"Oppositions, rather than heroes": An Examination of Dialectical Principles in the Work of Tom Stoppard

by

Patricia Anne Myers Smith

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts
of the University of Cape Town
for the degree of
Master of Arts

April 1987

Abstract

The central assertion of this thesis is that the work of Tom Stoppard is uniformly informed by artistic principles which are dialectical in nature, and which are adopted by the playwright to express a consistently dialectical world view. The thesis examines the details and implications of the prevalence in Stoppard's work of features accurately described by the terms of Hegelian dialectical theory.

Chapter one briefly examines this theory, which provides the philosophical basis and terminology for the thesis, and suggests how Stoppard's work may be linked to it.

Chapter two discusses the genres within which Stoppard's works fall. It is noted, by means of comparison and reference to the works, that the genres of drama and comedy, as opposed to the novel or poetry and tragedy, are inherently appropriate for the expression of a dialectical world view, and are therefore logically favoured by the playwright.

Chapters three and four take the discussion of dialectical principles in Stoppard's work from considering their appearance at an overall generic level to examining their presence in the details of individual works. These chapters examine the ways in which the first two terms of

the thesis-antithesis-synthesis triad of dialectical theory are reflected in Stoppard's plays. Chapter three discusses antithetical oppositions in the "hierarchy of dramatic construction" - in the words, lines, scenes and acts of the plays. Chapter four continues the examination by discussing the presence of dialectical oppositions in the characters and ideas of the plays. It is suggested parenthetically that Stoppard's allusiveness is reflective of a dialectical awareness and cultivated to express this. In both chapters it is explained that the extended use of quoted examples from the texts is aimed at stressing the prevalence and variety of dialectical oppositions in the plays.

Chapter five considers how the theses and antitheses of the dialectical oppositions in the plays reach synthesis. A critical "school", which argues that Stoppard's plays are simply expressive of disorder in the Absurdist tradition, is identified. A further "school", which finds particular theses or antitheses being authorially vindicated at the expense of others, is noted. It is suggested that the conclusions of both "schools" are inadequate, being based on analysis which fails to examine the precision with which the equal validity of both sides of Stoppard's dialectical oppositions is presented. It is argued that this precision creates an open-ended exploration of possible responses to the issues of the plays, rather than providing either

authorially endorsed answers or a vision of irredeemable disorder. It is suggested that the dialectical oppositions of the plays reach synthesis in the experiencing minds of the audience members, which are forced through the dialectical progression of the plays to adopt a system of understanding sufficiently broad to encompass both the theses and antitheses which they have encountered. It is finally noted that it is in this "broad system of understanding" that the value, for Stoppard, of his drama lies, providing what he refers to as the "moral matrix from which we make our judgements of the world."

Contents

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my grateful thanks to the following for their contributions towards the completion of this thesis:

Terry Boxall for sound advice, constructive criticism and sympathetic supervision;

Dee Myers for assistance with typing;

Cassidy MacDonald and Roslyn Sulcas for making their word processors available to me;

Patrick Fish for making time to help in an emergency;

Leonard Smith for constant support and encouragement;

The Human Sciences Research Council and the University of Cape Town for financial assistance. The conclusions arrived at in this thesis are not, however, to be regarded as in any way a reflection on the HSRC.

Chapter 1

Dialectics and the Link with Stoppard

The term "dialectic" is a complex one: its connotations include those connected with its common usage and those attached to its specific use in philosophical theory. In general usage the term "dialectic" refers simply to discussion, disputation or argument. But the term has been strongly influenced by its incorporation into philosophical theory. Here the definition becomes more specific: "dialectic" refers directly to a particular method of philosophical contemplation and explication. This method involves the recognition and expression or statement of contrary principles and the resolution of their opposing elements in an encompassing system of understanding. G. R. G. Mure points to the question and answer conversations of Socrates and the dialogues of Plato as early examples of philosophical exposition based on the dialectical method, and explains that the German philosophers Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel adopted and adapted this method and expanded the concepts and theory of dialectics (24-31).

It is not necessary to the issues surrounding this thesis to enter into a detailed discussion of the contributions of the various German philosophers to dialectical theory. A consideration of their theory is only necessary in that it provides the terminology and basic theoretical principles which inform this thesis. The

following brief explanation will thus suffice.

It was Fichte, Mure argues, who, in expanding on the philosophical theory of Kant, introduced "... a dialectic of contradiction ... which passes beyond thesis and antithesis to synthesis" (30). Hegel developed this theory and it was from him, finally, that the theory of dialectics took the form it was to retain in general philosophical vocabulary. He adopted the terms "thesis", "antithesis" and "synthesis" and wove them into a complex argument in an attempt to express his philosophical insights. W. T. Stace outlines the essential elements of Hegel's dialectical theory usefully:

> Throughout the system there is [the] triple rhythm [of the 'triad']. Being, nothing, becoming, is the first Hegelian triad. The first category in each triad is always, as here, an affirmative category. It lays itself down as a positive assertion, eg. being, is, etc. The second category is always the negative, or opposite, of the first. It denies what the first affirmed, e.g. not-being, is not, etc. This second category is not brought in by Hegel from any external source. It is deduced from the first category, and this means that the first contains the second, and is shown to produce it out of itself .... Thus the first category contains its own opposite .... At this point the two categories stand confronting

and contradicting each other. But it is impossible to rest in this contradiction, for it means that opposite categories are applicable to the same thing at the same time. It means, in the case of the present triad, that if we affirm that anything "is", we must at the same time admit that it "is not" .... How can the thing both be and not be? The answer is that it both is and is not when it <u>becomes</u>. The category of becoming therefore resolves the contradiction. In other words the contradiction between the first and second categories is always reconciled in a third category which is the unity of the two preceding. The third category contains within itself the opposition of the other two, but it also contains their underlying harmony and unity. The three members of a triad are sometimes called the thesis, antithesis and synthesis, respectively. The synthesis being reached now posits itself as a new assertion, as an affirmative category which thereby becomes the thesis of a new triad .... It will be seen that this entire process of categories is a compulsory process forced onward by the compelling necessity of reason. By rational necessity the thesis gives rise to its opposite and so to a contradiction. Reason <u>cannot</u> rest in what is self-contradictory, and is therefore forced onwards to the synthesis. (92-3)

Bendetto Croce points out that in Hegel's writing "The relation of the two first [thesis and antithesis] to the third [synthesis] is expressed by the word 'solution' or 'overcoming'" (21). Hegel explains the importance of this concept:

> What is sublated (overcome dialectically) is not thereby reduced to nothing .... To sublate (aufheben) has a two-fold meaning in the language: on the one hand, it means to preserve, to maintain, and equally it means to cause to cease, to put an end to .... Thus what is sublated is at the same time preserved, it has lost its immediacy only but it is not on that account annihilated. (Quoted in Plant 143)

A point that becomes importantly clear with regard to the concept of synthesis is that it involves the resolution of opposites or contraries in an encompassing concept which preserves both while invalidating the individual exclusivity of each.

Mure argues that the terms involved are most fruitfully written thus: thesis-antithesis-synthesis; the hyphenation, he argues, is to show that "the order is logical and not temporal" (34). He also points out that Hegel used the "circle as the geometrical referent to this system" (37) in preference to the straight line, in order similarly to

emphasize the logical rather than temporal relationship of
At this point it will be fruitful to note certain
the three constituent concepts.
remarks made by Stoppard about his work, and indeed his
point of view, in the several interviews he has granted to
One final point with regard to the theory of
journalists and critics. In these interviews Stoppard
dialectical thought requires explication. This point was
himself a predilection for dialectical thinking and obvious
suggested by Stace in the argument quoted above: the
thesis about the way in which this preference influences the
antithesis, or "second category", "is not brought in by Hegel
structure and content of his writing. An antithesis is
from any external source. It is deduced from the first
'opposition' in artistic creation, which reminds us of the
category." The important suggestion here is that Hegel saw
first two terms of the thesis-antithesis-synthesis triad, is
the dialectical method of explication not as a philosophical
unveiled in the following remarks: "My plays are actually
system which usefully explained reality, but as a system of
constructed out of people defeating each other. ... I think
thought which, in its processes, actually reflected the
I write about oppositions, rather than across ...
nature of reality. Raymond Plant quotes Hegel's argument:
(Interview with A.C.H. Smith 2); "I don't write plays which
"... this dialectic is not an activity of subjective thinking
express my point of view. I write arguments
applied to some matter externally, but is rather the
I tend to write for two people rather than for One
matter's very soul putting forward its branches and fruit
alone" (Whitaker 5), "I write plays because writing
organically" (141). For Hegel, the dialectical method both
dialogue for two characters is the most respectable way of
explained and reflected the truth of reality; with its
contradicting myself" (Levy 19); "What I'm always trying to
emphasis on the synthesis of opposites it is, as Mure
say is Firstly, A. Secondly, minus A" (Hayman 101). "...
states: "... a system intended not as any rigid or final
like a Beckett joke which is the funniest joke in the
structure but as the deposit of a stern effort to think
world to me. It appears in various forms but it consists of
systematically in the faith that the truth is the whole" (40).
the statement followed by immediate refutation in the
same breath. It's a constant process of elaborate structure
and total - dismantlement (Hayman 17).
The preceding discussion makes the concerns of this
thesis clear. The examination of dialectical principles in
the work of Tom Stoppard will involve the recognition and
The mention of the word 'constant' in this final
explication of important elements in his work which reflect
observation recalls the process of dialectical thinking as
the triadic pattern explained above.

At this point it will be fruitful to note certain remarks made by Stoppard about his work, and indeed his world view, in the several interviews he has granted to journalists and critics. In these interviews Stoppard reveals a predilection for dialectical thinking and provides clues about the way in which this preference influences the structure and content of his writing. An attraction to "opposites" in artistic creation, which reminds us of the first two terms of the thesis-antithesis-synthesis triad, is revealed in the following remarks: "My plays are actually constructed out of people deflating each other. ... I tend to write about oppositions, rather than heroes ..." (Interview with A.C.H. Smith 2); "I don't write plays with heroes who express my point of view. I write argument plays. I tend to write for two people rather than for One Voice" (Whitaker 5); "I write plays because writing dialogue for two characters is the most respectable way of contradicting myself" (Levy 79); "What I'm always trying to say is 'Firstly, A. Secondly, minus A'" (Hayman 10); "... there's a Beckett joke which is the funniest joke in the world to me. It appears in various forms but it consists of confident statement followed by immediate refutation in the same voice. It's a constant process of elaborate structure and sudden - and total - dismantlement" (Hayman 7).

The mention of the word "constant" in this final quotation recalls the process of dialectical thinking as

explained in the preceding theory. The idea of the emergence of the synthesis of the contradictory thesis and antithesis as a newly posited thesis is suggested here and in the following two remarks:

> ... you get into trouble with my plays if you think that there's a static viewpoint on the events. There is no observer. There is no safe point around which everything takes its proper place, so that you see things flat and see how they relate to each other. ...there's no point of rest. (Hayman 144)
>
> . . .
>
> ... the element 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-rebuttal, 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" 6-7)

Stoppard has explained that his frequent presentation of opposing elements stems directly from his world view: "What I think of as my distinguishing mark is an absolute

lack of certainty about almost anything .... I don't feel certain enough about anything to put up a hero to say it for me" (Hayman 40); "... god knows why I try to do it like that - presumably because I _am_ like that. ... My plays are a lot to do with the fact that _I just don't know_" ("Ambushes" 13).

The quotations cited here, with their emphasis on "oppositions", "contradictions", repeated "rebuttals", "counter-rebuttals" and "refutations" and a lack of "static viewpoints", suggest that the works to which they refer contain elements which may be usefully examined in terms of the components of dialectical theory. It is an examination of this kind that will be conducted in the succeeding chapters of this thesis.

It should be acknowledged that the recognition of dialectical principles in Stoppard's work is not new, and that from the first critics noticed in his work the presence of the elements of dialectical thought which have been noted above.

Jill Levenson states that _Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon_ is "structured loosely as a debate" with two characters at the extremes of "idealistic commitment" and "cynical disengagement" and "a number of other characters [who] hover between these two attitudes ..." (439). In seeking an artistic

parallel for Stoppard's approach, Kenneth Tynan quotes Oscar Wilde's maxim: "A Truth in art is that whose contradictory is also true" (48). Coppelia Kahn discusses the "intensely antagonistic debates " of Travesties, in which "spokesmen exchange positions capriciously, or their opposing viewpoints collapse into identical nonsense." Kahn contends that Travesties "actually concludes ... suggesting a perpetual agon continuing the debate" (193). Hersh Zeifman argues that The Real Thing "bounces the questions around in a kind of endless debate" ("Comedy of Ambush" 141). And Richard Corballis detects in Stoppard's work a "customary structural pattern, which consists of a pair of polar opposites straddled by something in between" (77).

Certain expressions used by Levenson, Tynan, Kahn, Zeifman and Corballis suggest elements of dialectical thought in Stoppard's work without invoking the basic thesis-antithesis-synthesis terminology of dialectical theory. Other critics, however, have made the link between Stoppard's dramatic principles and dialectical theory more explicit. For example, Thomas Whitaker describes a "circle of antitheses" (119) in Travesties and suggests that Stoppard's characters are a "line of antithetical twins" (140), while Tim Brassell notes that "there is a deliberate, rasping antithesis" (171) in Artist Descending a Staircase; Enoch Brater argues that a "discrete synthesis between 'seriousness' and 'frivolity'... has become the hallmark of [Stoppard's] style" (117); Ronald Hayman notes in

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead a "moment-to-moment progression, which is almost dialectical" (39) and describes Stoppard's technique in terms of "playing dialectical leap-frog" (53); Felicia Londré asserts that "Dialectical thought provides ... impetus for ... Jumpers" (Tom Stoppard 49); Thomas Whitaker argues that Travesties carries an "implicit dialectical burden" (119) and that it reveals the influence of "Shavian dialectic" (113); Richard Corballis, too, notes this influence, suggesting that the structure of Shaw's Heartbreak House corresponds "to the three phases of Hegelian dialectic" and explaining that the suggestion of a "Shavian parallel [in Night and Day] is certainly apt in many respects" (114).

These views have been quoted at some length in order to illustrate the fact that one finds the terms associated with dialectical thought in a great number of the major critical interpretations of Stoppard's work, ranging from those written in the early nineteen seventies at the start of Stoppard's career, to those appearing in current periodicals, and from those referring to his earliest efforts, his novel and radio plays, to those concerned with his latest work for the stage and television. The critics quoted above have most usually used the terms noted in the course of either general critical analysis of the works or the explication of specific features of certain works. None has made the extraordinary prevalence in Stoppard's work of

features so accurately described by these terms the subject of detailed study. This thesis aims to pursue such an examination.

It should be clear that the examination of dialectical principles in Stoppard's work with which this thesis is concerned will not simply constitute the arbitrary identification of areas of the work which "fit" a preconceived "mould", but will rather involve the explication of Stoppard's most basic artistic principles and the way in which they reveal the concerns of his work. For it is the contention of this thesis, and the preceding quotations from Stoppard and his critics support this suggestion, that the presentation of opposing principles, and the production of meaning through the resolution of their contrary characteristics, is a central feature of Stoppard's artistic technique, pervading his entire output of plays, stories and a novel. Both the workings and implications for meaning of dialectical principles in the individual works will be examined in detail. In the course of the examination of individual works and their relations to one another, the recurrent themes and issues which occupy Stoppard's interest will be suggested, and an explanation offered as to why it is appropriate that dialectical principles are adopted by him for their presentation, while an exploration is conducted of the ultimate perceptions, attitudes and views of the world which are revealed by his employment of dialectical principles in artistic creation.

Chapter 2

The Significance of Genre Choices

The genres open to the artist working within the bounds of imaginative literary expression are essentially three: prose fiction, drama and poetry. Stoppard's published work falls within the former two, although "poetic" elements have been detected in his plays (Tynan 85). It is not with such elements that we need be concerned at present; it is not intended that a discussion of the defining parameters of poetry should be undertaken. Attention is directed, however, to Stoppard's use of the novelistic and dramatic forms of expression because the choice of genre carries with it inherent possibilities and limitations. It is already apparent from the description of "poetic" elements in the plays that, in practice, the theoretical categories posited seldom exist in isolation. However, ignoring for the present the complications of such practical considerations, it will be fruitful to examine the implications of genre choices for the "inherent possibilities and limitations" they present. For, in the course of a discussion of these, we may come closer to the recognition of Stoppard's artistic aims.

It is interesting to observe that, although his reputation is built upon his success as a playwright, Stoppard's first published works were short stories. His short stories "Reunion", "Life, Times: Fragments" and "The

Story" appeared in an anthology of works by new writers called Introduction 2 in 1964. The next work to appear was his novel, Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon, published in 1966. In fact, Stoppard wrote his first play, Enter a Free Man (then titled A Walk on the Water) in 1961, but this was not performed until 1963 and not published until 1968. In the same year that the short stories appeared, the BBC broadcast two of Stoppard's fifteen-minute radio plays, The Dissolution of Dominic Boot and 'M' is for Moon and Other Things, and Stoppard embarked also upon the first draft of what was to become, in 1966, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead. It will be noticed that throughout the early nineteen sixties, in what might be described as the years of his artistic apprenticeship, Stoppard experimented with the categories of both prose fiction and drama. And, interestingly, any intimations of success on his part were centred on his novel, rather than his plays, as he confessed to Janet Watts: "I was very light-hearted about the whole thing [the premier of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead] ..., there was no doubt in my mind whatsoever that the novel would make my reputation, and the play would be of little importance either way" (quoted in Hayman 47). Despite this conviction, the performance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead by the National Theatre Company thrust his dramatic work into prominence, and prose fiction was abandoned from that point onward in favour of the drama.

This shift in emphasis may be explained by reasons less capricious than those attendant on Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead's movement from the fringe of the Edinburgh festival to London's West End. It was suggested earlier that it is the inherent possibilities and limitations of dramatic expression as compared to those of the novel form, that we may, in the light of Stoppard's dramatic output of the twenty years following the appearance of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, detect as the forces behind the abandonment of the novel in favour of the drama. Let us conduct such a comparison in order to establish the features of the genre Stoppard has come to favour.

A novel is almost exclusively experienced individually, the reader pursuing the reading of the text in isolation. The drama is usually experienced collectively, the spectator experiencing the performance of the play as part of an audience. The location in which the novel is read is variable; the reader chooses whatever place he or she wishes. A drama usually takes place within the defined parameters of a theatre, to which the spectator must go in order to witness it. Attendant on these features is the fact that the reader of a novel chooses the duration spent reading it, and may complete the reading at several interrupted sittings or at one. A member of a dramatic audience usually watches the play at one sitting, with only short, if any, intervals. The text of a novel is fixed on

the page, which occupies physical and temporal space; pages must be read consecutively in order to progress from beginning to end. The text of a play is presented by performers, and, while the performance occupies temporal and physical space, pieces of the text may be presented simultaneously in different acting areas, and the audience's experience of the words and actions need not follow the sequential path dictated by the novel. The presence of performers who present a dramatic text introduces the element of a mediating interpretation between author and audience into the apprehension of a drama which is not present in the experience of novel reading, which involves only the interaction of the reader with the words of the author. Finally, the novelist can only rely on the words used to create artistic effect; if he or she wishes to introduce complexity of character, situation or action, fairly complicated and extensive explanation and description will probably have to be presented. The playwright makes use not only of the verbal but also of the visual (or in the case of the radio play, the aural) component of his medium, and may produce the desired effects through the interaction of these components. But, unless there is a narrator-character, the playwright must rely on the <u>spoken</u> word, dialogue between characters or the soliloquizing of a single character, in conjunction with visual images, to convey the mental states of his characters.

This brief comparison between prose fiction and drama is not exhaustive; one might examine many further areas of divergence. And, as was the case with the identification of literary genres at the start of this chapter, there are without question numerous exceptions which violate the characteristics assigned specifically to the novel or to the drama, and cause complications of generic identification. But it is not such exceptions that concern us here; the comparison conducted in the preceding paragraph provides us with sufficient general grounds for discussing the reasons for and implications of Stoppard's shift from writing both prose fiction and plays, to working exclusively within the domain of the dramatist.

The comparison above presents in brief terms the "possibilities and limitations" of the genres discussed. It will be noticed immediately that in the presentation of a drama the contributing elements and components of production are more numerous than those involved in the experiencing of a novel, and that the playwright has the responsibility of controlling the basic arrangement of these elements. (Later, of course, this arrangement is interpreted by director and performers, but they cannot legitimately alter the initial intructions of the playwright without permission). The playwright, in creating a drama, thus writes with an awareness of the four areas which the performance of the play will inevitably define: the area of performance, or stage; the off-stage area, such as the wings and backstage

in a conventional proscenium theatre; the audience area; and the world outside the theatre or place of performance. The playwright is also aware that a drama involves the participation of people who fall into three categories: there are actors, who portray characters, and who are observed by an audience. Finally, the playwright creates with the contribution of both visual images and verbal elements to the artistic effect of the play in mind, and with the knowledge that the two may operate simultaneously in a dramatic performance. In contrast to the playwright, the novelist has no given parameters of physical environment for the reader's experience of the novel, and can only rely on the words themselves and their interaction with the solitary reader, to present the designed artistic effect.

These possibilities and limitations inherent in genre carry several implications. For a dramatist cannot ignore the given components of dramatic presentation which have been enumerated; a novelist may choose whether or not to create similar self-imposed components and their attached limitations. Thus, a playwright must, necessarily, come to terms with these components. In order to create certain effects the dramatist may minimize the contribution of certain components and focus on others. For example, very often actors are presented as characters, an approach which tends to deny the disparity between actor and character; while the proscenium arch presentation with its implied imaginary

fourth wall, in conjunction with a box set depicting the remaining walls of a room, concentrates attention on the stage area, minimizing awareness in the audience of the off-stage area, the outside world, and their own seating area. Further, a performance such as has recently been given entailing the recital of St Mark's Gospel by a solitary actor, makes minimal use of the visual component and emphasizes the verbal accordingly. But, nevertheless, the disparity between actor and character present in the first example remains, and it is only through the playwright's conscious demand that the audience "suspend their disbelief" that the disparity is successfully denied. And in the second example, a visual element, however minimal, remains to interact with the verbal.

A playwright may choose, instead of making minimal use of certain components of drama, to employ all contributing elements fully. And the potential interactions which then become possible are several: they may occur between audience, actors and dramatic characters; playing space, off-stage area, audience area and the world outside; verbal elements and visual images. These components may be integrated forcefully, so that a vivid visual image is, for example, supported and intensified by a complementary verbal element. Or a strong awareness of audience, actors and characters may be fostered, so that attention is drawn to the role of each in the dramatic event. For example, the opening of Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair is presented by the

so-called "Stage-keeper", who addresses the audience thus: "Gentlemen, have a little patience. He that should begin the play, Master Littlewit, the Procter, has a stitch new fallen in his black silk stocking; t'will be drawn up ere you can tell twenty" (7). He is then replaced by the "Book-holder", who proceeds to present a playful "legal argument" regarding the critical judgement of the play between the author and the audience, saying that "the play will follow presently" (10). Similar prologues and epilogues are not uncommon in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Jonson's opening reminds the audience that the actors are performing a play which is for their apprehension and enjoyment. In such cases the two groups are portrayed as complementary to one another, and the disparity between actor and audience member is maintained but carefully accommodated in a dramatic context which integrates the two. And at the close of the stage performance, when the actors move out of character to take their curtain calls, the disparity between actor and character is again acknowledged, but again comfortably accommodated within a dramatic context in which the various elements which contribute to dramatic presentation are integrated.

In contrast to such integration, however, a playwright may choose to present the interaction of the suggested components of dramatic presentation in a context in which the inherent disparities between the components are not

accommodated comfortably but are held in contrast or even complete opposition. And it is in this possibility, which, it must be emphasized, stems from that inherent quality of the dramatic mode of artistic creation which results in the disparate components enumerated above coming into being the moment that any drama begins, that we see the kernel of the reason for Stoppard's shift from the novel to the drama. For an artist who is "always trying to say ... 'Firstly, A. Secondly, minus A'", and who admires expression that takes the form of "a constant process of elaborate structure and sudden - and total - dismantlement" (see chapter one 7), the drama provides inherent components, the disparity between which need only be skilfully exploited, not created, as would be the case if the work took another generic form, in order to express that predilection and its accompanying world view successfully.

Repeatedly, as will be shown in succeeding chapters, Stoppard displays an acute awareness of his medium, and very often uses the disparities between the various dramatic components as the basic foundations upon which the superstructure of the play develops. Such components are not, as has been explained, necessarily and unavoidably in opposition to one another, but the disparities between them may be easily developed to present such an opposition, so that each component expresses or represents one or other element of the Stoppardian algebraic formula. The most easily recognizable examples of this practice are the

It will be clear, as is to be expected in artistic
frequent confusions created by the incompatible
tion of any complexity and interest, that the
contributions of conflicting visual and verbal elements.
suggested by this formula are never, or very
Thomas Whitaker points out that in Jumpers "We repeatedly
presented in terms as simple as the algebraic
attend to two or more characters, often in different playing
suggests. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead
areas, who do not grasp each other's situation" (104), and
Inspector Hound provide clear examples of the
suggests that through the flow of "verbal and visual puns"
suggested because they are actually centred
in After Magritte "We are invited to suspect that the
other dramatic texts, the pre-existing Hamlet and the
meaning of every item ... might turn out to be
guardian murder mystery invention. The complexity with
disconcertingly plural" (79). In other examples, the inherent
Stoppard puts his theory into practice in these and
disparity between actor and character, or actors and
works will be discussed in succeeding chapters, in
audience, is frequently emphasized and each component is
called analyses of the structural features
employed to express either the "A" or the "-A" of Stoppard's
above will be conducted. The present concern is
awareness. In Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead we
the
encounter characters who already exist as dramatic creations
are for the expression of the concerns of
from another play. In addition, some of these characters
A detailed examination will also be
are actors (players), and when they present a performance,
in which the structural mould provided
other characters become their audience. Structurally,
is filled with content which expresses
before we need concern ourselves with any text that actors
particular plays: for example, the
may speak, we are being required to recognize the various
formally placed against the notion of
components of drama, and enticed to follow the interactions
the two states are emphasized.
between them. These interactions, as has been suggested
opposing characteristics
above, are often presented in terms of the conflict of
emphasized. In each case
opposition; for example in The Real Inspector Hound, where
too, audience, actors and characters are present in the
action, the role of audience member is shown to be contents
incompatible with the role of actor, and Moon and Birdboot's
attempts to play both roles inevitably end in death: context

It will be clear, as is to be expected in artistic creation of any complexity and interest, that the oppositions suggested by this formula are never, or very seldom, presented in terms as simple as the algebraic metaphor suggests. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead and The Real Inspector Hound provide clear examples of the process being suggested because they are actually centred on other dramatic texts, the pre-existing Hamlet and the Stoppardian murder mystery invention. The complexity with which Stoppard puts his theory into practice in these and other works will be discussed in succeeding chapters, in which detailed analyses of the structural features identified above will be conducted. The present concern is simply to establish the particular appropriateness of the dramatic genre for the expression of the concerns of Stoppard's work. A detailed examination will also be conducted of the way in which the structural mould provided by the dramatic form is filled with content which expresses Stoppard's concerns in particular plays: for example, the claims of "art" can be strongly pitted against the claims of "politics" or "life" if the two claims are embodied in dramatic components whose opposing characteristics are already being structurally emphasized. So that when the Player in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead says to the two protagonists "We're actors - we're the opposite of people" (47), the opposition which his words, the contents of his speech, introduce is reinforced and complicated by the fact that the words are spoken in a structural context

in which the idea of actor as opposed to character is already present.

This chapter has thus far been devoted to the discussion of Stoppard's preference for the dramatic over the novelistic mode of artistic expression, and to the suggestion that an explanation for this preference lies in the fact that the dramatic form contains inherent elements which are uniquely appropriate for the expression of Stoppard's self-acknowledged world view. The argument presented may be illuminated by a brief examination of Stoppard's novel, Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon. Significantly, an oft-noted quality of the work is its "theatricality"; critics frequently compare the techniques employed in the novel to those of the plays and identify certain of its elements as "theatrical" and others as "novelistic". Jim Hunter's remark is representative: "Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon is theatrical (or dramatic, or filmic) in its assembling a series of funny encounters or panoramic sequences; novelistic in being centred on the unbalanced consciousness of Mr. Moon" (7). Hunter suggests that the structure of the novel is essentially "dramatic", while its characterization is "novelistic". The first part of this suggestion is clearly correct: the first chapter, tellingly entitled "Dramatis Personae and Other Coincidences", presents the reader with one of the "panoramic sequences" identified by Hunter, in which five sets of seemingly

unconnected characters are introduced in five separate sections, similar to the opening scenes of a drama. The opening chapter provides a model for the novel, which progresses by the presentation of such "panoramic sequences".

