasn't supposed to matter. By the time I realized you were the last romantic it was too late. I found it *didn't* matter. (65)

Henry is not interested in who is playing Giovanni to Annie's Annabella simply as a matter of principle. In fact, he is worried about the prospect. Still, Charlotte takes his words literally, and deems Henry as "the last romantic". It is important to note that

[416] "Having that [the knowledge] is being rich, you can be generous about what's shared—she walks, she talks, she laughs, she lends a sympathetic ear, she kicks off her shoes and dances on the tables, she's everybody's and it don't [sic] mean a thing, let them eat cake."(64)

there is no hint of irony in her comment. On the contrary, she is using the word in the positive sense, practically praising Henry for being "the last romantic". This is because she has now realized that underneath Henry's rather careless, superficial way, his commitment is "concrete for life".(66) In other words, the logic of the play goes like this: Henry's romantic idea of love allowed him not to be bothered, Charlotte misunderstood Henry, and at one point decided "it wasn't supposed to matter," and now, after the divorce she has understood the true nature of Henry's love. Charlotte is seen to condemn herself that she is the one to blame for the failure of the marriage. Her nine lovers, compared with Henry's one, makes her look further liable to accusations.

If we agree with Charlotte, it is also Annie, wiser than Henry according to Stoppard,[417] who is to blame for the crisis in Henry's second marriage. She, supposedly, is repeating the same mistake of failing to appreciate the real love Henry always held for her from the beginning. This disconcerting implication is a serious set-back from the dynamic process of Henry's education in love. More problematic, in fact, is Henry's notion of love itself. Is "a sort of knowledge" which is "personal, final, uncompromised" possible between partners in everyday lives? Quite contrary to Paul Delaney's argument, it is not Debbie's or Charlotte's but Henry's understanding of love that sounds "unreal".

At this stage, Stoppard has an enormously difficult, almost paradoxical, task before him. On the one hand, he still has to present the precarious relationship between Henry and Annie mirroring the relationships described in "House of Cards" or experienced in the real lives by Max-Annie and Henry-Charlotte. On the other hand, as a version of "the real thing", the Henry-Annie relationship should also be presented different and distinct from all those.

Stoppard solves the question by differentiating Henry from Max, and Annie from Charlotte in their ways to cope with the marital crisis. In this scene (Scene Seven), we are given clues about the difference between Annie and Charlotte.

[417] "The second wife, Annie, doesn't have the smart remarks. She's actually wiser than he is. He's cleverer, but she's wiser." Joan Juliet Buck, "Tom Stoppard: Kind Heart and Prickly Mind," [American] Vogue, 174 (March 1984) Quoted from TSIC, p.170.

The problem with Charlotte is that, as she admits herself, she just decided that "it[418] wasn't supposed to matter". Subsequently, she not only had affairs, but somehow managed to keep them secret from Henry, even though she knew that Henry would not sit around being witty if he caught her out with a lover.[419] Unlike Charlotte, however, Annie will make it known to Henry that she is having an affair, which is the central crisis of the play, and forces Henry to go through a baptism of pain before he emerges confident that there is nothing wrong in loving popular music, to say the least. The question of knowledge still holds the key.

Scene Nine mirrors once again the opening scene of "House of Cards", and the confrontation scene between Max and Annie, as the note clearly suggests: "*It's like the beginning of Scene 1 and Scene 3.*"(68) Henry confirmed the night before that Annie had checked out of the hotel, and now he confronts Annie as she comes in to the living room (as Charlotte in "House of Cards" and Annie in Scene Three have done). For a similar reason to Max's when he rummages through his wife's belongings in "House of Cards", Henry has made a total mess of the bedroom. Inevitably, however, while the scene mirrors "House of Cards", differences arise. Max in the first scene would not admit his wrongdoing. Henry, however, readily admits what he is really like.

> CHARLOTTE: It's like when we were burgled. The same violation.
> Worse.
> MAX: I'm not a burglar. I'm your husband.
> CHARLOTTE: As I said. Worse.
> MAX: Well, I'm sorry.
> I think I just apologized for finding out that you've deceived me.
> Yes, I did. (13)
>
> - - -
>
> ANNIE: [...]

[418] "it" here refers to Henry's having affairs imagined by Charlotte.

[419] "You[Max] don't really think that if Henry caught me out with a lover, he'd sit around being witty about place mats? Like hell he would. He'd come apart like a pick-a-sticks. His sentence structure would go to pot, closely followed by his sphincter."(22)

Oh, God, Hen. Have we had burglars? What were you doing?

HENRY: Where were you?

ANNIE: On the sleeper. [...]

HENRY: [...] Who were you with?

ANNIE: Don't be like this, Hen. You're not like this.

HENRY: Yes, I am. (69)

It was Max in Scene One who said, "You should have just put it in your handbag. We'd still be an ideal couple. So to speak."(13) In scene nine, Annie says, "You should have put everything back. Everything would be the way it was." Henry, quite unlike Max, ardently denies this: "You can't put things back."(70)

What distresses Henry most is his suspicion that Annie might have slept with Billy. So, he continuously asks Annie if she did, but this is not to support her daughter's argument, but to demonstrate his own claim that he is absolutely committed, honest and caring.

ANNIE: [...] I fibbed about the train because *that* seemed like infidelity—but all you want to know is did I sleep with him first?

HENRY: Yes. Did you?

ANNIE: No.

HENRY: Did you want to?

ANNIE: Oh, for God's sake!

HENRY: You can ask me.

ANNIE: I prefer to respect your privacy.

HENRY: I have none. I disclaim it. Did you?

ANNIE: What about your dignity, then?

HENRY: Yes, you'd behave better than me. I don't believe in behaving well. I don't believe in debonair relationships. 'How's your lover today, Amanda?' 'In the pink, Charles. How's yours?' I believe in mess, tears, pain, self-abasement, loss of self-respect, nakedness. Not caring doesn't seem much different from not loving. Did you? You did, didn't you? (71-72)

Henry is far from being witty here, as Charlotte predicted. Henry's rather crude attitude is similar to Max's in Scene Three, but makes a strong contrast to Max's in "House of Cards". However, Henry's language does not "go to pot", as a certain glib touch of language and no lack of vocabulary suggest even in his confession of the belief in mess, etc. Moreover, as for style and refined speech, Henry's is no doubt the best in the play.

> HENRY: [...] I don't want anyone else but sometimes, surprisingly, there's someone, not the prettiest or the most available, but you know that in another life it would be her. Or him, don't you find? A small quickening. The room responds slightly to being entered. Like a raised blind. Nothing intended, and a long way from doing anything, but you catch the glint of being someone else's possibility, and it's a sort of politeness to show you haven't missed it, so you push it a little, well within safety, but there's that sense of a promise almost being made in the touching and kissing without which no one can seem to say good morning in this poncy business and one more push would do it. Billy.
>
> Right?
>
> ANNIE: Yes. (70-71)

This is one of the best speeches in the play. It is beautiful, sensitive, and accurate, revealing Henry's fine sensitivity as a renowned playwright. Henry never fails to forget the art of articulateness even in the moment of extreme emotional strain. The description is so fine that Annie almost seems to be taken by surprise, and to be forced to confess in spite of herself.

So the pattern of Henry's behaviour in this scene and in the following scenes emerges: he gets it both ways. He is at once more honest and more refined in his coping with the crisis. It is because he "can manage knowing if you [Annie] did," but "can't manage not knowing if you did or not."(71)

What slightly draws our attention in the exchanges between Henry and Annie is whether they are built on the inverted roles of the sexes. As I have already mentioned, Annie told Henry what Max told Charlotte. The following exchange will not make any difference even when the role of the sexes is inverted.

> HENRY: [...] Who were you with?
> ANNIE: Don't be like this, Hen. You're not like this.
> HENRY: Yes, I am.
> ANNIE: I don't want you to. It's humiliating.
> HENRY: I really am not trying to humiliate you.
> ANNIE: For you, I mean. It's humiliating for you. (69)

Still, the most interesting example is when Annie says to Henry, "You have to find a part of yourself where I'm not important to you or you won't be worth loving."(72) This echos of Amanda in Private Lives, when she argues, "The 'woman'-in italics-should always retain a certain amount of alluring feminine mystery for the 'man'-also in italics."[420] It is of course not clear whether Stoppard actually had this parodic intent, but in the relationship between Henry and Annie there certainly is the struggle for dominance. Henry's aforementioned rape of Annie is a graphic example. At that time, Annie could not believe what Henry had said, and simply asked, "You didn't really, did you?" To this, Henry definitely answered, "Yes."(39)

Annie is a bolder, more passionate and lively person than Henry, as we witnessed in the second scene. In terms of intellect, however, she is no match for him. Even when she sensed something was going wrong in the new marriage, she could not get her opinion to prevail as we saw in the cricket bat scene. In the train with Billy, she was even seen to repeat what Henry said.

This frustration, however, seems to be one of the main causes of her affair with Billy, as we can see in the next scene when Annie confesses to Henry what was really behind it.

> ANNIE: [...] I send out waves, you know. Not free. Not interested. He

[420] Private Lives, p.16.

> sort of got in under the radar. Acting daft on a train. Next thing I'm looking round for him, makes the day feel better, it's like love or something: no—love, absolutely, how can I say it wasn't? You weren't replaced, or even replaceable. But I liked it, being older for once, in charge, my pupil. (76-77)

It is not just "for once" that she has been involved with a younger person, because, as is revealed in the last scene, Brodie was also her recruit: "Private Brodie goes over the top to the slaughter, not an idea in his head except to impress me. What else could I do? He was my recruit."(80) For this simple reason, she went to such lengths over the past few years to organize the Brodie committee, ask Brodie to write a TV play, press reluctant Henry to do up the play, risking her own marriage, and played a part in it herself.

The penultimate scene, Scene Eleven, is actually the resolution scene. The scene begins with a propitious sign for the reconciliation between Henry and Annie, as Henry is listening to Bach's "Air on a G String". It instantly makes Annie "pleased". Though Henry cunningly proceeds to accuse Bach of stealing "note from note" from Procul Harum,[421] he responds to Annie by saying, "I *love* it," which is a definite sign that at last Henry is ready to share Annie's interest. Henry also admits at long last that he has been careless: "It's as though I've been careless, left a door open somewhere while preoccupied."(75)

Unlike Max, Annie's ex, Henry maintains the attitude of "dignified cuckoldry" by putting Billy's call through to Annie on the one hand, and pours out his love for her in a more sincere, straightforward way: "The trouble is, I can't *find* a part of myself where you're not important," "What you do is right. What you want is right."(76)

By this time Annie has also realized that her relationship with Billy is untenable. Actually, it was over in the short rehearsal scene of Scene Ten, as I mentioned before. After her confession of the Billy affair to Henry, she makes it clear that Henry is her

[421] Norman Carrell starts the introduction of his book titled Bach The Borrower (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967) with this sentence: "Bach was a great borrower."

love: "I have to choose who I hurt and I choose you because I'm yours."(77) At the end of the scene, it is clearly shown that they have reached the final resolution.

> HENRY: Annie. (*Pause*) Yes, all right.
>
> ANNIE: I need you.
>
> HENRY: Yes, I know.
>
> ANNIE: Please don't let it wear away what you feel for me. It won't, will it?
>
> HENRY: No, not like that. It will go on or it will flip into its opposite. What time will you be back?
>
> ANNIE: Not late. (77)

Annie's final answer is quite significant as it makes such a strong contrast to Annie's last words of Scene Five just before she started her affair in Scene Six, which went "Too late". Henry can be confident again that Annie will come home to him after all. In this respect, Henry's agonizing final cry, "Oh, please, please, please, please, *don't*", just after Annie has gone out, leaving her promise of "not late", seems a bit overdue. It sounds desperate, but in actuality there is nothing to be so desperate about. It sounds more like a cry of relief. But, it sums up Henry's attitude throughout; a mixture of desperateness and dignity.

The final scene is just an epilogue, though there is still a question to settle. Brodie first comes in this scene, and he plays the role of cementing the renewed relationship between Henry and Annie. He behaves just as Henry has suspected throughout. He is not overtly pleased with his play revised by Henry. He quibbles about his early release: "I'm out because the missiles I was marching against are using up the money they need for a prison to put me in."(79) His ingratitude and rude attitude in the end drive Annie to explain what was the real cause for his arson, and, rather dramatically, to smash the dip bowl into his face. The Brodie case is publicly and privately finished.

Accomplished work as it is, The Real Thing is not altogether free from typical Stoppardian drawbacks. Stoppard has demonstrated that he is a master builder of inter-textual, self-referential intricacies, but we still feel that the plot of the play is not just compelling enough. As the play nears the end, the pace becomes hasty, and the final resolution of the conflicts looks more like a decision than an inevitable result of the dynamic process of successfully unified actions.

Even in the description of Annie we feel a bit uneasy. She is no doubt the most complex and interesting female character of Stoppard's plays so far. Her presentation, however, is uneven. In the beginning, she immediately attracts our attention with her boldness and passion. In the subsequent scenes, her characteristics somehow becomes tenuous. Partly because of that, her last act of violence comes as a total surprise and gives the impression of an easy solution particularly reminiscent of Ruth's smashing of a bottle at the last moments of Night and Day. It looks like a failed attempt to try to sing in a higher tone simply by singing louder.

The more serious problem, however, is Stoppard's almost chronic tendency of authorial intervention. In The Real Thing we witness the authorial intervention in the most essential scenes, Scene Five and Scene Seven, where Henry explicates his expertise on the dramatic art and his idea of love. His argument, typically Stoppardian for its absolutism and claim for universality, naturally undermines the dynamism of the play, because its supposedly universal quality conflicts with Henry's ongoing experience of love.

Henry argues in the cricket bat scene that what dramatists are trying to do "is to write cricket bats, so that when we throw an idea and give it a little knock, it might . . . *travel* . . ."(52) With this argument, Henry basically acknowledges the functional role of art, because a cricket bat, presumably the art, is for hitting a cricket ball, an idea. What remains totally in the dark is what sort of idea it is. If we are familiar with Stoppardian theatre and his own views on art, we can conjecture that the idea is fundamentally related with "provid[ing] the moral matrix, the moral sensibility, from which we make our judgements about the world".[422] However, in a sense, what sort of moral matrix an artist is trying to provide through his work is more important than whether he provides the moral matrix at all. In this context, Henry's argument does not convey anything in

[422] "Ambushes for the Audience," p.14.

actuality, because his "idea" does not have any qualifier or predicate. Shortly after, however, Henry comes out with something like an idea.

> There's nothing real there [in politics, justice, patriotism] separate from our perception of them. So if you try to change them as though there were something there to change, you'll get frustrated, and frustration will finally make you violent. If you know this and proceed with humility, you may perhaps alter people's perceptions so that they behave a little differently at that axis of behaviour where we locate politics or justice [. . .] (53-54)

So, according to Henry, the role of art is to "alter people's perceptions".[423] Still, this is little different from Henry's cricket bat argument, because we have no idea what "people's perceptions" are. Moreover, if politics, justice, and patriotism are just our perceptions of them, how can we know a certain perception is more desirable than a certain other one? The case is that, contrary to his own argument, Henry here presupposes there is something "there", if it is extremely ambiguous, which enables an artist to tell a right perception from a wrong one, and makes him try to modify the wrong one. This is where Henry's absolutist stance cuts in with his metaphor of a coffee mug.

