

**INFANTICIDE AS THE METAPHOR OF THE FEAR
OF A FUTURELESS SOCIETY - A STUDY OF THE
SELECTED PLAYS OF EDWARD BOND**

By

REEMA STELLA JAYACHANDRAN

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in English Literature to the University of Calicut**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled, **Infanticide as the Metaphor of the Fear of a Futureless Society - A Study of the Selected Plays of Edward Bond**, submitted by **Reema Stella Jayachandran** to the University of Calicut in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Literature is a record of bona fide research work done by her under my guidance and supervision. No part of this thesis was submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, title or recognition before.

Place : Calicut
Date : 24.1.07

Snehaprabha
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DECLARATION

I, **Reema Stella Jayachandran**, hereby declare that this thesis has not been previously published by me for the award of any degree, diploma, title or recognition before.

Place : Calicut
Date : 24.1.07


Reema Stella Jayachandran

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Preface

Literature irrespective of age, language and culture has certain common threads that bring the various literary pieces under one roof. The portrayal of infants as symbols of innocence, hope, grace, nature and futurity is one among them. The Child written by Tagore, Songs of Innocence by Blake, and the images associated to childhood and children in the Bible are a few examples, which substantiate the previously mentioned statement.

It is a truth that no ardent reader can forgive the characters that exploit and hurt children. It is the privilege of a reader to experience a special kind of happiness when the author makes such evil characters suffer and repent for their misdeeds. The reader always yearns for the child to be the ultimate winner. Until I read Saved of Edward Bond, I was under the impression that mostly the dramatists try to

bring poetic justice in their works especially when cruelties are committed towards children by other characters. My belief was mainly based on the reading of the dramas of seventeenth century. In The Tempest and The Winter's Tale the evil characters Antonio and Leontes had to suffer their lot for the cruelties done to Miranda and Perdita respectively. John Webster made Ferdinand, the Duke of Calabria to undergo the ordeals for his cruel act of infanticide in The Duchess of Malfi. My belief further strengthened when the fat Prince Arsen Kazbeki in the play The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Brecht was bound to suffer for his atrocity towards the infant.

Saved shocked me as it shocked any playgoer of the twentieth-century England. The question that popped up in my mind was: why Bond did not punish the criminals severely in Saved? After reading Narrow Road to the Deep North as a venture to explore more about the dramatist's intention I got an answer for my question. In course of time

a careful study of his plays directed me to read in between the lines in a different perspective so as to comprehend the aim of a revolutionary socialist in writing and staging plays, which he believed to be the rational theatre. So I decided on a detailed study of the plays of Bond and his treatment of infanticide as a dramatic metaphor in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle.

The first chapter is an insight into the plays of Bond juxtaposed with his background, which in turn will help the reader to understand the fine living writer in a new light. A journey with a searchlight of analytical reasoning is carried out in the second chapter so as to establish that the fear of a futureless society finds dramatic expression through the metaphor of child murder in the plays selected for the present study. The next chapter is a comparative study of the treatment of infanticide in the selected plays of Bond with that of Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale, and The Caucasian Chalk Circle. My endeavour is to highlight the aspect that

infanticide is not a novel theme attributed to Bond alone but only he could highlight infanticide to portray the disposition of the twentieth century postwar society. In the fourth chapter the study aims to bring out the theatre techniques adopted by Bond to substantiate the theme of infanticide as the fear of a futureless society. The final chapter sums up the preceding chapters with a critical inquiry into the other plays of Bond.

Behind any accomplishment lies the guidance of a well-experienced, talented and generous personality. This is what flashes into my mind when I extend my deep reverence and indebtedness to Dr. M. Snehaprabha, Former Head of the Department of English, Zamorin's Guruvayurappan College, Calicut without whose boundless generosity this thesis would never have seen the light. Her apt advice and motivation helped me not only in the completion of my

thesis but also gave a chance to taste the spirit of humanity tinged with compassion.

I record my sincere gratitude to Dr. N. Ramachandran Nair, Former Head of the Department of English, University of Calicut for his valuable advice throughout my endeavour especially at the time of joining the research. Endless thanks are due to Dr. Pushpa Mohandas, Senior Grade Lecturer, Department of English, Zamorin's Guruvayurappan College, Calicut for introducing the various aspects in the plays of Bond and encouraging me in the pursuit of the subject. I am highly grateful to Shri.T.M.A.Jaleel, Head of the Department of English, University of Calicut for all the help given to me for the completion of the thesis.

Words will not suffice to express my greatest debt of gratefulness to my parents for their sacrifice and effort that helped me to go on with this study even under adverse circumstances. They have always been a never failing source

of help and encouragement to me. I also thank my sister Reshma for the emotional support rendered to me during the final phase of the thesis.

I am highly thankful to the Librarians and Staff of the Indo American Centre for International Studies, Hyderabad, British Council Library, Chennai, British Council Library, Delhi and CIEFL, Hyderabad for rendering all possible help for me to explore the works of Edward Bond. I also thank the Librarians of the School of Drama, Thrissur, University of Calicut and Zamorin's Guruvayurappan College, Calicut for their assistance.

My hearty thanks to Mr. Murali for being so prompt in typing my thesis.

Above all, I praise and thank the Almighty for His guidance and blessings.

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Introduction

The events demand interpretation, and that interpretation has many levels and possibilities.

(Kelsall 6)

Most types of literature namely novels, short stories, essays, and poems, are intended to be read in silence by a solitary reader. Here the term 'reader' refers to the person who aims at a serious intellectual or aesthetic pursuit of the different genres of literature. At times plays are also often read in this manner but they are created primarily to be presented in public by a team of performers. The plays are designed in such a manner that their effectiveness will be relevant only when they are performed. When the play is staged many of the incidents narrated in the play can be understood and assimilated in a better way. In other words drama presents fiction or fact in a form that could be performed. According to Boulton, "it is the literature that

walks and talks before our eyes" (3). When the characters come alive on the stage even the illiterate person gets an opportunity to make himself acquainted with some of the great creative works in literature, which when given in the printed form, he finds difficult to comprehend. This makes drama a medium for effective communication to people of all social strata.

The themes of the plays are woven with utmost care since the plays have the power to influence a great mass of common people. Apparently the texts cease to be simply the representation of something else. Since drama has got a major impact on the public it grows out of the boundary of, just giving delight to the audience. The texts become clear communicative acts aimed at influencing the thoughts and actions of the audience. The dramatist uses the play as a medium to represent the various issues namely religious, social, political and cultural for information, instruction, contemplation or implementation.