The latter part of Hunter's analysis needs elucidation. Hunter is correct in suggesting that the novel reveals the "unbalanced consciousness of Mr. Moon" and that this revelation is specifically "novelistic". Hunter here recognises a crucial possibility attached to the novel form which cannot be achieved in the drama. Dorrit Cohn has defined this possibility usefully in her theoretical work Transparent Minds: she notes the "... singular power possessed by the novelist: creator of beings whose inner lives he can reveal at will" (4), and that "... narrative fiction is the only literary genre ... in which the unspoken thoughts, feelings, perceptions of a person other than the speaker can be portrayed" (7). She explains that "... this means that the special life-likeness of narrative fiction - as compared to dramatic and cinematic fictions - depends on what writers and readers know least in life: how another mind thinks, how another body feels" (5-6). In its presentation of the character of Mr. Moon, whose consciousness we enter fully, Stoppard's technique is purely "novelistic".

But the characterization in Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon

is not consistent, and Hunter's remark that the novel "centres" on Mr. Moon's consciousness is misleading. For we are presented with several other characters, most notably the eponymous Lord Malquist, whose presence prevents complete concentration on Mr. Moon. And Stoppard's presentation of these characters is significantly different to his presentation of Mr Moon. The "inner being" of Lord Malquist is never "revealed"; we are never allowed to enter his mind and observe his consciousness. All we know of Malquist is revealed through his actions and words. And his words reinforce this method of characterization: they are designed to present ideas, or analytical postures, rather than to reveal deeply felt emotions or intense experiences. When Moon asks him "What do you stand for?", he answers "Style, dear boy. Style. There is nothing else" (63). The other characters in the novel are similarly presented through action and speech only. As Ronald Hayman points out, Stoppard "Mimic[s] ... theatrical and filmic clichés" (50) in their presentation: for example, there are two cowboys on horseback who drawl out inarticulate threats with drawn guns in their hands; a character named The Risen Christ who rides a donkey and wears a long white robe; and an Irish coachman named O'Hara, who is revealed as Jewish by his exaggerated and clichéd speech patterns. Clearly, all the characterization in the novel is by no means "novelistic"; much of it is "theatrical" in that it derives from the clichés of the theatre and, more importantly, in that it is

purely the characters' actions and words which effect it. Interestingly, in addition to creating what has been described as a "dramatic" or "theatrical" structure for his novel, Stoppard also deliberately invokes certain of the limitations, enumerated earlier in the chapter, inherent in drama in his presentation of character, so that, although the presentation of Mr. Moon's consciousness is successful in purely "novelistic" terms, an experiment with the presentation of character in dramatic terms is also being conducted within the novel. We see in Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon a dual interest on Stoppard's part in both the inner psychological workings of Mr. Moon's mind and the actions and words of Lord Malquist as representations of an analytical posture adopted towards the world. To summarize simply: the mixture of generic techniques in Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon reveals an artistic temperament attracted not only to the novelistic, but also strongly towards the dramatic mode of expression.

We may turn to some remarks made by Stoppard for further explanation of the reasons for forsaking the novel as a means of artistic expression. He has confessed that "I'm no good at character. It doesn't interest me much" (Hayman 148), and that his aim is to "... contrive the perfect marriage between the play of ideas and the farce or perhaps even high comedy" ("Ambushes" 7). As has been explained, in his novel, Stoppard's interest seems equally divided between the concept of characters as figures whose

minds may be the subject of complex psychological examination and revelation, and the idea of characters as a blend of plausible people and mere spokesmen for or representatives of certain ideas or philosophical positions. Stoppard's words, quoted above, suggest that as his artistic aims crystallized, his interest in complex psychological revelation of the "Mr. Moon" kind diminished as his interest in the expression of ideas increased, with the result that the more "dramatic", "Lord Malquist" kind of characterization became more appropriate to his purposes. The capacity of the "dramatic" mode of characterization for the expression of "ideas" rather than "psychology", coupled with the innate disparate components of the dramatic genre, which cause it to be so appropriate to the "A. Minus A" world view Stoppard attempts to express, makes Stoppard's forsaking of the novel for the drama as means of expression a logical move.

Certain "theatrical" qualities in Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon have been identified above, but it should be noted that the conscious and deliberate employment of "theatrical" elements continues in Stoppard's work after the transition from novel writing to the creation of plays has been made. Instances such as that in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead which was discussed earlier, in which characters talk about acting, or startling sequences such as that with which Jumpers opens, where a gunshot accompanies the collapse of a

pyramid of acrobats in yellow jumpsuits, to be followed suddenly by a secretary performing a striptease act on a trapeze, are extremely common in the plays. This deliberate theatricality has been frequently dismissed by critics as gratuitous "showing off" (Taylor "Plays in Performance" 38), "serving no purpose except entertainment" (Ruby Cohn 120), and distracting attention from the real issues of the play by being "narcissistic[ally] self-conscious about ... medium" (Kemp 667). Tim Brassell argues that the "semi-pejorative" status which the word "theatricality" has acquired results from the "general divergence ... between the 'theatre' world [of actors and performance] and the 'drama' world [of analytical textual criticism]" (2). This seems a valid suggestion, since it would appear that those who accuse Stoppard of gratuitous showing-off fail to recognize the importance of the performance of his plays for the adequate expression of their concerns. For the deliberate use of the kind of theatrical devices noted above is a direct corollary of the deliberate choice to write in the dramatic rather than the novelistic idiom: such devices heighten the audience's awareness of all the disparate contributing components of the stage performance, and thus provide the optimal dramatic context for the presentation of oppositions between these elements.

Having discussed the significance of Stoppard's choice of the dramatic genre as his predominant means of artistic expression, we may briefly examine the significance of the

predominant categories into which his work falls within this broad generic class. These categories are suggested by Stoppard himself in the previously quoted remark made in "Ambushes for the Audience" in 1974: "What I try to do, is to end up by contrivng the perfect marriage between the play of ideas and the farce or perhaps even high comedy" (7). This remark was repeated in a slightly altered form to Kenneth Tynan in 1976: "I write plays of ideas uneasily married to comedy or farce" (100). The special suitability of the drama for the expression of ideas, as opposed to the psychological intricacies of character, and Stoppard's preference for "ideas" over "psychology" have been discussed. His preference for comedy over the traditionally opposed dramatic genre of tragedy is interesting, and the reasons for and implications of such a preference may be linked to his preference for the dramatic genre over others. The explanation for the decision to write predominantly within the comic genre (the split between genres here is not as easily identified or classified as that between the novel and the drama) may be seen, like that which provided the clue to the choice of the dramatic, in the "possibilities and limitations" suggested by the chosen generic form.

Before discussing Stoppard's use of the comic genre we may examine the parameters of the genre more closely. Although the writers contributing to the theory

of comedy have been numerous and their arguments diverse, it is possible to locate various points of similarity and agreement between their suggestions. Although leaving the outer boundaries of the definition and the debate blurred, these points provide a reliable core for a working theory of comedy. Three modern critics, David Farley-Hills, Paul Goodman and Eric Bentley, present arguments which provide useful summaries of such points. An examinaton of their suggestions will elucidate certain aspects of the nature of comedy, in order to reveal some of its "possibilities and limitations", in the hope of providing the basis for assessing the reasons for its being Stoppard's dominant mode of expression.

The central unifying feature of the arguments of these three critics is the insistence on the centrality of a particular structural pattern for the definition of comedy. Farley-Hills, in The Comic in Renaissance Comedy, rejects as "too narrow" theories of comedy which equate the "comic with the risible" or "insist that the comic mood involves an optimistic outlook." Instead, he suggests that

> If a definition of the comic is sought in the way ideas are structured, however, it will be seen that ... [such diverse plays as The Chairs, The Cherry Orchard, Much Ado About Nothing and Waiting for Godot] each exhibit the essential features of comic structure; they each exploit incongruity in a way that initially detaches our emotions from

> the problems involved .... We shall find that comedy arises whenever the mind has to take in simultaneously, or near simultaneously, two or more contradictory, but equally plausible interpretations of the same phenomena. (5, 14)

An additional ingredient in the creation of comedy is mentioned by Farley-Hills: surprise or suddenness:

> ... incongruity is not peculiar to comedy and ... something more is needed to explain how incongruity works to produce comic effects .... As important as ... incongruity ... is the role of surprise or suddenness in creating the comic .... It is not true to say that the unexpected by itself can explain the nature of the comic. Surprise, suddenness, the unexpected are at least as important to melodrama or to the short story as to the comic. Nonetheless, surprise in conjunction with incongruity provide us with the essential elements of the comic .... The reason why suddenness is so important ... becomes obvious when we appreciate the need for the incongruous images or ideas to be present before the mind at virtually the same instant. For it is only if the contradictions appear virtually together that they present a logical problem that the rational mind cannot solve .... Three requirements are

> absolutely essential [to any comic situation]: a clear contradiction between the two versions of the same thing that are presented to the mind, the equal or near equal plausiblity of the two versions, and the near simultaneity with which the mind is confronted with these incompatible images. (20-22)

Farley-Hills suggests that the equal plausibilty of each term of the incongruity or contradiction causes a "mental impasse" in the observer, which is accompanied by "tension." And very often, he argues, "laughter is the release of [that] tension" (14). But Farley-Hills is insistent on the idea that it is the "structure", and not the "laughter", that defines comedy:

> Generally speaking the more absolute the contradiction involved the stronger the laughter evoked, but the comic, as a structure of words, can produce every response from uproarious laughter through smiling to a simple mental recognition that irreconcilable contradiction exists. (47)

The importance of this central structural feature of incongruity or contradiction for Farley-Hills lies in its accompanying effect on the audience. For it is the "detachment" that the equal plausibility of opposing interpretations produces, that Farley-Hills regards as the

major definitive feature of comedy. He concludes that

> Comedy shows the possibility of more than one value judgement of the same event, and, though preference may ultimately be shown, initially comedy asks us to suspend judgement. ... comedy ... is constantly surprising us with shifts of point of view. ... whereas comedy is 'alienating' (that is, it keeps its audience emotionally at a distance), tragedy (and most other dramatic genres) aims to engage the audience's sympathies. (24, 30-31)

Farley-Hills's view is reflected in the similar attitude of Paul Goodman, who begins his argument by positing a brief theoretical definition of comedy, which he later fills out with discussion: "Let us take comedy ... as a relation, a 'deflatable accidental connection', among the parts" (106). This remark recalls the insistence on structure for the creation of comedy encountered in Farley-Hills's argument, and Goodman's "accidental connection" is easily linked to the "incongruity" also found therein. Goodman's conception of comedy relies much more, though, on laughter as a defining feature, than does Farley-Hills's. But this difference is one of degree rather than kind, and the laughter which Goodman associates with the "deflation" that occurs when the "accidental connections" of comic structure become clear to the audience, is similar in

conception to the "release of tension" which Farley-Hills describes as resulting from the "mental impasse" introduced by the comic structure. Goodman, too, insists on the detachment that comedy produces in its audience: he argues that the constant requirement of "accidental connections" causes the frequent appearance of new elements in the action and the reversals of expected action, thus preventing the audience's sympathies from lodging securely in any one place:

> ... the comic intrigue ... is naturally divergent and expansive, freely introducing new complications, whereas the tragic plot converges to remove just the complexity that it has .... Unlike the reversals of tragedy, comic reversals are not brought on by discoveries; rather they compound the errors. ... the audience identifies not with this or that particular character but with the world of the work as a whole, a space and time and drama. In discussing the feelings of comedy, it is essential to bear this in mind. With tragedy, everything centres in the end in the protagonist .... But with comedy, no such thing. (109, 110, 114)

Eric Bentley's suggestions in The Life of the Drama reflect a similar view of the operation of comedy: "What tragedy achieves ... by its incredibly direct rendering of sympathies and antipathies, comedy achieves by indirection,

duality, irony" (309). Further remarks made by Bentley, although concerned with the purpose rather than simply with the workings of comedy, nevertheless express this in the terms used by Farley-Hills in his discussion of comic structure:

> The strategy of comedy is to displace our guilt upon the characters in the play. We are detached. They are, in Brecht's terms, 'alienated' from us. Tragedy, on the other hand, entails perhaps the most direct, singleminded, and complete identification with guilt that is offered by any art whatsoever. (261)

And, finally, resonances of Farley-Hills's "suddenness and surprise" and Goodman's "divergence and expansiveness" ideas are heard in Bentley's suggestion that the "comic sense tries to cope with the daily, hourly, inescapable difficulty of being" (303) while the "tragic poet writes from a sense of ... particular crisis" which presents "at the core of any good tragedy ... a profound disturbance of the human equilibrium" (306).

The theories of Farley-Hills, Goodman and Bentley have been examined because they seem, complementarily, to summarize succinctly several important characteristics of comedy. Their suggestions reveal the influence of several eminent philosophers of the comic; for example, the

arguments of all three are bolstered by direct reference to such concepts as Bergson's "Anaesthesia of the Heart", an analogy illustrating the association of "detachment" with comedy (Farley-Hills 38, Bentley 298); Kant's "absurdity" and "transformation of a strained expectation into nothing" easily linked to Farley-Hills's "incongruity" and "tension" and Goodman's "accidental connection" and "deflation" (Farley-Hills 42, Goodman 106); and Aristotle's "deformity", again reflecting the central idea of "incongruity" (Goodman 106). Each of the theorists under discussion presents complex ideas regarding the aims and effects of comedy within arguments greatly simplified in my rendering. Their arguments have deliberately been truncated at the point where discussion shifts from the workings to the purposes or aims of comedy. It seems that, disregarding the various purposes to which a preference for comedy may be directed, we may detect in the structural features necessary to the functioning of comedy, outlined with considerable consensus by the many theorists of the genre, the reasons for Stoppard's choice of the comic genre as his predominant mode of artistic expression.

For the explanation of these reasons we must bear in mind those remarks, quoted in chapter one (7-8), made by Stoppard in attempts to establish for interviewers the bases of his artistic philosophy. The predilection for dialectical thinking revealed in these remarks is expressed in terms closely allied to those commonly found among

theorists of comedy, and summarized succinctly in the Stoppardian concept of "A.-A.": "deflation", "opposition", "contradiction", "refutation in the same voice", "constant process of elaborate structure and sudden dismantlement." And Stoppard's admission, quoted earlier in this chapter (page 27), that "character doesn't interest me much", and his preference for "ideas" over "psychology", recall the "detachment" associated with comedy. When these remarks are considered, it becomes clear that a similar explanation may be found for Stoppard's decision to adopt modes of expression which emerge from the comic, rather than the tragic, generic mould, to that which governed his choice of the dramatic over other generic alternatives. For the structural elements by which the functioning of comedy is effected, like those of the drama, are inherently appropriate for the expression of the world view Stoppard communicates.

In these initial chapters the analysis of dialectical principles in Stoppard's work has been initiated by establishing the dialectical nature of Stoppard's world view (most clearly revealed at first glance in his explanatory remarks to interviewers) and by showing how this dialectical awareness informs the foundations of his artistic expression, the genres within which his work falls. In succeeding chapters the presence of dialectical principles in the details of the works will be examined.

Chapter 3

Dialectical Oppositions 1 - Words, Lines, Scenes and Acts

The logical development of the examination of dialectical principles in Stoppard's work takes us from a consideration of such principles at an overall generic level to the discussion of the appearance of dialectical principles in the specific details of individual works. The following two chapters will be devoted to the initial stages of such a discussion: in these an examination of the presentation of oppositions - the first two terms of the dialectical triadic pattern - in many of Stoppard's works will be conducted.

As was suggested in chapter one, the triadic pattern is seen informing every element of the plays' presentation. Oppositions are encountered on every level of the hierarchy of dramatic construction: in the words Stoppard uses to create lines of dramatic dialogue; in the lines which constitute scenes; in the acts composed of scenes; and in the plays constructed from acts. The presentation of oppositions in the hierarchy of dramatic construction will be the focus of examination in this chapter; chapter four will discuss the presence of oppositions in further elements of Stoppard's plays, in the characters who inhabit and the ideas which are expressed in them.

In the various tiers of the hierarchy dialectical

oppositions are created in three ways: firstly, purely verbal oppositions created essentially out of the language of the plays; secondly, oppositions created from the interaction of visual (or aural) and verbal elements, from the sounds and images and the language which constitute an enacted play; and lastly, purely visual or aural oppositions created from the interaction of the purely visual images of the stage or television play or the purely aural (as opposed to verbal) elements of the radio play.

We may begin the examination of the presentation of oppositions in the hierarchy of dramatic construction by looking at the smallest units from which the plays are constructed: the words from which Stoppard's language is made up, and which constitute the least comprehensive tier of the hierarchy. Stoppard's use of language exhibits both precise control and stunning inventiveness. His characteristic word-play has led critics to compare him with a fellow-defector from an Iron Curtain country, Vladimir Nabokov (Whitaker 4; James 70; Tynan 46). One of the most noticeable features of Stoppard's word-play is the extraordinary number of words which are equivocal, and especially striking is his extremely frequent use of puns. As Hersh Zeifman remarks: "Words may indeed be all we have to go on, but in Stoppard's plays words are, more often than not, puns: ambiguous, confusing, enigmatic" ("Tomfoolery" 206). Many of Stoppard's puns involve extraordinary

linguistic contortions, which necessarily attract the attention of both appreciative and unimpressed critics. The latter tend to regard Stoppard's punning as extravagant exhibitionism, mitigating against any serious artistic purpose he might intend. For example, John Russell Taylor accuses his persona of having a "fourth-form show-off side" ("Plays in Performance" 38); John Simon writes of "interminable word-play, some of which is amusing and linguistically stimulating, but the total of which is cloying" ("Theatre Chronicle", 1967, 665); Simon Varey claims that "if any of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead works at a philosophical level, Stoppard's brand of semantic comedy that dazzles us right through the play effectively prevents us from taking it very seriously" (27); and Ruby Cohn rounds off the diatribe with the all-inclusive statement: "Stoppard's puns, parodies, and performance strategies are inventive, but they serve no purpose except entertainment in the light drama that constitutes the bulk of his work" (120). Even an enthusiastically appreciative critic such as Felicia Londré remarks with implied disapproval on the prevalence of the "lowly pun" in Stoppard's work ("Using Comic Devices" 351).

But critics who view Stoppard's word-play as "mere entertainment" or puerile "showing off" fail to perceive the extent to which Stoppard's artistic purpose informs every element of his expression. This purpose has been suggested in previous chapters and crudely summarized in

Stoppard's own formulaic terms: "Firstly, A. Secondly, minus A." And just as Stoppard naturally chose the inherently dialectical forms of drama and comedy in his search for the genres most appropriately expressive of a dialectical awareness, so a linguistic equivalent to these automatic genre choices was selected. For if the pun is considered carefully, it, too, is revealed as a linguistic form inherently appropriate to the expression of the Stoppardian algebraic formula. Hersh Zeifman, profoundly sensitive to this appropriateness, explains it admirably:

> Puns are a perfect way of conveying, through language, [the] dialectical structure of Stoppard's drama. For nothing is more schizophrenic, by definition, than a pun: two or more utterly different meanings are yoked violently together in the straight-jacket of a single word (or two words that sound alike). It is language arguing with itself. And all that is required to set the dialectical ball really rolling is for one character to assume meaning A while another character opts for meaning B. A pun is thus quintessentially dialectical, containing within itself its own thesis and antithesis. ("Tomfoolery" 215)

Puns are, as Zeifman states, most often formed through different characters' interpretations of the same word, which often result in confusion between the characters.

But Stoppard's puns are equally directed at the momentary confusion of his audience, for it is such a confusion that Stoppard relishes as the product of his dramatic ingenuity; he told Ronald Hayman that "... what I personally like is the theatre of audacity. ... Dislocation of an audience's assumptions is an important part of what I like to write" (143).

Clearly, Stoppard's prodigious employment of the pun is deliberately aimed at conveying a dialectical viewpoint through every aspect of the plays' language - from individual words to the whole arguments and ideas expressed by their coalescence. By employing a language whose meaning is frequently ambiguous, Stoppard forces a dislocation of the audience's assumptions about the communication it offers; comprehension of the language can only be accomplished through the conscious adoption of a dialectical viewpoint - the conscious acknowledgement of the validity of both the thesis and antithesis offered by each pun.

Jim Hunter suggests that Stoppard attempts to illustrate the paradox that "language offers itself as an aid to reason and communication, yet it repeatedly tips us in the mire" (78-9). The implications of questioning the communicative abilities of language are profound. By bringing our interpretation of language into question, Stoppard encourages the audience to question the relationship between language and the reality it purports to

represent. As Howard D. Pearce argues:

> ... the pun, like irony, calls meaning into question, thereby posing the corollary question, 'How does the word imitate its referent?' ... Wilde calls reality into question by challenging language. His aphorisms subvert complacently accepted truths. Like Wilde, Stoppard questions the relationship between words and reality. (1149)

And the logical development of viewing the relationship between words and reality as questionable is the questioning of the reality itself which those ambiguous words attempt to express. Manfred Draudt follows this development: "... in the great number of puns which exploit the ambiguity of language, a playful and comic facade hides a menacing reality. ... Under the commonplace phrase or everyday situation there lurks the unexpected shoal ..." (357). Hersh Zeifman explains the final implication of using language as Stoppard does: "... the reality those puns reflect is itself enigmatic. ... linguistic uncertainty mirrors metaphysical uncertainty. ... we are trapped ... in a world in which there is ... a confusing multiplicity of possible meaning ..." ("Tomfoolery" 206-7). Clearly, the pun is employed so very pervasively by Stoppard because it is the ideal linguistic method, in its specific operation as a unit of communication and in its implications, of expressing the uncertainty Stoppard feels philosophically and temperamentally.

The puns created by Stoppard range from the simple to the complex, from the word capable of only two interpretations through whole sequences of words linked by a unifying theme, to words connoting different meanings in different languages. The simple pun which involves one word (or two homophones) with two possible interpretations and creates the most basic of dialectical relationships between these interpretations, makes frequent appearances. Examples are to be found in almost every play, even in Squaring the Circle which is predominantly devoted to dialectical expressions of a much more complex nature. In this play an imprisoned thief tells the Marxist intellectual Kuron: "I've redistributed more property than you'll ever see" (49). The following represent a small selection, some of which reveal the inspired virtuosity of Stoppard's language, and have become the classics of quoted Stoppard:

> Rosencrantz: Shouldn't we be doing something constructive?
>
> Guildenstern: What did you have in mind?
>
> ... A short, blunt human pyramid ...?
>
> (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead 31)

. . .

> Gwen (sings): I'm not awfully au fait
> with manners down your way -
>
> Cecily (sings): And up yours, Miss Carr ....
>
> (Travesties 93)

Cocklebury-Smythe [desperately trying to avert the exposure of his involvement with Maddie, while ostensibly instructing her in the intricacies of parliamentary committee procedures]: A quorum is nothing more or less than the largest minimum specified number of members being that proportion of the whole committee, let us say three or four get Coq d'Or Sunday night completely invalid without them. Got it?

(Dirty Linen 21)

. . .

Ivanov [talking of the difficulty of finding cellists for his orchestra]: I was scraping the bottom of the barrel, and that's how they sound.

(Every Good Boy Deserves Favour 16)

. . .

Alexander: I have a complaint.

Doctor: Yes, I know - pathological development of the personality with paranoid delusions.

Alexander: No, there's nothing the matter with me.

Doctor: There you are, you see.

(Every Good Boy Deserves Favour 26)

> Mageeba: Do you know what I mean by a relatively free press, Mr Wagner? ... I mean a free press which is edited by one of my relatives.
>
> (Night and Day 85)

. . .

> Inspector: If you think you can drive a horse and cart through the law of slander by quoting blank verse at me, Cahoot, you're going to run up against what we call poetic justice: which means we get you into line if we have to chop one of your feet off.
>
> (Cahoot's Macbeth 62)

In these examples, Stoppard culls from the language dual meanings available from current usage. In other instances, he forces an ordinarily unambiguous word into a simple pun:

> Martello: Yes, why isn't there a word ... for people being pushed downstairs or stuffed up chimneys ...? De-escalate is a word, I believe, but they don't use it for that. And, of course, influence. He was bodily influenced. That's a good idea; let's cheer ourselves up by inventing verbs for various kinds of fatality - ....
>
> (Artist Descending a Staircase 50)

Ruth: The media. It sounds like a convention of spiritualists.

(Night and Day 47)

These simple puns, with their easily identifiable dialectical dualities, are the least spectacular and challenging of Stoppard's linguistic expressions. A different type of simple pun, the substitution of one word for another which sounds similar but is not identical, gives at times a hint of the impressive constructions of more complex punning:

Guildenstern: Maidens aspiring to godheads -

Rosencrantz: And vice-versa - ....

(Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead 24)

. . .

Mother: Is it all right for me to practice?

Foot: No, it is not all right! Ministry standards may be lax but we draw the line at Home Surgery ....

Mother: I only practice on the tuba.

Foot: Tuba, femur, fibula -

(After Magritte 33)

. . .

George: Yes, I'm something of a logician myself.

Bones: Really, sawing ladies in half, that sort of thing?

George: Logician.

(Jumpers 44)

Beauchamp [remembering Tristan Tzara, but not his name]: In Zurich in 1915 you told Tarzan he was too conservative.

Donner: Tarzan?

Beauchamp: I don't mean Tarzan. Who do I mean? Similar name, conservative, 1915 ....

Donner: Tsar Nicholas?

Beauchamp: No, no, Zurich.

(Artist Descending a Staircase 23)

. . .

Withenshaw: The wheres and Y-fronts, the whys and wherefores of this committee are clear to you all. ... you passed with flying knickers ....

(Dirty Linen 28)

. . .

Purvis: I don't think I'm going to get to the bottom of this, to my infinite regress, I mean regret.

(The Dog It Was That Died 34)

Perhaps the most extreme form of this type of pun is found in the various names Carr substitutes for Joyce in Travesties: in this sequence of puns the great artist is referred to as Doris (49), Janice (51), Phyllis (53), Bridget and Dierdre (95).

It can be seen from these few examples that Stoppard's

puns constantly confront the audience with the ambiguities of language, forcing them to interpret the words of many speakers in two different ways. Stoppard creates characters who respond to the ambiguities of language in various ways, revealing that the invocation of the dialectical possibilities of language can be either deliberate or accidental. There are those who cynically manipulate ambiguities with the idea of concealing or twisting the truth (the Inspector in Cahoot's Macbeth, the Doctor in Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, Mageeba in Night and Day, Cocklebury-Smythe in Dirty Linen). On the other hand, there are characters who find their language unintentionally revealing secrets or interfering with the efficient communication of their thoughts, rather than effecting it (Withenshaw in Dirty Linen, George in Jumpers, the artists in Artist Descending a Staircase, Purvis in The Dog It Was That Died.) Stoppard uses the dialectical qualities of puns to clarify his characterization and to illustrate and express serious philosophical concerns, as well as in the provision of pure entertainment.

The puns discussed up to this point have encouraged only two possible interpretations, creating a dual thesis-antithesis structure. The dialectical interaction set in motion by their use is easily identifiable and explicable: the audience member must register both possible meanings before moving on to consider what follows. The thesis and antithesis of the dialectical triad are clear. But wherein

lies the synthesis of this opposition? This is a question which will be addressed in chapter five, where consideration will be given to the way in which the various thesis-antithesis relationships of the plays' constituent elements reach synthesis. The present chapter is concerned only with the details of the initial oppositions.