> There is, I suppose, a world of objects which have a certain form, like this coffee mug. I turn it, and it has no handle. I tilt it, and it has no cavity. But there is something real here which is always a mug with a handle. (53)

It seems as if Henry/Stoppard were toying with the Platonic concept of "idea" as the real substance. At first sight, the concrete quality of a coffee mug and its familiarity make Henry's argument sound anything but the ethereal Platonic idea. However, Henry's metaphor of a coffee mug is also surrounded by the similar abstract, universal quality, because we know that a coffee mug per se does not exist. The idea of a coffee

[423] This is basically Stoppard's own view on the role of art as I discussed in the Travesties section.

mug may exist, but every coffee mug which actually exists is different from every other. Furthermore, it is impossible for us to see a coffee mug from all directions at the same time, as Henry indeed explains.

Henry uses these extremely abstract ideas to advocate the sacredness of the language. Condemning Brodie as "a lout of language", Henry argues: "Words don't deserve that kind of malarkey. They're innocent, neutral, precise, standing for this, describing that, meaning the other, so if you look after them you can build bridges across incomprehension and chaos."(54) This is no doubt a beautifully put argument, set forth by a skilled artisan dealing with "words". However, a lingering doubt immediately follows: can words be "innocent, neutral, precise"? It is as if Henry is assuming a pure set of signs which are absolutely separated from what they refer to. In reality, however, a signifier is inexorably linked to a signified, whether it be a coffee mug or justice, and the signified cannot be absolutely innocent and neutral. Terry Eagleton makes a clear point concerning this question in Marxism and Literary Criticism: "The languages and devices a writer finds to hand are already saturated with certain ideological modes of perception, certain codified ways of interpreting reality."[424] Irrespective of Terry Eagleton's ideological orientation, this sounds far more convincing than Henry's subtle pretence to *universality*.

Neil Sammells's criticism of The Real Thing as "aesthetic as well as political, militant conservatism" derives from this argument for the absolute truth by Henry. Kinereth Meyer, however, thinks Neil Sammells's criticism is fundamentally false in that it is based upon "the identification of Henry, a playwright, with Stoppard himself".[425] And she shrewdly and correctly points out, "If Henry is Stoppard's mirror, he is also the reflection of the playwright's own foibles."[426] However, in her distancing of Henry from Stoppard, she comes to a rather curious conclusion: "The Real Thing is not intended to secure his place in the literary canon but to demonstrate, through Henry, the *dangers* of seeing language as 'innocent, neutral, precise'."[427]

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[424] Terry Eagleton, Marxism and Literary Criticism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp.26-27.

[425] Kinereth Meyer, "'It Is Written': Tom Stoppard and the Drama of the Intertext," Comparative Drama, 23, No. 2 (1989), 113.

[426] Ibid.

[427] Ibid., p.116.

Neil Sammells's criticism is no doubt too much for Stoppard. The problem with it, in my opinion, lies in his understanding of The Real Thing as static "'looking-glass adventures' in which his [Stoppard's] mirrors reflect nothing but themselves."[428] So, to him, "House of Cards" is not so different from The Real Thing itself.[429] On the other hand, Kinerath Meyer commits an opposite mistake of understanding Henry's views as just Stoppard's ironic handling of a self-referential character. In fact, there is no denying that Henry's views are identical to Stoppard's own. Henry's understanding of the role of art is similar to Stoppard's. When Henry argues, "If you get the right ones [words] in the right order, you nudge the world a little or make a poem which children will speak for you when you're dead,"(54) it reflects Stoppard's long-standing belief which goes as far back as to an earliest short story.[430] Most importantly, "words" which are "innocent, neutral, precise" unmistakably echoes Guthrie's assertion at the end of Night and Day: "Information is light. Information, in itself, about anything, is light."[431] Guthrie's conclusive comment sounds impressive at first in the same way as Henry's, as I argued before, but a doubt immediately follows also in the same way: what is "information in itself"? By implication, the information Guthrie is referring to is also "innocent, neutral, precise". However, as Wagner relates to Guthrie, when he emphasized to an African press officer in Kambawe that "it's [Globe is] an objective fact-gathering organization", the officer asked in no time, "is it objective-for or objective against?" Wagner concludes, "He may be stupid but he's not stupid."[432]

Henry's opinion about art and language extends to his understanding of love. To Henry, love is "to do with knowing and being known". But his definition of knowledge as "personal, final, uncompromised" undermines the process of ever-deepening, ever-widening knowledge of each other, while The Real Thing is in fact as much as, or more, to do with the process itself. It is curious, therefore, that the knowledge Henry is

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[428] Neil Sammells, p.139 In fact, he is quoting Irving Wardle ("A Grin Without a Cat," The Times, 22 June 1968, p.19), but asserts that the device of "looking-adventure" is true of The Real Thing, though the tactic is different.

[429] "In effect, Stoppard launches a pre-emptive strike, criticising Henry's *House of Cards* in terms which might appear equally appropriate to The Real Thing itself." Ibid., p.138.

[430] "'There is a certain word,' he said very carefully, 'which if shouted at the right pitch and in a silence worthy of it, would nudge the universe into gear.'" Tom Stoppard, Reunion in Introduction 2, p.123.

[431] Night and Day, p.91.

[432] The whole story is narrated by Wagner to Guthrie. Night and Day, p.29.

referring to can also come and go, as he tells Debbie "when it's *gone* everything is pain".(64, italics mine)

Taken in all, Stoppard keeps a delicate balance between him and Henry throughout the play except in those two scenes where Henry behaves as Stoppard's mouthpiece. It is true that, the two scenes being so vital, a lot of confusion ensued in an overall understanding of the play. However, the virtues of The Real Thing easily outweigh the shortcomings. With its deep concern for the subject matter and intricate structures, Stoppard once again produced a play whose meanings reverberate deep and wide, the more we think about the play.

Moreover, the very presence of the clash between absolutism and dynamism in The Real Thing is significant in the development of Stoppardian theatre, because it serves as the momentum for the further integration of the two. Henry once says that he can manage knowing, but cannot manage not knowing. In a way, what is more important and vital is the ability to manage not knowing, because ultimate knowledge always defies our efforts to know. Stoppard's early protagonists such as Mr Moon, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and Albert, all lacked this ability and ended up in their own deaths. As I will argue in the next chapter, Stoppard presents a far more balanced vision of the question of the knowledge in Arcadia.

Similarly, the conflict between stasis (absolutism) and kinesis (dynamism), in other words, Order and Chaos, will finally be presented in Arcadia as mutually inter-dependent; without the one, the other cannot exist. This is the ultimate vision of the Stoppardian world which Stoppard has reached some three decades later from Lord Malquist and Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.

B. Arcadia

Arcadia, the best play by Tom Stoppard with the possible exception of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, was first staged at the Lyttelton Theatre, Royal National Theatre in April 1993. As is usual, the earliest reviewers were widely divided in their opinions. Michael Billington was enthusiastic: "But here his ideas and his sympathies work in total harness and give the play a strong pulse of feeling."[433] To some reviewers, however, Arcadia was just another play by Stoppard with no distinction. Christopher Tookey stated in the Mail on Sunday, "Time hasn't withered Mr Stoppard, but it hasn't matured him either."[434] John Gross was also dispassionate, though with a proviso: "But there is a difference between a play of ideas, and playing with ideas; between ideas which inform the whole life of a work and ideas as icing on the cake. It is possible, I suppose, that a second visit of re-reading will disclose a deep structure which has so far eluded me."[435] He is making an important point, particularly in relation to Stoppardian theatre, but it seems that his reservation is more sensible than his disappointment.

Arcadia is so structured that it can best be understood as a literary detective work. As it switches back and forth from the early nineteenth century and the present time, it shows the real picture of the earlier time on the one hand, and the literary detectives' efforts to reconstruct the past on the other. Therefore, it is not a primary concern whether they succeed in their jobs or not, as information on the past is directly available to the audience. Instead, the question in focus is the very effort and will to know; once again, knowledge has become the all-important question.

Bernard, a don at Sussex, happened to come across "The Couch of Eros", a poetry book written by an Ezra Chater. The book as such is of no consequence in its own right or to Bernard. What interested Bernard about the book is that it was owned by Byron. More importantly, it contains three documents (letters) of highly sensational import; the letters suggest that a duel had occurred between Ezra Chater and someone who seems to have seduced his wife. As a matter of fact, there is no evidence of the incident as

[433] Michael Billington, (Guardian, 14 April 1993) in Theatre Record, 13 (1993), p.406.
[434] Christopher Tookey, (Mail on Sunday, 18 April 1993), in Theatre Record, 13 (1993), p.411.
[435] John Gross, (Sunday Telegraph, 18 April 1993) in Theatre Record, 13 (1993), p.409.

such. More importantly, the dedication inscribed in the book is not to Byron but to a Septimus Hodge. Still, undeterred for fame, Bernard began his research.

Subsequently, Bernard discovered references to two Chaters existing in approximately the same period. As for the poet, there are two references in the periodical index of the time; in "Piccadilly Recreation", there are two vitriolic reviews of Chater's works, "The Maid of Turkey" and "The Couch of Eros". Bernard was further encouraged by finding that the underlined parts in the book which is now in his possession coincide with the quotations in the review. On the other hand, according to the British Library database, the other Chater was a botanist who "described a dwarf dahlia in Martinique and died there after being bitten by a monkey."(22)[436] Understandably, Bernard concluded that these two Chaters could not be the same person.

The interesting thing about the poet Chater is that there is no trace of him left after 1809, adding to the possibility that a duel actually had happened, and that Chater had been killed in the duel. Quite significantly, the year 1809 was the year in which Byron's first major poetical work English Bards and Scotch Reviewers was published. Shortly after the publication Byron left England for his trip to the Levant in a rather dubious situation.

> He had booked a passage abroad for the sixth of May from Falmouth, and he urged Hanson to raise money "on any terms." The manner in which he speaks of the urgency suggests some personal impasse more serious than the importunities of his creditors. Later, in Greece, he referred again to some mysterious reasons for his leaving England and not wanting to return there. He assured Hanson that it was not fear of the consequences of his satire that caused his impatience to leave, "but I will never live in England if I can avoid it. *Why*—must remain a secret."[437]

The tempting speculation about Byron's motive is that "he wished to escape his own proclivities toward attachment to boys", as he was closely attached to a Cambridge

[436] All the quotations are from, Arcadia, (London: Faber and Faber, 1993).
[437] Leslie A. Marchand, Byron: A Portrait (London: John Murray, 1971), p.59.

choirboy, Edleston, "who had wanted to live with him in London".[438] Still, the real motive(s) remains unknown.

Bernard, an expert on Romanticism and Byron, was of course aware of the mystery. And the sudden disappearance of Chater and the sensational letters in the poetry book led him to a bold conjecture that Byron had killed Chater in a duel, and subsequently had escaped from the complications.

With all this in mind, Bernard comes to Sidley Park to find out more about anything related to Chater, Hodge, and Byron, because the dedication of the poetry book to Septimus Hodge took place at Sidley Park in 1809, according to the inscription.[439] At Sidley Park, Hannah Jarvis, an independent researcher and novelist, has also been working for her next book. Coincidentally, her research interest overlaps with that of Bernard, though the motivation is radically different. Hannah basically regards the Romantic movement as "decline from thinking to feeling".(27) Hannah immediately finds Bernard's rather intruding attitude not to her taste, and is sceptical about his theory from the start. However, everything goes well with Bernard in the beginning.

He is told by Hannah that Septimus Hodge was the tutor at the Estate at the time and was also at Harrow and Cambridge together with Byron. He himself has also discovered in the library the first edition of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers with a pencilled superscription in it which directly refers to Chater's work.

> O harbinger of Sleep, who missed the press
> And hoped his drone might thus escape redress!
> The wretched Chater, bard of Eros' Couch,
> For his narcotic let my pencil vouch! (49)

To Stoppard's credit, these lines are ingeniously invented to be quite ambiguous. They could be interpreted as Byron's own creation, but as they are, there is no proof of this. Bernard, however, is duly or unduly encouraged by his discovery. To his further

[438] Ibid., p.59.

[439] The inscription is as follows: "To my friend Septimus Hodge, who stood up and gave his best on behalf of the Author - Ezra Chater, at Sidley Park, Derbyshire, April 10th 1809."(21) Actually this is a repetition, because we have already heard Chater reading the inscription, dedicating his work to Septimus. The deceptively friendly tone of the inscription led Bernard to exclude the possibility of Septimus Hodge being the person addressed in the letters.

delight, Hannah reports that she has just found a letter from Lady Croom to her husband which informs him of her brother's marriage to a Mrs Chater. The marriage took place in 1810, so the letter indirectly supports Bernard's contention about Mr Chater's death. There is further good news in store for him. Valentine, the eldest son of the present Croom family and an Oxford postgraduate, quite disinterestedly confirms that Byron, in fact, was at Sidley Park around the time, as it is written down in a game book that he had shot a hare. To Bernard, this is the final, unequivocal proof that he is right in his reasoning.

> BERNARD *has been silent because he has been incapable of speech. He seems to have gone into a trance, in which only his mouth tries to work.* (51)

So, to Bernard at least, Byron had an affair with Mrs Chater, subsequently killed Chater in a duel and the hitherto unknown reason for Byron's sudden departure from England in 1809 was no doubt related with this incident.

Just before Bernard announces "the most sensational literary discovery of the century", he gives a lecture to Hannah, Valentine, and Chloë as a rehearsal.

> Last paragraph. Without question, Ezra Chater issued a challenge to *somebody*. If a duel was fought in the dawn mist of Sidley Park in April 1809, his opponent, on the evidence, was a critic with a gift for ridicule and a taste for seduction. Do we need to look far? Without question, Mrs Chater was a widow by 1810. If we seek the occasion of Ezra Chater's early and unrecorded death, do we need to look far? Without question, Lord Byron, in the very season of his emergence as a literary figure, quit the country in a cloud of panic and mystery and stayed abroad for two years at a time when Continental travel was unusual and dangerous. If we seek his reason - *do we need to look far*? (58)

Bernard's argument is apparently incomplete.[440] Hannah reasonably objects that he has "left out everything which doesn't fit".(59) Irrespective of the accuracy of Bernard's argument, however, this is a highly enjoyable moment. As a matter of fact, his argument is all the more interesting because it is built upon the false premise, and still manages to be more or less consistent. More importantly, Bernard displays his character note here with his passion and persuasive power.

As Bernard is adamant and uncompromising, Hannah issues a sterner warning: "[. . .] you're like some exasperating child pedalling its tricycle towards the edge of a cliff, and I have to do something. So listen to me. If Byron killed Chater in a duel I'm Marie of Romania. You'll end up with so much *fame* you won't leave the house without a paper bag over your head."(59) Bernard is unstoppable, though. Subsequently, the discovery rages in several national newspapers, and he is even invited to a TV show.