Drama, which began as a handmaid of religion, was purely instructive in nature. According to Horace it was designed to delight and instruct. From classical times until the renaissance it was closely associated with major religious and civic observances. Gradually it started discussing the topics of the day and matters of general interest. As a result it was influenced by the socio-political changes. Restoration Comedy, Sentimental Comedy and Antisentimental Comedy were a few off springs of the socio political changes down the ages. The play reflects the period, which it has been composed. Audiences attend plays because of several reasons like curiosity, pleasure, and thirst for knowledge or for aesthetic experience. All these experiences are intensified by the public nature of drama thus providing means for the people to reflect upon the society, its beliefs and various other issues of the day.

The fact that drama deals with the political and social issues account for the change in its trend according to the

changing political and social scenario. A bird's eye view of the post war England in the 1950s clearly accounts for the change in the trend in the postwar British theatres. England felt the impact of the postwar boom. The revived interest in Marxist theory and European Marxist writing resulted in a literature of socialist thought. This in turn opened a new channel for discussion about the relationship between politics and art. In 1956 when the British society witnessed the decay of the empire, the lovers of drama were preparing themselves to witness the beginning of a revolution in the British theatre with the advent of the Modern period in literature. The by-product was the so-called proper drama that focused an attack on the myths of Edwardian England. This dramatic modernism compelled the audience to ponder over the relation to the actions performed on the stage. The British dramatists namely Edward Bond, Harold Pinter and Tom Stoppard, portrayed the insular tendencies of the times like preoccupation with violence and contemporary political agendas.

Edward Bond has always been very vocal about his allegiance to pacifism. Born in 1934, Bond's upbringing in a war affected society and its traumatic break, account for this allegiance. In 1940 when the Blitz began he was evacuated to Cornwall and as he remarked, "I knew that I was being sent away so that I would not be killed by bombs. Not unreasonably, I thought that the fact that my parents were staying behind meant that they would be killed" (qtd. in Coult 11). The frightful experiences of war made him a lover of non-violence.

The childhood experiences during the war also inflicted in Bond a sense of questioning attitude and coerced him to view the cruelty and pain of the world with an embarrassing directness. The thought, that the painful experiences he had, were shared by the children of his generation made him think about the sufferings and problems of the society as a whole. Later, as a dramatist it turned out to be a blessing in disguise since it strengthened

his intense sensitivity to the society and its surroundings. As a playwright, he feels, and then records the various problems of the society with a humane heart and microscopic eyes. When a dramatist, who is really aware of his role in the society records the various issues concerned to the people and the society it happens that the plays may not turn out to be so pleasant since there is a realistic portrayal of the situation. The same can be attributed to the plays of Bond. His role as a responsible dramatist forced him to follow the path of violent portrayal of the themes in his plays. He makes his plays a platform to respond to the various happenings in the society. When he portrays the bitter events the plays automatically become violent. So the plays of Bond are filled with violence and cruelty.

Bond believes in the dictum that art is the expression of rationality and drama a rational theatre, which helps people to awake from their stony- sleep thus shedding their tranquillizing mentality so as to reform the contemporary

society. The transformation within the inner self of Bond after seeing Donald Wolfitt's Macbeth at the Bedford theatre in Camden accounts for his theory of the awakening effect of drama. In an article titled, "Drama and the Dialects of Violence," in the Theatre Quarterly 2, Bond recalls his experience on seeing the play:

For the very first time in my life, I met somebody who was actually talking about my problems, about the life I'd been living, the political society around me [...] there was just this feeling of total recognition. I knew all these people, they were in the street or in the newspapers [...] I got a feeling a resolution - that there were certain standards (2).

It is said that Bond was surprised how the other people who had seen this play could just go on with their lives in the same way. Having imbibed very much the awakening effect of drama on the audience he moulded themes for his plays in such a way that it made the society

aware of its grotesquely corrupt behaviour, which indirectly opened the doors for a new dawn-- a sort of realization from the past errors.

The plays of Bond make the spectators analyse rationally the various events shown on the stage. While analysing the events they have to relate the incidents to the characters and the characters to the environment in which they are brought up. The analysing of the environment becomes an investigation of the society in which the characters live. When the spectators analyse the society and relate the incidents, which are performed, indirectly, they are provided the answers for the various bitter happenings in the society. In such a context the plays of Bond become a vehicle to reflect on the set up of the society, its philosophy and ideals thus giving an option for rationalistic action.

When a playwright like Bond records the actual situation of the members of a society, in which so many

restrictions are imposed on them, the outcome is that the plays become grim. It becomes the realistic portrayal of the contemporary situation. The themes may be macabre, but still there is an optimism that the reader or the spectator should perceive beyond the play, because the playwright's intention is to make the audience understand the problem, then give them space to think about an alternative and later execute it. Since the responsibility of the dramatist becomes so gigantic, he takes the help of various situations, images and literary devices to depict the actual condition of the situation. These would help him to influence the audience and bring out the graveness of the situation. The ghastly portrayal of the situation makes the audience contemplate on the related events thus catalysing their thinking for rationalistic actions.

Bond also makes use of various effective images in his plays to bring out the intensity of the situation. For example the infanticide and the cruelty to children that occur in most

of his plays denote the vehicle, which the dramatist has used, to convey certain facts and realities about the situation. In other words these powerful images arouse the curiosity of the spectator and force him to contemplate, Why such a ghastly incident is being portrayed? This excites his thinking or rational power so that he finds out the reasons, relates it to his life and goes for corrective measures, if any. The powerful images should not be viewed as simple images but as metaphors, which he uses to denote the seriousness of the indirectly stated problem. So with a powerful searchlight of analytical reasoning tinged with inquisitiveness a study is being undertaken on the role of infanticide and its metaphorical implication in the selected plays of Bond.

In the present study the focus is on the treatment of infanticide in the selected plays of Bond as the metaphor of the fear of a futureless society. The selected plays are Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle.

The study aims at establishing the fact that infanticide portrayed in the selected plays of Bond has a very serious implication, since it denotes the aggression prevailing in the society. The *weight of aggression* in the society is so intense that it creates panic and *fear* among the members. When the aggression becomes unbearable that is when the fear mounts up the unthinkable like infanticide happens. Bond finds infanticide as a vehicle to portray this fear of the society. The effect of the tension existing in the society thus finds its relevance through the metaphor--infanticide. When the aggression goes beyond control cruel deeds like infanticide takes place in the society. We can also say that infanticide occurs out of fear, which increases with aggression. When the members of a society commit infanticide that means they are murdering the future of their own society. Infants symbolize future, hope, and promise. So if that hope and future is nipped at the bud then there is no future for the society and the society becomes futureless.