Stoppard does not exclusively employ simple puns such as those discussed above. Equally prevalent are puns of a much more complicated nature: one word may have several meanings, not simply two; several words may have a single meaning; a string of related puns on a theme may be presented; or puns may be created from the interaction of different languages. The corollary of such complex punning is that the oppositions involved in the simple pun are multiplied and complicated. Where a simple pun involved one thesis and one antithesis in its interpretation, a string of such puns presented in close proximity creates these dialectical oppositions in an increasingly hectic progression: each thesis and antithesis becomes more intense as it interacts with the pair presented a moment previously. In such episodes the thesis-antithesis pair of each individual pun sparkles in brief opposition before being subsumed in the larger explosion of the next, and the process continues to expand until the string of puns comes to an end and the particular thematic interaction of individual puns gives way to other linguistic

forms. Such sustained punning ranges in the plays from the comparatively uncomplicated to the stunningly intricate. There are the mild tongue- and mind-twisters such as "you wouldn't take standing-room only in your sitting-room lying down" (Cahoot's Macbeth 53-4) and "certain words were uttered and cannot be unuttered, they are utterly and unutterably uttered" (The Dog It Was That Died 26). The beginnings of sustained punning are reflected in the rhyme expressing Tzara's opinion of Joyce's work in Travesties:

> Tzara (to Joyce): For your masterpiece
> I have great expectorations
> For you I would eructate a monument
> Art for art's sake - I defecate. (48)

Finally, there are the masterpieces of complex thematic punning, in which each pun adds significance to the preceding one, and the spectator is swept along on a spring tide of mounting dialectical interpretations. There are many such examples in the plays; three, from the early, middle and nearly contemporary periods of Stoppard's writing, will show that Stoppard's linguistic powers and purposes are equally apparent in works from the start of his career as in those from the present:

> Donner: Sugar art is only the beginning.
> Martello: It will give cubism a new lease on life.
> ... - your own pieces, reproduced indelibly yet edibly. ... Your signed loaves of bread reproduced in sculpted dough, baked ... your

ceramic steaks carved from meat! It will give opinion back to the intellectuals and put taste where it belongs. From now on the artist's palate -

Donner: Are you laughing at me, Martello?

Martello: Certainly not, Donner. Let them eat art.

(Artist Descending a Staircase 26)

. . .

Grayson (dictating into the phone): There'll be Czechs bouncing in the streets of Prague tonight as bankruptcy stares English football in the face, stop, new par. ... Make no mistake, comma, the four-goal credit which these slick Slovaks netted here this afternoon will keep them in the black through the second leg of the World Cup Eliminator at Wembley next month. ... You can bank on it. ... But for some determined saving by third-choice Jim Bart in the injury hyphen jinxed England goal, we would have been overdrawn by far more when the books were closed.

(Professional Foul 74)

. . .

Debbie: That's what free love is free of - propaganda.

Henry: ... Persuasive nonsense. ... How about 'What free love is free of, is love'? ...

> 'You could put a 'what' on the end of it ..., 'What free love is free of is love, what?' - and the words would go on replicating themselves like a spiral of DNA ... 'What love is free of love? - free love is what love, what? -'
>
> (The Real Thing 63)

Perhaps the tour de force of these extended complex puns, though, occurs in Travesties: the audience is first treated to an evocative description of Henry Carr's wartime experiences:

> Carr: Never in the whole history of human conflict was there anything to match the carnage - God's blood!, the shot and shell! - graveyard stench! - Christ Jesu! - deserted by simpletons, they damn us to hell - ora pro nobis - quick! no, get me out! ....

This breakdown is immediately followed by Carr's musings on what clothes he should wear, the details of which are expressed in words sounding astonishingly like his descriptions of the war:

> Carr: I think to match the carnation, oxblood shot-silk cravat, starched, creased just so, asserted by a simple pin, the damask lapels - or a brown, no biscuit - no - get me out the straight trouser ....
>
> (Travesties 27)

In this latter passage, almost every word acts as an antithesis to its corresponding thesis in the former, creating a sustained pun of extraordinary brilliance. The spectator must swim with the surge of dualities as best he or she can, but it is probable that many will suffer partial drowning along the way.

The complex puns discussed thus far consist simply of collections of simple puns - two meanings attaching to one word or two homophones. But Stoppard's puns can become considerably more complicated than this, and the dialectical implications attached to them grow proportionately more complex. When a single word is endowed with three or more meanings the dialectical oppositions explode into theses with multiple possible antitheses. This kind of multiple punning occurs in Travesties, for example, with Bennett's announcement of a "social revolution" in Russia:

> Carr: A social revolution? Unaccompanied women smoking at the Opera, that sort of thing? ...
>
> Bennett: Not precisely that, sir. It is more in the nature of a revolution of classes contraposed by the fissiparous disequilibrium of Russian society.
>
> Carr: What do you mean, classes?
>
> Bennett: Masters and servants. ...
>
> Carr: Well, I'm not in the least surprised, Bennett. I don't wish to appear wise after the event, but anyone with half an acquaintance with

> Russian society could see that that day was not far off before the exploited class, disillusioned by the neglect of its interests, alarmed by the falling value of the rouble, and above all goaded beyond endurance by the insolent rapacity of its servants, should turn upon those butlers, footmen, cooks, valets .... (Travesties 29)

Here, the words "social revolution" are interpreted in one way by Bennet (and, in all probability, the audience) and in an additional two ways by Carr. The audience is thus forced to accept three possible interpretations - a thesis opposed by two different antitheses - of the words, and must wrestle with these oppositions in order to make sense of the play.

Multiple meanings cluster similarly around the word "Dada" in Travesties: it is the name of the artistic movement of which Tzara is a disciple, as in Carr's "My art belongs to Dada" (25); this phrase suggests the later pun which endows the word with its second meaning: "Well my brother has been a great disappointment to me, and to Dada. His mother isn't exactly mad about him either" (71); the word also becomes the stuttered first consonant of the declaration of love between Tzara and Gwendolen:

> Tzara: Have you ever seen my magazine "Dada", darling?
>
> Gwen: Never, da-da-darling! (56);

and, finally, it receives its forth interpretation by being divided into two words to make Nadya's Russian "yes, yes" answer to a question from Lenin (20). Here four theses and antitheses arise from the same word, clamouring for recognition by the audience. And, as Richard Ellmann sagely notes, there is a rich and appropriate irony in Stoppard's choice of this particular word as the basis for a multiple pun: "... the word intended to destroy sense proves to have many senses" (744).

The reverse of the process of the evocation of multiple meanings from a single word, as outlined in the example above, also occurs in the plays. In the following example from Artist Descending a Staircase, Beauchamp interprets Donner's one-word opinion of his tape recordings in multiple ways, while Donner forces Beauchamp's many words on the subject to adopt identical meanings:

> Beauchamp: Well, what do you think of it, Donner? ...
>
> Donner: I think it's rubbish.
>
> Beauchamp: Oh. You mean, a sort of tonal debris, as it were?
>
> Donner: No, rubbish, general rubbish. In the sense of being worthless, without value; rot, nonsense. Rubbish, in fact.
>
> Beauchamp: Ah. The detritus of audible existence, a sort of refuse heap of sound ....
>
> Donner: I mean, rubbish.
>
> (Artist Descending a Staircase 19)

Perhaps the most complicated of complex puns results from the interaction of two or more meanings of the same word which arise from its interpretation in different languages. One of "Dada's" four interpretations in the example quoted earlier was created in this way. These different language puns range from Carr's casual description of Tzara's poetry as "belle-litter" (Travesties 43), to those occurring in the elaborately constucted multi-lingual openings to Dirty Linen and Travesties and the sophisticated word-games of Dogg's Hamlet. Only speakers of French will understand the elaborate pun Stoppard creates in Tzara's Dadaist poem at the start of Travesties. Tzara's English words are drawn from a hat:

> Ill raced alas whispers kill later nut east,
> noon avuncular ill day Clara! (18).

As Jim Hunter explains, this sounds very much like a remark in French:

> Il reste à la Suisse parce qu'il est un artiste.
> Nous n'avons que l'art, il déclara.

This French, when translated into English, becomes:

> He stays in Switzerland
> Because he is an artist.
> 'We only have art,' he declared. (Hunter 240)

The pun here results from the opposition in the mind of any extraordinarily alert French-speaking audience member, of the thesis created by the nonsense English and the antithesis embodied in the simultaneous coherent French. The words

are at the same time meaningless and meaningful. Although this pun only causes the appearance of one thesis and one antithesis in interpretation, its operation makes it one of the most complex kinds of pun employed by Stoppard.

The operation of many of the puns in Dogg's Hamlet is similar, although there the language is not French, but the Stoppardian creation, Dogg. Whenever a character speaks in Dogg, the utterance has a translatable English meaning, which the audience can understand, most usually because Stoppard ensures that the context in which the utterance occurs provides its obvious meaning. But, in addition, Dogg is composed of the same words as English, but with each word ascribed a different meaning to that it carries in English. This results in each Dogg utterance creating not only its English translation but also a meaning in English itself. Thus the Dogg word "bedsocks", as in "Hamlet bedsocks Denmark" (31), is interpreted by the audience not only as "prince of", but also as "bedsocks". In the recognition of these two possible interpretive antitheses to the thesis in Dogg lies the way of the audience, often made a hilariously ludicrous interpretive path by the English resonances of Dogg expressions such as "Haddock priest" (The mike is dead, 15) or "Cretinous pig-faced, git" (Have you got the time please, sir?, 16). The audience cannot help but become aware of the possible interpretations of particular words. In these complex bilingual puns

Stoppard's purpose remains the same as in those, complex and simple, composed purely in English: to create an awareness in the audience of the equal viability of the various theses and antitheses, and to strive constantly for the effective means of linguistic expression for the oppositions inherent in the dialectical viewpoint algebraically summarized by "Firstly, A. Secondly, minus A."

Up to this point the discussion has been essentially concentrated on individual words, those creating the dialectical oppositions involved in the pun. But the way in which Stoppard connects individual words to make full lines of dramatic dialogue without using puns also frequently brings dialectical oppositions into being. On occasions the oppositions are created simply through the extraordinary juxtaposition of ordinary words or phrases. The example of "Haddock Priest" quoted above has this quality in addition to being a simple pun. Much of the hilarity in Dogg's Hamlet is derived from this kind of juxtaposition, which is one of the hallmarks of Dogg. But the juxtaposition of incongruous phrases occurs in all the plays. The degree of incongruity which arises varies from the mild to the extreme; from that resulting from the coalition of phrases which appear merely odd or strange when placed together, to that which arises when contradictory phrases clash. Some representative examples come from The Real Thing, Travesties, Jumpers, A Separate Peace and Rosencrantz and

Guildenstern Are Dead:

> Charlotte: She used to eat like a horse, till she had one.
>
> (The Real Thing 29)

. . .

> Carr: Nothing gives me an appetite so much as renouncing my beliefs over a glass of hock.
>
> (Travesties 72)

. . .

> George: I can actually see [Archbishop] Clegthorpe! - marching along, attended by two chaplains in belted raincoats.
>
> (Jumpers 38)

. . .

> Brown: It was like winning, being captured.
>
> (A Separate Peace 180)

. . .

> Player: ... all the money we had we lost betting on certainties.
>
> (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead 87)

. . .

> Tzara: I have often observed that Stoical principles are more easily borne by those of Epicurean habits.
>
> (Travesties 36)

In these examples, the interpretive dialectical thesis

and antithesis arise not from the possible duality of meaning of particular words or phrases, but from the interaction of the initial part of an expression with the part that completes it. The audience's initial interpretation of a seemingly ordinary remark such as "Nothing gives me an appetite" is compromised, undermined and reinterpreted by the unexpected explanation, "so much as renouncing my beliefs", which follows it. And this altered interpretation is itself dissolved and recreated in a yet more compromised form by the addition of "over a glass of hock", so that by the time the line is completed the audience members have received three interpretive jolts; they have been forced to review their understanding of the character's words twice. In this particular example, the oppositions of meaning do not clash head-on, and are more accurately described as alternatives than opposites. But in the case of a remark like "all the money we had we lost betting on certainties", the alternatives become fully antithetical opposites, of which the audience is again forced to become aware as the line progresses.

A variation on the dialectical strategy of juxtaposing incongruous words or phrases is the favourite Stoppardian technique of having characters make remarks which they themselves immediately correct or contradict. Examples of this strategy include those lines containing a single correction and those presenting multiple corrections or

contradictions:

> Brezhnev: ... ever since then they've let the party drift into open democracy, make that bourgeois democracy ....
>
> (Squaring the Circle 74)

. . .

> Carr: I stand open to correction on all points, except ... the success of my performance, which I remember clearly, in the demanding role of Ernest (not Ernest, the other one) ....
>
> (Travesties 25)

. . .

> Guildenstern: The equanimity of your average tosser of coins depends upon the law, or rather a tendency, or let us say a probability, or at any rate a mathematically calculable chance, which ensures that he will not upset himself by losing too much ....
>
> (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead 12-13)

. . .

> Riley: Now for the last time - and remember you're on oath - I ask you in all solemnity - and think carefully before you reply - I ask you - God dammit, now I've forgotten the question ....
>
> (Enter a Free Man 27)

> Thelma: ... what he had on his face was definitely shaving foam! (Pause) Or possibly some kind of yashmak!
>
> (After Magritte 20)
>
> . . .
>
> Henry: 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.
>
> (The Real Thing 46-7)

In these examples Stoppard reveals his confessed admiration for the "various forms" of a "Beckett joke" which "consists of confident statement followed by immediate refutation in the same voice " (see chapter one 7). In the interaction of each statement with its accompanying refutation, be it a modification or a complete contradiction, there is the interaction of antithetical oppositions. It becomes evident that the structure of individual lines of Stoppardian dialogue is very frequently designed to create just such dialectical operations in the minds of the audience as those which result from his employment of the ambiguous pun.

This discussion has centred on the way in which Stoppard combines words to make up individual lines of dramatic dialogue, but the remarks of Thelma and Henry discussed above begin to stretch the defining parameters of

"individual lines"; the dialectical oppositions which are brought into being by their remarks arise not so much within their lines as between separate lines spoken by them. Since they, like most Stoppardian characters, speak in fluid prose rather than well-defined lines of verse, it is difficult to make clear identifications of individual lines. But since the remarks of Henry and Thelma cover two sentences, unlike the other examples discussed above, they transfer the discussion from the examination of the dialectical oppositions created by the smallest units of the hierarchy of construction, to a consideration of those occurring in the structural tier immediately above: that consisting of the collections of lines which are constituted by the words and which constitute the scenes of the plays. This tier is a more comprehensive category than that beneath it: the consideration of it will involve an examination of the oppositions created line by line within sections of the text which coalesce to create scenes. These sections are composed not only of lines of dialogue; the definition of the category is stretched a little to include "lines" of visual and aural effects.

The specifics of such aural and visual "lines" will be clarified when they are discussed in detail in due course. In beginning an examination of the tier of the hierarchy of dramatic construction which is composed of lines, concentration will be focused on the ways in which verbal

(as opposed to visual or aural) theses and antitheses are created through the structure of lines. These ways are numerous, but each again involves the juxtaposition of incongruities (this time between lines), and thus creates the kinds of dialectical theses and antitheses in interpretation which such incongruous juxtapositions within lines created.

A frequently occurring method is the creation of sudden contrasts in speech register, either within one speech by the same character or in the movement from speaker to speaker:

> Linda: We-ell, I was in the desert one day ... and a strong brown arm <u>scooped</u> me up and as we roared into the sunset he covered me with burn-ing kisses and put me on his pillion! I met him over the Fancy Goods.
>
> (<u>Enter a Free Man</u> 42)
>
> . . .
>
> Carr [describing Joyce]: ... in short, a complex personality, an enigma, a contradictory spokesman for the truth, an obsessive litigant and yet an essentially private man who wished his total indifference to public notice to be universally recognised - in short a liar and a hypocrite, a tight-fisted, sponging, fornicating drunk not worth the paper ....
>
> (<u>Travesties</u> 23)

McKendrick: Wit and paradox. Verbal felicity. An occupation for gentlemen. A higher civilization alive and well in the older universities. I see you like tits and bums by the way.

(Professional Foul 48)

Macduff: Oh horror, horror, horror!
Confusion has made his masterpiece!
Inspector: What's your problem, sunshine?

(Cahoot's Macbeth 55)

Other incongruous juxtapositions are created when characters adopt a different interpretation of the words addressed to them to that intended by the speaker:

George [referring to Thumper the rabbit]: Do you realize she's in there now, eating him?
Crouch [thinking George is talking about the dead philosopher McFee]: You mean - raw?
George: No, of course not! - cooked - with gravy and mashed potatoes.

(Jumpers 77)

Blair: You're the first person to jump off a bridge on to a dog. The reverse one often used to see on the Saturday morning cinema, of course.

Purvis: Men jumping off dogs onto ...?

Blair: No, dogs jumping off bridges onto ....

(The Dog It Was That Died 16)

One of the simplest and most effective ways of dislocating the audience's perception and forcing a sudden reversal in their interpretaion is the use of total disagreement, a line-to-line feature one finds frequently in Stoppard, very often in the most extraordinary contexts:

Thelma: You contradict everything I say.

Harris (heatedly): That I deny.

(After Magritte 18)

. . .

Harris: No - you have pushed me too far. When I married you I didn't expect to have your mother -

Thelma (shouting back at him): She's not my mother - she's your mother!

Harris (immediately): Rubbish!

(After Magritte 22)

A variation on the complete dislocation involved in such total disagreements is the milder form whereby characters do not utterly contradict, but rather correct, themselves or each other. This process may occur simply between two lines of dialogue or may proceed, becoming more complicated, through several lines:

Wagner (enthusiastically): Hello Gigi, you lovely bastard! You look terrific!

Guthrie: I look terrible.

Wagner (fresh start; same tone): You look terrible! How are you?

(Night and Day 21)

. . .

Rosencrantz: I wish I was dead. I could jump over the side. That would put a spoke in their wheel.

Guildenstern: Unless they're counting on it.

Rosencrantz: I shall remain on board. That'll put a spoke in their wheel.

(Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead 81)

. . .

Narrator (to camera): Poland's reliable ally, her neighbour to the east, had been a watchful and threatening presence since 1945.

Witness: 1700.

(The Narrator is about to protest.)

All right, 1720 but no later.

(Squaring the Circle 35)

At its most complicated this process involves only the smallest of corrections expressed in similar words in each line and makes heavy demands on the attention of the audience, as is evidenced in these representative examples from Artist Descending a Staircase and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead:

Beauchamp: The first duty of the artist is to capture the radio station.

Donner: It was Lewis who said that.

Beauchamp: Lewis who?

Donner: Wyndham Lewis.

Beauchamp: It was Edith Sitwell, as a matter of fact.

Donner: Rubbish.

Beauchamp: She came out with it while we were dancing.

Donner: You never danced with Edith Sitwell.

Beauchamp: Oh yes I did.

Donner: You're thinking of that American woman who sang negro spirituals at Nancy Cunard's coming-out ball.

Beauchamp: It was Queen Mary's wedding, as a matter of fact.

Donner: You're mad.

Beauchamp: I don't mean wedding, I mean launching.

Donner: I can understand your confusion but it was Nancy Cunard's coming-out.

Beauchamp: Down at the docks?

Donner: British boats are not launched to the sound of minstrel favourites.

Beauchamp: I don't mean launching, I mean maiden voyage.

Donner: I refuse to discuss it.

(Artist Descending a Staircase 20-21)

Rosencrantz: He talks to himself, which might be madness.

Guildenstern: If he didn't talk sense, which he does.

Rosencrantz: Which suggests the opposite.

Player: Of what?

(Small pause)

Guildenstern: I think I have it. A man talking sense to himself is no madder than a man talking nonsense not to himself.

Rosencrantz: Or just as mad.

Guildenstern: Or just as mad.

Rosencrantz: And he does both.

Guildenstern: So there you are.

Rosencrantz: Stark raving sane.

(Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead 50)

The final verbal inter-line method whereby Stoppard creates the incongruous juxtapositions which present the oppositions of a dialectical viewpoint so effectively, is the interweaving of the lines of characters who are not paying attention to one another either because they are acting in different playing areas or because they are submerged in their own preoccupations. For example, in Jumpers, the intricacies of George's lecture prove so intriguing to him that he can give no attention to the cries of his wife, which are consistently interjected into his convoluted lines. Similarly, in Professional Foul, Stone's

pedantic lecture is juxtaposed with McKendrick and Anderson's discussion of Broadbent, the interest of which prevents them from listening to Stone (61). And in the opening scene of Travesties, Joyce and Tzara recite sentences from scraps of paper and Lenin discourses excitedly in Russian with Nadya, while Cecily constantly exhorts them all to silence (18-21).

On other occasions conversations between two or more characters dissolve into juxtaposed monologues or fragmented sets of dialogues, as the preoccupations of individual characters become so absorbing as to prevent them from involvement in others' concerns: in Artist Descending a Staircase, Donner pontificates about his aesthetic theories while Beauchamp distractedly swears as he attempts to swat a fly (20); in Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, the maths teacher's explanation of political theories in axiomatic terms reveals her comparative lack of interest in the geometry Sacha reads from his schoolbook (19-20); in Professional Foul, the five philosophers talk at cross-purposes during three simultaneous conversations over dinner (76); in Travesties all the characters converse in limericks in one scene, and although their verse is integrated, their subjects remain at odds, Carr's being the heights of British Culture, Joyce's his pecuniary difficulties, Gwen's the extraordinariness of Tzara, and Tzara's the inefficacy of art (33-6); and in The Real Inspector Hound Birdboot's

lecherous musings are interwoven with Moon's thoughts of his superior, Higgs, while the lines of both are juxtaposed with those of the play they are observing.

This type of inter-line dislocation reaches perhaps its apogee in Cahoot's Macbeth, in the scene in which the performers of the subversive Shakespearean drama switch from the original text to its equivalent in Dogg, while the Police Inspector desperately attempts to alert his men in a code language:

> Malcolm: Jugged cake-hops furnished soon? [What wood is this before us?]
>
> Inspector (into walkie-talkie): Wilco zebra over.
>
> Macduff: Sin cake-hops Birnam, git. [The woods of Birnam, sir.]
>
> Inspector: Green Charlie Angels 15 out.
>
> (Cahoot's Macbeth 76)

In all these examples of the various methods whereby the incongruous juxtaposition of lines is effected, the audience is required, as the dialogue progresses, to reinterpret every initial remark in the light of that (or those) which follows it. Stoppard skilfully controls his audience's reaction to his material, forcing them to follow a dialectical path of interpretation: the structure of his lines demands that the audience understands the initial remark (we might call this a thesis), and immediately afterwards accepts a second remark which contradicts the

initial one to some degree (an antithesis). Often this second remark is itself reinterpreted, and becomes a second thesis to a second antithesis, so that the development of scenes progresses along a line of oppositions, each element of which relates retrospectively to the element preceding it while also advancing the dialogue. Stoppard thus guides his audience's perception through his dramatic structures towards a fusion with his own dialectical perceptions.

In the consideration thus far of the dialectical oppositions created by Stoppard's structuring of his characters' lines, concentration has been focused solely on the oppositions created by verbal interactions between lines of dialogue. But, as Roger Scruton points out, Stoppard's "plays are not so much drama as audiovisual metaphysics" (46), and it is vital to any full understanding of his plays to appreciate the contributions made by visual and aural elements in addition to the effects of the words. It was with the examination of such visual and aural elements in mind that the idea of aural and visual "lines", as the equivalent of verbal lines, was introduced at the start of this discussion. Any performed play has, by definition, visual and/or aural components, which range in scope from scene designs which remain static throughout scenes or acts (or whole plays) to aural and visual effects which last for only a fleeting moment. It is to such passing visual and aural effects that the label "lines" will be applied, since

they may be assigned a roughly equivalent "dramatic space" for the purpose of analysis to that occupied by lines of dialogue. And, as will be shown, Stoppard often structures such visual and aural lines in the same ways that his verbal lines are structured, with the intention of creating dialectical oppositions in the audience's interpretation of the play.

The oppositions involved here are produced through the interaction of visual, aural and verbal lines in different combinations. The first of these occurs when Stoppard presents purely aural or purely visual oppositions which result from the appearance of an unexpected visual or aural effect which interacts with its more familiar surrounding context, or from the interaction of two conflicting visual and verbal images. Such interactions are found in many of the plays: in Every Good Boy Deserves Favour the performance of a children's band is brought to a halt by the triangle playing of Sacha, who refuses to keep time, and whose "subversive" notes conflict with the rest of the music (18); in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead the audience witnesses the very realistic death of the Player after he has been stabbed by Guildenstern, only to see him suddenly rise again, showing that the dagger was only a theatrical prop (93-4); in Night and Day President Mageeba enters and fires a burst from a gun which is only revealed to be a toy by the lack of injury caused by his action (74); near the end of Squaring the Circle the Polish Politburo is seen

sitting in what appears to be a prison dock, but which becomes the Polish parliament as the camera zooms out to reveal other parliamentary members (55); in After Magritte the opening scene is composed of people and objects in extraordinary and initially inexplicable positions, creating a quasi-surrealist whole (9-11); Jumpers, too, opens with an extraordinary spectacle in which an unexplained woman trapeze artist removes pieces of clothing as the trapeze passes back and forth across the stage, and knocks over a manservant bearing a tray of drinks (17-8); her performance is immediately followed by one by a group of acrobats, who form a human pyramid which collapses as one of them is shot dead by an unseen gunman (21); and in Travesties, as the characters resolve several longstanding misunderstandings, there is a deliberate hiatus followed by a "formal dance sequence", the effect of which is, as Stoppard's stage directions dictate, "a complete dislocation of the play" (97).

In these examples purely visual or aural effects are used to create dislocations in the audience's perception of the play; these dislocations cause oppositions to arise in the audience's interpretation of the events on the stage. When an unexpected visual or aural effect occurs the audience is forced to reinterpret the context in which it is presented. When the Player rises in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, the audience is required to reverse its interpretation of the scene it has just witnessed. In

such cases the audience is encouraged to accept an interpretive thesis (the death of the Player), and then forced to accept an antithetical interpretation (the living Player) immediately afterwards. It can be seen that Stoppard's structuring of visual and aural lines operates very often in the same way as that of verbal lines: it propels the dramatic movement forward along a dialectical path, forcing the audience to perceive the progression of the play only through the acknowledgement of the validity of both opposing sides of dialectical antitheses.

On rare occasions such oppositions are further complicated by the simultaneous presentation of visual and aural lines. A simple example of such a strategy is seen in Squaring the Circle, where the First Secretary of the Polish Communist Party returns from his summer holiday carrying a bag which both contains a "snorkel and ridiculous straw hat" (a visual image which undermines his typical politician's garb and demeanour) and "clinks dangerously" (an aural image having the same effect) (29). But a more complicated example is found in an extaordinary scene in Jumpers: Inspector Bones reverently enters Dotty's bedroom, at which the audience hears a burst of "romantic Mozartian trumpets", after which he raises his head, "and the trumpets are succeeded by a loud animal bray, a mating call", at which point Bones drops the vase of flowers he is carrying and a sound "such as would have been made had he dropped it down a long flight of stone stairs" is heard (52). The

interaction of the various visual and verbal elements here causes extreme dislocation in the audience's perceptions: no sooner has an interpretive thesis been reached than an antithetical interpretation offers itself with the operation of another visual or aural effect. This scene is finally explained when George is shown to have been playing the sounds on a tape recorder in the next room, but until this resolution is reached Stoppard mercilessly flings his audience between the oppositions of the interpretive theses and antitheses.

But by far the most common combination of visual, aural and verbal lines used by Stoppard in the careful creation of oppositions is that which involves either the interaction of visual or aural lines (or both) with verbal lines. In such cases, a visual image or verbal effect undermines something being said by one of the characters. Examples are to be found in every play and the quotation of but a few cannot do justice to the prevalence, but can suggest the variety, of this type of feature. To suggest, then, a representative selection of examples: in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Rosencrantz calls "Next" into the wings, but nobody appears in response (51), and a few lines later this process is repeated but reversed, when he says "Keep out, then! I forbid anyone to enter!" and has no sooner relievedly noted "That's better ..." when "Immediately, behind him a grand procession enters ..." (53); in After Magritte, when for the

first time in the play the scene resembles an ordinary living room, Foot the Police Inspector bursts in saying "What is the meaning of this bizarre spectacle?" (24); in Artist Descending a Staircase Stoppard begins a scene with "cliché Paris music, accordian" only to follow this with Sophie's line: "I must say I won't be entirely sorry to leave Lambeth - the river smells like a dead cat, and the accordianist downstairs is driving me insane ..." (29); in The Dog It Was That Died the Police Chief's analysis of Purvis's involvement with the Russians is undermined by the bubbling of the opium pipe he is smoking (43-5) and Purvis's leap from the Thames bridge after his decision to commit suicide is followed not by a splash but by the unexpected "sound of a quite large dog in sudden and short-lived pain" (13); in Squaring the Circle, the narrator discusses the intricacies of a Solidarity meeting and suggests that "As always, there was a Polish joke for the occasion", which is followed by some dialogue from the meeting accompanied by a caption on the screen saying "Polish Joke" (68); and in The Real Inspector Hound, when a telephone rings on the stage of the play-within-the-play, Moon, one of the critics, unexpectedly answers it, and announces even more unexpectedly that it is for Birdboot, the other critic, who remains on the stage of the play-within-the-play to become one of its characters (36-7).