His success, however, does not last long. His fall from it is as swift as his rise to it, and he "get[s] the rug pulled"(74) by none other than Hannah herself. Hannah has discovered in "the garden books" written by the past Lady Croom that Ezra Chater at Sidley Park was the same Chater who had died in Martinique bitten by a monkey: "The dahlia having propagated under glass with no ill effect from the sea voyage, is named by Captain Brice 'Charity' for his bride, though the honour properly belongs to the husband who exchanged beds with my dahlia, and an English summer for everlasting night in the Indies."(89) Bernard is "fucked by a dahlia."(88)

Bernard's bungled attempt, if it is not the sole cause, must have contributed to such comment as John Peter's: "History, for Stoppard, is the continuation of detective work by other means except that the evidence gets harder and harder to pin down."[441] He goes on to say after a few paragraphs:

> History is a different matter. There may not be quite enough evidence in Sidley Park's library to prove or disprove that Byron stayed there; but a shortage of documents about an event does not mean that that event is

[440] Valentine points it out clearly, saying, "Actually, Bernard, as a scientist, your theory is incomplete." But Bernard simply retorts "I'm not a scientist."(59)

[441] John Peter, (Sunday Times, 18 April 1993) Theatre Record, 13 (1993), p.409. Prapassaree and Jeffrey Kramer also commented to the same effect: "[. . .] chaos makes Laplace's dream unrealizable, both as to the prediction of the future and retrodiction of the past. The major subplot of the contemporary

unknowable by nature and can never be verified one way or another. Stoppard's central metaphor hangs loosely on his plot.[442]

The surprising aspect of John Peter's comment is that, while it claims to be otherwise, it actually describes exactly what Stoppard is trying to show in Arcadia. As I have already suggested, Arcadia is so structured that it does not matter much whether Bernard's detective work is successful or not. The audience knows from the start that it is wrong. What matters, therefore, and indeed is interesting, is how close he could get to the real facts or how consistent his historical guesswork could be. As a matter of fact, Bernard's argument is so consistent that if it were not for Lady Croom's letter, we would be led to believe Bernard's theory irrespective of its historical truth. So, paradoxical as it may sound, the very fact that his argument turned out to be false demonstrates that to a certain extent, we can reconstruct the past. Moreover, the other literary detective, Hannah, is far more successful than Bernard. She carefully continues her research, and in the end establishes the true identity of the Sidley Hermit.

Hannah happened to come across the Sidley Hermit in an essay in an 1860s "Cornhill Magazine", where Peacock calls him "a savant among idiots; a sage of lunacy."(26) The occasion was an epiphany to her for "the nervous breakdown of the Romantic Imagination,"(25) and she came to Sidley park for further research.

Before Bernard came, Hannah had only a landscape prospectus book drawn by Noakes, the landscape gardener in Arcadia, where there is a picture of the Hermit. While showing it to Bernard, she comments in a matter-of-fact tone that the Hermit was "drawn in by a later hand of course. The hermitage didn't yet exist when Noakes did the drawings".(25) Her judgement sounds perfectly reasonable, but is false in actuality. We already know that it was drawn in by Thomasina even before the hermitage was built. In Scene One, Thomasina put the hermit in the Noakes's book, saying, "I will put in a hermit, for what is a hermitage without a hermit?"(13) This may be a relatively insignificant incident. Still, it is worth paying attention to, because it highlights that Hannah is as vulnerable to false confidence as Bernard. At this moment, we, like

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section of the play is a witty illustration of this aspect of chaos in action". Prapassaree Kramer and Jeffrey Kramer, "Stoppard's Arcadia: Research, Time, Loss," Modern Drama, 40, (1997), p.5.

[442] John Peter, ibid.

Hannah, have no idea as to the identity of the Sidley Hermit. When it is revealed, however, at the last moment of the play, that the Hermit was none other than Septimus,[443] we know that Hannah's original perception of the Hermit is as fundamentally wrong as Bernard's conjecture, because Septimus is anything but "A mind in chaos suspected of genius."(27) Compared with Bernard's failure, her success is quite remarkable in this respect.

Bernard's arrival at Sidley Park suddenly boosts Hannah's research. Having gone "through the library like a bloodhound,"[444] he makes an important discovery from the beginning; he has found the portfolio used by Septimus, in which are preserved "*three items: a slim maths primer; a sheet of drawing paper on which there is a scrawled diagram and some mathematical notations, arrow marks, etc.; and Thomasina's mathematics lesson book*".(43) All these items will be key leads in Hannah's research. Later, Bernard once again makes a decisive contribution with his discovery of a book in the library, titled "The Peaks Traveller and Gazetteer" which contains a more detailed description of the Hermit.

> [. . .] a hermitage occupied by a lunatic since twenty years without discourse or companion save for a pet tortoise, Plautus by name, which he suffers children to touch on request. (64)

The book goes on to say that "what preoccupied the Hermit was a question of Frenchified mathematick that brought him to the melancholy certitude of a world without light or life, and that he died aged two score years and seven."(65) So, the fragments are gradually being put together to make the whole picture. The first link between the Hermit and Septimus is established as Hannah notices that they were born in the same year.[445] Later, Valentine confirms that the diagram discovered in

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[443] It seems that 'Septimus' is named after an ancient figure 'Septimius'. The old Housman mentions him in Tom Stoppard's latest play, The Invention of Love: "[. . .] In the Dark Ages, in Macedonia, in the last guttering light from classical antiquity, a man copied out bits from old books for his young son, whose name was Septimius; [. . .]" The Invention of Love (London: Faber and Faber, 1997), p.44. The name of the fortune teller in Oscar Wilde's Lord Arthur Savile's Crime is "Mr. Septimus Podgers".

[444] The name of Bernard naturally reminds us of "St Bernard dog", though it is not a bloodhound. Maintaining the link, Valentine later asks Hannah, "Did Bernard bite you in the leg?"(66)

[445] "HANNAH: (*Reading*) 'He died aged two score years and seven.' That was in 1834. So he was born in 1787. So was the tutor. He says so in his letter to Lord Croom when he recommended himself for the job: 'Date of birth-1787.' The hermit was born in the same year as Septimus Hodge."(66)

Septimus's portfolio is about heat exchange. Thus, a further link is made between Septimus and the Hermit, as the diagram supports the description of the Hermit in the magazine. Finally, Gus, the youngest of the present Croom children, presents Hannah with the final proof she has desperately been looking for, the picture of "Septimus with Plautus" drawn by Thomasina. The identity of the Hermit is successfully revealed.

The literary detective work in Arcadia is essentially connected to the wider question of knowledge itself, but it also touches upon the question of human identity, with Bernard and Hannah representing the Romantic and the Classical tempers, respectively. It is difficult to view Bernard as purely romantic, because he, if a more life-like and rounded character, apparently descended from sexual predators like McKendrick and Wagner. Still, he surely evokes a romantic temper with his energy, passion and bounciness. His romantic sympathy is particularly apparent, when he clashes with Valentine.

> BERNARD: [. . .] If knowledge isn't self-knowledge it isn't doing much, mate. Is the universe expanding? Is it contracting? Is it standing on one leg and singing 'When Father Painted the Parlour'? Leave me out. I can expand my universe without you. 'She walks in beauty, like the night of cloudless climes and starry skies, and all that's best of dark and bright meet in her aspect and her eyes.' There you are, he wrote it after coming home from a party. (61)[446]

While giving vent to his anti-scientific sentiments, Bernard duly advocates the Romantic cause with the direct quotation of one of Byron's most cherished poems and the emphasis upon self-knowledge.

On the other hand, quite contrary to Bernard, Hannah is described as cool, reserved, sceptical and meticulous. Her antagonism to Romanticism is particularly clear in the symbolic role she attached to the Sidley Hermit. Still, they do not represent the different principles mechanically. Bernard has a sense of the keen academic as he

[446] This is also a superb rendering of the clash between scientism and anti-scientism. Valentine's response makes the point clearer: "(VALENTINE *stands up and it is suddenly apparent that he is shaking and close to tears.*) VALENTINE: [. . .] He's not against penicillin, and he knows I'm not against poetry."(62)

demonstrated in the help he gave to Hannah's research. Hannah, for her part, is once seen as adamant and assertive as Bernard.

> VALENTINE: (*Pause*) Did Bernard bite you in the leg?
>
> HANNAH: Don't you see? I thought my hermit was a perfect symbol. An idiot in the landscape. But this is better. The Age of Enlightenment banished into the Romantic wilderness! The genius of Sidley Park living on in a hermit's hut!
>
> VALENTINE: You don't *know* that.
>
> HANNAH: Oh, but I do. I do. Somewhere there will be *something* . . . if only I can find it. (66)

Bernard's and Hannah's respective failure and success, therefore, should not be solely attributed to their different tempers. Though Hannah's success may support Stoppard's preference for the classical temper to the romantic,[447] the balance is immediately redressed if only we take into account Thomasina's mysterious intuition which strongly supports the Romantic cause. In this respect, it could be chance events that the one succeeds and the other fails just as Thomasina's primer book has been preserved while Septimus's stacked papers were used for a bonfire. Stoppard made a rather clear remark in his interview with David Nathan concerning human identity: "None of us is tidy; none of us is classifiable. Even the facility to perceive and define two ideas such as the classical and romantic in opposition to each other indicates that one shares a bit of each."[448] Even Byron, the figurehead of the raging Romanticism of the early nineteenth century and author of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and Manfred, curiously set his artistic standard after John Dryden and Alexander Pope, the giants of Neo-classicism. His devotion to Alexander Pope in particular never faltered throughout his life. Taken in all, Arcadia supports the above-mentioned statement by Stoppard, as

[447] In an interview with David Nathan, Stoppard commented, "They [the romantic and the classical] take turns to dominate, but I would say I lean to the classical in the sense that I associate it more with caution and introversion, rather than recklessness and extroversion. Extroversion is a performance art." David Nathan, "In a Country Garden (If It Is a Garden)," Sunday Telegraph, 28 March 1993, Arts sec., p.13. In Arcadia, Hannah consoles Valentine, saying "Don't let Bernard get to you. It's only performance art, you know."(65)

[448] David Nathan, "In a Country Garden (If It Is a Garden)," p.13.

neither Romanticism nor Classicism emerges as definitely victorious. In the end, we need both Romantic passion and Classical scepticism.

At a larger level, Arcadia is a grand drama of scientific debates. The scientific theories featured comprise no less than Newtonian physics, quantum mechanics, thermodynamics (entropy), and Chaos Theory. Into the debates are also woven vast themes like determinism, free-will, death, love, our quest for truth, and so on. This may sound enormously daunting, but to Stoppard's immense credit, granted that some basic understanding of the scientific theories is necessary for a full appreciation, Arcadia can even be satisfactorily enjoyed without particularly detailed knowledge of them, due to its extremely dextrously handled comedies on the one hand, and the moving human drama of love and death on the other. As for the themes themselves, they are packed together, interacting and overlapping with one another to such an extent that they do not give a hint of disorder.

Though it may not be tenable under rigorous scientific scrutiny, we can postulate the interactions of the scientific theories in Arcadia as follows for the sake of convenience. First, the Newtonian paradigm stands for a rigorous determinism where the universe runs according to its strict rules with no room for human participation. At the other end of the spectrum stands entropy theory with its fearful determinism that the universe is irrevocably heading for the heat death. Chaos Theory cuts in amid these opposite determinisms to make room for human free will and chance which make the world as it is: "The unpredictable and the predetermined unfold together to make everything the way it is. It's how nature creates itself, on every scale, the snowflake and the snowstorm."(47)

In this postulation, we can clearly see how the vision of Arcadia has developed out of Stoppard's earlier vision expressed in Lord Malquist and Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. Mr Moon, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were all entrapped in the deterministic world; while they intuit the Newtonian order, they are completely dominated by the chaos of entropy without realizing the interaction of the two, Order and Chaos.

As for quantum mechanics, it is almost totally ignored in Arcadia. There is only one occasion when Valentine mentions it as part of placing Chaos Theory in context.

> To be at the beginning again, knowing almost nothing. People were talking about the end of physics. Relativity and quantum looked as if they were going to clean out the whole problem between them. A theory of everything. But they only explained the very big and the very small. The universe, the elementary particles. (47-48)

Quantum mechanics was revolutionary in the true sense of the word, more so than Chaos Theory, as it marked a real departure from Newtonian mechanics and revealed the astonishing features of the small world. Scientists, during the prolific era of the early twentieth century when Relativity Theory was first established by Einstein and quantum mechanics was progressing at a dazzling rate, must have felt the same way as Valentine feels at the moment, with better reasons.

The reason why quantum mechanics must be part of the scientific debates despite its low profile in Arcadia, is that the spirit of uncertainty hovers over the play. In a way, quantum mechanics scientifically endorses a central proposition underlying the whole of Arcadia: that is, that an absolute knowledge of anything, whether it be history or human destiny or whatever, is inherently impossible. This is partly but convincingly demonstrated in the above-discussed attempts to reconstruct the past. And the sense of mystery permeating Arcadia is also instrumental in underscoring this point.

To construe the mysteries in Arcadia solely in terms of quantum mechanics, however, is no doubt too far-fetched, but Stoppard's stance on the question of knowledge had undergone a drastic change from that in, say, The Real Thing, where Henry argues about "personal, final, uncompromised" knowledge. The change may be the result of Stoppard's deepening understanding of human nature itself, but quantum mechanics may have had its role.

Stoppard must have become familiar with the basic concepts and implications of quantum mechanics while he was writing Hapgood.[449] The drama was a daring attempt to dramatize the theory, but the poor response it received is not without its reasons.

[449] It was staged at the Aldwych Theatre, London, on 8 March 1988.

The whole concept of the twin spies and the two Hapgoods does strain credibility. It is inconceivable in particular that Ridley, who has been working with Hapgood herself for such a long time, can actually be duped into believing that Hapgood's twin sister is not actually Hapgood herself, but her real separate twin sister. The twin sister of Hapgood can best be understood as the alter-ego of Hapgood, but unfortunately, the metaphorical characteristic of the twin Hapgood scheme is not compellingly driven home.

Considering the bizarre behaviour of particles,[450] however, any attempt to visualize it is more or less doomed to fail, and in this respect, the whole scheme of twins in Hapgood even seems extremely ingenious, and the famous *uncertainty principle* formulated by Heisenberg in 1927 seems to be an inevitable conclusion, the gist of which is, "The more accurately we know the position of a particle, the less accurately we know its momentum and vice versa."[451] According to the principle, we are inherently blocked from knowing the present in all its details, and inevitably have to do with this lack of knowledge. The prospect so disgruntled Einstein whose Relativity Theory opened the way for quantum mechanics itself that he tried all his life to refute the Copenhagen interpretation, contending that God does not play with dice.[452]

Considering the huge influence of the uncertainty principle not only on various scientific fields but on the intellectual climate in general, it is simply impossible to disregard it, and in Arcadia it is in effect taken for granted as an underlying scientific principle.

Shortly after its opening, the play goes headlong into the scientific debates as Thomasina asks Septimus about an interesting phenomenon she observed.