Attitude of Bond towards children and childhood should be considered to get a clear perspective of the use of infanticide as a metaphor in his plays. Bond's attitude towards children and childhood is juxtaposed with old age because the child is a victim like the old man. Both are powerless members of the society. According to Bond children are not motivated by prejudices, and have a positive attitude towards experience. But they are seldom given security or concern. The society has lost its innocence and has also become ignorant of the importance of innocence. This is because the society is in a state of fear. "Bond's prelapsarian innocence is a time of freedom and justice, without aggression and violence" (Duncan 2). Since the society has lost its innocence aggression exists in the society.

In such a society, the moment the children come into this world they are deprived of love and care. The world has nothing new to offer to the babies. When the children are

not given security or concern a feeling of insecurity is seen in them as they grow. This reflects the insecurity seen in the parents as well as in the society in which they live. The loss of prelapsarian innocence has paved way for a materialistic, emotionally vacuum world. The existing social and cultural circumstances weave human nature in such a way that it becomes a vacuum. There is no joy in life or birth. The world could not contain the babies and they are termed as burden and fear. The children either die or are psychologically injured. In a materialistic society the babies are seen as nuisance. Adults find no time to pamper the baby after the busy schedule of their work. A newborn innocent baby is a burden in all sense. It is also treated as a financial burden. The baby has no place in a society in which even the grown up individuals are not respected. This is evident from Bond's experience during the time of war:

I remember walking along a road and seeing two aeroplanes hitting each other, and I was terribly excited about this; it was marvellous, these great toys

going smash in the air, two little silver aeroplanes, miles off. And I remember running down this hot road towards them, and suddenly out of the aeroplanes, two men appeared [...] it stopped me dead in the road, and made me realize that in fact what one had been talking about was human beings. (qtd. in Coult 10)

According to Bond the atrocities against innocents bloom as a result of the mindless dispensation of a corrupt morality. One of the major concerns of Bond is how a war stricken society welcomes a newborn baby. Either the modern sophisticated civilisation is imposed on it by the modern society or otherwise it is put to death if it cannot survive in such a restricted condition. Human beings are designed in such a way that they should live naturally. According to Bond living naturally means living biologically. In the sophisticated living culture it happens

that the human beings detract from their natural lives. They deviate from the biological aspects of life.

A general review of the selected plays viz. Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle would help to get into the crux of the plays at the primary level. A detailed analysis of each and every aspect will be carried out in the second chapter of the study.

In Saved, the flat of Pam, the central character is a microcosm of a loveless arid world outside. There is no emotional tie between the parents and their daughter. Even the parents live together as strangers. The parents and the daughter do not fit themselves to be called members of a family but rather three strangers living under one roof. The hostile attitude of the members, the unhealthy set up prevailing in the family, all serve as dramatic pictures of the suffering classes in which the members are highly affected by the impact of their bitter experiences. There are solid and

concrete reasons for their indifferent behaviour. Pam, Len, Mary, Harry, and Pete are all corrupted mainly because of their environment, upbringing, and forced abstractions like sociality, morality and order. - The arrival of Pam's baby only adds to the sorrows and miseries of the family members. Pam has no feeling for the baby. When Len, her pick up tells her that someone should take care of the baby she responds in a very detached emotionless way: "Why should I worry? Its father don't give a damn" (55).

Pam nurtures herself on frustration and disappointments. Her feeling of insecurity makes the baby also insecure.

The crucial episode occurs when Pam, in a fit of rage leaves the baby in the park with Fred, the supposed father, which paves the way to the brutal stoning of the baby. The baby becomes a victim of the actions performed by a gang of corrupted youth. The baby is being mercilessly handled,

worse than a doll. It shocks a normal human being to learn that Fred also has got a hand in the murder. Along with the murder the inhuman actions of the youth create dismay to the audience.

Even after the brutal infanticide the family members seem to be least bothered. The loss of the only baby in the family does not affect the members at all. Pam is more concerned about Fred being imprisoned. It is for Fred, that she mourns, and not for the baby. This reaction of a mother is as startling as the murder. Pam's mother, Mary who had lost a child in the bombing is least affected by the infant's death. She quarrels with Pam, not for leaving the baby alone in the park, but for selling the pram for fifty pounds instead of two fifty pounds. Len the onlooker seems to be little moved on watching the infanticide even though he is a member of Pam's household. Often he has advised Pam to take care of the baby but when his chance comes to react he

retires as a passive onlooker and does not react to the brutal acts of his friends.

The spectators are again shocked to see that after all the mishappenings the world of Pam, Mary, Harry, Len and Fred continue in the normal way. They continue with their sterile lives, ignorant of the feelings of others.

The gruesome infanticide poses certain questions like: What made the youth kill the innocent baby? Why was it treated in such a brutal manner? Why did the family members react in such a cold manner? The answers are so crucial that it sheds light on the disposition of the war inflicted capitalist society.

Most of the themes of Bond depict the relationship between society and children, some of them though in a subdued manner. Moreover he reflects his experiences of life through his naturalistic plays, which serve as eye

openers for the society to evaluate its status quo and opt for an entire change. For him every child is born as an orphan and must be adopted by its society. The only innate part of our nature can be seen as the capacity for this social and cultural adoption.

Narrow Road to the Deep North earned wide acclaim for Bond. The play as a whole deals with an attempted infanticide followed by mass infanticide, crucifixion and hara-kiri. Watching the play is like traversing through blood and terror. The characters that parade before the audience are in a war with themselves just like the members of a capitalist society. The macabre atmosphere in the play makes the spectator aware that his morally designed life is not much different from that of the incidents and tensions that the play creates. At the first reading, one feels that attempted infanticide is due to poverty where as mass infanticide is carried out for power.

Basho, the priest on his way to enlightenment witnesses an attempted infanticide. The parents of the infant abandon him near the river edge due to intense poverty. They are forced to do so because of their circumstances. The mother of the infant on seeing Basho requests him to take the responsibility of the baby. But, Basho seems to be little worried about his responsibility as a social being. He has been always looking for God, not at men, as he tells Kiro, one of the priests, "You don't know anything about God you've only been looking at men" (11). The irresponsible behaviour of Basho paves way to the later disastrous incidents in the play. The introductory part of the play poses many questions. Is it proper for parents to abandon their children to cruel fate even if the worst misfortune visits them? Could a learned man like Basho forget the responsibility he has in this world as a rational being? These questions begin to haunt the audience till the end of the play.

The abandoned baby grows up as a matter of chance. He becomes a tyrant by name Shogo. Shogo, the villain is born because of the irresponsible act of Basho. The former upholds the belief that men are basically evil--a belief, which fully contradicts the staunch belief of Bond, who believes that men are innately good, but the society makes him evil. Shogo's belief is an outcome of his sour experiences with his fellow beings who are indirectly caught in the trap of the pressure exerted by the society. In fact Shogo is an eye-opener for us to perceive what kind of society a tortured baby would try to build in the future.