In these examples the simultaneous or near simultaneous presentation of contradictory visual and verbal lines creates for the audience interpretive theses which are

accompanied, or immediately followed, by antitheses which demand equal acceptance. In this kind of presentation the same underlying dialectical artistic principles as those which have governed Stoppard's presentation of purely visual or aural lines can be detected.

The obvious simultaneity or near simultaneity of equally valid but contradictory elements in the examples discussed above reminds one of the theory of David Farley-Hills, which contained the argument that the equal plausibilty of each term of a contradiction caused a "mental impasse" in the observer, accompanied by "tension", which is very often released in "laughter" (see chapter two 33). It has been noted above that Stoppard's overriding dialectical artistic principles result in this kind of contradiction or opposition in interpretation attaining great prevalence in the construction of his plays. This prevalence is acknowledged by implication by many critics, who fail to recognise the importance of these features, being mentally ensnared in the laughter frequently produced by them. The profusion of laughter has led such critics to suggest that Stoppard's plays are merely progressions of gratuitous jokes which are not worthy of serious consideration. For example, Peter Kemp can only reluctantly assign "vague intimations of profound import" to the "jokey routines" of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (667). This kind of disparaging remark recalls of

course those of critics who found Stoppard's frequent punning purposeless. But critics who regard Stoppard's construction of his dramatic lines as resulting in gratuitous jokes, fail to perceive that the implications of such "jokes" are similar to those of the puns so prevalent in the "words" tier of the hierarchy of construction. Indeed, dialectical principles can be seen to determine the methods of presentation to a very large extent in both the first and second tiers of the hierarchy, those constituted respectively by the words and lines of whole plays. By employing structural features which produce dialectical oppositions in the audience's interpretive responses to the plays, Stoppard guides his audiences irreversibly along a dialectical interpretive path, which encourages audience members to view the world from a perspective similar to his own.

The discussion may proceed from an examination of the patterns according to which Stoppard assembles his words and lines to the third tier of the hierarchy of construction, that consisting of the scenes which are constituted by collections of lines. But in defining the features of the last two tiers of the hierarchy, problems are encountered. These problems arise from Stoppard's erratic use of the terms "scene" and "act" in the labelling of various plays. Many of the shorter stage plays are described as "one-acters" and are provided with no scene divisions by the playwright (these include <u>After Magritte</u>, <u>Every Good Boy</u>

Deserves Favour, Dirty Linen and Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth). The longer stage plays are usually divided into acts but not scenes, as is the case with Enter a Free Man, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Jumpers, Travesties and Night and Day. The radio and television plays, such as A Separate Peace, If You're Glad I'll Be Frank, Artist Descending a Staircase, Professional Foul and The Dog It Was That Died, usually contain scene but not act divisions. And other plays are labelled in terms of both acts and scenes, as are The Real Thing and Squaring the Circle (where the synonymous term "part" is used instead of "act").

Stoppard's infrequent use of the act division results in that category of the hierarchy containing relatively few oppositions, as will become clear from the discussion of the "acts" tier. And the fact that so many of the important one-acters have no scene divisions has resulted in there being no adequate means of comparing certain features of these plays with similar features of those which do contain such divisions. Such divisions have therefore been made here in order to facilitate an analysis of plays without scene divisions which is consistent with that of those plays which do contain authorial scene divisions. This has not been an arbitrary process; certain collections of lines have been designated as "scenes" according to criteria which resemble Stoppard's own. A new scene usually begins when a new character or set of characters enters, or when there is

a major shift in mood or period; a scene is constituted by the collection of lines which follows until another such change occurs. Thus, in the discussion of the oppositions occurring between scenes of the plays, consideration is being given to oppositions being set up between such collections of lines, oppositions which result from the interaction of these collections with each other.

As was the case in the discussion of the construction of Stoppard's lines, it is necessary to consider the oppositions created by the visual effects accompanying the collections of lines in addition to those created by the verbal interactions between scenes. Since the interaction between visual elements of different scenes is one of Stoppard's most basic and striking methods of creating oppositions in this tier of the hierarchy, it is appropriate to begin by examining such inter-scene interactions. Stoppard creates the simplest of dialectical relationships between scenes in the basic set designs of such plays as Enter a Free Man, Night and Day and A Separate Peace. In Enter a Free Man the stage is simply divided into the bar (stage left) and the living room of the Rileys' home (stage right). The scenes of the play oscillate between the two, and the behaviour of George and the events in the bar are contrasted with his activities at home. Ironically, in the pub, where Riley announces that he is "free" on several occasions, nobody pays much attention or respect to him and he is forced to return home, where he feels claustrophobic

whilst really being allowed carte blanche by his wife, Persephone, who does not really understand him but remains faithfully supportive. It is through the oppositions created by Riley's oscillations from bar to home and back that the audience is made aware of the complexities of character in this, the most realistic of Stoppard's plays. The scene-to-scene oscillations of Enter a Free Man are frequently accompanied by slight overlapping as the transitions are made. During such overlaps the audience must attend to both the bar and the living room, and the interactions between the events in each force the audience to perceive the action dialectically. For example, as Riley enters the bar for the first time, enthusiastically announcing "Enter a free man!", the lights remain on in the living room just sufficiently to see Linda, who remarks "Poor old Dad" (10). Riley's enthusiasm and confidence are thus undermined in the perception of the audience: Riley's announcement creates an interpretive thesis which is accompanied by the opposing antithesis suggested by Linda, both of which the audience must assimilate as the action continues. Similar kinds of oppositional structures are set up as the scene-by-scene oscillation progresses.

There is a similar but more flexible oscillation between the garden and lounge scenes of Night and Day. The amount of garden or lounge visible in each scene varies, and in some cases one of the two occupies the whole set. The

oscillations involved here help to facilitate the oppositions Stoppard sets up in this play between the wordy interpretations put upon events by journalists and politicians and the harsh realities of the events themselves. The audience is exposed to the violence of Guthrie's dream, with its noisy helicopter, jeep lights and gunfire, in a garden scene (15), and later hears the intricacies of various debates about politics and the press in the general luxuriousness of the lounge. The oppositions created between these two environments are used by Stoppard to sustain the oppositions of the intellectual debates of the play, so that even though the news of Jake's death is conveyed in a lounge-dominated scene, the fact that his corpse is "outside" in the jeep (86) forces the audience to retain a painful awareness of the violent realities of the world which such debates intellectualize.

And in the television play A Separate Peace the desire of John Brown to escape the pressures of the real world is reinforced by the oscillation of the scenes between two settings, the hospital office where such pressures demand that the mystery he presents should be solved, and the white blankness of his peaceful hospital room.

The basic antithetical set designs of these three plays are complicated in Jumpers. In this play there is a scene-by-scene oscillation between George's study, which is situated at stage left, and Dotty's bedroom, which occupies

the stage right area. The dialectical oppositions created by the juxtaposition of the detached intellectual musings of George and the painful psychological sufferings of Dotty are supported by the alternation between the bedroom and the study, and the clashes of the opposition are often emphasized by simultaneous playing in both areas, similar to that outlined in the overlap between bar and home in Enter a Free Man. But the antithetical oppositions created by such a divided playing area are complicated by a third major playing space, a central hallway and front door, which divides the Bedroom and Study. This central playing space is dominated by Inspector Bones, whose no-nonsense, common sense approach to the mystery of McFee's death contrasts both with Dotty's breakdown and George's removed self-involvement. Crouch the amateur philosopher and disciple of McFee is also a force in this space; it is here that he reveals to Archie the truth about McFee's defection from the Logical-Positivist camp and to George the fact of his death. The manipulative Archie, of course, runs rampant through all these playing areas, taking control wherever he goes. The third playing space both enforces the division between the dialectical oppositions created by the interaction of bedroom and study scenes, and also complicates these oppositions. The interactions which occur between the two major playing spaces and the dividing hall suggest further interpretive possibilities to the audience. Thus Jumpers offers not only a primary antithetical visual opposition,

but a whole set of secondary reactions between the three playing spaces, causing constantly shifting interpretive theses and antitheses.

The central action of Jumpers, enacted within this tripartite set, is framed by the prologue and coda, both of which take place in yet other spaces separate from the rest of the set. The jumble of characters and actions in the prologue appears in an ill-defined performing space which could be either circus tent, cabaret stage or gymnasium, judged by the events which take place. The surrealistic coda is performed within the confines of George's dream. These framing spaces and the events which occur within them complicate the audience's perceptions of the play further. The prologue provides no traditional explanatory introduction to the concerns of the play, and its frenetic and rapidly changing events have no sooner established themselves in the minds of the audience when the bedroom/hall/study set "assembles itself" (21) and the oscillation between bedroom and study begins. The coda provides no traditional denouement and its surrealistic action, defined by George's dream, seems tangential to the oppositions created in the central section of the play. Thus, the "spaces" within which the prologue and coda are enacted separate them from the rest of the play, and create further visual oppositions for the audience: they interact with the central parts of the play to create additional interpretive dislocations, resulting in further interpretive

theses accompanied by equally valid antitheses.

And there is a final playing space in Jumpers which interacts with these others; this is the "screen, hopefully forming a backdrop to the whole stage" (13). On this screen the audience sees the events occurring beyond the world of the stage in a simultaneous and identical picture to that shown at various times on Dotty's television set. These events include the military parades and ceremonial flypasts associated with the Radical-Liberal election victory as well as the landing of the first British astronauts on the moon. This last playing space, then, widens the scope of interactions between spaces within which events are being presented on stage from the simple dialectical bedroom/hall/study oppositions, to interactions between the outside world, and even the moon, and the theatre-defined play sets. The interpretive theses and antitheses which the audience must absorb multiply accordingly.

Similar kinds of multiple oppositions are created in the interactions between the four constantly visible playing spaces - office, school, cell and orchestral area - in Every Good Boy Deserves Favour. The oppositions occurring in this play result from the interaction between events occurring in different areas either in separate scenes or simultaneously. These visual theses and antitheses once

again provide considerable support to the verbal oppositions present in the intellectual debates of the play.

The various sets within which the scenes of The Real Thing are presented never appear simultaneously, as do those of Night and Day, Jumpers and Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, but there remain in this play interactions between events in three basic kinds of set: living room, undefined empty space and moving train. There are also interactions (which will be discussed a little later) within these three basic kinds of set, as Stoppard presents scenes in four living rooms, two empty spaces and two moving trains. And, finally, in Squaring the Circle, the many antithetical oppositions created by the visual elements of scenes in the plays discussed above are multiplied, as the action swings back and forth in the one hundred and twenty two scenes between such varied settings as the Black Sea shore, party offices, television studios, Solidarity meeting places, cafes, Walesa's flat, Gdansk shipyard, prison cells, hospital wards and Kremlin offices, all of which are suggested by various rearrangements of elements of a single basic set designed and built specifically for the filming of Squaring the Circle. This basic set gives concrete expression to the antithetical oppositions embodied in the title; Stoppard describes this quality in his introduction to the screenplay: "... they built a structure of steel gantries squaring off a huge red circular carpet on a steel floor. To this they added background flats and a few large

movable pieces .... This space served as an airport, a street, a dockyard ... and anywhere else we needed" (11). Thus, as the visual oppositions are being created through the interaction of the various "movable pieces" as the action of the play progresses through its many scenes and swings back and forth through their accompanying sets, these visual oppositions are constantly supported by the dialectical antitheses implied by the ever present square and circle of the larger set, within which individual scenes are played out. And as Stoppard points out so clearly in a variation on the algebraic summary of his basic artistic principles: "The result perfectly expressed the qualified reality which I had been worrying about creating since starting to write" (11).

The concept of "qualifying reality" is easily linked to the intention of presenting "Firstly, A" and "Secondly, minus A" when creating a dramatic performance which attempts to come to terms with the complex flux of reality. The artistic principles suggested by these two expressions are embodied as much in the oppositions created by the visual elements of Stoppard's scenes as in those brought into being by his structuring of words and lines.

Oppositions similar to those created through the interaction of the visual images of Stoppard's scenes are produced by the interaction of the scenes' verbal elements.

The juxtaposition of incompatible linguistic styles is an excellent method of creating interpretive theses and antitheses in the audience's understanding of the play, and is used as extensively by Stoppard as other methods which have this effect. It is thus one of Stoppard's most favoured techniques to present various scenes in different styles, and examples are found in almost all the plays. In If You're Glad I'll Be Frank the poetic scenes in which the wanderings of Gladys's mind are presented contain such lines as the following:

Gladys: Frank.
You could set your clock by him.
But not time - it flies by
unrepeatable
and the moment after next the
passengers are dead
and the bus scrap and the scrap dust,
caught by the wind, blown into the
crevasse
as the earth splits and scatters
at the speed of bees wings. (20)

The languid, haunting free verse of these scenes clashes violently with the frenetic but pedantic and bureaucratic expression of the outside world, encountered in the scenes in which Frank attempts to find Gladys in the few moments snatched from his demanding bus schedule:

Frank: Who's the top man - quick!

> Porter: You can't park there after seven if the month's got an R in it or before nine if it hasn't except on Christmas and the Chairman's birthday should it fall in Lent. (20)

A similar contrast is set up in Albert's Bridge, where Albert's poetic eulogies addressed to the bridge are contrasted with the scientific jargon and bureaucratic procedures of the Clufton Bay Bridge Sub-Committee meetings, and also with the prosaic domestic speech of Albert's wife and mother.

In Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead and Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth the Elizabethan language of the scenes composed of Shakespearean quotations contrasts with the twentieth-century idiom of Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, the Player and Easy, while in the latter plays further contrasts are set up between scenes presented in Elizabethan and contemporary English and those composed of the invented language, Dogg.

In The Real Thing the poetry in which the quoted love scenes from 'Tis Pity She's a Whore are expressed is sharply contrasted with the prose of the other love scenes in the play; in addition, the inarticulate and laboured expressions of Brodie are in direct opposition to the slick, brilliant word-play of the scenes dominated by the eloquent Henry.

In Every Good Boy Deserves Favour the stylistic contrasts are between the songs of Sacha, the eloquent rhyme of Alexander, the ordinary speech of the Doctor and the doctrinaire jargon of the Teacher. In Travesties, too, a series of contrasts is set up between the scenes composed of songs, and those consisting of limericks, lectures, or parodies of parts of The Importance of Being Earnest, Ulysses, Shakespearean dialogue and other major literary works. Similar kinds of stylistic contrasts between scenes can be found in Dirty Linen (the scenes of which interact with those of the playlet encased in it, New-Found-Land), Professional Foul, Night and Day and many of the other plays. These contrasts are a very common method whereby Stoppard creates antithetical oppositions between scenes: the constant variation in the style of expression causes the plays to progress along a dialectical stylistic path, each style presenting one variation in a kaleidoscopic shifting of dialectical antitheses, which it is the demanding and delightful task of the audience to follow. This cannot be successfully accomplished by the audience member unless he or she admits the validity of each antithetical style and thus moves with the antithetical progression of the scenes. Once again, Stoppard employs methods of expression which force the audience member to follow a dialectical path of perception when following the progression of the plays.

In examining the oppositions created by the interaction

of different scenes thus far, attention has been concentrated on purely visual and purely verbal interactions, but of course in a dramatic performance visual and verbal elements are seldom separable, working most often in tandem. In Stoppard's plays there are two particularly prevalent devices which create scene-to-scene oppositions through the interactions between both the verbal and visual elements of scenes: these are the repetition or reinterpretation of single scenes within the plays, and the play-within-the-play.

The former is encountered with a frequency that is startling, and is one of the central reasons for the progression of Stoppard's plays being more circular than linear. The reinterpretation of scenes which have either just passed or occurred some scenes previously obviously has a dislocating effect on the audience's interpretation: no sooner has a scene passed than the accuracy of events is questioned and undermined by an alternative rendition thereof. This occurs, of course, only when two different versions of exactly the same events are being presented. The various events at the centre of _After Magritte_, as told by Harris, Thelma and Mother, cause this kind of interpretive dilemma in the audience, although each is not strictly linked to expression in a single scene. Scene by scene reinterpretation occurs most notably in _Travesties_ and _Squaring the Circle_, as should be expected in plays respectively consisting of the dramatized reminiscences of

an old man and scenes in which "Everything is true except the words and the pictures" (27).

In Travesties there are no less than five different renditions of the scene which begins with Bennett's "I have put the newspapers and telegrams on the sideboard, sir", and continues with a discussion between Carr and his manservant about various contemporary political issues (26-32, 96); the scene consisting of a conversation between Carr, posing as Tzara, and Cecily, in the library is enacted in three versions (71, 75, 78); the arrival of Joyce and Tzara at Carr's rooms is performed once by "nonsense" caricatures who speak in limericks and once by more "normal" versions of the two characters (33, 36, 47), while the "normal" Tzara's entrance and ensuing argument with Carr is played twice (36-41, 41-47); in addition the conversation between Lenin and Nadya in Russian is presented once without translation (19-20) and once with a pedantic accompanying rendition in English, provided by Cecily (70). Stoppard refers to these reinterpretive scenes as "time-slips", and although he is at great pains to point out that "the effect of these time-slips is not meant to be bewildering" (27), their frequent occurrence is clearly aimed at dislocating the linear flow of the performance, creating dialectical oppositions between the various scenes which reinterpret each other.

Similar kinds of oppositions are created in Squaring

the Circle as the Narrator provides two or more different versions of many events, often at the insistence of the Witness. Examples of this kind of presentation include the two versions of Brezhnev's meeting with Gierek at the Black Sea (scenes i and ii), which are followed by the Narrator's "Who knows?" in scene iii (28); two versions of the Politburo viewing a military parade, in one of which they are presented as caricatures of Chicago gangsters and in the other as sober political figures (60); three versions of the meeting between Jaruzelski, Glemp and Walesa in two of which their discussions are presented in terms of an exaggerated poker game (88-91); and three versions of the Politburo's interpretation of the divisions within Solidarity, separated from each other by the freezing of the television image which "tears itself in half like paper with the sound of tearing paper" (72-3). Like the "time-slips" of Travesties these reinterpretive scenes dislocate the linear progression of the events in the play, and the interaction between the scenes causes antithetical interpretive oppositions in the audience members, who must witness each different version before the events of the play can continue.

Another version of this kind of structural device is the repetition or near repetition of the events of scenes in different contexts, involving either the same or different characters in similar situations. In these cases the same events are not being given in two different versions, but

are actually recurring in different contexts; this causes the audience to reinterpret the original scenes in the light of the new context in which similar events occur. A forced connection between the two sets of events is thus made, and the two (or more) events present an interpretive thesis and antithesis respectively, both of which the audience members must assimilate. For example, in Jumpers an acrobat is shot from a pyramid of gymnasts at both the beginning and end of the play (21, 85); Artist Descending a Staircase begins and ends with an identical combination of dialogue and sound effects, but the voice of Beauchamp in the latter scene replaces that of Donner in the opening one (13, 54); in act III of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead scene i shows the two protagonists reading the letter which orders Hamlet's death, while scene iii shows them approaching the reading of the replacement letter, which orders their own decapitation, by exactly the same sort of process, in which one of them pretends to be the King of England and reads the letters in this guise (82, 92); in Enter a Free Man Riley makes three self-conscious entrances into the bar, two of them using exactly the same words (which are further repeated by the implication of Harry's response "It's him again") (10, 54, 69); and in The Real Thing, the discovery of marital infidelity between the play's three couples occurs in three slightly different scenes (9, 35, 68); the living rooms of scenes iii and iv are "immediately reminiscent" (stage directions 35, 37) of those in scenes i

and ii; the identical words of Brodie's play are heard once in the course of conversation and once in the play's filming (55, 73); and the same scene of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore is performed twice, once as a "word rehearsal" and once as an "acting rehearsal" (67-8).

The second device which Stoppard uses to create oppositions between both visual and verbal elements of different scenes is one that is as prevalent in his works as the reinterpretation and repetition of scenes. This is the familiar dramatic component, the play-within-the-play. The frequency with which Stoppard's plays contain other plays has led Richard Corballis to remark that a preference for this kind of dramatic construction is "perhaps the most characteristic feature of Stoppard's art" (106), and indeed this device is present in some or other form in most Stoppard plays, as Corballis notes. Whenever a play-within-a-play is presented, the scenes bodying forth the inner play interact with those of the frame play. One of Stoppard's most obvious plays-within-the-play is the short New-Found-Land, the fantastic monologue of which interacts dialectically with the frenetic farce which surrounds it. But New-Found-Land is not so much a traditional play-within-a-play as a playlet dividing two halves of another play, Dirty Linen. When Stoppard uses the more traditional form of the play-within-the-play dialectical interactions of a different kind occur.

The occurrence of a play-within-the-play in any dramatic work has identifiable and constant effects: as Corballis states, it "create[s], at two removes from the real world inhabited by the audience, a repository for the artificial ..." (106). A play-within-a-play always has the effect of distancing the theatre audience from the performers of the inner play, who become representatives of the unreal, artistically created world of the theatre, while the stage audience becomes more representative of the "real world". In two of Stoppard's most important plays which contain other plays, The Real Inspector Hound and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, this is precisely what happens when the inner plays begin.

June Schlueter makes some extremely perceptive comments on The Real Inspector Hound. As she explains, the stage mirror facing the audience at the play's opening, and the first words of Moon and Birdboot, cause audience members to view these characters with "amused self-recognition". Schlueter goes on to explain that this identification is reinforced by the beginning of the play-within-the-play:

> While their identities to this point are those of actors in a mimetic play, when Mrs. Drudge walks on the stage between the critics and the audience and begins the Muldoon Manor play, Moon and Birdboot are no longer simply fictive characters. In the presence of Mrs. Drudge, we find ourselves making a distinction between the status of the

> housekeeper and that of the critics, and as she and the inhabitants of Muldoon Manor take us deeper into the fictionalized world of the play-within-the-play, we increasingly tend to view the frame play, which consists of the conversations of Moon and Birdboot, as an extension of our own reality rather than as play .... (92-3)

The beginning of the inner play, Schlueter argues, establishes for the audience member a "clear mental line" between what should be regarded as representative of the "fictive" and what of the "real" (93).

A similar kind of dichotomy is set up with the appearance of the play-within-the-play in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. The beginning of the play is rather confusing, but, with the appearance of the Player and his Tragedians, the beginnings of a play-within-the-play are suggested, and the Player's delighted description of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as "An audience!" (16) creates the kind of identification between Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and the theatre audience as that which occurs between Moon and Birdboot and their observers, and establishes a similar "clear mental line" between the increasingly "real" Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and the "fictive" Tragedians. Thus, as Helene Keyssar-Franke points out, "The first effect of the entrance of the players, then, is not to create in the audience an even more

bewildering sense of reality than previously .... We are drawn back towards the comfortable, the old familiarities of theatrical entertainment ..." (92).

In both The Real Inspector Hound and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead the scenes in which the appearance of the players who perform inner plays occurs, have the effect which Schlueter describes in her discussion of the former play: "Through the creation of the two separate plays, Stoppard manipulates his audience into a compartmentalizing of characters" (93). But Stoppard's deliberate use of the conventions of the play-within-the-play is as much aimed at the "dislocation of audience assumptions" as any of his other dramatic devices. For, as Schlueter explains

> ... once the dichotomy of play world and 'nonplay' world is established, he proceeds to upset any certainty with respect to those worlds by integrating the plays. Any clear sense of what is 'real' and what is 'fictive' is almost irrevocably disturbed when Moon and Birdboot step forward into Mrs. Muldoon's drawing room and become double characters. (93)

The scenes of The Real Inspector Hound's inner play which involve Moon and Birdboot interact with grating antithesis against the former scenes in which their identities remained separate from the "fictive" occupants of Muldoon Manor. A similar dislocation of the "clear mental

line" between the "real" Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and the "fictive" Tragedians occurs in their play when the audience members, but not Rosencrantz and Guildenstern themselves, recognize the two courtiers' doubles in the Tragedians' "dress rehearsal" (62).

In The Real Inspector Hound and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead Stoppard skilfully causes the scenes in which plays-within-the-plays are presented to produce dislocations in the audience's perceptions of the play; he deliberately overturns the interpretations produced by earlier scenes, creating strongly antithetical effects through the interactions between the different scenes. This kind of deliberate subversion of audience expectations and perceptions is described by Stoppard as an "ambush". Stoppard acknowledges this to be one of his most pervasive dramatic techniques: "I tend to write through a series of ... ambushes", he told Theatre Quarterly in a 1974 interview ("Ambushes" 6). The "ambush" is, of course, one of the most powerful techniques for the creation of the kind of dialectical oppositions which so accurately reflect Stoppard's basic artistic principles.

The oppositions which result from the interaction between scenes of the inner play and those of the frame play in the works discussed above do not merely dislocate perceptions, but have definitely disturbing implications for

the audience members. By using the play-within-the-play scenes as he does in The Real Inspector Hound, as Brian M. Crossley explains, "Stoppard produces a kind of double vision which challenges the validity of the real itself" (78). And the events of the Muldoon Manor play, which include the deaths of both Moon and Birdboot, are so dislocating as to leave the audience, in Jill Levenson's word, "stunned". As she remarks, "Observers until now, we begin to wonder when we will be called on stage and who will be watching us" (439).

The Real Inspector Hound and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, then, reveal Stoppard's most complete ambushing of audience interpretations and dislocation of carefully controlled expectations through the introduction of scenes from a play-within-the-play. But less spectacular ambushes of the same kind occur in Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth. In Dogg's Hamlet the scenes in which a lady from the audience shouts out in Dogg (32) and various audience members, as well as the performers, are given little coloured flags by Professor Dogg (23), have an effect similar to that which occurs in The Real Inspector Hound. These scenes unite the theatre audience with the performers on stage, so that when some of these performers begin to perform the play Hamlet, the traditional distancing of the audience to a level at two removes from the inner play does not occur. And the familiarity of most of the audience members with the English of Hamlet draws them even

closer to the performers of the Shakespearean play than are those whose "first language" is Dogg.

And in Cahoot's Macbeth the scenes in which the Police Inspector insists that audience members "Put your hands on your heads" (75) and "Stay where you are and nobody use the lavatory" (72), and that which involves the Hostess leaving the audience to speak to the Inspector, have a similar effect of blurring the distinctions between audience and actors. The result is that the performance of Macbeth is not so much at two removes from the reality of the audience as something tangible, which the audience and actors must cooperate in preserving in the face of the Inspector's attempts to halt it. It is thus with a feeling of triumph that the audience accepts and comprehends the switch from Shakespearean English to Dogg, and colludes with the actors in completing the play-within-the-play to the consternation of the uncomprehending Inspector.

In Travesties, scenes from a play-within-a-play are also structured so as to interact with other scenes to create dialectical oppositions in the audience's interpretation. The narrator status of Henry Carr in Travesties turns his reminiscences, which are acted out, into a play-within-a-play. But just as the audience has become used to this arrangement, Stoppard subverts it by giving Cecily, Nadya and Lenin similar "narrator" status, as

they deliver addresses to the audience in scenes which appear to be independent of Carr's controlling memory (66, 79, 85). This new arrangement sets itself up in opposition to that created by the earlier reminiscence scenes, only to be itself subverted as Carr takes over again.

In The Real Thing, and on a smaller scale in Night and Day, the scenes of the play-within-the-play are used also to ambush audience expectations, but in a way that exactly reverses the operation of the process in The Real Inspector Hound and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. In The Real Thing, as the opening scene occurs the audience's relation to the characters appears to have a comfortably conventional mimetic nature. It appears that the play is to be concerned with the discovery of adultery between two realistic but unnamed characters; the only element that might cause an extremely alert audience member to be suspicious of a typically Stoppardian dramatic trick is the sparklingly artificial fluency of the dialogue in the face of such emotional disturbance. The second scene opens in a different living room, occupied by a different man but the same woman, whose conversation suggests an intimate relationship. This seems somewhat strange at first but is explicable in view of the adultery discussed in the previous scene. This explanation is stretched when the first man appears, but the reluctance of the woman to see him puts the audience at rest again - their original interpretation remains a valid one. It is only half way through this

scene that the characters reveal that the first scene was in fact a play, written by the second man and performed by the first and the woman, who are professional actors. The first scene retrospectively takes on the status of a play-within-a-play and the audience is ambushed: it must scuttle its original interpretation and move one step back from the characters of the first scene, accepting those of the second as more "real" than the dramatic characters of the first. Stoppard thus causes the second scene to interact dialectically with the first, offering an interpretive antithesis to the thesis suggested by the first. The first two scenes of both acts in Night and Day operate in exactly the same way: it is only during the second that the audience realizes that the first took place in the dreams or imagination of one of the characters.