THOMASINA: When you stir your rice pudding, Septimus, the

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[450] Refer to Appendix I. Discussions about each scientific theory are largely indebted to the following books: Roger Penrose, The Emperor's New Mind (London: Vintage, 1990), James Gleick, Chaos (London: Vintage, 1998), John Horgan, The End of Science (London: Abacus, 1998), Fritijof Capra, The Tao of Physics (London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1983), John Gribin, In Search of Schrödinger's Cat (London: Transworld Publishers, 1996), Ilya Prigogine, Order out of Chaos (London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1985), Martin Goldstein and F. Inge, The Refrigerator and the Universe: Understanding the Laws of Energy (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1993)

[451] John Gribbin, p.156. He also comments, "Heisenberg's uncertainty principle is seen today as a central feature—perhaps *the* central feature—of quantum theory." Ibid., p.154.

[452] Kerner, the defected Soviet scientist, refers to this in Hapgood: "It upset Einstein very much, you [Hapgood] know, all that damned uncertainty, it spoiled his idea of God, which I tell you frankly is the only idea of Einstein's I never understood. He couldn't believe in a God who threw dice." Hapgood (London: Faber and Faber, 1994), p.41.

> spoonful of jam spreads itself round making red trails like the picture of a meteor in my astronomical atlas. But if you stir backward, the jam will not come together again. Indeed, the pudding does not notice and continues to turn pink just as before. Do you think this is odd?(6)

Casually remarked, this reveals the essential issue of the irreversibility of the world, the central aspect of entropy, but Septimus, the tutor, answers in a somewhat indifferent way: "time must needs run backward, and since it will not, we must stir our way onward mixing as we go, disorder out of disorder into disorder until pink is complete, unchanging and unchangeable, and we are done with it forever. This is known as free will or self-determination."(5) If well camouflaged, Septimus's response is actually striking in its self-contradiction. While he betrays a strictly Newtonian concept with his emphasis on rigid determinism ("unchanging and unchangeable"), unawares he contradicts the Newtonian system by his comment that time cannot run backward.[453] However, if he lacks Thomasina's penetrating intuition, he is a well-informed, sensible scientist in his own right. Indeed, in his reply lie all the central questions of Arcadia: the irreversibility of time, determinism, free-will, the interactions between them ("mixing as we go"), and our quest for the truth ("we must stir our way onward"). Still, taken in all, his remark curiously lacks any coherent meaning.

Thomasina, no doubt a daring and aspiring mind, goes a step further, flouting her thorough understanding of Newtonian physics.

> THOMASINA: If you could stop every atom in its position and direction, and if your mind could comprehend all the actions thus suspended, then if you were really, *really* good at algebra you could write the formula for all the future; and although nobody can be so clever to do it, the formula must exist as if one could. (5)

[453] One of the central features of Newtonian system is its time-symmetry. Determinism and reversibility are the two characteristics which are largely used in Arcadia to describe Newtonian physics.

This is the vision of the ultimate Newtonian determinism historically voiced by Laplace in his apotheosis of the mechanics around the same time as Thomasina's.[454] And, as early as at this stage, the critical engagement between Newtonian physics and entropy theory becomes apparent.

Most scientists will agree with Ilya Prigogine that "one of the greatest days in human history is April, 28, 1686 when Newton presented his Principia to the Royal Academy in London."[455] Newton was the apex of the Scientific Revolution. He discovered gravitational force and established the famous three laws of motion, which govern not only the heavenly bodies but also falling objects in the everyday world. By implication everything in the universe obeys Newton's laws of motion, because, irrespective of size, everything in the universe is supposed to have mass from atoms to planets and stars.

The interesting thing about Newton's ideas is that they describe and explain the world purely in terms of motion. So the change in the Newtonian system is essentially a change of a body from rest to motion and vice versa, together with changes in velocity, in other word, acceleration. Hence, in Newtonian physics, it does not make any difference whether time runs forwards or backwards.[456]

The strong point of the Newtonian system is that with a series of mathematical equations the whole movement of a moving body can be explained with utmost precision. But it has some puzzling implications.

> The remarkable feature is that once the forces are known, any single state is sufficient to define the system completely, not only its future but also its past. At each instant, therefore, everything is given.[457]

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[454] Later in Scene Seven, Newtonian determinism is emphasised again as Valentine refers to Laplace, if indirectly: "There was someone, forget his name, 1820s, who pointed out that from Newton's laws you could predict everything to come - I mean, you'd need a computer as big as the universe but the formula would exist."(73)

[455] Ilya Prigogine, p.1.

[456] Thomasina makes this point clear: "Newton's equations go forwards and backwards, they do not care which way."(87)

[457] Ilya Prigogine, p.60.

In this stark determinism of Newtonian physics, causality plays the ultimate role, leaving no room for chance or free will. It is no wonder that the symbol of the Newtonian world is the clockwork. It works through a series of precise interactions of cogs according to its inner rules. The universe was also believed to behave likewise, and the exact, law-abiding universe implies the presence of the Creator who set the laws, not involving Himself in the working of the universe. This is the vision of the mechanized, determined universe.

As I already mentioned, this is the world of Mr Moon, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. They are driven by their belief that everything is strictly connected by the chain-reaction of cause and effect, which is their definition of order. In spite of their belief and efforts, however, they cannot verify the order. Death, the ultimate chaos, in the end overwhelms them.

Newtonian physics reigned supreme for about two centuries, and even now, though it was revised by Relativity Theory and quantum mechanics, it remains hugely influential particularly in the area of space travel.[458] In this context it is quite interesting to note that in the early nineteenth century when the Newtonian scheme was the official plan for the Laplacean school which dominated the scientific world, a scientific theory which was fundamentally different from the Newtonian physics in its outlook and implications was first born. In 1911 Baron Jean-Joseph Fourier "won the prize of French Academy of Sciences for his mathematical description of the propagation of heat in solids."[459] Ilya Prigogine in his Order out of Chaos proposes that this is the year when the science of complexity was born. At the heart of this new science lies *heat*, "the rival of gravity".[460]

The scientific knowledge accumulated through the Scientific Revolution must have been one of the driving forces of the Industrial Revolution, which took place first in England from around the late eighteenth century. The symbol of the age of the Industrial Revolution was the heat engine. Interestingly, the very appearance of the engine was the background for the emergence of a different branch of science, i.e.

[458] "As applied to the motions of planets and moons, the observed accuracy of this theory is phenomenal - better than one part in ten million. The same Newtonian scheme applies here on earth - and out among the stars and galaxies - to some comparable accuracy." Roger Penrose, p.198.

[459] Ilya Prigogine, p.104.

thermodynamics. In the ideal world of dynamics where there is neither friction nor collision, the system of the machine is supposed to transmit the whole of the motion it receives. Understandably, this is not the case in the everyday world, as was demonstrated by the continuous efforts to improve the efficiency of the heat engine.[461] And the very question of engine efficiency is the point where the concept of *irreversibility* cuts in.

It is out of the question that the scientists at the time were aware of the implications of this newly-born branch of science. Most of them still supposed that heat was preserved like mechanical energy. With this in mind, Carnot tried to make an ideal heat engine in 1824. Brilliant and ingenious as it was, his description of the system was fundamentally flawed as it did not mention the very source of the heat supply. Still, through this kind of trial and error, the branch of thermodynamics was gradually established. And in 1852, William Thomson (Lord Kelvin), who began to study Fourier as early as in his teens, first established the second law of thermodynamics. In 1865, a German physicist Clausius enunciated it and introduced the concept of entropy.[462]

The first law of thermodynamics, known as the law of energy conservation, states that energy is indestructible and uncreatable. As it was deduced from Newtonian mechanics, it is time-symmetrical.[463] However, the second law strictly stipulates the irreversibility we witness in everyday life. Clausius stated it in two ways: "heat cannot be transferred from one body to a second body at a higher temperature without producing some other effect, and the entropy of a closed system increases with time."[464] Simply put, heat will flow spontaneously from hot bodies to cold ones, never the reverse. And entropy always increases in the universe towards the universal heat-death.

The determinism expressed here could be more horrifying, but the significance is that choice and chance are reintroduced to the proper realm of physics in that if we cannot actually reduce entropy, we can slow down the process of its increase.

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[460] Ibid., p.103.

[461] The Newcomen engine first appeared in 1711, and was further improved to be widely used across Europe until it was replaced by far more efficient Watt engine.

[462] Entropy is a measure of disorder. The higher the entropy, the greater the disorder.

[463] Roger Penrose, p.396.

[464] Oxford Dictionary of Physics, 2000 ed., s.v. "thermodynamics."

While Thomasina is having lessons with Septimus, the garden at Sidley park is undergoing a thorough transformation. The change in gardening fashion keenly reflects the intellectual, literary, and artistic climate of the early nineteenth century, adding historical authenticity to the picture of the time described in Arcadia.[465]

Moreover, considering the familiarity and the interest the audience may feel in 'gardening' compared with the abstruse debates about science, the insertion of the gardening theme is extremely functional in the whole dramatic effect of the play. It not only provides the occasions for the high comedy featuring "Culpability" Noakes and Lady Croom, but it effectively underscores the point that nothing is eternal or absolute. Everything undergoes change, and even scientific laws are no exception.

The improved Newcomen engine which Mr Noakes brought in to Sidley Park no doubt has more significance than just providing unbearable noise to Lady Croom. It symbolizes the intrusion of the industrial force in the idyllic Arcadia, and furthermore, its cacophonic thumping sounds, though Thomasina thinks they are from the piano in the adjacent room with her mother and Count Zelinsky "four-handed", form the background music when Thomasina first reads the "Prize essay of the Scientific Academy in Paris,"(81) which no doubt is the above-mentioned Fourier's essay. She immediately sees through the profound implication of the essay.

> THOMASINA: Well! Just as I said! Newton's machine which would knock our atoms from cradle to grave by the laws of motion is incomplete! Determinism leaves the road at every corner, as I knew all along, and the cause is very likely hidden in this gentleman's observation.

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[465] The "turning towards a greater natural beauty" set in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when philosophers such as Descartes and Locke were assailing the traditional ideas in the name of sceptical reason. William Kent (1684-1748) and Lancelot Brown (Capability Brown; 1715-1783) were the first pioneers who reflected the changing intellectual and artistic climate in reactions against "the earlier architected, geometrical designs inherited from Italy, France and Netherlands."(176) And it was Lancelot Brown who carried to its greatest lengths "What was later described as 'the first modern, English, irregular, natural, or landscape style' in the design of parks and gardens".(171) However, it is true that "his effects were achieved at a cost of the destruction of much old familiar charm and beauty around houses."(175) As the climate changed from Neo-classicism towards Romanticism, the garden design once again keenly reflected the change. "Picturesque" and "Picturesqueness" was at the heart of this changed garden design, as is demonstrated by Noakes, whose practice of presenting gardening prospectuses is modelled after Humphry Repton's (1752-1818). Tom Turner, English Garden Design: History and Styles since 1650, (Woodbridge: Antique Collectors' Club, 1986).

LADY CROOM: Of what?

THOMASINA: The action of bodies in heat.

LADY CROOM: Is this geometry?

THOMASINA: This? No, I despise geometry! (83-84)

When Mr Noakes comes in the scene shortly after, only to be told Lady Croom's complaint about the new Engine, Thomasina half jokingly hails him as "The Emperor of Irregularity!"(85)[466] and then and there she starts to draw the diagram which will be left in Septimus's portfolio, and Valentine will confirm to be the "heat diagram". This is the moment when Thomasina first establishes the second law of thermodynamics! She explains to baffled Mr Noakes, "Improve it [the heat engine] as you will, you can never get out of it what you put in,"(86) and to Septimus, no less baffled than Mr Noakes, "Newton's equations go forwards and backwards, they do not care which way. But the heat equation cares very much, it goes only one way."(87)

Unfortunately, however, the heat goes one way to universal heat-death, and the fearful implication is made clear near the end of the play when Valentine and Septimus are seen to be examining the same diagram at the same time on stage.

VALENTINE: It's a diagram of heat exchange.

SEPTIMUS: So, we are all doomed!

THOMASINA: (*Cheerfully*) Yes.

[. . .]

VALENTINE: She saw why. You can put back the bits of glass but you can't collect up the heat of the smash. It's gone.

SEPTIMUS: So the Improved Newtonian Universe must cease and grow cold. Dear me.

VALENTINE: The heat goes into the mix.

(*He gestures to indicate the air in the room, in the universe.*)

THOMASHINA: Yes, we must hurry if we are going to dance.

VALENTINE: And everything is mixing the same way, all the time, irreversibly . . .

[466] This indirectly refers to Thomasina's non-Euclidean geometry.

SEPTIMUS: Oh, we have time, I think.

VALENTINE: . . . till there's no time left. That's what time means.

SEPTIMUS: When we have found all the mysteries and lost all the meaning, we will be alone, on an empty shore.

THOMASINA: Then we will dance. Is this a waltz? (93-94)

The juxtaposition of the past and the present is significant, clearly anticipating the final moment of two past and present pairs dancing. On the other hand, Septimus's rather rueful comment ("we will be alone, on an empty shore"), beautiful as it is, sounds ominous, as it implies death. Death is of course the most fearful aspect of entropy, and allusions to death permeate Arcadia. At this moment, however, the implication has more impending emotional quality because we know that this is the last night for Thomasina.

Thomasina's death must have been most shocking to Septimus in all probability. He is the very person with whom Thomasina spent her last time, and was evidently on the verge of falling in love with her. When Thomasina implored him to come to her room that fateful night, Septimus refused out of his moral sense of duty. He must also have regretted that had he done so, she might have stayed alive.

One thing that draws our attention in the exchanges quoted above is that Thomasina does not seem to be much affected by the fearful implication of the heat theory she has just explicated to Septimus. It may be that she is excited over the prospect of the dance with Septimus on the eve of her seventeenth birthday. Or, it may be that she understands more about the way the world works; by this time she has already formulated the basis of a theory which, more than a century later, will be known as Chaos Theory.[467]

[467] As a matter of fact, Thomasina's discovery of Chaos Theory is a most vivid example of poetic license. There is not a remotest chance for her to have grasped the implications of the theory, and Valentine from time to time makes the point clear. A short exchange between him and Hannah when Thomasina's primer is first recovered serves as an adequate example: "HANNAH: Well, what was she doing?/ VALENTINE: She was just playing with the numbers. The truth is, she wasn't doing anything./ HANNAH: She must have been doing something./ VANENTINE: Doodling. Nothing she understood./ HANNAH: A monkey at a typewriter?/ VALENTINE: Yes. Well, a piano."(47)

James Gleick's superb science book, Chaos, contributed greatly to the popularity of Chaos Theory even among lay people. However, it is also true that Chaos Theory itself has some dramatic flavour and startling features which capture our imagination and interest. Early in the play Thomasina complains to Septimus, "Each week I plot your equations dot for dot, xs against ys in all manner of algebraical relation, and every week they draw themselves as commonplace geometry, as if the world of forms were nothing but arcs and angles," and asks emphatically, "if there is an equation for a curve like a bell, there must be an equation for one like a bluebell, and if a bluebell, why not a rose?"(37) Later, in her maths primer, she proudly proclaims, "I, Thomasina Coverly, have found a truly wonderful method whereby all the forms of nature must give up their numerical secrets and draw themselves through number alone."(43) This is no groundless boast. As if indeed to prove Thomasina's contention, Michael Barnsley in what he called "the chaos game" tried to reproduce the exact images of nature through a simple set of codes. It seems that he is particularly congenial to Thomasina's spirit as he said, "The model, then, is more interesting than a model made with Euclidean geometry, because we know that when you look at the edge of a leaf you don't see straight lines."[468] Interestingly, the process of the chaos game graphically reveals the chaos-order relationship in Chaos Theory. At first, the dots from his simple mathematical equation appear randomly without any sign of inner order. In the end, however, a highly ordered image emerges to make a most complicated and exact image we can encounter in the real world.