The new city built by the Commodore and Georgina the Salvation Army Sister, by defeating Shogo, only imposes more stress on the people. They enforce more laws on people in the name of religion. The people are no more contented but forced to believe that they are happy and satisfied. The nature of evil in the society fostered by Shogo and the Commodore takes different garbs but the basic

element remains the same, that is, people exist in a state of tension.

In the Narrow Road to the Deep North, the spectators are taken to a far future where the repercussion of the atrocities committed against the children take a more diabolical form. The mass infanticide committed by Shogo when he returns to power in order to kill the baby emperor shocks the audience but it teaches a lesson that a tortured individual will strike back at the society like a whirlwind because the weight laid upon him by the society is beyond words. The diabolical culture fostered by Shogo and Basho through the two different societies corresponds to the atmosphere predominant in the capitalist society. In other words the shocking incidents in the play reflect the conditions of the capitalist society. According to Bond the corruption of man's natural innocence, the influence of social environment on man's pure nature are certain factors, which account for the violent behaviour of the members of

the society. The entire play thus shoots a repertoire of questions to the viewers asking them to probe into the violent behaviour of the members of the society which in turn would unravel the problems of the society.

The next play selected for the study namely, The Bundle, has the setting in a primitive Asian community. The characters are given the social as well as political roles by the playwright. This helps the spectator to analyse the issues with a social as well as political perspective. In the opening scene there is an abandoned child and a priest who lacks humanity because of his obsession with his personal quest for enlightenment, which is a re-enactment of the opening scene of Narrow Road to the Deep North. The priest, Basho, veers from responsibility of saving the infant. The victim viz. the baby, who grows up due to the help rendered by a ferryman, becomes the central character, Wang. His experiences with the society make him an outlaw, then a leader of the guerrilla group and finally a revolutionary.

Being a victim of the attempted child-murder, Wang develops a moral dilemma, which in turn coerces him to commit the greatest sin that is infanticide. When he gets an opportunity to save a child he also indulges in the selfish act. He is forced to think only about his existence and survival because the pressure mounted on him is too high. He becomes so cautious of the impossibility of doing well in a world that is unfair and unjust to him. So he becomes more callous than Basho, picks up the bundle in which the baby is wrapped and throws it into the river.

The baby in The Bundle embodies the powerful image of difficulty, when he is born into a heartless society. People find it difficult to accommodate the newborn baby in the midst of their selfish needs and desires. The world has imposed a lot of burden on the common man that he tries to react on the lower strata of the social order. The attitude of Basho and Wang towards infants unravels the behavioural aspects of the socially moralized society. The Bundle turns

out to be a different kind of play, which grows out of the shared image.

The suppressed feelings of man burst out at a particular moment of his life, in the form of violence. Violence takes different shapes and forms, like infanticide, cruelty towards children and slaughter of men. According to Bond violence and destruction in animals help them to perpetuate or protect their species--a kind of defensive mechanism. Human being gifted with a highly specialized brain and power of thinking happens to be the only animal in the universe that attacks and destroys his fellow beings for no reason. He explains this in his note "On Violence" in Saved:

The survival of the fittest would help the survival of animals in which the need was weak, not-as is usually supposed-animals in which it was stronger. This argument would apply not only to aggression outside a group but also to aggression within a group, where

it helps in sorting out the order of rank, except that in the animals in these groups built in destroys his fellow restrains on aggression or as strong as built in aggression. Human being[s], however, are said to be the only animals living in groups of which this isn't true. (10)

When one reads about the cruelties committed towards children that include abandonment, attempted infanticide and mass slaughter of children in the plays of Bond it is natural that the reader is reminded of the abandonment of children in the plays of Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht. The abandonment of children is also a cruelty towards the children, who are the future pillars of the society. When we consider Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale and The Caucasian Chalk Circle written by Brecht where the abandonment of children occurs one finds that these renowned dramatists have treated the theme in an entirely

different manner that completely contradicts Bond's treatment of the theme. Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht while dealing with the atrocities committed towards children unite in one aspect. Whenever the child is tortured there remains a fund of humanity in the form of shepherds and servants to oppose it and redeem the children from such torture. Here Bond differs from the three mentioned dramatists. To have a clear perspective a brief plot outline of Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale and The Caucasian Chalk Circle should be given.

In Oedipus Rex, the hero Oedipus after three days of his birth was pinned at his ankles and was ordered to be thrown down on a trackless mountain since he was born with the doom that he will kill his own father, Laius. But still there is a kind Theban shepherd in the play who gives the baby to a Corinthian shepherd who in turn gifts it to the childless Polybus. Even though the oracle said that the baby would kill his parents the society does not torture him as

seen in the plays of Bond. The mother Jocasta frightened by the oracle is forced to abandon the doomed baby.

Shakespeare in The Winter's Tale tells the story of a child abandoned in some remote, desert place since her royal father, Leontes doubts the chastity of her mother, Hermione. The child Perdita becomes a victim to the misdirected fury of Leontes. The angry king cries out in a fit of rage.

LEONTES. The brat is none of mine

It is the issue of Polixenes." (2.3.92-93)

But still the king is not so cruel as to murder the baby with his own hands. He assigns the duty to Antigonus, one of the Lords of Sicilia.

LEONTES. This female bastard hence; and that

thou bear it

To some remote and desert place quite out

Of our dominions; and that there thou leave it,

Without more mercy to its own protection

A favour of the climate. (2.3.175-79)

There is a possibility of the child being saved by some kind hands. Later in the course of the play it is seen that a shepherd comes in the form of a saviour for the abandoned Perdita.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle is a play about a servant girl, Grusha who saves the life of the Governor's baby and becomes its adoptive mother. The real mother flees in horror during the insurrection forgetting the child. Arsen Kazbeki, the fat prince wants the child to be murdered so that he can rule the state without any trouble from the right heir of Grusnia. In this play there is at least someone filled too much with the milk of human kindness. For Grusha the welfare of the child is the prime consideration. She sacrifices her own future and bears everything for the baby. Her ordeal with the Ironshirts of Arsen Kazbeki who tries to kill

the baby and the way she fulfils the practical role of a mother are certain incidents in the play which show how she tries to save the baby from the cruel hands.

From the treatment of child torture in Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale and The Caucasian Chalk Circle it is inferred that the treatment of the same theme differs very much in the plays of Bond in terms of portrayal, style, and intensity. It is evident that he wants to impart a very important message to the audience of the postwar inflicted world. A detailed comparative study of the theme of child torture in the selected plays of Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht with that of the selected plays of Bond will be carried out in the third chapter.