This first scene is but one of the plays-within-The Real Thing, and Stoppard ambushes his audience equally the next time an inner play appears. During scene v Henry and Annie, who is also an actress, read some dialogue from a play written by Brodie, a friend of Annie's (48). During the discussion surrounding this reading the train carriage setting of the play is revealed. Scene vi opens with exactly this dialogue, with Annie as one of the characters (55). As Hersh Zeifman points out:

> Stoppard is teasing us mercilessly here. When the scene begins, we think what we are watching is

> a scene from ... Brodie's play .... 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. Annie is on her way to Glasgow to rehearse a new play; Billy is an actor travelling to Glasgow for the same production. Billy, we discover, also read Brodie's play; when he sees Annie in the train compartment, ... he is unable to resist taking advantage of the situation by ... lapsing into the appropriate lines from the parallel moment in Brodie's play. This scene reverses the Pirandellian trick of the opening scene .... ("Comedy of Ambush" 142-3)

This second "play-within-the-play" ambushes the audience and produces antithetical oppositions in interpretation as much as the first one did, albeit through different means.[1]

And there is yet another play-within-The Real thing. This is the production of Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, in which Annie and Billy are performing. Scene viii shows the audience this production in rehearsal, and thus, to quote the perceptive Zeifman again, "the circumstances in which ['Tis Pity She's a Whore] appears in [Stoppard's] text are clearly seen as artificial" ("Comedy of Ambush" 144). But Stoppard ambushes the audience again: as Billy and Annie enact the love scene between Giovanni and Annabella they are

actually engaged in an affair, and the declarations of passion made in the guise of these characters are "real". The scenes of the play-within-the-play once again interact with those of the frame play to cause complicated dialectical oppositions in the interpretive attempts of the audience. In The Real Thing, with its three (at least!) plays-within-the-play, Stoppard takes this method of creating inter-scene dialectical oppositions to what may be unsurpassable heights.

It has been seen that Stoppard consistently structures his words, lines and scenes in a way that will produce dialectical oppositions in the audience's interpretation which accurately reflect his own way of thinking. A similar principle underpins the structuring of the acts of Stoppard's plays. The tier of the hierarchy of construction which is composed of acts contains the least number of examples, since relatively few of the plays are provided with act divisions. But most of those plays which do contain such divisions show Stoppard presenting the elements of this most comprehensive of categories of dramatic construction according to the same principles as those which controlled his presentation of the elements of the lower tiers.

In Enter a Free Man the balance of the division of events between home and bar in act II provides an almost

perfect mirror image of that in act I. The first half of act I is dominated by Riley's activities in the bar, while the second half shows him at home with Persephone and Linda. Act II opens in the home, shifting to the bar in the second half. It is thus in the reversal of the structure of the acts of Enter a Free Man that the oppositions between them are created, and this "mirroring" of act I in act II accounts very largely for the circular rather than linear quality of the play's progression.

The two acts of Jumpers provide few interpretive oppositions. Act II continues the events of act I and Stoppard's stage directions to the second act announce that "only a minute or two have passed" (57). It is in the interactions between the surrealistic prologue and coda and the two acts which they frame that such oppositions are produced. The prologue provides spectacular and inexplicable visual effects which contrast with the large verbal sections of the following two acts. This is not to suggest that the stunning visual effects cease at the conclusion of the prologue. But it is accurate to note that the two acts of Jumpers are dominated by verbal complexities which contrast with, and in some measure explain, the visual pyrotechnics of the prologue. The coda, too, contrasts strongly with the two central acts of Jumpers. Its garbled dialogue and extaordinary visual effects reiterate many of the concerns and actions of the acts which precede it in the bizarre idiom of the nightmare.

Instead of providing a comfortable denouement to the complexities of the play, this coda reopens many of the play's mysteries, and its surrealistic mode is less reassuring than disturbing. The acts of Jumpers, beginning and ending as they do with the prologue and coda, may be seen to mirror each other in a way that is similar to those of Enter a Free Man, while the interaction of the coda and prologue with the acts which precede and follow them also causes certain interpretive oppositions in the minds of the audience members.

Any oppositions which arise from the interactions between the acts of The Real Thing do so through a shift in emphasis in the second act rather than through direct clashes between vastly differing elements in each act. Act I of this play consists of the events which occur in the four living rooms of the play, each of the four scenes presenting the audience with a new room, and an accompanying new relationship between the characters. Act II shows the characters on moving trains, in plays taking place in settings which are not living rooms, as well as returning at times to the living rooms of scenes ii, iii and iv. So it is only in the broadening in act II of the scope of the events of act I, and in the re-interpretation effects that such broadening causes in the perception of audience members, that anything nearing an "opposition" may be said to be created through the interaction of acts I and II.

It is in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead and Travesties that the stucturing of acts is mostclearlyused to create dialectical oppositions in interpretation. The three acts of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead are dominated by three accompanying settings. The first takes place largely "in a place without any visible character" (7), somewhere on the road to Elsinore, with a few events near its close which indicate that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have arrived at the castle. The set of the second act is Elsinore itself, its events occurring in or near the castle, although the nature of the play prevents anything as concrete as a specifically located setting. It is through Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's interaction with the Hamlet characters that the audience knows they are at Elsinore. The events of act III take place on the boat carrying Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to England, except for the last page of dialogue, which briefly returns the action to Elsinore.

The settings of these three acts are inextricably linked to the events and dialogue which they contain, and a comprehensive explanation of the oppositions created by the interaction between them would require a detailed explanation of the philosophical issues attendant on the play's development. But a remark made by Helene Keyssar-Franke in a brilliant essay on Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead provides so excellent a suggestion of the play's dramatic kernel that a consideration of the acts in terms of

Keyssar-Franke's analysis will be sufficient to suggest the nature of the dialectical oppositions thus created. Keyssar-Franke explains that "The essence of Stoppard's strategy is to juxtapose scenes in which Rosencrantz and Guildenstern operate outside their roles in Hamlet to [sic] scenes in which they do enact them; this creates a sense of the possibility of freedom and the tension of the improbability of escape" (87).

Although it is primarily through the juxtaposition of scenes that this simultaneous "sense" and "tension" are created, the juxtaposition of acts may be seen as reflecting the scenic juxtapositions on a broader scale. For on the "open road" of act I, and defined as they are by the Player's "an audience" (16), Rosencrantz and Guildenstern may seem to a large extent, although definitely "summoned" by the events of Hamlet, to be open to the "possibility of freedom" from these events. But when they reach the Hamlet dominated setting of Elsinore in act II, and the interactions between them and the Hamlet characters become more frequent, this "possibility of freedom" begins to be overwhelmed by the "tension of the improbability of escape", which reaches its greatest strength as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's doubles are killed in the Tragedians' "dress rehearsal". Act III with its boat setting encapsulates both Keyssar-Franke's "possibility" and "improbability". The boat setting gives the impression of reasserting the "possibility of freedom" because it appears to remove Rosencrantz and

Guildenstern from the action of Hamlet. William E. Gruber explains this implication:

> [In act III] ... is staged the famous sea voyage of Hamlet, for which no dramatic precedent exists. No lines from Shakespeare's play can here intrude, for none is available. In Hamlet, we learn of the events of the voyage only in retrospect, during a subsequent conversation between Horatio and Hamlet. This is an important point: most of act III of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead exists between the lines, as it were, of Hamlet, in what has always been represented as an undefined, unwritten zone. (304-5)

It is Gruber's argument that this freedom from the Hamlet text in the boat setting reasserts the " possibility of freedom" for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, that Stoppard "here invites his characters to invent their history according to their will". But of course, this reassertion of the "possibility of freedom" has occurred only through the non-existence of lines of dialogue from Hamlet to cover this period. But the plot of Hamlet, which determines the outcome of the sea voyage, cannot be altered by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, so that the "improbability of escape" reasserts itself simultaneously with the "possibility of freedom". Thus act III encapsulates the interpretive dialectical opposites offered by acts I and II, and

redefines them, requiring the audience to maintain an awareness of both the dialectical thesis and its antithesis as this process progresses.

In Travesties the complex interactions between acts which produced the dialectical oppositions of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, are simplified. Travesties consists of two acts, as opposed to the three of the earlier play. Although both the acts are dominated by and largely composed of the reminiscences of Henry Carr, they are different from one another in setting; most of act I takes place in the drawing room of Carr's apartment, with the exception of the short sequence which begins the play. This sequence is set in the Zurich Public Library, which is the setting of most of act II, which returns in its last stages to the drawing room of act I. This structure, it will be noticed, is similar to the mirroring structure of the acts of Enter a Free Man and Jumpers, and therefore produces similar dialectical effects to those associated with these plays. But the contrast between room and library creates additional oppositions. The first act, in its room setting, is populated by outrageous caricatures of famous figures who either speak in limericks or conduct arguments with witty aphorisms, and is full of allusions to The Importance of Being Earnest, the celebratory comic energy of which infuses this act. It is act I of Travesties that has led critics to decribe the experience of watching it as analogous to "drinking champagne" (James 69).

In addition, the events of act I are clearly shown to be the reminiscences of Carr, whose memory controls them. Act II, in stark and sobering contrast to the frenetic comic events of act I, begins with a long lecture by Cecily on Russian political history with detailed references to Lenin's development of Marx's political theories. This lecture is set in the library, which is to dominate the second act, and Cecily's address is the first of three that will temporarily rob Carr of his status as narrator and controller of events. Cecily's lecture, and those of Nadya and Lenin which follow, combined with the dominant library setting, cause the tone of act II to be markedly more serious than the antics of act I. Stoppard's careful structuring of the acts in this way causes an immediate dislocation in the audience's interpretation of the play and ambushes the expectations about it which have formed during the performance of act I. Act II presents a clear dialectical interpretive antithesis to the thesis offered by act I, and the audience must grapple with the oppositions thus set up if it is to follow the progression of the play.

It is clear from the examples discussed here that the structure of Stoppard's plays, from the smallest structural components to the largest, and from the least comprehensive tier of the hierarchy of construction to the most comprehensive, is designed so as to produce consistently oppositions in the audience members' interpretations of the

plays which are in accordance with the oppositions which dominate Stoppard's world view. Dialectical principles underpin every structural element of the plays, producing constantly changing interpretive theses and antitheses. The way in which these antithetical elements are synthesized will be the subject of chapter five, after the production of similar oppositions through further elements in the plays has been examined in the chapter which follows.

Chapter 4

Dialectical Oppositions 2: Characters, Allusions, Ideas

In chapter three the ways in which Stoppard creates dialectical oppositions - theses and antitheses - in the hierarchy of dramatic construction was examined. The examination of dialectical principles in the specific details of individual works may be continued by discussing the presence of such principles in further important dramatic elements: the characters who populate the plays, and the expressions of these characters, which give rise to the dominant themes, issues and ideas of the plays.

A separation between "characters" and "ideas" such as is being proposed here would probably seem extraordinary in the analysis of realistic mimetic drama, where one might expect "ideas" to contribute in large measure to characterization; and to be uneasily separated from this, even for the purpose of analysis. But the nature of Stoppard's drama is such that comprehensive analysis demands such a separation. This demand results from Stoppard's preference for "ideas" over "psychology" a preference which, as was suggested in chapter two, is linked very strongly to his decision to write within the genre of comedy, and which he has made plain in several interviews. In 1976, in conversation with Kenneth Tynan, he said "My characters are all mouthpieces for points of view rather than explorations of individual psychology. They aren't realistic in any sense. I write

plays of ideas uneasily married to comedy or farce" (100). And in 1978 he told Ronald Hayman, "I'm no good at character. It doesn't interest me very much" (148), a remark he repeated to Nancy Shields Hardin in 1979, adding "I think characters are there to voice ideas" (159). Speaking at a National Press Club luncheon in Washington, D.C. in the same year Stoppard expanded these statements with further explanation: "My plays are entirely ... plays of ideas; which is to say I am interested in a particular debate and thereafter I'm in a desperate search for some people to speak in this debate" (Dean 9). This explanation was repeated to an interviewer while Stoppard was playwright-in-residence at San Diego State University in 1981: "I write plays about ideas, then find or invent some sort of plot or whatever to hold the ideas" (Ruskin 544).

It is the result of Stoppard's avowed preference for "ideas" over "psychology" and his accompanying view of characters as "voices for ideas", that it is impossible to view the words spoken by his characters simply in terms of the contribution made by such expressions to characterization. In examining Stoppard's drama, it is necessary to examine many of the "ideas" expressed by the characters on their own terms, and to consider the dialectical oppositions created by the clash of "ideas" in the plays in separately from those produced by the clash of "characters". For Stoppard's theories on characterization

(or lack of it) have the effect of frequently providing characters with inconsistent and unexpected characteristics; since the characters are being used as mouthpieces for ideas these unexpected characteristics often tend to be extraordinary verbal fluency or cerebral capability. Jim Hunter evocatively explains this process as Stoppard "possess[ing] characters" which, Hunter suggests, causes "one [to] feel almost sorry for them, twitching with an energy outside themselves" (77).

Stoppard's views on the subservience of dramatic characters to ideas, and the practical application of these views in the writing of plays, have led critics to lambaste his artistic abilities. John Simon describes as a recurrent "foible" in Stoppard's work "the inability to keep any character ... from becoming uncharacteristically clever" ("Theatre Chronicle", 1976, 82); Gabriele Scott Robinson suggests that "Stoppard's working method ... leads to dramatic thinness" ("Plays Without Plot" 38); Arnold Hinchliffe describes Stoppard's work as being "bloodless" by "nature" (142), and would presumably join Richard Corliss in relievedly recognizing "a heart" (56) in The Real Thing, proving at last that Stoppard is human after all, and providing, like the recognition of "emotion" in this play did for the formerly disapproving John Russell Taylor, a "dramatically satisfying ... progression" and "improving story" ("From Rosencrantz to The Real Thing" 13).

Such critics base their disapproval of Stoppard's work on the inconsistancy and shallowness of his characterization. But these critics form their opinions according to their personal expectations about what meaningful drama should be, and not on the basis of the drama they see; as Jim Hunter explains, this invalidates many of their remarks: "We may well worry when a writer repeatedly fails in attempts at realistic characterization, but not when he simply chooses to do something else" (198). It is only through recognizing this "something else", the nature of which Stoppard's remarks concerning characterization make clear, that the importance of examining the "ideas" of the plays in a category separate from the "characters", becomes clear. Thus, consideration will be given here, firstly, to those oppositions arising from dialectical clashes within or between characters, and, secondly, to the oppositions arising from the interaction of opposing "ideas".

It might be assumed, in the light of Stoppard's remarks concerning characters, that there would be no need to examine the first of these categories at all, since characters are merely used for the presentation of elements of the second category. But Stoppard does not dispense with conventional realistic characterization entirely; in most cases the strident artificiality of the "mouthpiece" is relieved and provided with a sufficient quantity of

recognizably human qualities to produce characters realistically convincing enough to provide the plays' "ideas" with a living content, a practical arena in which to be tested. The extent to which "character" is used to embody rather than merely voice "ideas" varies in each play, from the two-dimensional caricatures of _After Magritte_ and _Travesties_ to the complex and changing protagonists of _Professional Foul_ and _The Real Thing_; but the "characters" who express the "ideas" which are the main focus of the plays are always enlivened with _some_ spark of human vitality to provide those ideas with dramatic vigour.

Attention may be given, then, to a consideration of the characters, limited and sketchy as they may be, inhabiting Stoppard's plays. A consideration of this topic reveals that Stoppard's creation of characters, like that of the tiers of the hierarchy of construction of his plays, is informed by dialectial principles. This is clearly seen in an early remark made by Stoppard in an interview with A.C.H. Smith: after explaining the "uncertainty" which causes him to adopt a dialectical world view, Stoppard remarks: "So I tend to write about oppositions, rather than heroes, don't I?" (2). It is this "tendency" which causes Stoppard's works to be peopled by what Thomas Whitaker refers to as "that line of antithetical twins ... through whom he has long been defining and redefining his bipolar world" (140). This "line" may be traced from Stoppard's early novel through the plays to the most recently published original

work (as opposed to adaptation), Squaring the Circle. The "antithetical twins" of the novel are the eponymous Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon, through whose characters Stoppard opposes two ways of responding to the chaos of life: mannered withdrawal on the part of Lord Malquist and confused and ineffectual, but dogged, participation by Mr. Moon. And the line of oppositions is continued by the philosophical, enquiring Guildenstern and the slower, more physical Rosencrantz in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead; the intellectual, if pretentious, and ambitious Moon and the lecherous Birdboot of The Real Inspector Hound, the detached apologist for spiritual values, George Moore, and the machiavellian leader of the Logical-Positivists, Archie Jumper, in Jumpers; the two Alexander Ivanovs, insane musician and political dissident, of Every Good Boy Deserves Favour; the idealistic and inexperienced Milne and the hardened professional pressman Wagner in Night and Day; the articulate, apolitical Henry and the boorish propagandist Brodie in The Real Thing, the objective but partially ignorant foreign Narrator and the more knowledgeable Polish Witness in Squaring the Circle; and, finally, the innocent child figures in Professional Foul and Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, and to a lesser extent in Night and Day, and the sophisticated adult figures of these plays.

The deliberate "twinning" of opposing characters is perhaps most clearly revealed in the Stoppardian

nomenclature: in several of the plays there are characters whose names or characters contain resonances of the words "moon" and "boot". Some of these characters have appeared in the list above: Lord Malquist, who "smack[s] his stick against the polished leather of his calf" (9), while discoursing about the Malquist Boots worn by the Duke of Wellington; Mr. Moon, his opposite; Birdboot and Moon in The Real Inspector Hound. But there are others: Dominic Boot, whose demise is chronicled in The Dissolution of Dominic Boot; Penelope in Another Moon Called Earth and Dotty in Jumpers, both of whose minds have become unhinged at the explosion of moon-linked romanticism which occurs with the landing of men on the lunar surface. Kenneth Tynan quotes Stoppard's comments on the characters of his Moons and Boots: "Moon is a person to whom things happen. Boot is more aggressive". Tynan goes on to expand this division with further explanation: "As a double act, they bring to mind Lenin's famous division of the world into 'Who' and 'Whom' - those who do and those to whom it is done" (66). Stoppard has made further remarks on this subject, quoted in an article by John A. Bailey on Jumpers: despite saying "I can't help it if [a character's name] keeps turning out to be Moon or Boot", Stoppard remarks "In fact, the chief characters in [Jumpers] are masquerading under false names. Moon and Boot is what they are really called", and ends with "I keep writing about the same double-act" (244).

In some of the plays two aspects of one character may

be antithetically twinned to two opposing characters: thus, while Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are antithetically twinned to each other in some respects, their shared insistence on being spectators and accompanying unwillingness or inability to recognize their preordained fate in Hamlet, is also opposed to the wholehearted, if tired, enthusiasm of the player for his "role"; in Jumpers, George is not merely opposed to Archie but his detached, intellectual rationality is contrasted with the near insanity and physicality of Dotty; and Dick Wagner, in Night and Day, is antithetically twinned not only with Milne, since his verbal skills and ruthlessness are also opposed by the kindness and non-verbal mode of expression of his photographer colleague, Guthrie.

And even in those plays in which "psychology" rises to a level of interest approaching or equal to that occupied by "ideas", the "heroes" whose psyches we begin to probe are still set against characters who illuminate the protagonists with the light of contrast: thus George Riley's ineffectual dreams in Enter a Free Man are opposed by the common sense of his wife Persephone; Albert's philosophizing is contrasted with the everyday concerns of the committee members, his mother and his wife in Albert's Bridge; and Professor Anderson's movement from theorizing to committed political application of theory is opposed to the failure of McKendrick to develop similarly through the course of

Professional Foul. In other plays where "psychology" is important, Stoppard's detailed characterization presents oppositions in a different form, which will be examined shortly. But from the discussion thus far, it is clear that the "tendency" to write about "oppositions, rather than heroes" is extremely pervasive in Stoppard's works. The way in which characters in Stoppard's plays interact with each other is similar to the opposition of the thesis and antithesis of a dialectical triad. Again, as was the case with the structural oppositions of chapter three, it may be wondered wherein the synthesis of these oppositions lies. But again, the concern of this chapter is only with the first two terms of the triad, and consideration will be given in chapter five to the way in which the theses and antitheses discussed here reach synthesis.

Thus far, discussion has been devoted only to the dialectical oppositions created by the interaction of the opposing characteristics of different characters. But in some of the plays, most notably those in which Stoppard probes the psyches of his characters in addition to considering "ideas", oppositions are presented within the presentation of a single character. Perhaps the most obvious way of producing oppositions within a single characterization is to show the progression of an individual character over a fairly long time. This of course does occur in the case of Carr and Cecily in Travesties, Donner in Artist Descending A Staircase, and Professor Anderson in

Professional Foul. The oppositions arise from the interaction between the characteristics which have developed over time with those which were revealed when the character was first introduced. These kinds of oppositions are the stuff of what Dougald McMillan calls "the drama of revealed motivation" (63), and are frequently employed by dramatists whose central focus is "psychology", rather than "ideas", and they are relatively rarely encountered in Stoppard's plays.

But a far more uncommon method of characterization is employed in other Stoppard plays which are concerned with "psychology" as well as "ideas". This method involves the simultaneous or near simultaneous presentation of the character's unspoken thoughts and spoken words. The first play in which this is encountered is If You're Glad I'll Be Frank. In his introductory directions to this play, Stoppard explains his method of characterizing Gladys: "From her first words it is apparent that Gladys is the 'Tim' girl, and always has been. As such, she has two columns to herself. The right-hand column is for the Speaking Clock, and as such it is ostensibly continuous. But of course we hear her voice direct, not through a telephone .... The left-hand column is for her unspoken thoughts, and of course this one has the dominant value" (7). This arrangement has the effect of exposing the listener (this being a radio play) to both the inner and outer voices of Gladys, to her thoughts and words, simultaneously. The following extract shows

Gladys's descent into madness, the progress of which the audience witnesses as the play proceeds:

I shan't go on, I'll let go
and sneeze the fear of God into
their alarm-setting, egg-timing,
train-catching, coffee-breaking
faith in
an uncomprehended clockwork -

yes, if I let go
lost track
changed the beat, went off the rails -
cracked

... at the third stroke it
will be three eighteen
and ten seconds ...
(pip pip pip)

At the third stroke
it will be
three eighteen and
twenty seconds....
And so what?

At the third stroke
it will be
three eighteen and
twenty seconds....
(pip pip pip)

At the third stroke
it will be
too late to do any good,
gentlemen

At the third stroke
it will be
three eighteen and thirty
seconds.

(pip pip pip)

At the third stroke — At the third stroke....

Manchester City 2,

Whores or Lancashire 43 for

seven declared

At the third stroke

Sheffield Wednesday will be cloudy

and so will Finisterre ....

(The Queen) So a Merry Christmas

and God Bless you everywhere ....

And now the Prime Minister!:

Gentlemen, the jig is us - I have

given you tears ....

And now the first Lord! -

Don't lose your heads while all

about you on the burning deck ....

Oh-Frank! Help me! .... (24-5)

Stoppard's method here is to set up an opposition between the juxtaposed voices of Gladys. The opposition is intensified by the fact that Gladys's inner voice is presented in startlingly evocative free verse, which, as Tim Brassell notes, makes a "striking contrast to the regulated, mechanical counting which provides its constant background" (81). The interaction between the inner and outer voices of Gladys thus has the quality of dialectical antithesis, and the tension brought about by the juxtaposition of the

opposing style and content of Gladys's utterances is the ideal medium for the effective expression of her initial despair and frustration, and her final breakdown. Stoppard here innovatively presents the antithetical elements of opposing characteristics within a single character simultaneously to express the complex and changing mental state of the character.

This kind of exploitation, for the purpose of accurate and detailed characterization, of the dialectical antitheses which arise from interactions between the inner and outer voices of characters, occurs in other plays. It might be said that the monologues of George Moore in Jumpers, Albert in Albert's Bridge and Carr in Travesties are expressions of these characters' "inner voices", and that these monologues interact with the words which these characters speak in response to other characters. Thus Stoppard does reveal the psychological depth of such characters and provides the "ideas" of the plays they inhabit with a human context. But only in Night and Day does the kind of simultaneous presentation of inner and outer voices that is seen in If You're Glad I'll Be Frank again occur, and it is for this reason that Ruth Carson is one of Stoppard's most complex and complete characters. The fact that Night and Day is a stage play prevents Stoppard from merely giving Ruth "two columns", one for the inner and one for the outer voice. Instead, Ruth's inner voice is assigned to "Ruth", and

Stoppard leaves it to the actress playing the character to provide the dramatic differentiation between the two voices. The audience sees Ruth, and in many different situations, which makes the knowledge that audience members have of her much wider in scope, if perhaps less intensely clear, than that they have of Gladys. But the oppositions which arise through the interactions between the words of Ruth and "Ruth" are created by Stoppard, as were those in If You're Glad I'll Be Frank, to effect the detailed expression of the complexities of Ruth's character. Jim Hunter explains that the words of "Ruth" "achieve different and equally useful effects at different times .... By them Ruth can clearly communicate her own momentary panics; she can also voice, poignantly, to her husband the confession she is unlikely ever to make (pp. 51-2); and once Mageeba is on the stage she can alert the audience, by her unspoken but audible warnings to Wagner" (61). In all these respects, the words of "Ruth" provide a more detailed psychological context for the ideas Ruth contributes to the debates about journalism around which the play swings. "Ruth's" words thus oppose Ruth's, preventing the audience from seeing her simply as a mouthpiece for ideas. And Stoppard's decision to characterize Ruth in this dual way enables him to begin act two with the scene which takes place in Ruth's fantasy. It was suggested in chapter three that this scene was an important means whereby Stoppard achieved his characteristic "dislocation of audience expectations", and it is only through the dual presentation of Ruth's character that this

particular dislocation can be achieved. But this fantasy scene not only dislocates audience expectations; it also increases the audience's understanding of Ruth's complex character and thereby increases the subtlety and scope of the play as a whole. Jim Hunter again explains the far-reaching implications of this scene in particular, and of the characterization of Ruth in general, with profound insight:

> Stoppard attempts to get away with two different layers of theatrical irony at the same time: a realistic Ruth-Milne conversation when the man is actually absent; and even within <u>this</u> conversation the former distinction between Ruth's words and "Ruth's" thoughts. "Ruth" is allowed to explain it later: "I talk to myself in the middle of a conversation. In fact I talk to myself in the middle of an "imaginary" conversation, which is itself a refuge from some other conversation altogether, frequently imaginary. I hope you don't mind me telling you all this" (p. 80). The "you" is herself....
>
> It is risky; it is not entirely absorbed into the play as a whole; yet it is also the best of the play. Without it, the emphasis would be firmly and unambiguously on Wagner, the need for a scoop, and the ironies of his various professional fouls; a play about newspapermen, with a woman

> thrown in for diversity. Milne would not appear at all in Act Two, and his death, though still upsetting, would carry less pain, as would Ruth's feeling for him. With the fantasy scene, the play is at least as much about Ruth as it is about newspapermen ...; and it takes a look at questions of private morality, to balance the debate about the morality of 'junk journalism'. (62)

Clearly, in Night and Day, Stoppard employs the innovative method of presenting the inner and outer voices of his central character simultaneously, as he did in If You're Glad I'll Be Frank, in order to exploit the oppositions which arise from the interaction between the antithetical sides of this kind of duality; the simultaneous inner and outer voices force the audience to recognize both the thesis and antithesis of this opposition, and to reach an understanding of the complexities of the character through a dialectical process. In addition, the revealed psychological details of the characters involved provide a complex human context within which the ideas of the plays are debated, which considerably widens the scope of their applicability.