This picture[469] is only possible with the aid of a computer, because the process, if simple, involves countless repetitions. So when Valentine explains that Thomasina did not have enough time and pencils, it may sound condescending but actually true.

The Chaos Theory is most lavishly treated in Arcadia, and for a proper appreciation of the whole play, I think it essential to elaborate on some key concepts of the theory, such as the *butterfly effect*, the *strange attractor*, and the *fractal* structure. In terms of Newtonian physics, we can predict with extreme accuracy the cyclic period of the

[468] James Gleick, p.238.
[469] See Figure 1 in the next page (p.262).

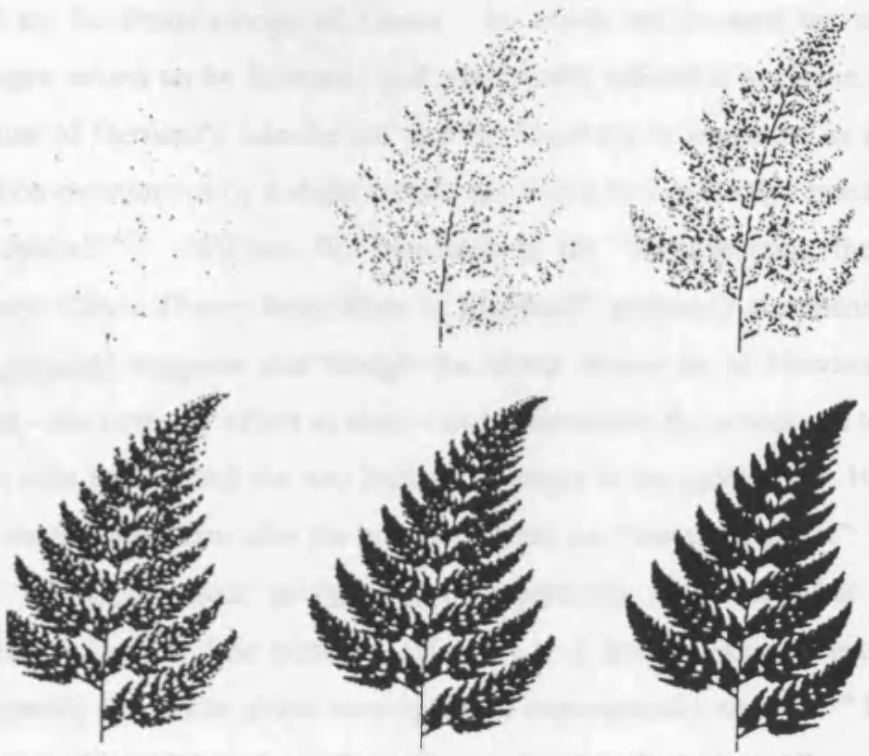

Figure 1. The Chaos game. Each new point falls randomly, but gradually the image of a fern emerges. All the necessary information is encoded in a few simple rules.[470]

comets or eclipses, but we cannot predict the weather.[471] Edward Lorenz, one of forerunners of Chaos study and "a weather bug as a child" according to Gleick,[472] made a basic weather model with his computer in 1960, and subsequently found that weather is inherently impossible to predict because a small change at an initial stage will make a big difference over time. So the term, butterfly effect, was coined half-jokingly, meaning that "a butterfly stirring the air today in Peking can transform storm systems next month in New York".[473] The butterfly effect with its literary flavour seems to have a certain appeal to literary critics. In "Stoppard's Arcadia: Research, Time, Loss", the authors assert: "In Bernard's case the 'butterfly' is Lady Croom, who has casually

[470] Ibid., p.238.

[471] "VALENTINE: We're better at predicting events at the edge of the galaxy or inside the nucleus of an atom than whether it'll rain on auntie's garden party three Sundays from now."(48)

[472] James Gleick, p.13.

[473] Ibid., p.8. In a more strict scientific meaning, it signifies "sensitive dependence on initial conditions". Ibid., p.23.

picked up Septimus's copy of Chater - in which are pressed the accusations and challenges seized on by Bernard - and whimsically offered it to Byron. [. . .] Not only the cause of Bernard's mistake but also its discovery is presented as a case of grand projection overthrown by a slight breeze: not foiled by a butterfly, exactly, but 'Fucked by a dahlia!'"[474] William W. Demastes in his "Re-Inspecting the Crack in the Chimney: Chaos Theory from Ibsen to Stoppard", passingly comments, "Wittily, the play [Arcadia] suggests that though the world strives to be Newtonian, sex is the element - the butterfly effect at work - that undermines the process. It is 'the attraction that Newton left out. All the way back to the apple in the garden.'"[475] Harriett Hawkins even coined a new term after the butterfly effect, i.e. "the apple effect": "What could be called 'the apple effect' in Paradise Lost perfectly illustrates what chaos theorists metaphorically term 'the butterfly effect': [. . .] Eve plucks and eats an apple and subsequently the whole global atmosphere is exponentially altered."[476] Dean Wilcox in an essay entitled "What does Chaos Theory have to do with Art," quotes from James Gleick's Chaos to illustrate that "this sensitive dependence on initial conditions is not a recent discovery, but has its place in folklore:

> For want of a nail, the shoe was lost;
> For want of a shoe, the horse was lost;
> For want of a horse, the rider was lost;
> For want of a rider, the battle was lost;
> For want of a battle, the kingdom was lost."[477]

The playful and striking image of a butterfly flapping its wings no doubt encapsulates an extremely important element of the study of chaos, but it does not seem that the real significance of the butterfly effect lies in the question "what is the butterfly?" Gleick only quotes the above folklore to convey effectively the idea of small change effecting a bigger change, and he immediately stresses, "In science as in life, it is well known

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[474] Prapassaree and Jeffrey Kramer, "Stoppard's Arcadia: Research, Time, Loss," p.6.

[475] William W. Demastes, "Re-Inspecting the Crack in the Chimney: Chaos Theory from Ibsen to Stoppard," New Theatre Quarterly, 19, No.39 (1994), p.253.

[476] Harriett Hawkins, Strange Attractors: Literature, Culture and Chaos Theory (New York: Prentice Hall, 1995), pp.40-41. In my opinion, her argument is rather questionable in that the change occurs simultaneously.

that a chain of events can have a point of crisis that could magnify small changes. But chaos meant that such points were everywhere."[478] It is clear from this comment by Gleick that it is basically impossible to identify the initial small changes which trigger big changes afterwards. The quoted folklore in a sense betrays the spirit of Chaos because of its apparent, mechanistic causality.

Trying to interpret Bernard's failure in terms of the butterfly effect is not only beside the point, but in fact impossible even with the limited range of the chance events in Arcadia. Not to mention Lady Croom's crucial role for the future confusion, and the dahlias sent by Chater, there are so many what-ifs involved in the whole event; what if Byron had not visited Sidley Park at that particular time, what if he had not gone shooting, what if it had been correctly recorded that Augustus shot the rabbit, not Byron, what if Bernard had been a bit more careful, and so forth. Considering these immense alternative possibilities at every turn, it is only wonderful that things have been so arranged for Bernard's spectacular failure! In a way, this is exactly how the butterfly effect is relevant to Arcadia.

The deep significance of the butterfly effect is that it is "necessary" for all the rich diversities in the world.

> The Butterfly Effect is no accident; it was necessary. Suppose small perturbations remained small, [. . .], instead of cascading upward through the system. Then when the weather came arbitrarily close to a state it had passed through before, it would stay arbitrarily close to the patterns that followed. For practical purposes, the cycles would be predictable—and eventually uninteresting. To produce the rich repertoire of real earthly weather, the beautiful multiplicity of it, you could hardly wish for anything better than a Butterfly Effect.[479]

Diversity is the price paid for Newtonian lawfulness. But it does not mean that everything in the world is totally random. Amid the diversities, a pattern of deeper complexity appears. In other words, a certain order is created out of the chaos. The

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[477] Dean Wilcox, "What does Chaos Theory have to do with Art?" Modern Drama, 39, (1996), p.701.
[478] James Gleick, p.23.
[479] Ibid., pp.22-23.

strange attractor,[480] another essential concept in the study of Chaos, demonstrates it in a clearer way. This term, with its apparent "psychoanalytically 'suggestive'"[481] quality, sounds tempting enough to draw the attention of critics. Harriett Hawkins indeed argued that in Arcadia "Tom Stoppard metaphorically associates the concept with Cleopatra, who paradoxically arouses Thomasina's 'hate' because she turns everything to 'love', and 'away goes the empire',"[482] though this seems too literal an application.

The strange attractor is used in Chaos Theory to designate a certain behaviour of a system which seems uncontrollably erratic, but has a complex, deep pattern in it. To understand a strange attractor, however, we first have to understand an attractor.

A movement of a pendulum in an ideal state without any friction at all can be illustrated as a trajectory in a phase space.[483] As the pendulum swings from left and right in a regular, repetitive pattern, the trajectory forms a circle, each point on it signifying velocity and position. In this case the circular orbit is the attractor.[484]

If a pendulum swings in the normal atmosphere, as we all know, the speed will slowly come down, and in the end, comes to a halt. In this case the attractor is a single point in the phase space.[485]

What should be clearly understood is that the attractor is not a strange attractor. If the sexual attraction in Arcadia is likened to a strange attractor, it is more likely that it is the attractor of the single point rather than a proper strange attractor.

The strange attractor appears when a pendulum is kept "swinging through a full circle, driven by an energetic kick at a regular intervals."[486] In this case, something really strange happens.[487] Normally, we would expect that the movement of the pendulum will form a regular, recognizable circuit. In other words, after some irregular movements, it will settle into a regular motion. But it is not the case. Surprisingly the orbit never repeats itself.

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[480] The term was coined in 1971 by a Belgian physicist-mathematician David Ruelle and a Danish mathematician, Floris Takens.

[481] James Gleick, p.133.

[482] Hariett Hawkins, p.126.

[483] Phase space is "an abstract mathematical space in which **coordinates** represent the variables needed to specify the phase of a dynamical system." (emphasis in the original) Garnett P. Williams, Chaos Theory Tamed (London: Taylor & Francis, 1997), p.23. Simply put, it is an imaginary two, three, or more dimensional space in which we draw a graph from, say, a mathematical equation.

[484] See Figure 2 in the next page (p.265).

[485] See Figure 3 in the next page (p.265).

[486] James Gleick, p.143.

[487] See Figure 4 in p.267.

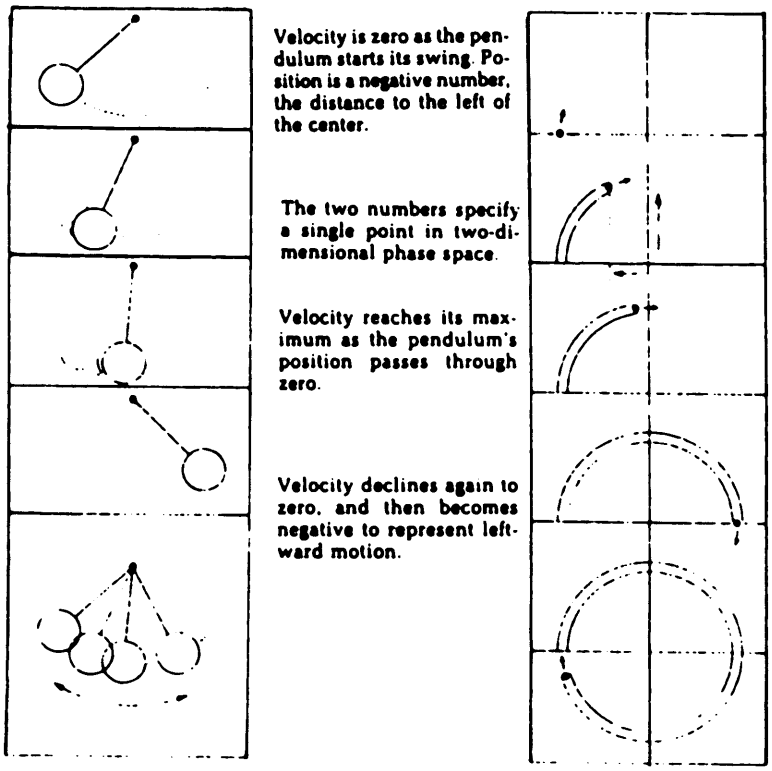

Figure 2. One point in phase space (right) contains all the information about the state of a dynamical system at any instant (left). For a simple pendulum, two numbers—velocity and position—are all you need to know.[488]

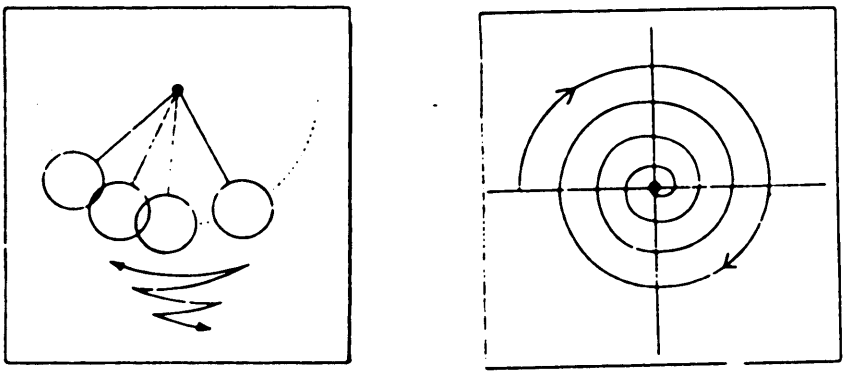

Figure 3. An attractor can be a single point. For a pendulum steadily losing energy to friction, all trajectories spiral inward toward a point that represents a steady state—in this case, the steady state of no motion at all.[489]

[488] Gleick, p.136
[489] Ibid., pp.136-137

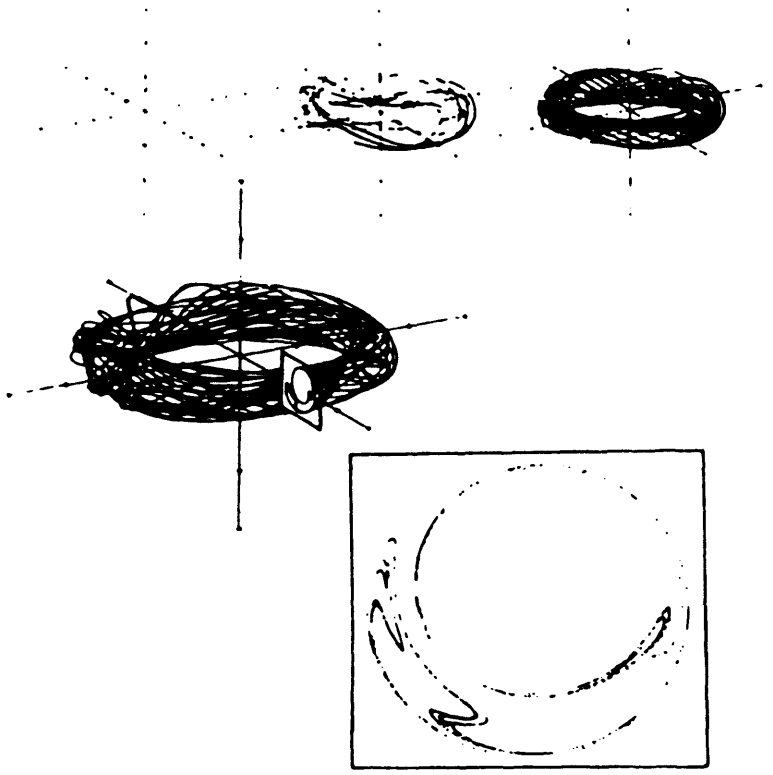

Figure 4. The strange attractor above—first one orbit, then ten, then one hundred—depicts the chaotic behaviour of a rotor, a pendulum swinging through a full circle. By the time 1,000 orbits have been drawn the attractor has become an impenetrably tangled skein.[490]

Though the complex structure of a strange attractor is not quite graphically shown in the example, a strange attractor usually has a very complex and deep patternal structure in it, a characteristic that is known in the jargon of Chaos Theory as fractal. This fractal structure is one of the most interesting aspects of Chaos Theory. The Coverly Set drawn from Thomasina's mathematical equation must be showing fractal structure.