The society depicted by Bond is materialistic. Its members want to improve their fortune and neglect everyone else. Such a society gives no place to love, spiritual values, and individual freedom. Bond believes that the

technological society cannot contribute anything constructive to mankind, but only make people stupid. As a result man is transformed to a slave. Man becomes aggressive due to the suppression of the desires and responses, which is due to the ethics and hollow principles set up by the society. This aggression induces fear, and when the fear reaches the zenith because of the heavy weight of aggression, violent incidents become common events in the society.

In such a technological society, infanticide is encouraged rather than prevented. Even though Bond admits that he has never heard of a baby being stoned to death, as shown in his play, he strongly argues that he has witnessed and heard of babies being bombed to death during the times of war, thus the stoning of infants as well as the grim punishments given to them is a manifestation of that in a different form. In a self-centred society, man himself finds it difficult to survive. Each one lives for

himself rather than for his children or family. Each one designs his world in such a way that it suits him only. Bond comments on the indifference of the parents in the technological society towards the children, in his preface to

Lear:

Parents are worn out by daily competitive striving so they can't tolerate the child's natural noise and mess. They don't know why it cries; they don't know any of its inarticulate language. (8)

Bond perceives that the materialistic nature, hollow values and competitive elements have made the society a sustained atrocity dominated by the strong upon the weak. He illustrates this in "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence", an article in the Theatre Quarterly 2:

You cannot ride on a bus or strike a match, without committing cannibalism. You don't eat anybody physically, but you eat their despair, you eat the wastes of their lives [...] we clothe the sides of our cars

with human skin, because people have been abused to make them. (3)

The concept of socially moralized institutions also contributes to the atrocity against the weak. When a person is socially moralized he has to accept the social institutions. Then he believes that some moral or legal force should restrict men. Bond in his preface to Lear writes:

Social morality is a form of suicide. Socially moralized people must act contemptuously and angrily to all liberalism [...] because these are the things they are fighting in themselves [...]. So other people's happiness becomes their pain, and other people's freedom reminds them of their slavery. It is as if they had created in themselves a desolate, inhospitable landscape in which they had to live out their emotional and spiritual lives. This landscape reflects, of course, the inhospitable unjust world in which they first suffered; and it exacerbates and reinforces their

aggression and seems to give it added depths of bitterness. By calling the unjust world good, they recreate it in themselves and are condemned to live in it. (9-10)

Persons who live in a moralized society feel that they are in an unjust world. There is no equal opportunity or healthy equality. The members of the socially moralized group perceive it as a form of tumult. This adds on to their aggression. At the same time they are forced to continue their lives in a socially moralized order. A socially moralized order instigates fear. In an atmosphere of fear people are being forced to behave violently. This is contrary to the view that man is aggressive by nature and basically selfish. Bond believes that the external factors like the society and the environment are responsible for the violent behaviour of man. When man is placed in an antagonistic society, it is the children who are in danger since they form the lowermost stratum of the so-called powerful social

order. Being members of the powerless group they are vulnerable to suffering. A society in its run for materialistic power cannot understand the child, who is the image of God, Himself.

Aggression leads to violence and violence opens the doors of destruction. Bond discusses this in the "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence":

Well, as a society we are destroying ourselves through violence. All people say, we must do something about these violent people, let's hit them harder. Or, look at those wicked Russians, we must make bigger bombs. Russell before the last war said that society could never survive another war, but in fact society did, so people keep thinking it wouldn't actually destroy us next time. But it could and will. A competitive society must destroy itself. There is no alternative, because this is the whole dialect of violence--I threaten you, you threaten me, and finally

you have to carry out your threats, otherwise there is no credence behind them. And also because aggression creates fear and this leads to more violence and this has an escalation of its own. So that if society goes on as it's going on now, it will destroy itself. Not will it could, it might--it will. (9)

The aesthetic practice employed by a playwright cannot be divorced while dealing with his plays especially for a playwright like Bond for whom writing plays has become a moral activity. Bond adopts innovative techniques in his plays. His techniques include different strategies he employs to orient the audience towards action. The use of a multi focused stage, scenes of violence to draw the attention to the dangerous aspects in the society, concrete verbal--visual imagery and the lingual techniques are a few. His theatrical idiom however is often complex and needs a thorough analysis. A detailed study of this will be carried

out in the fourth chapter that deals with the theatre and theatrical aspects of Bond.

Bond through his plays brings to light the issues he sees as morally vital to the healthy future of the society. He is a profoundly conscientious dramatist who undertakes a careful examination of the purpose of living in the time. He honestly reflects his various experiences in life. He prefers dealing with the problems of the people to the dealing of the ideas. So his plays start with the people and not with ideas. For this he makes use of the intense and vivid childhood experiences and weaves contemplative themes with an innocence and purity of a child. He creates morbid scenes not to sicken or weaken the spectators but only imitate on stage the events he had already witnessed so that they can ponder over the existing socio political ideologies and judge its relevance on the society.

The plays of Bond are focused on a very important mission that is art must heighten the conscience of the society. He carries out his mission by revealing the conflict between true justice and a false interpretation of this justice by the ruling class. This makes his plays a revelation of a thoroughly socialist revolutionary consciousness. Bond describes the situations, later makes the readers contemplate on it and then find another alternative to save mankind from the existing situations. In the early plays he has only given hints like that of a man coming out of the river towards the end in Narrow Road to the Deep North. In the later plays he has even given direct solutions, to the problems posed in his plays, which reveal his concept of social structure.

One finds a responsible, cogent writer in Bond who identifies himself as a part of the whole social system and is sensitive to the sufferings of others. He focuses on social injustice; violence and corruption caused by a class-

structured technocratic society and the urgent need to react for a better world. This awareness makes him respond to the prevailing truth which most people prefer to avoid or ignore. It is one of the reasons that he is labelled as a controversial figure of his time, and never a favourite of critics.

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**INFANTICIDE AS THE METAPHOR OF THE FEAR
OF A FUTURELESS SOCIETY - A STUDY OF THE
SELECTED PLAYS OF EDWARD BOND**

By

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**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in English Literature to the University of Calicut**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

2007

Chapter II

A Journey from Reality to Realization

Drama is not an event in life such as buying a Coat.

It is an event about life-as the actor acts buying a
coat the act asks:

Who are you who watch?

As you judge the play you judge yourself.

(Bond 233)

Edward Bond staunchly believes that all he can do as an artist is to tell the truth as simply as possible. In an interview with Klein he said that he "tells the truth from a working class point of view, because that now is the social truth. It has to do with the democratization of the human mind and the passing of political autonomy to the mass of people" (415).