A further unusual method of producing oppositions through the interaction of different elements within single characters occurs in The Real Inspector Hound. But this is

one of Stoppard's least realistic plays, and the oppositions created here are directed not at revealing the complexity of the characters' psyches, but purely at supplementing the other methods whereby Stoppard dislocates his audience's expectations in this play, forcing are-examination of the relationships between illusion and reality. A detailed discussion was conducted in chapter three of the mechanics of Stoppard's fusion of the "real" world of the critics and the audience with the "illusory" world of the Muldoon Manor play. The dislocation caused by this fusion, indeed the fusion itself, is produced by the movement of the "real" characters, Moon and Birdboot, from the world external to the play into the living room of Muldoon Manor; the fusion is upheld by the accompanying movement of Simon and Hound from the play world into the "real" world of the critics, and by Moon and Birdboot's occupation of their places in the murder mystery play. This kind of shifting of characters of course reaches its climax in the disclosure that Magnus is the Real Inspector Hound, but "Not only that! - I have been leading a double life - at least!" (48), and is also Albert and Puckeridge, the third-string critic. The protean characters of The Real Inspector Hound have the effect of causing oppositions to arise in the audience's perception of the play; the oppositions arise through the interaction of the "real" and "fictive" identities of the characters, and it is only through the acceptance of the validity of the antithetical elements of these oppositions that the audience

is able to follow the progression of the play. The oppositions produced through the interaction of the different elements of single characters in The Real Inspector Hound thus join those created by the interactions between Stoppard's "dialectical twins" in effecting not detailed characterization, but the concretization and optimal expression of the plays' ideas.

The discussion thus far has centred on Stoppard's presentation of oppositions through the interactions between different characters and between different elements of single characters. There remains undiscussed a final kind of opposition created by Stoppard through the characterization of his plays. This is the type of oppositionwhich arises when Stoppard adopts what is for him the very frequent practice of appropriating characters which have either already been given artistic life in the creations of other artists or have existed in history (or both!). Those falling into the former category include Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, the Player, Hamlet and the other characters in Rozencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Macbeth and the other dramatis personae of Macbeth in Cahoot's Macbeth, and Gwendolen and Cecily from The Importance of Being Earnest in Travesties. Characters taken from history include Joyce, Tzara, Lenin, Nadya and Bennett in Travesties and Brezhnev, Jaruzelski, Walesa and other figures of contemporary Polish politics in Squaring the Circle. Henry Carr, of Travesties, falls into both these categories,

having already been appropriated from history by James Joyce to become the Private Carr of the 'Circe' section of Ulysses.

A variation on this appropriation of actual people or characters from history or the works of other artists is the imbuing of newly created characters with characteristics or names which allude in some way to historical or artistic figures. This category is large in number and wide in scope; it ranges from direct allusions to historical or literary figures such as those made by the names of George and Dorothy Moore, Scott and Oates in Jumpers, and by the endowing of characters in Travesties with the characteristics and lines of characters in The Importance of Being Earnest, through indirect allusions such as those implied by Archibald Jumper (A.J. Ayer) and Inspector Hound (Sherlock Holmes), to the various allusions which take the form of parodying the clichés of the theatre, literature or art.

The oppositions which are created by appropriated characters are caused, of course, by the interaction between the audience's knowledge of the original historical or artistic figure which is appropriated or alluded to and the representation of or allusion to that figure in the Stoppard play. Stoppard has noted that "What I like to do is take a stereotype and betray it, rather than create an original character" (Quoted in Robinson "Nothing Left But Parody" 85). As Joan Fitzpatrick Dean points out, the result

of this preference is that the "famous people or famous characters" who "populate" his plays "never conform to the expectations of the audience. Stoppard, in fact, depends on the betrayal of stereotypes to breathe new life into the characters he re-creates. These astounding and often ludicrous characterizations are typical of his technique and indicative of his commitment to ambushing his audiences" (9). Thus the allusions which the presence of characters named George Moore or Inspector Hound, to mention but two examples, make to their historical or literary counterparts, have not only the obvious effect of imbuing their characters with resonances of the characters and beliefs of the figures to whom they allude, and thereby widening the scope and depth of their characterization, but also of "ambushing" and "dislocating" the audience's assumptions about the famous figures, and setting up a dialectical opposition between the assumptions based on knowledge of the figures and the perception of the characters in Stoppard's play. This kind of interaction and resultant opposition occurs every time Stoppard makes a historical or artistic figure a character in one of his plays. If the character is not simply named after or characterized in a similar way to a literary or historical predecessor, but is actually presented as a further dramatic representation of that predecessor, as is the case with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Henry Carr and James Joyce, then the opposition and dislocation involved are

proportionately more powerful when Stoppard "betrays the stereotype".

Before moving from a discussion of the oppositions created by Stoppard's characterization to a consideration of those arising from his presentation of the "ideas" of the plays, Stoppard's allusiveness may be examined a little more closely, for it is a rich source of oppositional elements and thus an important means whereby Stoppard gives artistic expression to his dialectical principles. For it is not only in the category of characterization that Stoppard borrows and makes allusion; the category of ideas is filled, too, with examples of this practice. Indeed, allusion is so pervasive in Stoppard's work that it has been described as "the petrol that drives the machine" (Hunter 127); it is found in large scale dramatic components such as plot, title, mood and set, in addition to character and idea, as well as on a smaller scale in the form of passing allusions in lines spoken by characters or actions performed by them. In all cases in which allusion occurs, whether it takes the form of parody, travesty, pastiche or simple reference, the kind of oppositon described above between the original and that which alludes to it, is set up.

Passing allusions have the effect of causing a brief hiatus in the audience's perception of the play's progress, a recognition of something familiar which is provided with a new context and which, in turn, redefines this context,

adding resonances of the context from which it was taken. Such passing allusions are myriad in Stoppard's work; some random examples include Guildenstern's "now ... and now ... and now ..." (52), recalling the despair of Macbeth's "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow" (Macbeth, act V, sc v, line 17); Archie's "Will no one rid me of this turbulent priest!" (Jumpers 85), recalling Henry II's reference to Thomas a Becket; and the piano chords from the Beatles' pop song "Help", which accompany "Ruth's" thoughts in Night and Day (19). As Jim Hunter explains, "there is nothing exclusively literary or academic about Stoppard's allusiveness. His comic rebounds are not only from cathedral walls but from advertisements, pop fiction, pop songs" (151). Richard Corliss describes Stoppard's employment of such a profusion of allusions as the playwright "min[ing] his play[s] ... with allusions ... that reverberate in the mind's ear" (57); it is through such constant "reverberations" that Stoppard produces a changing stream of small-scale oppositional interactions between new and old contexts.

The more sustained, play-long allusions, as opposed to those occurring seemingly in passing, have effects rather like those of passing allusions writ large. The recognition of familiarity by the audience is sustained throughout the play and the "reverberations" are not momentary but constant. Examples of play-long allusions are

seen in several of the plays. In Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead the plot and characters are determined by the sustained allusion to Hamlet; an additional play-long allusion is made by the characterization of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and the nature of the non-Hamlet scenes to Beckett's Waiting for Godot in particular and the Theatre of the Absurd in general. The sustained oppositions which arise here are thus formed by the interaction of Stoppard's play, in which neither the stereotypes of Tragedy nor the Absurd are allowed to progress sustained and unbetrayed, with the intense Shakespearean tragedy and the Beckettian absurdism of the plays to which it alludes. And, in addition, the play-long allusions to both dramatic traditions set up an opposition between Renaissance Tragedy and twentieth century Absurdism, providing Stoppard with an ideal means of exploring the nature and relative artistic importance of each.

Further examples of a similar type of play-long allusion are seen in Jumpers, The Real Inspector Hound and After Magritte; each of these plays contains the clichéd figure of the police officer, investigating either a mysterious murder or suspicious activities. The allusion to this dramatic cliché leads audiences to expect from the investigating Holmes- or Poirot-like characters of Bones, Hound and Foot an authoritative and ingenious explanation of the mystery. But Stoppard's betrayal of the stereotypical ingenious detective and the Agatha Christie style of

construction causes Bones to be unable to solve the mystery, leaving the audience in limbo, Hound to be simply part of a larger design, and Foot to be unwittingly and ridiculously the subject of his own investigation. The betrayal of this particular dramatic stereotype should serve as a warning to audiences against the easy final acceptance of one particular all-embracing explanation (of the mystery or the ideas of the plays) for there is always an opposing explanation, as Stoppard is at pains to demonstrate. In Jumpers the audience is forced to acknowledge the validity of the opposing philosophical systems, an opposition which the play upholds to its close and which is sustained by the unsolved murder mystery. In The Real Inspector Hound, although the ingenuity of Puckeridge is shown to be the force behind the play's murders, the uncomfortable merging of illusion and reality which the audience has witnessed in the play causes this to be a less than satisfying, mystery-solving denouement. And in After Magritte, the knowledge that the figure at the centre of the play's argument was Inspector Foot himself does not cancel out the play's vivid demonstrations of the relativity of individual perception and the uneasy relationship between language and reality.

A final example of a sustained play-long allusion occurs in Travesties, where the memory of Henry Carr mixes the political and artistic philosophy of Joyce, Tzara and Lenin with a performance of The Importance of Being Earnest.

This mixture provides the medium in which the central debate of the play can be conducted and in which auxiliary issues such as the unreliability of memory can be raised (and Carr's seemingly extraordinary concoction does not seem so strange when it is realized that a man named Tristan Rawson played John Worthing in the Zurich production, that the Lady Bracknell-like Joyce was actually the business manager of the actors, and that the whole performance fell under the patronage of A. Percy Bennett, the British Consul under whom Carr served [Prologue to Travesties 11]). But Stoppard's design here is again aimed at betraying the stereotype, in order to dislocate the audience's assumptions and create an opposition between the old and new contexts of the allusion. The extraordinary appropriateness of the sustained allusion to Wilde's play becomes clear when this design is recognized. As Margaret Gold explains, "Oscar Wilde in Earnest wrote a play as deliberately emptied of content - politically, emotionally, and philosophically - as can be imagined, and while he was engaged in making light of the sacraments and almost every bourgeois notion of seriousness, he called his play The Importance of Being Earnest. Stoppard, on the other hand, has written a play called Travesties and filled it with serious matter" (60-1).

Stoppard's profuse employment of allusion has attracted criticism from those who do not appreciate its purpose. Very frequently critics who recognize the profusion but not the reasons behind it accuse Stoppard of a lack of

originality, describing his work as derivative or parasitic. For example, Robert Brustein suggests that "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 .... In outline, the idea is extremely ingenious; in execution, it is derivative and familiar, even prosaic" (149-50); C. O. Gardner accuses the play of being "fashionable" and "a swill, composed of second-hand Beckett, third-hand Kafka, and the Goon show, with casual sprinklings of Chaplinesque pathos, logical positivist shadow-boxing, Pinterian 'grimness', and so on" (83). Joe Orton had little more understanding of his fellow playwright's work than Brustein or Gardner; of the same play he wrote in his diary "This derived from Look Back in Anger and Waiting for Godot in equal parts. It's been done many, many times in the last ten years" (14). John Weightman's criticism is directed less at a specific target than at the entire Stoppard canon: "In a sense, all art is pastiche and proceeds by cannibalisation. ... Mr. Stoppard's peculiarity is that he is not moderate in his cannibalising" (58-9). Once the intention and effect of Stoppard's profusion of allusions is recognized, a recognition which the preceding discussion is aimed at expressing, the kind of accusation levelled by Brustein, Gardner, Orton and Weightman becomes irrelevant.

At the start of this chapter Stoppard's preference for

"ideas" over "characterization" was explained; having examined the way in which Stoppard presents oppositions through the limited characterization he does employ, and having discussed briefly the oppositions which his use of allusion implies, a discussion of the proportionally more important "ideas" expressed by the characters may be initiated. Several sections of chapter three were devoted to the illustrations of a common Stoppardian concern: the discrepancy between "reality" and the language used by characters in the attempt to express that "reality". It may seem surprising that Stoppard should dramatize that discrepancy with such frequency while also attempting to use language for the efficient expression of ideas. But, as Jim Hunter explains, "It would be a mistake to think that Stoppard always presses his language to deviousness. In all the more serious plays there are sustained passages of coherent and felicitous argument in the Shavian tradition" (95).

In these "sustained passages of coherent and felicitous argument", which express many of the "ideas" of Stoppard's plays, the dominant method of expression is once again the characteristic Stoppardian manner of producing meaning: the dialectical opposition. The plays are constructed according to a debate formula, with two or more different ideas being pitted against one another, rather than according to a linear model of development, which might provide an explanation of a single idea from first premise to

conclusion. To describe Stoppard's plays as dramatized debates is a critical commonplace, as a glance at the remarks of various critics quoted in chapter one will make clear (9). But is is important to stress the similarity that the plays have to formal debates, because it is through the interaction of the opposing ideas and arguments of debates that conclusions are reached. And thus to stress the debate-like quality of the plays clarifies the oppositional working method adopted by Stoppard. Of course, Stoppard's own remarks provide a clear indication of the way in which the ideas of his plays are presented. The remark quoted earlier in this chapter which suggested that he wrote about "oppositions, rather than heroes" (121), refers as much to the interaction between ideas as to that between characters. And two remarks which were quoted in chapter one are worth repeating here to clarify the method whereby the all-important ideas of the plays are expressed. The first dates from an interview Stoppard gave in 1979: "I write argument plays. I tend to write for two people rather than for One Voice" (Quoted in Whitaker 5). The second is taken from the important 1974 interview entitled "Ambushes for the Audience":

> 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 <u>no</u> single, clear

> statement in my plays. What there is, is a sense 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-rebuttal, so that there is never any point in this intellectual leap-frog at which I feel <u>that</u> is the speech to stop it on, <u>that</u> is the last word. (6-7)

This last remark reveals clearly the way in which the plays' ideas are presented in terms of an ongoing debate, rather than a careful unfolding of an argument, and it also suggests the importance of this element in the plays; for Stoppard, this oppositional debate structure is "the most valuable element" of his work. Richard Corballis explains usefully that this presentation of ideas in terms of a debate suggests that "Stoppard is interested less in the way ideas evolve than in the relationship between systems of thought which are already fully formed" (154). And indeed, it is an exploration of such relationships that the plays conduct. Stoppard's technique is to assign various views on the central concerns or questions of the play to the various characters, so that the "argument [is] split among various characters" (Zeifman "Tomfoolery" 215) and "the characters in the play take up positions on these questions" (Saltzman 77-8). And much of the urgency with which the plays' debates, their "most valuable elements", are imbued is a

result of Stoppard's practice of effacing any personal preference he may have for the ideas of a particular character, or, as Joan Fitzpatrick Dean explains, of "restraining himself from idealizing those characters with whom he sympathizes and from undermining those with whom he does not" (10).

There are several central issues which occupy Stoppard's interest, and many plays return to a previously considered issue in order to explore it more fully. The ideas of the plays' debates most often express various responses to questions relating to the chaos of life and man's efforts to cope with it; the nature of political and artistic commitment, and the relationships between politics and art; the philosophy of moral behaviour; the importance of individual liberty, particularly freedom of expression; the existence of transcendent human values; the unreliability of language and its openness to abuse; the selectivity of perception and memory; and the elusive quality of truth.

When we recall the "line of antithetical twins" who inhabit Stoppard's work, it will become clear that there are very often two major conflicting approaches to the issue at the heart of the work, each character adopting one and thereby opposing that adopted by the other character. Obviously, an opposition is created by the interaction of the ideas expressed by the characters, each idea offering an

antithesis to the thesis suggested by the other. For example, the central concern at the heart of Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon is the chaos and disorder which human life involves, and to which individuals must in some way accommodate themselves. Stoppard's central characters provide two antithetical sets of ideas regarding this problem: Lord Malquist's consistent approach is summarized by his early idea that "Since we cannot hope for order let us withdraw with style from the chaos" (21); Moon does not offer a similar convenient epigram, but his consistent approach is also well established in chapter one of the novel, where his disturbed brooding on the chaos of life and his intention of "purging", by means of his bomb, this chaos of its "rottenness", are presented (24).

This early opposition between the ideas of withdrawal from and engagement with (whether successful or not) the chaos of life is one that is repeated in several of the plays, despite the different specific contexts which the different plays provide for the central debate. Elements of Lord Malquist's "withdrawal" and Mr. Moon's "engagement" can be detected in the opposing ideas of Brown and his nurse in A Separate Peace, Gladys and Frank in the play which bears their names, Archie and George in Jumpers, Joyce and Lenin in Travesties, Sacha and Alexander in Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, the early Anderson and Hollar in Professional Foul, and Henry and Brodie in The Real Thing.

In most of these cases the opposition is clearly a simple dialectical one involving only two antithetical alternatives. But in many of the plays the major antithetical ideas of the "twins" are accompanied by further possible responses from other "siblings". The oppositions that arise in these cases do not consist simply of two opposing ideas expressed by two separate characters, but rather of collections of ideas which mass on the two sides of the debate. An examination of Jumpers and Artist Descending A Staircase will reveal this process.

In Jumpers the central debate between Archie's logical positivist ideas and George's theistic apology is supplemented by the ideas emerging from Dotty's confused mind and those expressed by McFee (through Crouch). Dotty is essentially a disciple of Archie's, falling under his influence as a result of the neglect of George, and her ideas are largely composed of logical positivist statements learned during Archie's frequent visits to her boudoir. But her breakdown in the face of the moon landings provides a human context which clearly reveals the vacuum created by the loss of shared societal values which has accompanied the Rad-Lib election victory. McFee's reported defection from Archie's to George's philosophical views provides support for George's ideas against the arguments of logical positivism . The central debate between Archie and George is thus complicated and supplemented by these ideas of McFee

and Dotty.

In Artist Descending A Staircase the debate is centred on the value and definition of art and artists. Two artists, Donner and Beauchamp, argue repeatedly about the purpose and nature of their work. Both were once "revolutionary" artists, who "tried to make a distinction between the art that celebrated reason and history and logic and all assumptions, and our own dislocated anti-art of lost faith" (27). Beauchamp has continued on this revolutionary path by creating tape recordings which "liberate the visual image from the limitations of visual art" (36) and has been supported in this direction by a third artist, Martello, who is presently occupied with the construction of "metaphorical" sculptures which present descriptive clichés literally, using pearls for teeth, ripe corn for hair and "real feathers for her swan-like neck" (28). But Donner's revolutionary zeal has been destroyed by the disillusion associated with the First World War, and he has returned to a conservative and traditional view of the artist: "An artistic imagination coupled with skill is talent. ... Skill without imagination is craftsmanship and gives us many useful objects such as wickerwork picnic baskets. Imagination without skill gives us modern art" (21). As a result his work has changed; he explains that "I very much enjoyed my years in that child's garden of easy victories known as the avante garde, but I am now engaged in the infinitely more difficult task of painting what the

eye sees" (19). The debate is further fuelled by the view of Sophie, a devotee of art and long-time friend of the artists. Her affair with Beauchamp and subsequent suicide provide many of the complications in the plot of the play, providing again a human context for the intellectual debate. But her contribution to the debate provides a further apology for traditional artistic values; her argument supports Donner's later views in the debate against the revolutionary aesthetics of Beauchamp and Martello: "The more difficult it is to make the painting, the more there is to wonder at"; "Every artist willy-nilly is celebrating the impulse to paint in general, the imagination to paint something in particular, and the ability to make the painting in question" (38). The debate in Artist Descending A Staircase is thus centred on a primary opposition between views of art which are "revolutionary" or "traditional", but, as is the case with the central opposition between Archie and George in Jumpers, the addition of "siblings" who supplement the ideas of the central "twins" provides the debate with greater subtlety and scope, while retaining its basic oppositional nature.

In certain plays a variation on this process occurs. Instead of exploring a central issue through a pair of antithetical twins whose opposing ideas are bolstered by those of supporting siblings, Stoppard creates siblings who have equal and independent voices, each of which expresses a

different idea on the central concern. These independent characters offer alternatives, and the debate is centred on the alternatives rather than focused on the simple contrast of oppositions. The various ideas offered here are similar to the alternatives offered by the complex structural features discussed in the preceding chapter, and similarly complicate the simple dialectical opposition of thesis and antithesis. As was the case with such complex structural features, the thesis offered by each alternative idea is confronted by the multiple antitheses suggested by the other alternatives, each opposing every other, vying for recognition by the audience as the play progresses. Thus, multiple thesis-antithesis oppositions arise every time a different character expresses an idea which casts a new perspective on the play's central concern. And again, as was the case with the multiple oppositions in the hierarchy of construction, this multiplicity does not destroy or negate the dialectical principles which underpin the plays; it simply complicates and extends the number of opposing elements, each of which remains in dialectical opposition to every other. These multiple antithetical oppositions cause the ideas of the major plays to become extremely convoluted, requiring extraordinary concentration and attention on the part of the audience if they are to be fully understood. The way in which such multiple antithetical oppositions, as well as simple two-sided antithetical debates, are synthesized in Stoppard's work will, as has been explained before, be the subject of chapter

five; the concern at this stage is simply to continue to make clear the extraordinary pervasiveness and variety with which Stoppard employs the first two terms of the dialectical triad.

A brief examination of some of the major plays, Travesties, Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, Professional Foul, Night and Day and The Real Thing, will show how the debates which they embody are composed of multiple theses and antitheses, to the ideas of each of which the audience member must attend. Travesties continues the debate about the purpose and definition of art and artists which began in Artist Descending A Staircase. But it extends the discussion to include the relationship of art to politics, and the nature of artistic and political commitment, asking "whether the words 'revolutionary' and 'artist' are capable of being synonymous or whether they are mutually exclusive, or something in between" ("Ambushes for the Audience" 11). Stoppard probes this question by contrasting the views of three historical "revolutionaries", Joyce, Tristan Tzara and Lenin, whose arguments are presented within the memory of Henry Carr, British consular official living during the First World War, like the three famed men, in Zurich. Joyce is a revolutionary in terms of artistic form and content, but upholds a fairly traditional view of the artist as "the magician put among men to gratify - capriciously - their urge for immortality" (62); he is entirely apolitical,

arguing that "As an artist, naturally I attach no importance to the swings and roundabout of political history" (50).

Lenin, the political revolutionary, and his disciple Cecily, adopt an entirely different view. Cecily suggests that "artistic decadence ... is a luxury which only artists can afford" (74), and that "the sole duty and justification for art is social criticism" (74). Lenin expands on Cecily's view:

> 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 ... I daresay there will be hysterical intellectuals to raise a howl at this ... Such outcries would be nothing more than an expression of bourgeois intellectual individualism (85).

Lenin's argument is complicated by his revelation that art does have the quality claimed for it by Joyce, but that it remains an unaffordable luxury:

> I don't know of anything greater than the Appassionata. Amazing, superhuman music. It always makes me feel ... proud of the miracles that human beings can perform. But ... it makes me want to say nice things and pat the heads of 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 ... (89).

Tzara is both an artistic and political revolutionary; claiming an affinity with the ideology of Lenin, his view is that while art was once "the magic that conjured the intelligence out of the appetites" (47) and which raised man above the meaningless process of "Eat-grind-shit" (47), it has been "corrupted" by "patrons" and has begun to "celebrate the ambitions and acquisitions of the paymaster" (47), and thus lost its ability to raise man from meaninglessness. He therefore claims that " it is the duty of the artist to jeer and howl and belch at the delusion ..." (37) and that "It's too late for geniuses! Now we need vandals and desecrators, simple-minded demolition men to smash centuries of baroque subtlety, to bring down the temple, and thus finally, to reconcile the shame and necessity of being an artist" (62). As Eric Salmon explains, "Each of the three [Joyce, Lenin and Tzara] ... is at irreconcilable odds with the other two and among them they manage to reflect all the major twentieth-century attitudes to the arts" (228-9); this scope, and the extraordinary theatrical terms in which the debate is presented, many of which were suggested in chapter three, have resulted in Travesties being described as Stoppard's "three-ring circus of twentieth-century alternatives" (Brater 125)

The alternative ideas of the three revolutionaries are opposed by those of a further character - the reactionary Henry Carr. Although Carr has a rather jaundiced view of artists as "lucky bastards" and "members of a privileged class" producing "work that is absurdly overrated" (46), he holds the traditional view that "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", and that art "in some way gratifies a hunger that is common to princes and peasants" (74). He thus has some affinity with Joyce although the author of Ulysses would hardly agree with Carr in his assessment of Iolanthe as the height of "British Culture" (34-5). It was to protect the freedom which includes the freedom of the artist to produce his "absurdly overrated" work that Carr was prepared to fight in the war:

> Wars are fought to make the world safe for artists. It's never quite put in those terms but it is a useful way of grasping what civilised ideals are all about. The easiest way of knowing whether good has triumphed over evil is to examine the freedom of the artist. The ingratitude of artists, indeed their hostility, not to mention the loss of nerve and failure of talent which accounts for "modern art", merely demonstrate the freedom of the artist to be ungrateful, hostile, self-centred and talentless, for which freedom I

> went to war, and a more selfless ideal for a man of my taste it would be difficult to imagine (39).

It is through the opposition of these four alternative views on art and politics that the debate in Travesties progresses. Each idea presents a thesis and its juxtaposiiton with different ideas in the course of the play produces several different antitheses which oppose its unqualified acceptance by the audience. Jim Hunter, recalling specifically Stoppard's "Firstly, A. Secondly, minus A" remark, argues that "This is very much the pattern of the debate in Travesties: one can find oneself nodding at each epigram as it flashes by, recognizing some truth in it" (28-9). It is the "truth" with which Stoppard imbues each idea that sustains the debate and forces the audience members to acknowledge and absorb all the multiple theses and antitheses.

The major play which followed Travesties was Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, performed in 1977, in what Stoppard describes as "my year for making speeches" (Interview with Hardin 161). It examines the suppression of freedom and the treatment of political dissidents in the USSR. The fact that the play is compared by its author to "a speech" indicates that his own viewpoint is clearly presented, and that it cannot be said of this play that its author "just doesn't know" (see chapter one 9). The implications of this quality of Every Good Boy Deserves Favour will be examined

in chapter five, but it is significant to note at present that the usual debate formula of Stoppard's other plays is retained, and, once again, alternative systems of thought are set in opposition to one another. Initially, two main opposing sets of ideas are presented. The view of the Soviet State is presented by its representative, the Doctor, who explains that "opinions are symptoms" and that "dissent" against State laws and theories is regarded as a mental "disease", for which dissenters must be placed in an asylum until they are cured (30). Alexander's dissident views have caused this fate to befall him. His hunger stike threatens to kill him and confer the status and power of a martyr upon him. It is thus imperative for the State that he recant and be freed as quickly as possible. His conviction demands that he sacrifice his life for his beliefs, rather than compromise and gain freedom through pretending to be "cured". He argues that "what they call their liberty/is just the freedom to agree/that one and one is sometimes three" (34-5), and that, rather than compromise, one must "To thine own self be true/one and one is always two" (36). He believes that through his unswerving commitment he will challenge and overcome the inflexibility of the state: "I'm going to crawl out of here, thanking them for curing me of my delusions? Oh no. They lost. And they will have to see that it is so. They have forgotten their mortality. Losing might be their first touch of it for a long time" (29).

The ideas of the State and Alexander present two intractably opposed sides to the central debate. The difference between this and other Stoppardian debates is that the two opposing sides are not provided with anything approaching equal credibility. The manifest manipulation of language and situation by the State representatives prevents any audience identification with their arguments, and increases sympathy for Alexander. But the addition of ideas expressed by Sacha, Alexander's son, to this debate, does introduce some characteristic Stoppardian equivocality. For it is Sacha's simple view that his father is "wicked to let yourself die" (35), and he pleads with his father "Papa, dont be rigid!/Be brave and tell them lies" (35). The implications of Sacha's argument are that Alexander's rigidity is similar to the State's and that his refusal to act against his principles is more cowardly and destructive than a compromise and continued attempt at beating the system on its own terms would be.

The mad musician Ivanov is designed by Stoppard more as a part of the flawed metaphorical comparison between an orchestra and the State than as a "mouthpiece for ideas", but a passing idea expressed by Ivanov also contributes to the debate and suggests a further alternative to Alexander's resolve. Ivanov exhorts Alexander to have "Courage, mon brave! Every member of the orchestra carries a baton in his knapsack! Your turn will come" (30). Although the nature of this "courage" is not made clear (it could be the courage

to uphold or to break convictions), Ivanov suggests that Alexander will achieve his goal. The implication is that courageous action or whatever kind will eventually bear fruit. The arguments of Sacha and Ivanov, added to those of the Doctor and Alexander, present the characteristic Stoppardian alternatives and resulting multiple oppositions, even in this relatively unambiguous play.