HANNAH: [. . .] (*She looks over* VALENTINE'*s shoulder at the computer screen. Reacting*) Oh!, but . . . how beautiful!

VALENTINE: The Coverley set.

HANNAH: The Coverly set! My goodness, Valentine!

VALENTINE: Lend me a finger.

(*He takes her finger and presses one of the computer keys several*

[490] Gleick, p.143

times.)

See? In an ocean of ashes, islands of order. Patterns making themselves out of nothing.

I can't show you how deep it goes. Each picture is a detail of the previous one, blown up. And so on. For ever. Pretty nice, eh? (76)

Fractal means self-referential or self-similar. A part unmistakably reflects the shape of the whole, but never happens to be identical. The process, as Valentine puts it, goes on and on. In Chaos study, this is known as the Mandelbrot set after the name of the mathematician who first developed fractal geometry, and the real picture of one is really breath-taking.[491]

The surprising aspect of the Mandelbrot set is that it is generated by a strikingly simple mathematical definition. What Thomasina has discovered in Arcadia is this equation.

SEPTIMUS: We will have silence now, if you please.

(*From the portfolio* SEPTIMUS *takes Thomasina's lesson book and tosses it to her; returning homework. She snatches it and opens it.*)

THOMASINA: No marks?! Did you not like my rabbit equation?

SEPTIMUS: I saw no resemblance to a rabbit.

THOMASINA: It eats its own progeny. (77)

A mathematical equation which "eats its own progeny" is iterated algorithm, and this is a key principle of Chaos study. About two hundred years later, Valentine explains it to Hannah who is as much puzzled as Septimus.

VALENTINE: [. . .] What she's doing is, every time she works out a value for y, she's using *that* as her next value for x. And so on. Like a feedback. She's feeding the solution back into the equation, and then solving it again. Iteration, you see. (44)

[491] Refer to Appendix II.

The picture of the fern and the Mandelbrot set are all made through basically the same numberless feedback processes aided by the computer. In this respect Thomasina's boast of her geometry inevitably reveals a gap. Her discovery is the scheme of an iterated algorithm, and therefore, there is no real chance at all for her to see the picture her equation would make. However, there are some detailed touches which lend authenticity to Thomasina's chaos theory. Thomasina describes her geometry as "trial and error", and trial and error is the only way to generate the kind of geometry which the Mandelbrot set brings into view: "Unlike the traditional shapes of geometry, circles and ellipses and parabolas, the Mandelbrot set allows no shortcuts. The only way to see what kind of shape goes with a particular equation is by trial and error, and the trial-and-error style brought the explorers of this new terrain closer in spirit to Magellan than to Euclid."[492]

When Septimus first sees Thomasina's rabbit equation, he responds, "It will go to infinity or zero, or nonsense," demonstrating his no meagre knowledge of mathematics. Thomasina retorts by explaining, "No, if you set apart the minus roots they square back to sense."(78) So, surprisingly, Thomasina's rabbit equation is made up of the complex numbers just like the Mandelbrot set! The equation of the Mandelbrot set goes like this: an initial x which is a complex number goes into an mathematical equation, $X^2 + C$ (C is also a complex number), to generate the second value, and the second value is fed back into the same equation to generate the third value, and so on. If the value x is above 1, it will easily "go to infinity", and if it is below 1, to "zero", as Septimus argues.

If these are explicit references to Chaos Theory, there are some implicit references to it in Arcadia. As I have already suggested, the naming of Cleopatra as an illustration of the strange attractor does not quite capture the spirit of Chaos. However, love may serve an example. Almost all the characters in Arcadia are in a variety of love relationships. The nymphomania Mrs Chater surely represents an extreme case which is totally devoid of any mental dimension. And then, Captain Brice's blind love for her is no doubt an interesting case. On the other hand, Mr Chater's love for his wife seems a bit devious in its character. To Bernard, love is just a matter of sensual pleasure,

[492] James Gleick, p.226.

while Chloë seems to be ready to cherish her experience with Bernard as a romantic affair. In the beginning, Septimus is in love with Lady Croom, which quite defies any reasonable explanation, and later he seems to fall genuinely in love with Thomasina for her intelligence and her genuine feelings towards him. There is also the mysterious love of Gus for Hannah.

In spite of all these various love-relationships, however, to understand the theme of love in Arcadia as a demonstration of the strange attractor sounds far-fetched. In the first place, the concept does not seem to be weighty enough to weave a drama around it, and more significantly, love, "the strange attraction Newton left out", has more to do with the human factor which is in the end the most important in Arcadia than with the strange attractor.

What Newton left out, however, is not just attraction between human beings. Apparently, Newton did not pay much attention to the shape of the apple, either. When Gus first shows his feelings towards Hannah, he presents her with "*an apple, just picked, with a leaf or two still attached.*"(34) Just after this, the scene changes back to the early nineteenth century, but on the table where all the small things will gather quite irrespective of anachronism, there is an apple, "*the same apple from all appearances*".(35) Septimus picks up the apple and picks off the twig and leaves, placing them on the table. Then, he cuts a slice of apple to eat, and while eating, he gives another slice to Plautus, the tortoise which he uses as a paperweight. Later, Hannah, while Valentine is explaining Chaos Theory to her, picks up "an apple leaf from the table" and asks, "So you couldn't make a picture of this leaf by iterating a whatsit?"(47) So, it is apparent that the apple leaf is a live example to push the point of the new geometry.

Considering the fractal nature of natural shapes, we can push the point still further. What about the shape of an apple itself? With our anthropo-centred point of view, we all feel familiar with the concept that every human being is unique. However, it is not just a human being that is unique. In fact, everything in nature is unique in the sense that there are no two identical objects. In this context, the apple itself and the tortoise named Plautus by Septimus, and Lightening by Valentine tacitly serve as visual examples of Chaos Theory.

The two worlds of the past and the present depicted in Arcadia may well be explained in terms of the mirror structure which we have become familiar with in Stoppardian theatre. Despite the time gap of almost two hundred years, there are some similarities and self-referential qualities in the description of the two worlds, which leave room for an interpretation from the Chaos point of view. Septimus, if not a family member, is more or less like a permanent resident, and later Lord Byron came to the estate as a visitor. The situation is rather similar to that of Hannah and Bernard. Lady Croom no doubt had some intimate feelings towards Lord Byron, while the present Lady Croom lends a bicycle to Bernard, which according to Valentine is "a form of safe sex, possibly the safest there is." And he goes on to say, "My mother is in a flutter about Bernard, and he's no fool."(51)

In the past, Lady Croom unfortunately catches Byron having an affair with Mrs Chater, while in the present, Bernard and Chloë are caught having a sexual relationship by none other than Lady Croom herself. Subsequently, Bernard flees from the Estate, as Byron did in the past. On the other hand, Septimus has a covert feeling towards Lady Croom, and when Septimus declares his love for her, Lady Croom responds, "I do not know when I have received a more unusual compliment, Mr Hodge."(72) Just after the scene changes, Valentine sort of proposes to Hannah asking, "Can't we have a trial marriage and I'll call it off in the morning?" Hannah answers, "I don't know when I've received a more unusual proposal."(75) This, in turn, makes some contrast to Bernard's sudden, rather preposterous proposal to Hannah to go to London together for sex.

Thomasina, whose present equivalent is Gus, once asked Septimus if she was the first person to think of the Laplacean demon. Later Chloë repeats a similar question:

> CHLOË: [. . .] Valentine, do you think I'm the first person to think of this?
>
> VALENTINE: No.
>
> CHLOË: I haven't said yet. (73)[493]

[493] Even the asking pattern is the same: "THOMASINA: [. . .] Septimus! Am I the first person to have thought of this?/SEPTIMUS: No./THOMASINA: I have not said yet."(.5)

When Chloë has explained to Valentine that the deterministic universe goes wrong because of "people fancying people who aren't supposed to be in that part of the plan," Valentine admits that she is the first person to think of that, as Septimus did before to Thomasina. However, the most apparent example is the dancing scene at the end of the play where the two pairs, Septimus-Thomasina and Hannah-Gus, dance together at the same time.

This apparent self-referential quality of the two worlds may reflect some basic implications of Chaos Theory. However, it seems to have more to do with supporting structurally and thematically Septimus's view on history and the human destiny. Thomasina is once seen to lament the loss of the ancient masters: "Oh, Septimus! - can you bear it? All the lost plays of the Athenians! Two hundred at least by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides - thousands of poems - Aristotle's own library brought to Egypt by the noodle's ancestors! How can we sleep for grief?" To this Septimus replies in no time:

> By counting our stock. Seven plays from Aeschylus, seven from Sopocles [*sic*], *nineteen* from Euripides, my lady! [. . .] We shed as we pick up, like travellers who must carry everything in their arms, and what we let fall will be picked up by those behind. The procession is very long and life is very short. We die on the march. But there is nothing outside the march so nothing can be lost to it. The missing plays of Sophocles will turn up piece by piece, or be written again in another language. Ancient cures for diseases will reveal themselves once more. Mathematical discoveries glimpsed and lost to view will have their time again. (38)

Septimus' argument here is most like a customarily Stoppardian view. If indeed the world is as Septimus describes here, the world will not undergo much change, or at least the basic concerns of human beings (love will be one of them, as is demonstrated through the similarity between the various love relationships in the past and the present) will remain more or less the same, and only in this context, the lost plays could be written again. Human will and attempts to change the world will be not only irrelevant

but pointless, because after due time everything will become all right. This rather composed attitude quite strongly reminds us of the claim by Joyce in Travesties: ". . . yes by God *there's* a corpse that will dance for some time yet and *leave the world precisely as it finds it.*"[494]

Despite the disconcerting implication, Arcadia is largely supportive of Septimus' argument quoted above. Besides the apparent analogies between the past and the present discussed above, Chaos Theory, alongside Fermat's Last Theorem, is no doubt used as a proof for a scientific theory "glimpsed and lost to view". Another graphic example is the gathering of the small objects on the table placed in the hall. Its symbolic meaning is very difficult to grasp in an actual performance, but Stoppard went to great lengths to make it sure that the accumulation of the objects on the table is an important part of his scheme.

> *In the case of props - books, paper, flowers, etc., there is no absolute need to remove the evidence of one period to make way for another.* [. . .] *During the course of the play the table collects this and that, and where an object from one scene would be an anachronism in another (say a coffee mug) it is simply deemed to have become invisible. By the end of the play the table has collected an inventory of objects.* (15)

Indeed, at the end of the play, the table contains "*the geometrical solids, the computer, decanter, glasses, tea mug, Hannah's research books, Septimus's books, the two portfolios, Thomasina's candlestick, the oil lamp, the dahlia, the Sunday papers . . .*"(96) This is an illustration of, if anything, Septimus's argument that we "shed as we pick up, like travellers who must carry everything in their arms, and what we let fall will be picked up by those behind." What is left unanswered, however, as far as this metaphoric message is concerned, is whether this necessarily signifies progress. It seems that it can also be plausibly explained as an illustration of the increase of entropy.

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[494] Travesties, p.42.

Death is a powerful reminder of entropy at work, and as I mentioned before, death permeates Arcadia. The inept Chater repeatedly issues a challenge to a duel, and in the end dies in an ignominious way. The game books which provide the real data to chaos scientists in Arcadia are actually "A calendar of slaughter".(13) Lady Croom, while likening her estate to Arcadia, unwittingly comments, "'*Et in Arcadia ego*!' 'Here I am in Arcadia.'"(12) The 'I' in her quotation actually refers to death itself, so when Septimus later presents a correct translation ("'Even in Arcadia, there am I!'"), Thomasina immediately retorts, "Oh, phooey to Death!"(13) And the very presence of death even in Arcadia quite forces us to change our general idea of Arcadia itself, underscoring the universality of entropy.

Thomasina's prompt denunciation of death will have some ironic note in the end, as she herself will meet the most unfortunate and unexpected death. Her death is quite gratuitous almost like Ophelia's, but it is her death which makes the final dancing scene emphatically emotional. It may be the most emotionally charged moment in the whole of Stoppardian theatre, and significant in many ways as well. The gracious merging of the past and the present in the dancing pairs is no small achievement. However, paradoxical as it may sound, her dance is a most powerful assertion of life in that she dances under the shadow of death. She dies the same night in the most horrendous way imaginable (a terrible example of "a body in heat"). For that, her dance is the more moving and in a sense heroic as she defies the grip of the law to the last moment.

Compared with the deaths of Mr Moon, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Thomasina's death is an emphatic affirmation of the role of chance in the world. What Mr Moon, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were most afraid of was a death, gratuitous and accidental, hence meaningless. Behind Thomasina's death accidental death, however, is the enigmatic law of nature which weaves all the complexities and diversities including our own life and death. In this respect, her death powerfully drives home the question of chance and inevitability and their interaction.

The actual performance of Arcadia, however, does not end in sad mood. Thomasina is such a lively and impressive character throughout that in a sense we are blocked to link her amicable presence at the final moment to her imminent death.

In the end, the issues raised in Arcadia come down to the central question of human destiny. If Newtonian determinism is essentially lifeless, the determinism of entropy is life-destroying.[495] Though Chaos Theory provides some consolation in that chaos itself is not so chaotic, and chaos itself is a necessity, it is still necessary to define human destiny in the face of the all-powerful law of entropy.

There were some scientists who tried to prove entropy otherwise, suggesting that it can decrease. Bolzman, for example, argued that, though it is extremely unlikely, "as a result of the random movement of air molecules it *could* happen that all of the air in the room might suddenly concentrate in the corners".[496] Hence, the equilibrium could be broken in a reverse way. Another famous attempt is Maxwell's thought experiment. He imagined an extremely tiny, but intelligent being,[497] at a frictionless door between two volumes of the same gas. As the demon knows all the motions of the molecules in each partition, when a fast moving particle approaches, it opens the door so that faster moving molecules gather in one partition. If this were possible, the law of entropy could be broken. Later, it was proved that Maxwell's assumption was inherently wrong. However, Maxwell's demon undeniably has a certain charm with its good intent and intelligence in particular.