Bond not only tells the truth but also makes his plays interrogate the audience. His view that the drama interrogates the audience as much as audience interrogates the drama was made in the form of a theory only in 1987, but he had a clear conception of it when he wrote his early plays. The stoning of the baby in Saved, the mass infanticide and child abandonment in Narrow Road to the Deep North are certain instances where the drama questions the deeds of the members of the society and persuades the audience to contemplate on the mode of life they lead. Bond compares his plays to the milestones on a road with a sense of inevitability. All the problems of the society are not solved with his one play, but more crop up as soon as the play is finished.

According to Bond a writer has to be true to his experience and not tell even comforting lies. He is a playwright, who perceives the theatre as an expression of

the means of making a sane world. He observes in the Theatre Papers:

I think it was because I was brought up in a war, but the moment I start sitting at my typewriter then immediately I get involved in these fundamental questions simply because I was born into a society in which you didn't know if you were going to last the day. You could have been killed. When I was very young I saw people running for their lives. So those questions come very naturally to me ... I am concerned with important issues. That's part of my basic response. The subjects I deal with are not minute. They are full scale. They are about the future of our society. Whether I deal with them well others must judge. (qtd. in Hay & Roberts 22)

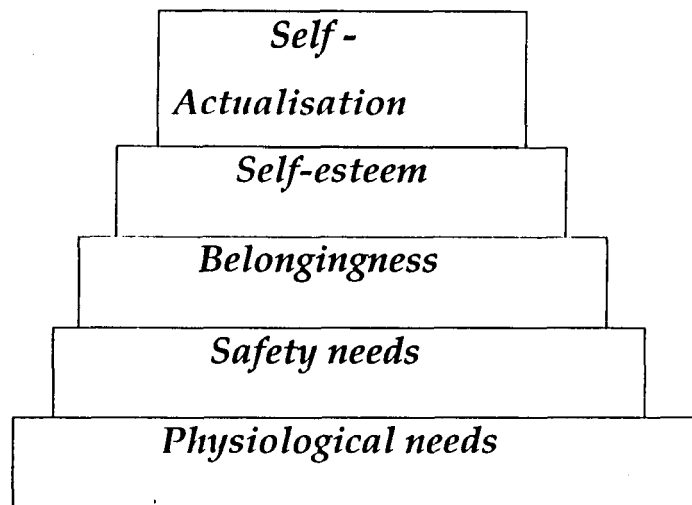
The plays, which range from social realism to imagistic precision, reflect a continual process of evaluating the nature of the contemporary problems. According to

Bond the twentieth century has been full of nauseating situations. He could not find any other means than writing plays to make the people understand the problems completely. As a dramatist he feels the necessity to go beyond the social evils to an indication of more positive means of remedying them. This intensifies the awareness element in his plays. He opposes the passive attitude towards contemporary reality and never expects the society to be changed overnight after watching the play but at least later its members should recognize the truth projected in the plays.

This chapter aims to prove that infanticide in Sayed, Narrow Road to the Deep North, and The Bundle serves as a dramatic metaphor of the fear of a futureless society.

Abraham Maslow in his work Motivation and Personality mentions a hierarchy of needs, starting from the

basic physiological and safety needs and ending with the need of self-actualisation.



Each and every individual craves for fulfilling all the needs that finally takes him to a level of self-actualisation, which is considered as the noblest of human needs by Maslow. Human beings have got the capability to become everything one is capable of becoming and there is a craving in man to become more and more what one is. But the external factors pose restrictions on them in the form of law, order, religion

and government. We find such an environment in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle.

The characters in Saved viz. Pam, Fred, Mary, and the members of the gang, who are the working class lot are not that blessed to reach the level of self-actualisation. The characters could not fulfil most of their needs. Pam, Len, Fred Harry and Mary could satisfy their physiological needs but not the safety needs in a capitalist society where there is competition and economic struggle. When the safety need is not satisfied it affects the other needs also. One does not find a need for belongingness in the characters in Saved. Same is the case with Wang in The Bundle who sells himself as a slave to the landowner because of poverty, whereas in Narrow Road to the Deep North Shogo by birth itself is a victim of the deeds of the society. Shogo and Wang are deprived of the physiological need itself. Because of poverty and lack of food their parents abandon them. Gradually the fulfilling of other needs seem to be too tedious for them.

Even in Basho the judge in The Bundle one finds the obsession of reaching the stage of self-actualisation because it has become the need of the day for him to survive in a class-structured society where power matters a lot.

When the needs are not fulfilled because of the restrictions imposed by the external conditions the human beings become frustrated. The frustration takes the form of panic, fear and anger. It becomes inevitable that they should give an opening to their suppressed feelings, mainly the hatred towards the society. So they kill the infants.

The society kills the infants because the social structure is designed in such a way that there is the hierarchy of aggressors in the social ladder, the strong brutalizing the weak and the weak brutalizing the weaker. In the words of Bond, "our society has the structure of a pyramid of aggression and as the child is the weakest member it is at the bottom" (Bond 6). When the weakest

member, namely, the child that is the promise, potential and hope of society is murdered, the society indirectly commits self-destruction. In other words the society becomes futureless. The infanticide in the above mentioned plays props out due to the aggression in the society. The members of the society are in a state of constant aggression when deprived of their various needs. This creates an atmosphere of tension and fear. When the tension and fear become intense, people tend to be violent and indulge themselves in violent deeds like child torture and murder. When the corpse of the baby lies on the threshold of the society, the spectators realize that the persons who commit murder are no less victims of the society than the baby. The state of being incessantly victimized makes them destroy their own future.

Infanticide in a Pram:

Saved premiered at the Royal National Theatre in 1965, London, was banned by the Lord Chamberlain

because of its notorious scenes. Its author, Bond, was labelled as a controversial writer for the shocking scenes that he created which made the viewers jump out of their seats. Leading critics of the period too passed the same question -- how dare you show us these things? It is said that Bond inherited the title of the best - hated man in London after the staging of Saved. According to J.C. Trewin of The Illustrated London News, the play is not the "feeblest thing" he has seen on any stage but "it is certainly the nastiest, and contains perhaps the most horrid scene in the contemporary theatre" (32). The review of Irving Wardle in The Times was also not different:

The most charitable interpretation of the play would be as a counterblast to theatrical fashion, stripping off the glamour to show that cruelty is disgusting and that domestic naturalism is boring. But the writing itself, with its self-admiring jokes and gloating approach to moments of brutality and erotic humiliation, does not support this view. In so far as

the claustrobically appropriate action has any larger repercussions it amounts to a systematic degradation of the human animal. (17)

In the midst of such lashing criticisms, there were a few critics who could foresee the intention of Bond in writing Saved. Sir Laurence Olivier in the letter columns of the Observer praised the play as "one in which we can experience the sacramental catharsis of a very chastening look at the sort of ground we have prepared for the next lot" (qtd. in Scharine 49). Even Penelope Gilliat of the Observer, commented that "this is not a brutish play but a play about brutishness which is something quite different" (42).