Professional Foul was also first seen in 1977, Stoppard's "year for making speeches". It, too, has as its subject the suppression of freedom, particularly freedom of expression, in an Iron Curtain country, this time Stoppard's native Czechoslovakia. And, like Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, the conflict between oppressive State and political dissident provides its context, and there is no question about Stoppard's views about this conflict. In portraying the blatant manipulation and deceit of the Czech police in falsely accusing Hollar of "currency offences", and the colloquium Chairman in setting off a false fire alarm during Anderson's address, Stoppard ensures that there is no possibility of State representatives gaining the sympathy of the audience. There is thus no equivocation on the injustice of the totalitarian regime. The debate arises over the reaction of the individual when confronted by such a regime. Although the two plays are as different as their different media, television screen and theatre stage, could make them, the debate in Professional Foul is similar to

that in Every Good Boy Deserves Favour: how should an individual respond to the suppression of freedom, and on what should this response be based? The debate in Professional Foul thus remains in the political arena of Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, but reintroduces through the setting, an international philosophy colloquium, the ethical and moral concerns of Jumpers.

The four main contributors to the debate, each offering a set of ideas which opposes those offered by the others, are the three British university professors, Anderson, McKendrick and Chetwyn, who are attending the philosophy colloquium in Prague, and a former student of Anderson's, the Czech dissident Hollar. Hollar's view is that "the idea of an inherent right is intelligible. I believe that we have such rights, and they are paramount". His dissident actions are a result of this belief: "The collective ethic can only be the individual ethic ... writ large .... 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 that State correctness" (55). Hollar's view of inherent individual rights give rise to absolute moral principles upon which he feels he has an obligation to act.

McKendrick's view is expressed over a dinner-time conversation with Chetwyn and Anderson: "The mistake people make is, they think a moral principle is indefinitely

extendible, that it holds good for any situation .... There aren't any principles .... There are only a lot of principled people trying to behave as if there are" (77-8). McKendrick's extremely relativist view exempts him from taking any particular political action, and his "extra-curricular" activities in Prague involve only drinking to excess and looking for "a free and easy woman" (76).

Chetwyn's view is diametrically opposed to McKendrick's, as is clear by his objection to the latter's relativistic definition of moral principles, and his reference to the wisdom of his eight-year-old son, which recalls Hollar's similar observation. Chetwyn's belief causes him to be involved in trying to help Czech dissidents and he is arrested on attempting to leave the country "in possession of letters to Amnesty International and the U. N. and that sort of thing" (93).

Professor Anderson's ideas change in the course of his time in Czechoslovakia. Initially, he argues that the subject of "ethics" is comparable to "manners" (54), and that it would be "bad manners" to accept Hollar's thesis and smuggle it out of the country, as Hollar has requested him to do. It is clear that at this early stage of his stay in Prague and until the dinner conversation with Chetwyn and McKendrick, Anderson's view of moral principles falls somewhere between the extremes of his interlocutors. He

agrees with McKendrick's view that moral principles are "fictions", but he insists that in order for them to have any "practical value" they must be "treated as if they were God-given absolutes" (78).

Anderson's exposure to the problems of Hollar and his family causes him to alter his view, to modify his existing ideas in the light of Hollar's thesis. In the lecture which he delivers to the colloquium near the close of the play this modification is made clear. Anderson still holds that rights, and the principles which result from them, are "fictions, albeit with the force of truths" (88), but notes that whether rights are defined in this way or as "the endowment of God", the fact that both definitions share the concept of "rights" proves that "There is a sense of right and wrong which precedes utterance", and the philosophical justification for those rights is immaterial to their existence. He thus claims that "the sum of individual acts of recognition of individual right" has built "a system of ethics" (90), and concludes that the "rules" of a society are "secondary and consequential elaboration of primary rights" and that "priority" must be given to "rights over rules - where they are in conflict" (87). This is a reversal of his initial principle that it would be "bad manners" to take Hollar's thesis; there he was giving priority to "rules" over "rights". His decision to take the thesis shows his newly formed principles in action.

It may be argued that Anderson's manipulation of McKendrick in planting the thesis in his luggage is a violation of his newly espoused principles. But Stoppard is careful to provide a situation which is opposite to Anderson's, and prevents the audience from immediately accusing him of flagrant hypocrisy. For Chetwyn, too, is carrying articles from Czech dissidents. His absolutism in refusing to adopt the same course as Anderson, to compromise his principles when the cause they serve is threatened, and when he is almost certain that the compromise will not endanger the individual who is in some measure betrayed, make all his efforts fruitless. Chetwyn's blameless failure has to be measured against the compromised success of Anderson. The opposing ideas which their final actions express present the final opposition of ideas in the play, and add an additional thesis and antithesis to the many which the ideas of Hollar, McKendrick, Anderson and Chetwyn have already set up.

The same process whereby the ideas of each character provide a thesis which is opposed by the ideas of all the other characters occurs in Night and Day, where Ruth, Milne, Wagner, Guthrie and Mageeba all express views on the concerns of the central debate: the freedom and responsibility of the press. The play was first seen in 1978, a year after Stoppard's "year for making speeches". Stoppard followed this remark with the statement that after

1977 he "came to the conclusion finally that other people could make speeches and they couldn't write my plays, so I was better off writing my plays" (Interview with Hardin 161). And thus, with Night and Day Stoppard's plays return from the arena of protest theatre, which is where Professional Foul and Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, although they retain elements of Stoppard's characteristic debate structure, can be squarely situated, to the stage of deliberately dramatized uncertainty. As Tim Brassell notes, the "contest between rival schools of thought provides the play with its closest link with Travesties; in short, it follows the 'Art Debate' in that play with the 'Press Debate' in this" (207). For in Night and Day Stoppard once again effaces his own view to a large extent, providing all the characters with ideas at which "one can find oneself nodding ..., recognizing some truth ..." (Hunter 28-9). The result is that though Stoppard can say in an interview that "in Jacob Milne's monologue labour newspapers, he does speak for me. No question", the play nevertheless provides opposing viewpoints, and Stoppard is accurate in adding that "when the African dictator puts his point of view about the relativity of freedom, that also makes sense" (Interview with Hardin 159). And one can find equally convincing elements in the opposing ideas of Wagner, Guthrie and Ruth. The audience is again required to witness and accept the validity of the thesis which each idea presents, while also acknowledging the claims of its opposing antithesis.

Stoppard has made the distinction between plays like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Jumpers and Travesties, which "are in this area of trying to marry the play of ideas to comedy" and "nuts-and-bolts comedies" such as After Magritte and The Real Inspector Hound, which are really "an attempt to bring off a sort of comic coup in pure mechanistic terms" ("Ambushes" 7-8). Although it was explained in chapter three that similar oppositional elements are found in the words, lines, scenes and acts of both types of play, the "ideas" of the "nuts-and-bolts comedies" are not so much voiced specifically by the characters who inhabit them as suggested by their dialogue and action. Thus the constant disagreement in After Magritte about the exact nature of the sight seen by all the characters in the play provides an expression in dramatic terms of the selectivity of memory, the relativity of perception and the uneasy relationship between language and reality, themes which of course are found in most of the major plays beneath the specific context of the particular debate of each play. But the explanation provided for the seemingly absurd situations of After Magritte suggest the idea that rational explanations and perceptible truth underlie the chaos of reality, and this implicit idea thus opposes that implied by the play's chaotic scenes. Chapter three outlined the implied contradictory ideas, the initial separation between, but later fusion of, "illusion" and "reality", arising from The Real Inspector Hound, which,

like the ideas of _After Magritte_, are not articulated but implied through enaction by the characters. Thus in those plays which do not contain the actual expression by characters of opposing ideas, such oppositions arise through implication. Such oppositions are underpinned by structural oppositions such as those outlined in chapter three, and require the audience to examine both their constituent theses and antitheses.

The debate structure through which many of the plays' "ideas" are expressed, and the oppositional way in which the ideas of the "nuts-and-bolts" plays are implied, stress a concern which is paramount to Stoppard - the elusive nature of truth and the importance of exploring all possible avenues in pursuit of it. The debates of the plays represent a search for this truth, for what is "real". This search reaches its height in one of Stoppard's most recent plays, _The Real Thing_. In this play the subject of the debate is authenticity, truth itself. And the debate is not limited to the discussion of truth in one particular area. The play reintroduces and reexplores the political and aesthetic debates of _Artist Descending A Staircase_, _Travesties_, _Jumpers_, _Professional Foul_ and _Every Good Boy Deserves Favour_, extending the aesthetic debate from being centred on literary and pictorial art to include a discussion on "the real thing" in music; and it also introduces an uncharacteristic Stoppardian concern: the nature of truth, the real, in love, in the foundation of the relationships

between human beings. The great scope of this play makes it one of Stoppard's most complex creations. The debate structure according to which the various characters' ideas on the various subjects, the truth of which is under consideration, are expressed, causes again the occurrence of multiple theses and antitheses to which the audience must attend. For again, Stoppard provides each character with ideas which demand equal consideration by the audience, and which oppose those expressed by the other characters.

It becomes clear from this examination of the ideas of Stoppard's plays that the expression of this vitally important element of Stoppard's drama is based, once again, on the firm principle of producing meaning from the interaction of opposing elements. We find the first two terms, thesis and antithesis, of the dialectical triad as uniformly present in the expression of the plays' ideas as in that of their characters.

The separation of the discussion of the ideas of the plays from that relating to the hierarchy of construction may give the impression that the debates which have been identified are simply transported from the debating hall to the stage unchanged. Of course this is far from the case, and it is essential for a full understanding of Stoppard's drama to remember the extraordinary theatrical forms of expression whereby the debates of the plays reach dramatic

realization. The kinds of dislocation and opposition which the enormous variety of structural devices used by Stoppard introduce, and which were discussed in detail in chapter three, intensify the oppositions present between the various ideas expressed, and further warn the audience against easy acceptance of either a particular thesis or its antithesis. Stoppard's mode of expression forces the audience to keep both the thesis and antithesis of each opposition in mind, so that the progression of the play may not be effected or followed by the audience unless the validity of each thesis and antithesis is acknowledged. Stoppard guides the audience carefully to an acknowledgement of both the "A" and "minus A" of each opposition, encouraging, indeed forcing, a dialectical view of the world of the plays.

Chapter 5

Synthesis - The Resolution of Oppositions

Chapters three and four were devoted to a detailed examination of the numerous ways in which dialectical oppositions are presented in the various elements of Stoppard's plays. In the course of this examination the suggestion was made that Stoppard's all-pervasive oppositional method of presentation is expressive of a dialectical world view and is directed at the fulfilment of the specific, self-confessed aim of "dislocating the audience's assumptions". It is a frequent practice of critics providing exegeses of Stoppard's work to note this continual deliberate dislocation and to suggest that it is merely expressive of the playwright's "basic sense of disorder", to use Gabriele Scott Robinson's term ("Plays Without Plot" 37), revealing a vision of a world dominated by chaos and providing no resolution of that chaos.

For example, Jill Levenson wrote in as early as 1971, in "Views From a Revolving Door", that "the random action and dialogue [his settings] compass dramatize a confusion that has no bounds" (431), and that "To differing degrees [his dramas] appear arbitrary, unpredictable, and confusing. ... each is governed by ... an argument which examines possible solutions to a problem ultimately to reject them all ..." (435). Her views were echoed by Coppelia Kahn in 1978 (196) and Joan Fitzpatrick Dean in 1981 (47).

Dietrich Schwanitz, too, suggests that "the confusion [in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead] is arranged in such a way that any attempt to find a starting point for its solution ... leads only to a further justification of the confusion: these attempts therefore run in mad cycles" (137), while Enoch Brater argues of Travesties that "Rather than direct us to any one particular course of action, it dooms us instead to an endless cycle of parts forever eluding a whole" (126), and of Jumpers that "The curtain rises and falls on a confusion which has been staged without the intrusion of reconciliation. Too late for integration or mediation, the world Stoppard portrays in Jumpers is beyond synthesis" (123).

In most cases critical interpretations which stress the disorder and chaos produced by the Stoppardian "dislocation of assumptions" conclude in one of three ways. Some critics are content, as Brater is in his discussion of Stoppard's early plays, merely to note that Stoppard's plays are expressive of the chaotic nature of the world. Others make this quality of Stoppard's writing the basis for placing him firmly within the tradition of Absurdism. Levenson argued in her 1971 article that Stoppard's plays are composed of "features peculiar to the Theatre of the Absurd as Martin Esslin has described it" (431), but as recently as 1984, John Russell Taylor suggested in a review of Stoppard's dramatic career that "He came to the theatre

when that Fifties and Sixties institution the Theatre of the Absurd had really played itself out, and in many respects he appears as the last and most refined representative of it ..." ("From Rosencrantz to The Real Thing" 14). Still others regard the dislocation of assumptions and resultant chaos as evidence of failure on Stoppard's part, suggesting that the playwright should offer some clear solution, some locus of truth, within the plethora of dislocated assumptions produced by his works. Brater's use of the word "dooms" in his remark concerning Travesties, quoted above, carries the implication that the play does not fulfil the expectations it raises. Kenneth Tynan is perhaps the most extreme of the critics whose assessment follows this path; Tynan notes the debate within Albert's Bridge, and goes on to discuss the play's ending: "The bridge finally collapses, with both men on it .... It is a fine catastrophe, but also a neat escape hatch for Stoppard, who is thus absolved from the responsibility of telling us which view of life we should espouse ..." (88). The clear accusation here is that Stoppard's preferred oppositional method of expression, with its accompanying dislocation of assumptions, constitutes an evasion of artistic duty, failing as it does to resolve its oppositions and provide an easily digested "message".

Whether critics regard the dislocational working method adopted by Stoppard as expressive of a vision of a

disordered world, or as the culpably unresolved exploration of conflicting possibilities, the consensus among many interpretations of the plays is that a reconciliation or resolution of the dislocation they cause is not offered. Although certain of the critics quoted above show an awareness of the presence of certain oppositions in Stoppard's presentation of the plays, none, as was suggested in chapter one, appears to have detected the extent to which the oppositional mode of expression is systematically and universally adopted by Stoppard, or to have subjected this prevalence to the kind of detailed investigation which the preceding chapters have attempted to conduct. This critical lapse may explain the ease with which certain critics conclude their remarks with the recognition of a chaotic Stoppardian vision of the world and with the application of an Absurdist label to the plays. For once the extensive patterning and constant presence of the oppositions which form the core of Stoppard's work are recognized, it becomes impossible to suggest that the plays are aimed at an expression of chaos or a despairing vision of disorder. Because such critics fail to see the crucial structure beneath the plays' apparently chaotic events, they fail to understand how the plays transcend the chaos they contain. Once the structural principle informing Stoppard's entire artistic output is clearly recognized and fully examined, the way in which the plays suggest a synthesis of their disparate elements is unmistakable.

For the chaotic events of the plays are presented almost without exception within the guiding framework of the dialectical opposition, the variety and prevalence of which chapters three and four have illustrated. In order to understand why the recognition of this oppositional method of expression is vital to an understanding of the plays' transcendence of chaos, it is necessary to reiterate certain important elements of dialectical theory, as it was explained in chapter one. It was suggested that dialectical thought "involves the recognition and expression or statement of contrary principles and the resolution of their opposing elements in an encompassing system of understanding" (2), and that, according to dialectical thought, "the contradiction between the first and second categories is always reconciled in the third category which is the unity of the two preceding" (4). It was further explained that "the relation of the two first [thesis and antithesis] to the third [synthesis] is expressed by the word 'solution' or 'overcoming'" (5), and the importance of this concept was explained as follows:

> What is sublated (overcome dialectically) is not thereby reduced to nothing .... To sublate (<u>aufheben</u>) has a twofold meaning in the language: on the one hand it means to preserve, to maintain, and equally it means to cause to cease, to put an end to .... Thus what is sublated is at the same time preserved, it has lost its

> immediacy only but it is not on that account annihilated. (5)

In chapters three and four an explanation was provided of the ways in which Stoppard structures his plays from elements which create in the audience an initial response or understanding, but which immediately, often simultaneously, create a conflicting response, a process which was consistently summarized by Stoppard's own formula for his basic principle of expression, "Firstly, A. Secondly, minus A." These elements, it was explained, force a recognition on the part of audience members of the equal validity of both the first response (probably based on habitual assumptions) and the conflicting second response (which is subversive of such assumptions). The compulsory and unavoidable nature of this dual recognition was one of the important points stressed in chapters three and four; Stoppard does not rely on the objectivity and openness of the audience to achieve the full acknowledgement of the validity of his theses and antitheses. The plays are presented, it was explained, in such a way that the progression of the drama cannot be effected or followed unless such a dual acknowledgement is made.

If this method of presentation is examined in the light of the dialectical theory quoted above, it becomes clear that Stoppard creates in the experiencing mind of each audience member the "encompassing system of understanding"

which resolves the dialectical oppositions presented in the plays. The validity of the thesis of each opposition is, obviously, "caused to cease" by the introduction of a simultaneously opposing antithesis, but the fact that the validity of the thesis has been acknowledged, has been registered in the experiencing mind of the audience member, means that the thesis is, equally, "preserved and maintained". By deliberately propelling the dramatic movement of the plays forward along an oppositional path, a path which by its nature dislocates the initial assumptions of audience members as it is travelled, Stoppard ensures that a broader, more inclusive understanding of the key issues of the plays is created in the experiencing mind of each audience member. Each member of the audience, if he or she is to follow the progression of the play, must acknowledge each antithesis in addition to the thesis which precedes it, and, in doing so, is forced to expand an awareness which might initially have limited an admission of validity to either the thesis or its antithesis. Each audience member is thus forced to participate actively in the process which preserves the validity of each thesis and antithesis while invalidating the individual exclusivity of both. It is thus by unavoidable implication in the minds of the audience that the synthesis of Stoppard's dialectical oppositions is to be found.

Clearly, it is never Stoppard's intention to provide

specific answers to the questions raised so urgently by his works. Critics who, like Tynan, base their denigration of Stoppard's artistic achievement on the fact that he evades "the responsibility of telling us which view of life we should espouse" fail to appreciate that the essential nature of the Stoppardian artistic endeavour is informed not by the urge to proselytize, or to convert by means of propaganda, but to search, relentlessly, through constant questioning and the exploration of possibilities, for an understanding broad enough to accommodate the complexities of human existence.

Clive James and Jim Hunter do not fall into the answer-seeking trap which prevents Tynan from appreciating the full import of the plays. James revealed a profound understanding of Stoppard's method of expression fairly early in the playwright's career; in a 1975 article he wrote:

> ... [we should] consider the possibility that Stoppard's increasingly apparent intention to create a dramatic universe of perpetual transformations ... might spring from an impulse to clarify. ... Stoppard's dramatic equivalent of the space-time continuum ... exists to be ungraspable, its creator having discovered that no readily appreciable conceptual scheme can possibly be adequate to the complexity of experience. ... The playwrights who grapple with those issues

> supposedly too weighty for Stoppard's frivolous talent are likely to have been inspired by a view of their task which is not only less comprehensive than Stoppard's but also less penetrating. (71-2, 74)

And Hunter showed in his 1982 book on Stoppard a similar awareness of the way in which Stoppard's dislocations amounted to more than a simple evasion of the "responsibility of telling us which view of life we should espouse":

> ...it is [not] ... a negative impulse to freedom, a fear of being caught. What Stoppard ... feel[s] is the excellence of pluralism: that it is right to move among the philosophers and dance in different grandeurs. "Not knowing" is not a negative loss of confidence but an alertness, an openness .... (130)

Writing specifically of Travesties Hunter noted that "The fierce import of the play is its warning against what Lawrence called the 'ghastly obscene knowers' ..." (176). Stoppard's dislocation of audience assumptions through the provision of oppositions containing equally plausible conflicting elements is clearly not aimed at the evasion of providing answers to the key questions raised by the plays, but at expanding the audience members' appreciation of the complexities involved, of widening the scope of their response, of creating an understanding broad enough to

encompass fully the issues under consideration. The focus of the plays is on questioning as a means to truth; the important aim is to articulate broad questions, rather than to provide final answers. Stoppard's remark explaining this with respect to Travesties may be applied to his work in general:

> The question is, how does one justify Ulysses to Lenin? Is it possible? ... There's no question of there being an answer to this. No question of writing a play which squares the circle. But it is a question of such enormous importance that one doesn't have to justify a play by answering it. One simply has to restate it, and kick it about. (Interview with A.C.H. Smith 2)

Those who view Stoppard's plays as expressions of a choatic vision of the world simply do not take their analysis of the dislocation caused by the plays far enough. For there is no despairing suggestion in Stoppard's drama that the concept of an answer to the questions raised is redundant; if this were the case the Absurdist label would be appropriately attached to Stoppard. A belief in the possibility of answers, however elusive, to the issues raised by the plays is what fuels the deliberate and systematic presentation of dialectical antitheses, and what ensures that every possible alternative in the "excellently plural" world of the plays is opposed by a competing

possibility, which clamours for equal recognition by the audience. As Christopher Hahn has pointed out:

> The whole notion of questioning and argument is central to most of Stoppard's plays, as might be expected from a playwright interested in the theatre of ideas. ... A dialectic is set up which produces tension, but there can be no resolution of this tension if [it] is obvious that there <u>are</u> no answers or if the questions are asked merely for their own sake. Indeed, the assumption that there is an answer somewhere is vital even though the journey towards it seems impossibly tangential. It is not a characteristic of Stoppard's theatre to ask only rhetorical questions, and never to assume a possible solution. (20-21)

There is, in Stoppard's work, evidence of a completely un-Absurdist faith in the exploration of possibilities as a path toward a reasoned understanding of the world; this evidence is supported by Stoppard's self-confessed commitment to "progress through reason", expressed in his open letter to the Czechoslovak leader, President Husak, in 1981: "The occupational prejudice of playwrights is that things only move forward through dialogue. I also retain my faith, which may be an occupational naivety, in progress through reason and reasoned discussion" (58). Hegel's dialectical theory, as outlined by W.T. Stace and quoted in

chapter one (3-4), immediately springs to mind:

> It will be seen that this entire process of categories is a compulsory process forced onward by the compelling necessity of reason. By rational necessity the thesis gives rise to its opposite and so to a contradiction. Reason cannot rest in what is self-contradictory, and is forced onwards to the synthesis.

When Stoppard's commitment to "mov[ing] forward through dialogue" and "progress through reason" is appreciated, the appropriateness of dialectical principles as the basis for his artistic expression is immediately recognized.

The discussion thus far has centred on the way in which the constant oppositions of Stoppard's plays create in the experiencing mind of the audience member an encompassing understanding sufficiently broad to accommodate a synthesis of those oppositions. This discussion has, of necessity, involved a refutation of the critical "school" which regards the plays as expressive of an authorial vision of irresolvable confusion and chaos. But a rival "school", providing interpretations of a very different kind, is frequently encountered in critical material concerning Stoppard's work. The central unifying suggestion made by critics of this "school" is that the dislocation which the works aim to produce results ultimately not in an expression

of disorder but in the enunciation of very specific answers to the questions raised by the playwright. Critics adopting this view frequently explain the process whereby contradictory ideas are introduced by the plays' dislocations; their argument concludes, however, with the suggestion that Stoppard does, in direct negation of Tynan's suggestion, "tell us which view of life we should espouse", that conflicting views are examined but authorial sanction is finallly given to one particular view, while others are rejected.

That such conclusions should emerge from the discussion of some of Stoppard's later plays is perhaps understandable, as will be explained shortly, but a brief discussion of some responses to the earlier plays will reveal that this kind of didactic intent is ascribed to Stoppard from the start of his career by certain critics. Leslee Lenoff, writing of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, suggests that the two central characters have "one quality [which] proves to be the important failing which helps to seal their fate"; this "quality", Lenoff suggests, is "an acquiescent approach to life" (46). Lenoff goes on to suggest that the Player has an opposing attitude:

> The Player accepts that he has no control in the universal sense, but yet does not necessarily deny the existence of free will. Within this framework of random coincidence free will operates to construct a definite pattern. ... life

> consists only of randomness from which the individual must create his own design. By shaping reality in his own way, the Player becomes a creative artist. (53)

Lenoff thus draws a complex parallel between the Player and Stoppard himself, seeing them both as creative artists, and suggesting that Stoppard vindicates the Player's attitude while criticizing that of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Lenoff's article, although interesting, contains none of the subtlety of Helene Keyssar-Franke's brilliant essay concerning Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, and the insistence exhibited by Lenoff on culling a clearly paraphrasable "message" from the play leaves no room for the reduced finality, but infinitely enlarged scope, of Keyssar-Franke's interpretation that the play offers both "a sense of the possibility of freedom [perhaps comparable with Lenoff's 'creativity'] and the tension of the improbability of escape [perhaps similar to Lenoff's 'acquiescence']" (87).

Jumpers, like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, has been interpreted as a play with a message by certain critics. For example, Paul Delaney, in "The Flesh and the Word in Jumpers", rails against certain critics who ascribe "weight" (374) to the views of both George and Archie, stating that "If we are to understand the play at all, we

must first recognize that Jumpers affirms that moral absolutes do exist .... Stoppard ... is sure that Archie is wrong, that his 'materialist argument' ... is invalid" (373, 375). Eric Salmon suggests a similar interpretation, arguing that "[Jumpers] comes down on the side of George and the angels. ... all the play's authority is given to the dismissal, morally speaking, of Archie and his horde" (223, 231).

Salmon provides a similarly clear cut solution to the debate of Travesties, suggesting that "the play as a whole, both by its structural form and its general tone, gives its blessing to that point of view which, by and large, is represented by Joyce" (229). Lenoff, Delaney, and Salmon represent but three of the critics who view Stoppard's early works as explorations of certain issues which vindicate a particular stand on the issue concerned and invalidate the conflicting positions. Such critics appear to make the same mistake as those, quoted earlier, who regard Stoppard's works as expressive of a vision of disorder: they fail to detect the extreme care taken by the playwright to present the events of the plays within an interlocking framework of dialectical oppositions which ensures that validity is accorded to both thesis and antithesis. If this basic artistic principle is recogized such "answer-seeking" criticism is clearly seen to be misdirected, for Stoppard's aim is not the presentation of answers but the broadest possible expression of important questions. Most critical arguments which stress one view within the plays' debates as

authorially vindicated reveal less a deep appreciation of the plays' expession than an unwillingness to follow the Stoppardian oppositional method through to the broad, inclusive awareness it provides, an awareness in which the conflicts are synthesized in the encompassing understanding which has been reached.

The implications of and reasons for such critical "unwillingness" will be discussed a little later. Before examining these issues we may consider some of Stoppard's later plays, which, it was suggested earlier, are often more understandably viewed as expressive of very specific points of view. The plays most often discussed in terms of the "messages" they offer are the "political" works of 1977, Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul, and the 1978 play Night and Day. It will be recalled that in chapter four mention was made of the fact that Stoppard has described 1977 as "my year for making speeches" (156) and a brief examination of the arguments of the plays of that year was conducted, during which it was explained that Stoppard's abhorrence of the politically repressive regimes of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union is clearly evident in these plays. Thus a clear, paraphrasable "message" does emerge from the "speech" plays in the form of a protesting indictment of the injustice and cruelty of the political systems under scrutiny, and critics who point this out, as almost all those discussing the plays do, are clearly

correct. But, as the discussion in chapter four attempted to make clear, the simple presentation of the injustice of the regimes of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union represents only a part of what is communicated by the plays. For, as was suggested, the oppositional debate structure is used in these plays in much the same way as it is in the earlier "non-speech" plays, to probe the limits of questions to which there is more than one response. The questions of the "speech" plays of 1977 are similar: each asks how an individual should respond to the clearly presented injustice and cruelty of a totalitarian government. And, as in the other plays, the oppositional methods whereby responses to these questions are presented do not admit of one entirely authorially sanctioned answer, but rather a range of answers which are explored, each being given credibility and validity (see chapter four 156-63).