In Arcadia, Stoppard seems to suggest two ways to cope with our "doomed" situation; these are love and knowledge.

As I said earlier, there are quite a few variations of love relationships which make the spirit of love pervasive in Arcadia. Most significant of all, however, is the love between Septimus and Thomasina. Their love for each other is the most genuine, based upon the deep understanding of each other's emotional and intellectual capabilities and potentials. Hence, they could overcome the social and age gaps. Love, therefore, is the indefinable, mysterious quality which not only makes our life a blessing, but helps us to get over the insurmountable.

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[495] I am saying this in the commonsensical sense and in relation to Arcadia. Under strict scientific examination, there must be some objections to this rather careless generalization. As far as I understand, Ilya Prigogine successfully conveys the idea that the chaos itself implied in entropy is vital for a higher complexity.

[496] Jeremy Rifkin and Ted Howard, Entropy: A New World View (London: Paladin Books, Granada Publishing, 1985), p.52.

[497] This is known as Maxwell's demon, though the name was given later by Lord Kelvin. Refer to Goldstein, p.221.

In fact, Septimus and Thomasina are depicted as being in a special relationship throughout the play, besides being the tutor and the pupil. For example, when Thomasina first put a hermit in the Noakes prospectus, she described him as "the Baptist in the wilderness".(14) Considering that Septimus will be the hermit, elucidating the questions raised and solved by Thomasina, it is no accidental image for her tutor in the future. Whether he succeeded in his research is a question to which there is no answer in Arcadia. However, he and Thomasina represent different modes of approach to the fundamental question. If Thomasina captures the truth in the lightening of a moment with her intuition, Septimus works further on the discovery, probably making it more easily accessible.

Their special relationship is further implied by the tortoise-rabbit pairing, redefining in a way the moral of the ancient fable. Basically Septimus is associated with the tortoise. He keeps a tortoise named Plautus. He is said to have been keeping the tortoise all his life. Above all, it is the picture of him with Plautus that finally demonstrates that he is indeed the Sidley hermit. On the other hand, Thomasina is a rabbit girl.

> SEPTIMUS: [. . .] I have brought Lady Thomasina a rabbit. Will you take it?
>
> JELLABY: It's dead.
>
> SEPTIMUS: Yes. Lady Thomasina loves a rabbit pie.
>
> (JELLABY *takes the rabbit without enthusiasm. There is a little blood on it.*) (67)

Indeed, it was while she was eating "yesterday's upstairs' rabbit pie"(3) that she picked up the gossip on Septimus's affair with Mrs Chater. More importantly, she discovered Chaos Theory through "her rabbit equation", though tortoise-like Septimus saw "no resemblance to a rabbit."

The rabbit and the tortoise may be the visual metaphors for Thomasina's and Septimus' mental capabilities. The point, however, is that they are not in competition against each other. Both qualities are needed to enhance intellectual development. In this sense, the paradoxical name, "Lightning", for Valentine's pet tortoise also seems

quite deliberate. It successfully stands for the combined qualities of rabbit-like intuition and tortoise-like patience.

Concerning the question of knowledge, there is a disconcerting implication: that is, does increased knowledge mean progress or increased entropy? There is no denying that modern civilization with its unprecedented technical knowledge is building entropy up at an ever-increasing rate. Even the huge amount of information itself piling up these days contributes to the creation of information chaos. However, it is also true that our knowledge is getting ever more sophisticated and integrated into a higher order, as is demonstrated, for example, by the unspeakably complex images of Chaos. If there is no way to decrease entropy, the only option available to us is to curb its increase with our ever more increasing awareness of entropy and ever more refined knowledge of the universe. At any rate, it seems, this is the position Stoppard endorses in Arcadia.

First of all, the zeal to know more, to get to the truth, is a characteristic that all the major characters in Arcadia share. Thomasina, Septimus, Valentine, and Hannah are all players in the progress of our knowledge. Though the motive is a bit tainted, and the vision a bit limited, Bernard is no doubt among the others. This sentiment and attitude is best exemplified by Valentine's comment: "It's the best possible time to be alive, when almost everything you thought you knew is wrong."(48) Later, Valentine makes the point in a more explicit way: "It's like arguing who got there first with the calculus. The English say Newton, the Germans say Leibniz. But it doesn't *matter*. Personalities. What matters is the calculus. Scientific progress. Knowledge."(60-61) What Valentine argues must be true. It will stand to reason more to say that all the important scientific discoveries are the result of the collective endeavour of human beings who are determined as much as fascinated in their quest for truth. Newton is largely acknowledged as the inventor of calculus, but it is almost unknown that Newton "developed his calculus based on 'Monsieur Fermat's method of drawing tangents.'"[498] Later, Hannah once again stresses the importance of our quest for truth in the most memorable way.

HANNAH: [. . .] It's *all* trivial - your grouse, my hermit, Bernard's

[498] Simon Singh, Fermat's Last Theorem, (London: Fourth Estate, 1997; paperback edition, 1998), p.47.

> Byron. Comparing what we're looking for misses the point. It's wanting to know that makes us matter. Otherwise we're going out the way we came in. [. . .] If the answers are in the back of the book [the Bible] I can wait, but what a drag. Better to struggle on knowing that failure is final. (75-76)

The unstoppable human spirit to know more is no doubt presented as one of the keys to cope with our doomed situation.

A most wonderful character in Arcadia is Gus; all the more so because he is almost invisible. David Guaspari calls him "Arcadia's unsolved—indeed, uninvestigated—mystery". And he goes on to say, "A boy gone voluntarily mute might seem like a would-be Symbol the size and subtlety of a billboard, but his function is (to me, at least) obscure."[499] However, he has his symbolic roles, it seems to me, not in the future, but in Arcadia, though my interpretation is of a highly speculative nature.

A most apparent quality of the character of Gus is indeed *mysteriousness*. Gus went "voluntarily mute" at the age of five, which defies any explanation. He makes up a tune while playing the piano. When the present Lady Croom was digging in the wrong place advised by an expert, he put her right at the first go, exactly finding out the foundations of Capability Brown's boat-house. The most surprising event is that Gus presents Hannah with the picture of Septimus with Plautus, the last proof Hannah has been desperately looking for. How could Gus know what Hannah has been researching, even when there is no evidence that she has been discussing her research subject with Gus?

This very mysteriousness, however, is significant. As I have already mentioned, Arcadia is a drama about the quest for truth, while making it clear that the absolute truth is unobtainable. So there are many devices used to evoke a strong sense of mystery in Arcadia. Thomasina's genius is also a mystery. How could she grasp the most profound ideas of science so easily and so ahead of her time? Fermat's last theorem no doubt adds to the sense of mystery. Did Fermat really have the proof he did

[499] David Guaspari, "Stoppard's Arcadia," Antioch Review 54, No.4 (1996), p.235.

not bother to write down? It was in 1993, the same year Arcadia was first staged, that Andrew Wiles, an English-born American mathematician, first announced that he had proved Fermat's last theorem. However, his announcement proved to be an unhappy stunt which, in scale and significance, far exceeded Bernard's bungled attempt, as it was later revealed that there was some gap in his demonstration. Still, he eventually proved Fermat's Last Theorem in 1995. So a most enigmatic mathematical challenge was finally overcome, but only with the aid of the latest mathematical developments and insights 350 years after Fermat had first posed the theorem. Even now the mystery is not wholly uncovered as there still lingers a question whether there is another, far simpler proof Fermat originally conceived. Opinion is still divided in the mathematical world.

Even Ezra Chater's death looks as comic as it is mysterious. What was the real situation in which he was killed "by a monkey bite"? The link between the poet and the botanist is so unbelievable that we are even tempted to side with Bernard to guess that they are not the same person.

The Byron connection is another powerful method to evoke the sense of mystery, as indeed his life was full of mystery; his poetic genius itself, his alleged incestuous relationship with his half sister, Augusta, his alleged homosexual relationship with a choir boy named Edleston, to name but a few. Furthermore, the way Byron is incorporated into the play so that his presence may be more acutely felt by his physical absence, is really remarkable. Besides the extant references to Byron by the main characters, the implicit references to him indeed make him a hovering spirit. The name of Gus, not to mention Augustus, Thomasina's brother, seems to have Byronic connection in that Augusta who had an intimate relationship with the poet, used to call him "Guss" as a nick-name.[500] Bernard once comments to Hannah that she has "never understood him [Byron], as you've shown in your novelette".(59) The novelette he mentions is the one titled "Caro", Hannah's best-seller, and it seems as if Byron himself were talking to Caro (Caroline Lamb) herself, as she wrote a novelette whose protagonist was modelled after Byron. Even at the comic moment when Septimus reveals his love for Lady Croom, there seems to be a Byronic connection.

[500] Marchand, p.145.

LADY CROOM: [. . .] I hope I am more than a match for Mrs Chater with her head in a bucket. Does she wear drawers?

SEPTIMUS: She does.

LADY CROOM: Yes, I have heard that drawers are being worn now.(72)

According to Lady Byron's recollections, during her stay with Byron at Augusta's house just after their marriage, Byron used to say, "'A. *I know* [you wear drawers]'—or to me, '*I know* A [wears them],' with an *emphasis* perfectly unequivocal."[501] Whether Stoppard actually had this connection in mind cannot be corroborated, but it seems as if he were making an ironic comment about the episode, maintaining the Byron connection in a most inscrutable way.[502]

The character of Thomasina herself is said to be modelled after Byron's daughter, Ada, who is presumably "the world's first computer programmer".[503] In honour of this, a computer language developed by the Defence Department of the United States was named after her in 1980.[504] All these, together with the mystery of Gus, successfully establish the atmosphere of mystery which serves as a background for the scientific debates.

Another quality about the character of Gus, closely related with mysteriousness, is his *unrealness*. All the mysterious characteristics of Gus add to it, together with the

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[501] The brackets are from the original, and the letter A in the quotation refers to Augusta. Ibid., p.198.

[502] Even Chater is not absolutely free from his connection with Byron. His first poetry book, "The maid of Turkey", tacitly reminds us of Byron's famous poem, "The Maid of Athens". According to Benjamin Wooley, there was a poet named Joseph Blacket, Annabella, future Lady Byron, and her mother Judith "nurtured into publication". They "put him up in a cottage on the Milbank family estate and sustained him with little parcels of cash conveyed by servants."(17) In return, he "wrote touching poems on themes suggested by his patrons, read and complimented Annabella's own poetical efforts, and expired romantically at the age of twenty-three." Byron caricatured him in English Bards and Scotch Reviewers as "the tenant of a stall" with "a pen less pointed than his awl", "having given up his store of shoes" and now "cobbles for the Muse." The poet was a cobbler. Benjamin Wooley, The Bride of Science: Romance, Reason and Byron's Daughter (London: Macmillan, 1999), pp.16-17.

[503] Ibid., p.269. It was Irving Wardle who first mentioned the connection in his review of Arcadia in Independent on Sunday 18, April, 1993.

[504] Benjamin Wooley, though he concedes that "Ada was not a great mathematician"(p.276), connects her interest in complex numbers to Chaos Theory: "[. . .], Ada found the concept of imaginary numbers fascinating. [. . .] And, as various mathematicians had shown at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, they could be combined with real numbers, yielding 'complex numbers', the properties of which could be explored by plotting a graph, with one axis representing the imaginary component of the complex number, the other axis the real part. This created a new form of two-dimensional geometry (a geometry that a hundred and fifty years later would be shown to have as one of its distinctive shapes that icon of chaos theory, the Mandelbrot set)." Benjamin Wooley, p.261.

minimal information given about him. Indeed, he behaves in such a way as to minimize his presence. He still remains a significant character, demonstrating Stoppard's mastery of dramatic skills.

Gus also has a somewhat angelic atmosphere about him. He strictly limits his contacts with other people, and gets upset when people shout, irrespective of who it is. He is also fundamentally constructive in whatever he is involved except only the piano noise he sometimes makes.

All these suggest, it seems to me, that he is a character incarnate of some life-giving, entropy-reducing principle. He may be a being like Maxwell's demon.

As I have already stated, Thomasina's final dance is a dance of both life and death. With Gus and Hannah joining, the significance of the dance amplifies. Can anything dreadful happen to Gus sooner or later as it did to Thomasina? Or is Gus demonstrating the life-preserving force by joining the dance? In any case, the dance is a dramatic gesture, a powerful metaphor for the deep, rich world that life and death, the two ultimate realities as far as we humanbeings are concerned, intermingle to produce the very world of the Chaos and Order which we inhabit. This is the vision of Arcadia in Arcadia, and it effectively sums up the whole vision of the Stoppardian world.

VI. Conclusion

Stoppard's development in terms of his art and vision of the world has come full circle with Arcadia since his career took off with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. In the early works, typically in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead and Lord Malquist and Mr Moon, Stoppard presents modern man's desperate efforts to find meanings in his lives and the world, on the one hand, and his failure to do so, on the other. This in a way testifies to Stoppard's own inability to artistically portray the world as a unification of chaos and order. As the result, in spite of their instinctive belief in the order of the world, the early protagonists are unredeemably entrapped in chaos, and end up in ignominious deaths. On a different level, however, Lord Malquist and Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead properly belong to the category of meta-literature, and the complexities and ambiguities prevalent in them largely originate in the self-reflexive characteristic. Both Lord Malquist and Mr Moon and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead depict the agonizing process of an aspiring writer trying to establish his own identity as a creative writer, on the one hand, and his failure to do so, on the other. Once again, the failure is due to the protagonists' inability to put chaos and order into a unified context. Interestingly, Lord Malquist and Mr Moon, over which Stoppard was more ambitious, was a total flop, while Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead established Stoppard's fame as a promising young playwright. A possible explanation for the crossed fortunes of the works is that Stoppard put into the novel such diverse ideas, yet without a gripping plot, that the novel actually got nowhere, while in the case of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, the plot of Hamlet kept the play more or less in focus, preventing it from diverging too widely.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead is an amazing work particularly from a young playwright, as it deals with such abstruse themes of death and life/illusion dichotomy. However, it seems that Stoppard was not fully aware of all the ideas incorporated into his play, as his assertion that "the idea is the end product of the play"[505] indirectly attests. In Jumpers and Travesties, however, Stoppard deliberately tries to set forth his own views on such fundamental questions of morality and art, and the views expressed

[505] Tom Stoppard, "Something to Declare," The Sunday Times, 25 February 1968, p.47.

in both works remain more or less the same through Stoppard's whole career as his underlying assumptions and vision.

In Jumpers, Stoppard makes clear his opposition to radical empiricism and materialism represented largely by logical positivists. To Stoppard, they pose an ominous threat in that they attempt to eradicate the vital mysteries of the world and thereby to put the world in a scientific order. George, together with Stoppard, fights against them with his moral absolutism, arguing memorably that there is "good which is independent of time and place and which is knowable but not nameable".[506] Love, for example, is one of the vital mysteries, by virtue of which our existence in the world can be elevated to a higher dimension.