Most of the debate on this play was focused on scene six where some men in the park stone an infant to death. Stoning of the baby when performed on the stage naturally creates a feeling among the public that the dramatist has erred severely by portraying such sickening incident. Even

the British authorities failed to understand the moral purpose of the so-called shocking scenes, which serve as a dramatic metaphor. They banned the play after its first performance. What the public failed to realize was the significance of the presentation of such a macabre incident in the play, which has a great relevance in the contemporary society. In the preface to Lear Bond explains the thematic relevance of the infanticide in Saved:

Every child is born with certain biological expectations, or if you like species' assumptions-that its unpreparedness will be cared for, that it will be given not only food but emotional reassurance, that its vulnerability will be shielded, that it will born into a world waiting to receive it, and that knows how to receive it. But the weight of aggression in our society is so heavy that the unthinkable happens: we batter it. And when the violence is not so crude it is still there, spread thinly over years; the final effect is the same and so the dramatic metaphor I used to describe it was

the stoning of a baby in its pram. This is not done by thugs but by people who like plays condemning thugs. (6)

Saved is a visceral portrayal of life amongst the have-nots and go-nowhere of the working class London. It can also be seen as the expression of the lifeless world filled with evil. The evil is not inherent in the characters but rather imposed on them by the environment. It portrays a barren loveless society that is dangerously near self-annihilation. It tells about the lives of a group of working class people in South London. The cramped environment is brought out through thirteen scenes and each scene is increasingly restrictive.

The characters live in an urban, industrialized environment and are caught up by the evils of a consumer society. Most of the scenes in the play are set up in a small house where there is desirable and undesirable collision

among its inhabitants -- Harry and Mary, their daughter Pam, and her "pickup" (32) Len. The house is filled with hatred and violence. The arrival of Pam's baby adds to more confusion since it is perceived as an unwanted object. Pam, in a fit of rage leaves the baby doped with aspirin with its supposed father Fred. The infant is murdered brutally by the group of men in the park including the baby's father, Fred. Fred is convicted of the crime and goes to prison. Pam tries for Fred's release. Later Fred is set free and the characters continue their lives in the normal way.

There is non-fulfilment of the various human needs so the characters are in a state of tension and are therefore aggressive. Aggression creates fear and this leads to more violence. When a thorough analysis is undertaken about the behavioral aspects of the character one can get a clear picture of the society in which they live. Their behavioural aspects shed light on the disposition of the society because the society has got a major share in the actions of the

characters. It is found that the characters are frustrated, hostile and in a state of boredom. A quick glance of the various factors that contribute to aggression would help in the better reading of the use of infanticide as a dramatic metaphor. *The feeling of insecurity, apathetic behaviour, social structure and related problems, and physical environment* are some of the factors that accelerate and denote aggression in Saved.

When the pressure due to the feeling of insecurity, apathetic behaviour, class structure, and physical environment, escalate, the characters have a tendency to threaten the persons inferior to them, so as to find an outlet for their suppressed life. Bond in his preface to Lear observes:

So human aggression has got important features that make it more destructive than the aggression of other animals. It is animal aggression, but it has to be accommodated by our human minds, and presumably

it appears to us as more alarming and frightening than it does to other animals. This is true of our subjective feelings of aggression as well as of the aggression we meet from outside. We have more complicated resources to deal with this increased vulnerability. When panic and fear becomes unbearable, it is as we lied and said they were not there, and out of this lie we build social morality. Children are especially vulnerable in this way, as I have said but we are all exposed to the same pressures throughout our lives.

(9)

Feeling of Insecurity:

Security means feeling safe. This feeling arises when one is secure and at the same time he should have the sense of security as well. This is possible only when he is safe from dangers and the people around him are friendly and helpful. Emotional bonds like love and affection also play a lion's share in creating a feeling of security. When all the

above conditions are absent then there is a feeling of insecurity. There can be no emotional development when a person is insecure. Conflict between the various members of a family can also create a feeling of insecurity in the members. One finds this feeling of insecurity in Pam, Fred, Len and the thugs in Saved.

Pam, the central character is a young woman of about twenty-three years of age. Her hostile relationship with her parents is evident in the opening scene itself. There is no respect, concern, understanding or love between the parents and the daughter. For her, Harry her dad is an old man. That is how she introduces her dad to Len, her "pick up" (32). "Spite" (90) is the first motive that she ascribes to her parents. She does not seem to bother about her strained relationship of her parents. For her "its their life" (34). She never sees her parents as her own. As a daughter she fails to take the initiative to set the family in harmony. According to her she never "chose" (36) her parents and she doesn't

like anybody to discuss about her parents. She has no sympathy for her brother, who is killed in the war, or fond remembrances of him. When she speaks about her brother, who was killed in the war she says "They ad a boy in the war" (34) and she is very cool and detached when she says to Len that a bomb in the park killed her baby brother. All these point out at the emotional aridity in Pam's world. There is no warmth of relationship. She lives in a world of insecurity.

The term "pick up" (32) for Len substantiates that Pam has chosen him only to quench her physical needs. There is no emotional tie between the two. In the first scene whenever they talk there are only dirty jokes, whereas in the second scene there is a scarcity of topics for them to discuss. Later her relationship with him is "nothing but rows an' argument" (92). She finds him as boredom. She is tired and sick of the relationship with Len and finds him as a person with no self-respect. She even forgets to show her gratitude

to him, who loses his job for helping her when she is sick. Her relationship with Len portrays an unfaithful, thankless world. The insecurity of Pam is evident when she cries out, "All my friends gone. Baby's gone. Nothin' left but rows. Day in, day out. Fightin' with knives". "I'll throw myself somewhere. It's the only way" (122). Her attitude towards life is that people "treat you like a doormat. All take and no give" (89).

The parents of Pam, Harry and Mary have not spoken for years. Pam who grew up in the midst of them received no attention. Her world is filled with tension and chaos. There is no space for dream and joy. She gives importance only for materialistic pleasures. The conflict between the parents has stunted her growth as an emotionally secure individual and this is reflected in her behaviour when she becomes a mother. In short she becomes an exact replica of her parents.