It is this crucial additional part of the whole import of the "speech" plays that is most frequently ignored by certain critics, who view the indictment and protest of the plays as the entire meaning conveyed by their expression. Such critics see 1977 as a watershed year in Stoppard's career, in which a sudden change from uncertainty and ambivalence to commitment took place. There are many who adopt this view; some representative examples are found in the exegeses of Arthur M. Saltzman, Judy Simons and Tim Brassell. Saltzman writes:

> ... Stoppard's most celebrated plays seem to argue

> that when the absurd and ordinary are indistinguishable, and when no values prove absolute, laughter is the best strategy for confronting our utter bewilderment; the corollary to 'nothing is certain' is 'nothing can be taken seriously.'
>
> That Stoppard should begin to turn his attention to the volatile political scene suggests a major divergence from the insular concerns that motivated Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, The Real Inspector Hound, Jumpers, and other plays about characters whose only desire is to be left in peace. Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul ... signal a transition from detachment to engagement which is further verified in Night and Day .... In these plays, the playwright no longer excuses his protagonists from issues of human rights on grounds of artistic or professional immunity. The development demanded of the Stoppard hero has been from detached observer to active perceiver; he has learned the necessity of devoting his cleverness to worldly causes. (68-9)

Simons expresses a very similar view, arguing that "The development in his work has been through the growing commitment and confidence evident in the confined settings

and positive arguments presented with a precision and clarity lacking in his earlier writings" (79). Brassell, too, detects a change in the nature of Stoppard's writing, but suggests that is more in the nature of a shift in emphasis than the abandonment of earlier concerns:

> Taken together, Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul represent a distinct but not drastic advance in Stoppard's work, in particular a new readiness to take a definite stand on certain political issues. ... Where Stoppard's attitude towards his subject does differ is not in the underlying seriousness of his approach, only in the greater clarity with which his own viewpoint is expressed, in the keen sense of indictment built into the dramatic form. (202-3)

Although the arguments for a sudden change from "uncertainty" to "commitment" on Stoppard's part draw most of their evidence from the 1977 "speech" plays, the later play Night and Day is also frequently cited as a substantiating feature of this development. Saltzman specifically states that the later play should be seen in this light, the article from which Simons's words are taken is devoted almost entirely to a discussion of Night and Day, and the comments of Brassell come from a book in which Night and Day is considered alongside Professional Foul and Every Good Boy Deserves Favour. As the discussion of this play in chapters three and four noted, Night and Day is more

accurately assessed as a movement away from the political plays of 1977, in that the careful balancing of the dialectical oppositions in the play creates the kind of dual validity for the antithetical elements of the play which was seen to dominate the earlier plays, and only to exist side by side with clear political statement in the "speech" plays. It would seem that the reason for the critical tendency to classify Night and Day in the same terms as Professional Foul and Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, and to see the three as collectively indicative of a movement from "uncertainty" to "commitment" on Stoppard's part, is similar to that which prompted critics to extract authorially vindicated answers from the earlier plays. This critical view can only be seen as emanating from a failure to perceive the nature and implications of Stoppard's constant and deliberate presentation of dialectical oppositions whose conflicting components are both endowed with credibility and validity. For if the careful balancing of opposing elements in the plays is objectively examined, it becomes impossible to see Night and Day as presenting one "positive argument" or "tak[ing] a definite stand on certain political issues", any more than it is possible to see the entire import of Professional Foul or Every Good Boy Deserves Favour as the expression of such an "argument" or "stand".

The failure to perceive the crucial importance of Stoppard's dialectical mode of expression may result from

the fact that Stoppard has made certain remarks in interviews which reveal his own particular viewpoint more clearly than the plays do. Although the critics quoted above do not specifically cite such remarks, Paul Delaney, another critic who sees the plays as expressive of clear cut answers to the questions raised within them, does. Delaney's article entitled "Cricket Bats and Commitment" deals largely with The Real Thing, but his view of this play is informed to a great extent by his interpretation of the preceding plays, of which he sees The Real Thing as an extension. Delaney cites the following remark made by Stoppard in an interview with David Gollob and David Roper in 1981: "... what Milne says is true. I mean it is true .... I believe it to be a true statement. Milne has my prejudice if you like" (Delaney 54; Gollob and Roper 15). Delaney cites this remark as evidence for the fact that "Despite ... critical reluctance to recognise anything but relativity, Stoppard asserts that when his characters speak on various sides of a question, one may be voicing a position which is not just more persuasive or more eloquent or more generally accepted, but is, quite simply, true" (54). Delaney's failing is to take this remark not as the expression of one aspect of a personal view by the playwright, expressed outside the context of the play, but as a view endorsed by the play itself. The play is not, of course, expressive of any such final answer to the debates it raises. Delaney, in his search for "finality" and "answers" ignores not only the balanced dialectical

oppositions of the play itself, but also other remarks made by Stoppard which clarify both his personal view and suggest the play's balancing of dialectical oppositions: in the very same interview Stoppard states that

> My feelings about Wagner in particular and about journalism are rather ambivalent, but I admire Wagner rather a lot as a character. I would admire him if he existed. ... the woman ... speaks for me as well. Nobody can have a cut and dried good/bad attitude towards Wagner or journalism because there are different things to be said on different sides .... (15)

In an earlier interview , quoted in chapter four, Stoppard exposes the inaccuracy of critical interpretations which suggest that any particular character's voice is authorially vindicated at the expense of all others: "... in Night and Day, certainly in Jacob Milne's monologue about newspapers, he does speak for me. No question. But when the African dictator puts his point of view about the relativity of freedom, that also makes sense" (Interview with Hardin 159).

The failure of critics such as Saltzman and Simons to recognize the dialectical oppositions which accompany the direct political statements in the "speech plays" and which make up the entire fabric of Night and Day, causes them to

recognize and label a shift in Stoppard's artistic aims and methods which can only be seen as partially endorsed by the plays they discuss, and which is exposed as premature in the light of the plays which follow them. For the most recent original works, The Real Thing, Squaring the Circle and The Dog It Was That Died, with their multiple dialectical oppositions, can only be seen as providing the kind of clear statements which are the partial dividend of the "speech" plays if the dual validity of their antithetical elements is overlooked in the desperate search for answers to the plays' questions. Paul Delaney, it will be remembered, found an authorially endorsed viewpoint in Jumpers (see page 182): he finds a similar authorial endorsement in The Real Thing, almost entirely in the words of Henry, suggesting that the arguments of the other characters on almost every issue are dismissed ("Cricket Bats" 58); his analysis of this play demonstrates a similar "unwillingness" to that which underpinned the "answer-seeking" interpretations, quoted earlier, of Stoppard's first few plays, an unwillingness to recognize Stoppard's systematic and continual presentation of dialectical oppositions as the framework of the plays, and to follow the implications of the dual validity of both opposing elements through to the logical conclusion. This conclusion, as was explained earlier, involves the abandonment of the vain search for authorial answers and the easy solution of being told "which view of life we should espouse", in favour of the search for a broader, more inclusive understanding of the issues and questions raised

by the play, a search directed and enforced (for the alert audience member), by the playwright's careful presentation of the plays through the progress of constantly shifting dialectical oppositions, and which yields in its encompassing breadth of vision a synthesis of the individually opposed elements.

The "unwillingness" of the "answer-seeking" critics to follow Stoppard's artistic design and the implications such a design suggests must stem from an expectation of artistic expression which views the experiencing audience member as the passive receptacle for the "message", fully formed and complete, expressed by the creative artist. This expectation is clearly confined within parameters too narrow to allow a full appreciation of the dialectical method of expression adopted by Stoppard. Its demand that the audience be "told which view of life it should espouse" is discomfited by Stoppard's insistence on the recognition of the dual validity of opposing elements, and it shies away from the enlarged encompassing awareness such expression offers, alarmed by the lack of closure and finality necessarily accompanying this awareness.

Stoppard's work cannot be appreciated by an audience member or critic dominated by such passivity. The dislocations of the plays are aimed at alerting the audience member and, as has frequently been explained, forcing him or

her to abandon fixed assumptions in favour of the recognition of conflicting possibilities. The success of the plays' progression and expression depends on an ongoing alertness in the audience member, a collaborative spirit which offers continued attention to the oppositions expressed by the playwright. Once such attention and collaboration is withdrawn, the dialectical method of expression loses its forcefulness. The dialectical method adopted by Stoppard encourages such collaboration and rewards it with an understanding of the issues at the heart of the plays which is broadened, an appreciation which is sufficiently large in scope to encompass the conflicting sides of the dialectical antitheses, synthesizing their opposing elements.

The plays themselves contain no synthesis of their opposing elements; it is in the experiencing mind of the alert and collaborative viewer that the synthesis takes place, that the encompassing awareness is created. This designed result is one of the cornerstones of Stoppard's artistic philosophy. It is particularly important in situating him in a post-Absurdist milieu, even though it is clear that his theatre incorporates many Absurdist techniques, as the analyses of chapter three clearly intimated. It is in the encompassing awareness which his dialectical method of expression creates in the audience member that the value, for Stoppard, of his theatre lies. For it is from such an enlarged understanding, in which

deeply held assumptions have been fused with newly discovered opposing considerations, that Stoppard sees his audience responding more fully, more honestly and with greater understanding, to their world.

Three statements Stoppard has made concerning his artistic aims illustrate this view. The first appears frequently in various forms in both interviews and in Stoppard's non-dramatic writing. Two quotations are representative: in "Playwrights and Professors" Stoppard identifies "the general mistake which makes most literary criticism stilted and tautological - the mistake which holds literature to be the end product of the ideas it contains, when in truth the ideas are the end product of the literature" (1219); and in the interview entitled "Ambushes for the Audience", Stoppard is quoted as saying that "... if my plays were the products of my ideas, they'd have it all more pat .... My plays are a lot to do with the fact that I just don't know" (13). Clearly, Stoppard's plays are designed as expressions which provide, not fixed answers and authorially vindicated ideas, but a springboard for further consideration, and a basis for interaction with the world.

The second Stoppardian statement which should be considered provides a further explanation of the playwright's view of his work. It is quoted by Kenneth Tynan, in an account of Stoppard's final lecture on his

visit to the University of Southern California for a "Tom Stoppard Festival" in 1977:

> For an hour and a half, he says, he has shared his thoughts with us and answered many of our questions. But what is the real dialogue that goes on between the artist and his audience? By way of reply, he holds the microphone close to his mouth and speaks eight lines by the English poet Christopher Logue:
>
> Come to the edge.
> We might fall.
> Come to the edge.
> It's too high!
> COME TO THE EDGE!
> And they came
> and he pushed
> and they flew. (119)

Stoppard's aim, then, is simply to entice his audience members away from the safely held territory of fixed assumptions, and to provide, through the dialectical progression of the plays, the impetus for each audience member to form the increased possibilities exposed by the play into a system of understanding which encompasses their conflicting elements and synthesizes their opposition. Those plays which are most completely informed by the dialectical opposition as a guiding principle of expression, when viewed by a collaborative and alert

audience, must come very close to fulfilling this aim.

A final remark made by Stoppard in the "Ambushes for the Audience" interview explains the playwright's conception of the value of the synthesizing awareness created by the dialectical method, of the value of his artistic endeavour:

> I think I'd like to spell this out more because I usually cut corners and end up appearing to say that because art can't do what "World in Action" does, art is unimportant, plays are unimportant, and one might as well write Pyjama Tops as Galileo. ... Briefly, art ... is important because it provides the moral matrix, the moral sensibility, from which we make our judgements about the world. (14)

It is clear that Stoppard's aim is neither to express a vision of a world subject to irredeemable chaos, nor to preach in the hope of converting followers to a particular cause, but to create a breadth of vision sufficient in scope to accommodate the enormous complexities of human existence, a vision from which the individual may respond more completely and honestly to the world in which that existence is lived. It is profoundly appropriate that Stoppard's artistic expression is based on dialectical principles, since this artistic aim is so closely reflective of that of Hegel's dialectical philosophy, as quoted by G. R. G. Mure

in chapter one (6): the dialectical theory of Hegel and the art of Tom Stoppard are both "intended not as any rigid or final structure but as the deposit of a stern effort to think systematically in the faith that the truth is the whole."

Works Cited

Bailey, John A. "Jumpers by Tom Stoppard: The Ironist as Theistic Apologist." Michigan Academician 11 (1979): 237-50.

Bentley, Eric. The Life of the Drama. New York: Atheneum, 1979.

Brassell, Tim. Tom Stoppard: An Assessment. London: Macmillan, 1985.

Brater, Enoch. "Parody, Travesty and Politics in the Plays of Tom Stoppard." Essays in Contemporary British Drama. Ed. Hedwig Bock and Albert Wertheim. Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1981. 117-30.

Brustein, Robert. The Third Theatre. London: Jonathan Cape, 1970.

Cohn, Dorrit. Transparent Minds. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.

Cohn, Ruby. "Tom Stoppard: Light Drama and Dirges in Marriage." Contemporary English Drama. Ed. C.W.E. Bigsby. Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies 19. London: Edward Arnold, 1981. 109-20.

Corballis, Richard. Stoppard: The Mystery and the Clockwork. Oxford: Amber Lane, 1984.

Corliss, Richard. "Stoppard in the Name of Love." Rev. of The Real Thing, by Tom Stoppard. Time 16 Jan. 1984: 56-7.

Croce, Bendetto. What is Living and What is Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel. Trans. Douglas Ainslie. London: Macmillan, 1915.

Crossley, Brian M. "An Investigation of Stoppard's "Hound" and "Foot"." Modern Drama 20 (1977): 77-86.

Dean, Joan Fitzpatrick. Tom Stoppard: Comedy as a Moral Matrix. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1981.

Delaney, Paul. "Cricket bats and commitment: the real thing in art and life." Critical Quarterly 27.1 (1985): 45-60.

---. "The Flesh and the Word in Jumpers." Modern Language Quarterly 42 (1981): 369-88.

Draudt, Manfred. "'Two Sides of the Same Coin, Or ... the Same Side of Two Coins': An Analysis of Tom Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." English Studies 62.1-6 (1981): 348-57.

Ellmann, Richard. "The Zealots of Zurich." Times Literary Supplement 12 July 1974: 744.

Farley-Hills, David. The Comic in Renaissance Comedy. London: Macmillan, 1981.

Gardner, C.O. "Correspondence: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." Theoria: A Journal of Studies in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences 34 (1970): 83-4.

Gold, Margaret. "Who Are the Dadas of Travesties?" Modern Drama 21 (1978): 59-65.

Goodman, Paul. "Comic Plots: The Alchemist." Ben Jonson: A Collection of Critical Essays. Ed. Jonas A. Barish. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963. 106-20.

Gruber, William E. "'Wheels within wheels, etcetera': Artistic Design in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." Comparative Drama 15 (1981-2): 291-310.

Hahn, Christopher. "The Theatre of Tom Stoppard: The Spectator as Hero." Diss. University of Cape Town, 1979.

Hayman, Ronald. Tom Stoppard. London: Heinemann, 1977.

Hinchliffe, Arnold P. British Theatre 1950-70. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974.

Hunter, Jim. Tom Stoppard's Plays. London: Faber & Faber, 1982.

James, Clive. "Count Zero Splits the Infinite: Tom Stoppard's Plays." Encounter Nov. 1975: 68-76.

Jonson, Ben. Bartholmew Fair. London: Ernest Benn, 1977.

Kahn, Coppelia. "Travesties and the Importance of Being Stoppard." New York Literary Forum 1 (Spring 1978): 187-97.

Kemp, Peter. "The usual ventriloquist act." Rev. of Squaring the Circle, by Tom Stoppard. Times Literary Supplement 15 June 1984: 667.

Keyssar-Franke, Helene. "The Strategy of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." Educational Theatre Journal 27 (1975): 85-97.

Lenoff, Leslee. "Life Within Limits: Stoppard on the HMS Hamlet." Arizona Quarterly 38 (1982): 45-61.

Levenson, Jill. "Views From a Revolving Door: Tom Stoppard's Canon to Date." Queen's Quarterly 78 (1971): 431-42.

Levy, B.S. "Serious Propositions Compromised by Frivolity." Critical Quarterly 22.3 (1980): 79-85.

Londré, Felicia Hardison. Tom Stoppard. New York: Ungar, 1981.

---. "Using Comic Devices to Answer the Ultimate Question: Tom Stoppard's Jumpers and Woody Allen's God." Comparative Drama 14 (1980-1): 346-54.

McMillan, Dougald. "Dropping the Other Boot or Getting Stoppard Out of Limbo." Gambit 10.37 (1981): 61-76.

Mure, G. R. G. The Philosophy of Hegel. London: OUP, 1965.

Orton, Joe. "Orton on theatre and literature." Plays and Players Dec. 1978: 14-16.

Pearce, Howard D. "Stage as Mirror: Tom Stoppard's Travesties." Modern Language Notes 94 (1979): 1139-58.

Plant, Raymond. Hegel. London: Allen & Unwin, 1973.

Robinson, Gabrielle. "Nothing Left But Parody: Friedrich Durenmatt and Tom Stoppard." Theatre Journal 32 (1980): 85-94.

Robinson, Gabriele Scott. "Plays Without Plot: The Theatre of Tom Stoppard." Educational Theatre Journal 29 (1977): 37-48.

Ruskin, Phyllis, and John H. Lutterbie. "Balancing the Equation." Modern Drama 26 (1983): 543-54.

Salmon, Eric. "Faith in Tom Stoppard." Queen's Quarterly 86 (1979): 215-32.

Saltzman, Arthur M. "Tom Stoppard Joins the Fray." Theatre Annual 36 (1981): 68-80.

Schlueter, June. Metafictional Characters in Modern Drama. New York: Columbia University Press, 1977.

Schwanitz, Dietrich. "The Method of Madness: Tom Stoppard's Theatrum Logico-Philosophicum." Essays on Contemporary English Drama. Ed. Hedwig Bock and Albert Wertheim. Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1981. 131-54.

Scruton, Roger. "The Real Stoppard." Encounter Feb. 1983: 44-7.

Simon, John. "Theatre Chronicle." Rev. of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, by Tom Stoppard. Hudson Review 20 (1967-8): 664-5.

Simon, John. "Theatre Chronicle." Hudson Review 24 (1976): 79-90.

Simons, Judy. "Night and Day." Gambit 10.37 (1981): 77-86.

Stace, W.T. The Philosophy of Hegel: A Systematic Exposition. London: Macmillan, 1924.

Stoppard, Tom. After Magritte. London: Faber & Faber, 1971.

---. Albert's Bridge. London: Faber & Faber, 1969.

---. "Ambushes for the Audience: Towards a High Comedy of Ideas." Theatre Quarterly 4.14 (1974): 3-17.

---. "An Interview with Tom Stoppard." With Nancy Shields Hardin. Contemporary Literature 22 (1981): 153-66.

---. Another Moon Called Earth. The Dog It Was That Died and Other Plays. London: Faber & Faber, 1983. 89-108.

---. Artist Descending a Staircase. Artist Descending a Staircase and Where Are They Now? London: Faber & Faber, 1973. 7-54.

---. A Separate Peace. The Dog It Was That Died and Other Plays. London: Faber & Faber, 1983. 165-83.

---. Dirty Linen. Dirty Linen and New-Found-Land. London: Faber & Faber, 1976. 13-52, 67-73.

---. Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth. London: Faber & Faber, 1980.

---. Enter a Free Man. London: Faber & Faber, 1968.

---. Every Good Boy Deserves Favour. Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul. London: Faber & Faber, 1978. 10-37.

---. If You're Glad I'll Be Frank. London: Faber & Faber, 1969.

---. Interview. With A.C.H. Smith. Flourish: The RSC Club news-sheet 1 (1974): 1-3.

---. Jumpers. London: Faber & Faber, 1972.

---. "Life, Times: Fragments." Introduction 2: Stories by New Writers. London: Faber & Faber, 1964. 121-5.

---. Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon. London: Anthony Blond, 1966; London: Faber & Faber, 1974. (The Faber edition is quoted in this thesis.)

---. 'M' is for Moon and Other Things. The Dog It Was That Died and Other Plays. London: Faber & Faber, 1983. 89-108.

---. New-Found-Land. Dirty Linen and New-Found-Land. London: Faber & Faber, 1976. 53-65.

---. Night and Day. London: Faber & Faber, 1978.

---. "Open Letter to President Husak." They Shoot Writers, Don't They? Ed. George Theiner. London: Faber & Faber, 1984. 57-9.

---. "Playwrights and Professors." Times Literary Supplement 13 October 1972: 1219.

---. Professional Foul. Every Good Boy Deserves Favour and Professional Foul. London: Faber & Faber, 1978. 39-93.

---. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. London: Faber & Faber, 1967.

---. Squaring the Circle. London: Faber & Faber, 1984.

---. The Dissolution of Dominic Boot. The Dog It Was That Died and Other Plays. London: Faber & Faber, 1983. 47-58.

---. The Dog It Was That Died. The Dog It Was That Died and Other Plays. London: Faber & Faber, 1983. 9-45.

---. The Real Inspector Hound. London: Faber & Faber, 1968.

---. The Real Thing. London: Faber & Faber, 1982.

---. "The Story." Introduction 2: Stories by New Writers. London: Faber & Faber, 1964. 53-55.

---. "Trad Tom Pops In." With David Gollob and David Roper. Gambit 10.37 (1981): 5-17.

---. Travesties. London: Faber & Faber, 1975.

Taylor, John Russell. "From Rosencrantz to The Real Thing." Plays and Players Oct. 1984: 13-16.

Taylor, John Russell. "Plays in Performance." Drama 148 (Summer 1983): 38-40.

Tynan, Kenneth. Show People. London: Virgin, 1981.

Varey, Simon. "Nobody Special: On Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." Dutch Quarterly Review of Anglo-American Letters 10 (1980): 20-31.

Weightman, John. "Art Versus Life." Encounter Sept. 1974: 57-9.

Whitaker, Thomas R. Tom Stoppard. London: Macmillan, 1983.

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

Zeifman, Hersh. "Tomfoolery: Stoppard's Theatrical Puns." Yearbook of English Studies 9 (1979): 204-20.

Additional Works Consulted

Babula, William. "The Play-Life Metaphor in Shakespeare and Stoppard." Modern Drama 15 (1972): 279-81.

Bennett, Jonathan. "Philosophy and Mr. Stoppard." Philosophy 50 (1975): 5-18.

Berlin, Normand. "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: Theatre of Criticism." Modern Drama 16 (1973): 269-77.

Bigsby, C. W. E. Tom Stoppard. Harlow: Longman, 1976.

Buhr, Richard J. "Epistemology and Ethics in Tom Stoppard's Professional Foul." Comparative Drama 13 (1979-80): 320-9.

Cahn, Victor L. Beyond Absurdity: The Plays of Tom Stoppard. Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1979.

Clum, John M. "Religion and Five Contemporary Plays: The Quest for God in a Godless World." South Atlantic Quarterly 77 (1978): 418-32.

Cobley, Evelyn. "Catastrophe Theory in Tom Stoppard's Professional Foul." Contemporary Literature 25 (1984): 53-65.

Colby, Douglas. As the Curtain Rises: On Contemporary British Drama, 1966-76. London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1978.

Cooke, John William. "The Optical Allusion: Perception and Form in Stoppard's Travesties." Modern Drama 24 (1981): 525-39.

Crump, G. B. "The Universe as Murder Mystery: Tom Stoppard's Jumpers." Contemporary Literature 20 (1979): 354-68.

de Vos, Josef. "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: Tom Stoppard's 'Artistic Failure'." Neophilologus 61 (1977): 152-9.

Duncan, Joseph E. "Godot Comes: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." Ariel 12.4 (1981): 57-70.

Durham, Weldon B. "Symbolic Action in Tom Stoppard's Jumpers." Theatre Journal 32.2 (1980): 169-79.

Elam, Keir. "After Magritte, After Carroll, After Wittgenstein: What Tom Stoppard's Tortoise Taught Us." Modern Drama 27 (1984): 469-85.

Esslin, Martin. The Theatre of the Absurd. Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1968.

Farish, Gillian. "Into the Looking-Glass Bowl: An Instant of Grateful Terror." University of Windsor Review 10.2 (1975): 14-29.

Gabbard, Lucina P. "Stoppard's Jumpers: A Mystery Play." Modern Drama 20 (1977): 87-95.

Gianakaris, C. J. "Absurdism Altered: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." Drama Survey 7 (1968-9): 52-8.

Hinden, Michael. "Jumpers: Stoppard and the Theatre of Exhaustion." Twentieth Century Literature 27 (1981): 1-15.

Holubetz, Margarete. "A Mocking of Theatrical Conventions: The Fake Death Scenes in The White Devil and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." English Studies 63.1-6 (1982): 426-9.

Jama, Virginia. "The Image of the African Leader in Recent Western Fiction." Horn Of Africa 3.1 (1980): 43-5.

Jensen, Henning. "Jonathan Bennett and Mr. Stoppard." Philosophy 52 (1977): 214-7.

Kennedy, Andrew. "Natural, Mannered, and Parodic Dialogue." Yearbook of English Studies 9 (1979): 28-58.

---. "Tom Stoppard's Dissident Comedies." Modern Drama 25 (1982): 469-76.

Lee, R. H. "The Circle and its Tangent." Theoria: A Journal of Studies in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences 33 (1969): 37-43.

Levenson, Jill L. "'Hamlet' Andante/ 'Hamlet' Allegro: Tom Stoppard's Two Versions." Shakespeare Survey 36 (1983): 21-8.

Ludlow, Colin. "Marriage Lines." Rev. of Night and Day, by Tom Stoppard. London Magazine Feb. 1979: 91-3.

Marowitz, Charles. Confessions of a Counterfeit Critic. London: Eyre Methuen, 1973.

Peereboom, J. J. "The Political Wave: The London Drama Scene." Dutch Quarterly Review of Anglo-American Letters 10 (1980): 59-72.

Rabinowitz, Peter J. "'What's Hecuba to Us?': The Audience's Experience of Literary Borrowing." The Reader in the The Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation. Ed. Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980. 241-63.

Roberts, Philip. "Tom Stoppard: Serious Artist or Siren." Critical Quarterly 20.3 (1978): 84-92.

Rod, David K. "Carr's Views on Art and Politics in Tom Stoppard's Travesties." Modern Drama 26 (1983): 536-42.

Rodway, Allan. English Comedy: Its Role and Nature from Chaucer to the Present Day. London: Chatto & Windus, 1975.

---. "Stripping Off." London Magazine Aug.-Sept. 1976: 66-73.

Shiner, Roger A. "Showing, Saying and Jumping." Dialogue: Canadian Philosophical Review 21 (1982): 625-46.

Simard, Rodney. "The Logic of Unicorns: Beyond Absurdism in Stoppard." Arizona Quarterly 38 (1982): 37-44.

Stoppard, Tom. "An Interview with Tom Stoppard." With Joost Kuurman. Dutch Quarterly Review of Anglo-American Letters 10 (1980): 41-57.

---. "A playwright in undiscovered country." With Hugh Herbert. Guardian 7 July 1979: 10.

---. "But for the Middle Classes." Rev. of The Enemies of Society, by Paul Johnson. Times Literary Supplement 3 June 1977: 677.

---. "Confessions of a Screenwriter." Today's Cinema 3 Feb. 1969: 5.

---. "Interview with Tom Stoppard." With Giles Gordon. Behind the Scenes: Theatre and Film Interviews from the Transatlantic Review. Ed. Joseph F. McCrindle. London: Pitman, 1971. 77-87.

---. Neutral Ground. The Dog It Was That Died and Other Plays. London: Faber & Faber, 1983. 109-64.

---. "Nothing in Mind." London Magazine Feb. 1978: 65-8.

---. On the Razzle. Adapted from Einen Jux willer sich machen, by Johann Nestroy. London: Faber & Faber, 1981.

---. "'Orghast'." Times Literary Supplement 1 Oct. 1971: 1174.

---. Rough Crossing. Adapted from Jatek a Kastelyban, by Ferenc Molnar. London: Faber & Faber, 1985.

---. Teeth. The Dog It Was That Died and Other Plays. London: Faber & Faber, 1983. 69-88.

---. "The Definite Maybe." Author 78 (1967): 18-20.

---. Where Are They Now? Artist Descending a Staircase and Where Are They Now? London: Faber & Faber, 1973. 55-79.

---. Undiscovered Country. Adapted from Das Weite Land, by Arthur Schnitzler. London: Faber & Faber, 1980.

Styan, J. L. "High Tide in the London Theatre: Some Notes on the 1978-1979 Season." Comparative Drama 13 (1979): 252-7.

Taylor, John Russell. Anger and After. London: Methuen, 1962.

---. The Second Wave. London: Eyre Methuen, 1971.

---. "Tom Stoppard: Structure + Intellect." Plays and Players July 1970: 16-18.