Stoppard's moral absolutism finds its equivalent in Travesties as aesthetic absolutism. Stoppard rejects both Tzara's extreme self-indulgence and Lenin's extremely functional art. Instead, he argues that the role of art is to present the world as it is, and thereby immortalizes it. In this context, Stoppard's artistic vision is fundamentally Joycean in that Joyce demonstrated in Ulysses the very role of art Stoppard envisages, and it is small wonder that Stoppard speaks with Joyce in the play.

What underlies Stoppard's moral and aesthetic absolutism is his individualism. Stoppard objects to art serving a particular cause, but sincerely believes in its social function. This rather paradoxical attitude is notably in evidence in Stoppard's argument that art "provides the moral matrix, the moral sensibility, from which we make our judgements about the world".[507] In other words, art is not directly involved in changing the world, but tries to present the world as it is, and still has its function, as it works on our "moral sensibility". In other words, to present the world as it is, is itself moral. The problem with this vision, though its truth can hardly be questioned, is that it inevitably leads to individualism, as it objects to any collective efforts to change the present state of affairs.

Stoppard's so-called political plays are overt applications of Stoppard's moral and artistic vision. Stoppard once argued that he believes in "art being good art or bad art, not relevant art or irrelevant art".[508] We can ask whether Stoppard's political works are good works or bad works, but the question whether they are relevant or irrelevant still

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[506] Jumpers, p.46.
[507] "Ambushes for the Audience", p.14.
[508] Ibid.

remains valid. This is not just because Stoppard unequivocally denounces the human rights abuses in the Eastern European Communist countries, but, more significantly, because Stoppard comes up with his own ideological belief, the kind of moral matrix he has in mind to provide. Stoppard's argument in his political plays, in a nutshell, is that to guarantee fundamental, individual human rights is the way to avoid a dictatorial regime. However, it is too true to be specifically meaningful. Moreover, instead of giving a due contextual consideration to the question of individual versus community, Stoppard unequivocally sides with the individualist position, and thus, establishes an absolute supremacy of the one over the other.

Stoppard's concern for public causes did not last long. Stoppard, it seems, felt the need to look back into his practice of art and to probe the meanings of love at the juncture of his middle age. The Real Thing heralds Stoppard's new, maturer stage. While dealing with the daunting subjects of love and art, Stoppard for the first time succeeds in unifying emotion and intellect. Stoppard's vision of art still remains largely the same as that in Travesties, and his absolutist tendency is also in evidence, particularly in Henry's lecture on real love. However, they are impressively set amid the dynamic process of Henry's education in love. Significantly, the play ends propitiously as Henry and Annie confirm their real love for each other. This positive note is what I call reconciliation, and anticipates the final fusion of chaos and order in Arcadia.

The question of chaos and order lies at the centre of Arcadia against a vast background of scientific theories, and Stoppard impressively demonstrates that neither inevitability (order) nor randomness (chaos) alone can lead to the true vision of the world. It is the interaction of the two, "the fortuitous and the ordained"[509] according to Guildenstern, and "the unpredictable and the predetermined"[510] according to Valentine, that makes the world as it is. This fusion of chaos and order in Arcadia effectively resolves all the conflicting ideas Stoppard has been dealing with. Finally, Stoppard proposes that we can cope with our existence through love and knowledge. This is far from being a new idea, but its validity can hardly be doubted.

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[509] Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, p.14.
[510] Arcadia, p.47.

Appendix I : The Bizarre Behaviour of the Particles Shown in the Double-Slit Experiment.

To illustrate the significance of this rather simple experiment, Stoppard quotes Richard Feynman as a foreword of the written text of Hapgood: "We choose to examine a phenomenon which is impossible, *absolutely* impossible, to explain in any classical way, and which has in it the heart of quantum mechanics. In reality it contains the *only* mystery . . . Any other situation in quantum mechanics, it turns out, can always be explained by saying, 'You remember the case of the experiment with the two holes? It's the same thing.' (Richard P. Feynman 'Lectures on Physics'/'The Character of Physical law')" The following account of the experiment is heavily indebted to Roger Penrose's The Emperor's New Minds (pp.299-305).

Suppose there is a screen of some kind with two slits (holes are all right) in it. On one side of the screen is a wall that incorporates a detector of some kind. On the other side is a source of photons (it is the same with any other particles).

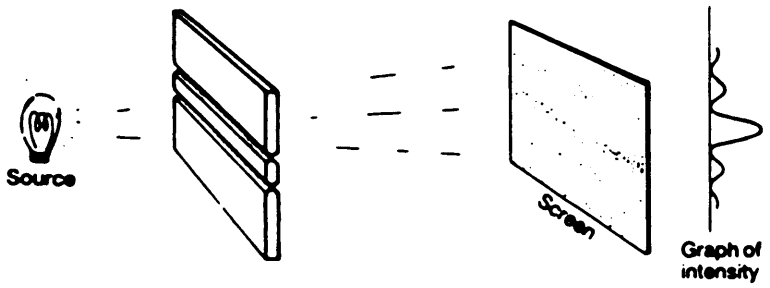


Figure 1-1. The two-slit experiment, with monochromatic light.

If either slit is blocked, the electrons behave "like normal, self-respecting everyday particles."[511] The part on the detector wall nearest to the slit will be brightest, while the intensity gets attenuated to either side. (Figure 1-2)

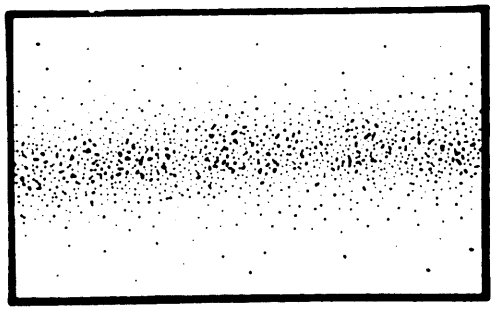


Figure 1-2 Pattern of intensity at the screen when just one slit is open - a distribution of discrete tiny spots.

511 John Gribbin, p.171.

If both slits are open, however, the key problem for the particle picture comes alive. We may expect that the intensity of illumination on the detector wall will simply get doubled when both slits are open.

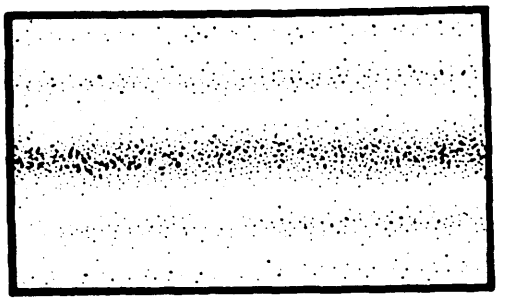


Figure 1-3 Pattern of intensity when both slits are open - a wavy distribution of discrete spots.

Surprisingly, the intensity of illumination at the brightest part is four times what it was, and at some other parts the intensity goes down to zero. This means that with both slits open photons are prevented from arriving where it could with only one slit open. This is a property called 'interference' in waves. Though we are familiar with the fact that the light is at once particle and wave, it is indeed puzzling enough in that particles moving in wave patterns do not exist in nature.[512] Still, the bizarre behaviour of a particle does not stop here. If the intensity of light from the source is dropped to the point that only one photon goes through either of the slit, we still get the interference pattern. So, it seems, "each particle travels through *both slits at once* and it interferes with *itself*!"[513] However, this should not be understood that the photon splits in two and travel both slits, because no particle has ever been observed as some fraction of a whole.[514]

Stranger still, if we place a detector at one of the slits, so that we may know which slit the photon went through, the interference pattern at the detector wall disappears. So, it seems, the photons not only know whether both holes are open, but they know whether or not we are watching them, and adjust their behaviour accordingly.

512 Fritjof Capra, p.165 "The picture of travelling waves is thus totally different from that of travelling particles; as different—in the words of Victor Weisskopf—'as the notion of waves on a lake from that of a school of fish swimming in the same direction.'" Ibid. p.165.
513 Roger Penrose, p.304.
514 Ibid., p.305.

Appendix II : The Mandelbrot Set

Roger Penrose supposes that we are travelling to a distant world, and jokingly calls the world "Tor'Bled-Nam".[515]

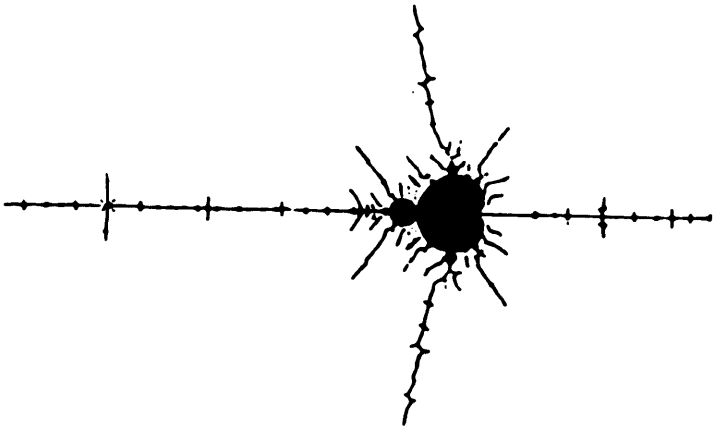


Figure 2-1. A first glimpse of a strange world.

By "reducing the magnification of our sensing device by a linear factor of about fifteen", the entire world of Tor'Bled-Nam springs into view. And the entire world bears uncanny resemblance with the part shown in Figure 2-1. Compared with the whole, it is just a tiny dot as is indicated by an arrow.

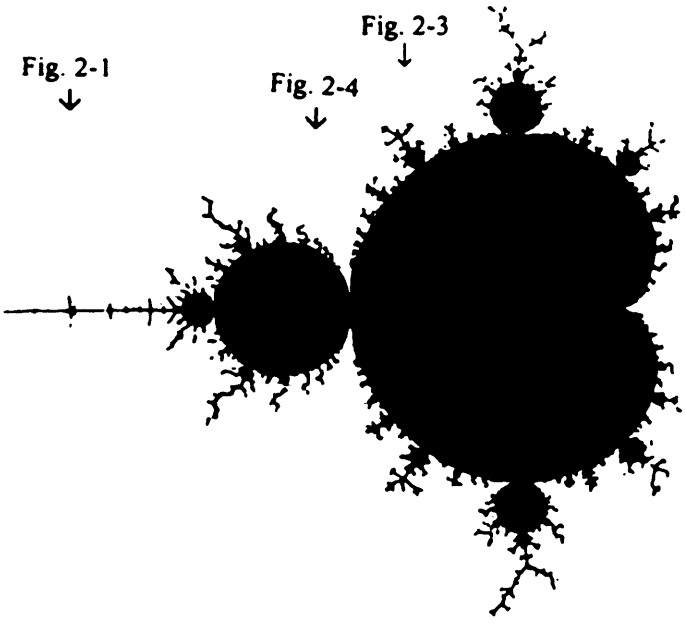


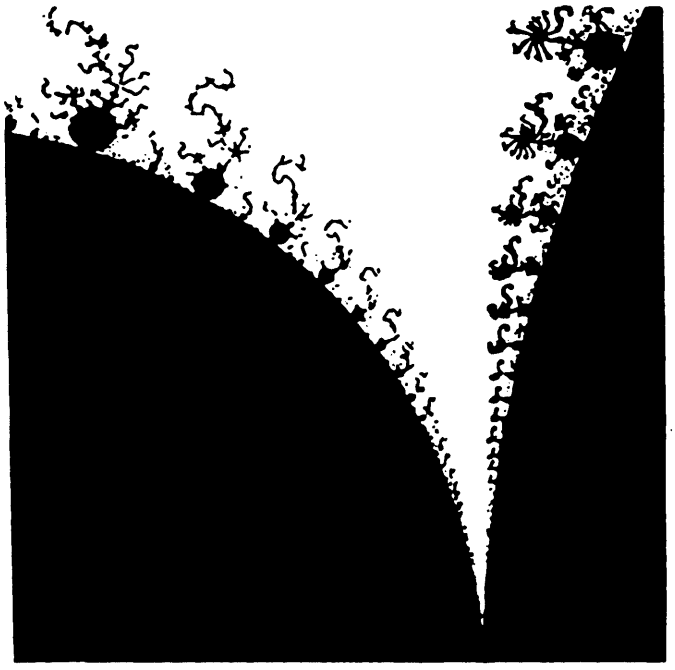
Figure 2-2. 'Tor'Bled-Nam' in its entirety. The locations of the magnifications shown in Figs 2-1, 2-3, and 2-4 are indicated beneath the arrows.

515 Refer to Roger Penrose, pp.98-105

Figure 2-3 is the small wart on the original picture magnified by a linear factor of about ten. The resemblance is striking, but in details there are differences to make it a different shape from the original one.

Figure 2-3. A wart with a 'fiveness' about its filaments.

Figure 2-4 is the crevice area magnified by a factor of about ten, and we still see the warts with their complex spiralling activities, but on the right, there appear as complex shapes which resemble 'sea-horse'.



← Fig. 2-5

Figure 2-4. The main crevice. 'Seahorse valley' is just discernible on the lower right.

With a sea-horse-like shape blown up with about 250-fold magnification (figure 2-5), we "find that this is no ordinary tail, but is itself made up of the most complicated swirlings back and forth, with innumerable tiny spirals, and regions like octopuses and seahorses."

Fig. 2-6
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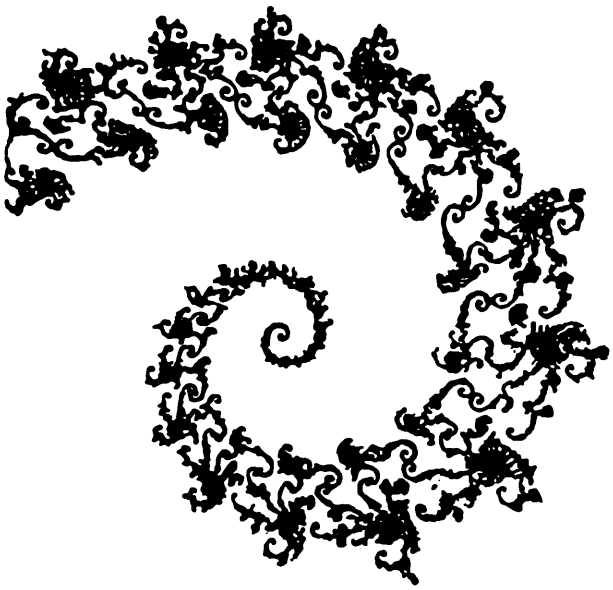

Figure 2-5. A close-up of a seahorse tail

Increasing the designated part by the arrow in Figure 2-5 by a factor of about thirty, there appears a familiar, if not clear, object in the centre.

↗
Fig. 2-7

Figure 2-6. A further magnification of a joining point where two spirals come together. A tiny baby is just visible at the central point.

A further increase of magnification by a factor of about six, there appears a tiny creature "almost identical to the entire structure" we have been examining.

Figure 2-7. On magnification, the baby is seen closely to resemble the entire world.

A closer look may easily prove that it is a bit different from the original, but the resemblance is really amazing! And if we continue our magnification, the baby will reveal all the varieties and complexities again and again, but any part of it will not be exactly the same with any other. Roger Penrose remarked, expressing his wonder at the Mandelbrot set, "The Mandelbrot set is not an invention of the human mind: it was a discovery. Like Mount Everest, the Mandelbrot set is just *there*!"[516]

[516] Roger Penrose, pp.124-25.

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