Brought up in a world of tension, and insecurity Pam unleashes her anger and frustrations on her kid and Len. In the world of Pam, Len and the kid are less powerful compared to others. Len has his own self-defensive mechanism to escape from the wrath of Pam since he is an adult, but the baby suffers intensely in the hands of Pam. Her relationship with the baby is murderous. She has never cared for the christening of the baby. Christening is a very important rite observed by the Christians just after the child is born. This signifies that the baby is spiritually purified and has become the child of God. This rite is being ignored in a very convenient way by Pam and her family members. The baby is given no name. As a mother she does not even bother to call her own baby by any name. She addresses her baby as "it" or "that kid" (67). When the baby starts to cry without a break she seems to be least affected. She avoids the noise of crying by increasing the volume of the television. According to her the baby cries louder when she goes near it, so she avoids it. This shows the attachment she

has for her baby. She fails to identify the cry of her baby and tells Mary, "I thought the cat was stuck up the chimney" (48). The baby is seen as a millstone or a "racket" (50). She never pampers the baby. At times the baby is drugged with aspirin. She is burdened with her own worries that she has a feeling that she cannot do anything. More than paying attention to the baby she enjoys herself whenever she picks up a quarrel with Len. Her attention is only on her new love Fred, who is supposed to be the father of the baby according to her. She feels that the baby is an obstacle between her and Fred, whenever he visits her. She gets rid of the baby by leaving it in Mary's room. Whenever Len asks Pam to hold the baby she has a feeling that he is pestering her. She is of the opinion that she need not worry about the baby since the father of the baby is also least bothered about. When Len tries to put the baby in her arms she yells: "I tol' yer take it back! Get off a me! Yer bloody lunatic! Bleedin' cheek!" (55).

Pam takes the baby to the park not for the baby's sake or to enjoy herself with the baby. This is evident when she tells Fred "I couldn't stand it on me own no more. I'ad a come out. I don't know what I'm doin. That kid ought a be in bed. Less take it'ome Fred" (67). When she puts up a quarrel with Fred she demonstrates her anger by leaving the baby in the pram to the favour of the society. According to her the baby is a gift from her for Fred to present to his other girlfriends. As a mother she forgets that the baby has got pneumonia and it should not be left outside all alone, that too with an uncaring father. Her nervous instability and desperate responses prove that she is a victim of her situations. At the end of scene six when the brutal infanticide is over she comes back and seems to be least bothered about the condition of the baby in the pram. She does not realize that the baby is being killed since she does not even look into the pram once, but pushes it mechanically since she has to take the baby back to the house. When Fred is arrested and put in jail for the infanticide she goes to see

him and has no complaint that the baby is being murdered. Her feelings are for Fred rather than for her dead baby. She identifies him with her as a victim of a hollow world and has sympathy for him.

Len turns out to be an onlooker of the whole event. He sees the brutal infanticide but did not know what to do. He who dwells in an insecure world would find it difficult to save another insecure being. His relationship with Pam is not a secure one. Moreover he is at the verge of being thrown out of the house of Pam. It is his insecurity that forces him to cling on to Pam even though she treats him with no respect and consideration. Brought up in a world of insecurity he forgets his moral responsibility. Even though he takes care of the baby more than the other members of the family he fails to react to the situation when the crucial point comes for him to act that is to save the baby when it was in danger. His nervous nature is one of the causes for his irresponsible behaviour. According to Pam he is always

“nosey” (22). In the opening scene his sexual insecurity is evident when he invents interruptions himself or is interrupted by the old man, Harry. Leading a life in such tensed conditions accounts for his morally irresponsible behaviour. He retires as a passive onlooker.

When the members of a society feel insecure there is every chance for aggression to exist in the society. The feeling of insecurity accelerates anxiety, and frustration. When it exceeds the limit the consequence is seen on the babies who are the most insecure in an aggression filled society.

Apathetic Behaviour:

The high class category of a socially moralized institution gives least attention to the lower class and are unconcerned and unemotional towards the latter's needs. In a socially moralized institution obedience and allegiance to law and order is given more importance than any other

tender feelings. The apathetic behaviour in the characters Fred, Pam and Mary symbolize the kind of society in which they live where there is no consideration for humanity and this implies the aggressive nature of the society.

Fred lives in a mechanical hollow world. There is no emotional tie up with him and Pam and also in his other relationships. According to him he thinks that "she was going spare" (64) that is why he started a relationship with Pam. His attitude towards her is that she ruined his life because of the baby. The fact that Pam is the mother of his baby does not arouse any respect or tender feelings in Fred for her. He is bothered only about himself. He has little consideration for the baby also. For him the baby "ought a be in bed" (65). He also addresses the baby as "it" (68). He does not hold or pamper it. He is devoid of all paternal feelings. He seems to be little bothered when Pam puts the baby alone in the park. He says to his friend "You wake it up an'yer can put it t' sleep" (72). When the thugs play with

the pram he does not think about the baby at all but keeps himself busy talking with Mike. When the thugs coerce him to stone the baby he also participates in the cruel sin of killing the baby. He is not bothered about the death of the baby and is indifferent to the whole event because for him the whole thing is an accident and "it was only a kid" (85). He feels that he is innocent about the whole thing because everything happened due to Pam's irresponsible behaviour. He tells Pam, when she visits him in the prison:

FRED. Why the bloody 'ell bring the little perisher
out that time a night?

PAM. (fingers at her mouth). I wanted a -

FRED. Yer got no right chasin' after me with a
pram! Drop me right in it!

PAM. I was scared t' stay-

FRED. Never know why yer'ad the little bleeder
In the first place! Yer don't know what yer
doin'! Yer're a bloody menace! (83)

This shows that Fred is a very self-centred person. Instead of sharing the responsibility it is seen that each character tries to place the responsibility on others' shoulders. He is only bothered about the fact that he will be in the dock. For him Pam and the baby have got no significance in his life. He commits the crime of murdering the baby along with others since he finds it as a medium of giving vent to his frustrations and anger. One cannot say he is feeling less because at one point he says: "Why couldn't I bin tryin' a'elp the kid? I got no cause t' 'arm it" (84). This shows man by birth is innocent but the environment makes him cruel and violent. Even when Len asks him about his feelings when he committed the murder he just tries to avoid the topic rather than elaborating on it.

Women, who are always associated with tender qualities of compassion and sympathy, are different in this play. Pam and Mary perceive the infanticide as a feeling of relief--a relief from burden and responsibility. On the other

hand, Fred, the father of the baby does not dream at all about the future of the baby. The entire world is unemotional and dry.

The cause for this apathetic behaviour is their existence in a socially moralized society. Fred, Pam and Mary all belong to the lower class group in a capitalist society. They live in a society where love, and other tender feelings are considered as weaknesses. So they also become obdurate as designed by the society. This obdurate nature is shown on the kids also who have got the privilege to receive all care, love and affection from others.

Social Structure and Related Problems:

Bond believes that the social structure exists in the society and once it is formed it tends to be perpetuated. Bond's opinion regarding social structure is expressed in the preface to Lear. It is important to understand his view of social and class hierarchy.

The organizing groups, the leaders, receive privileges. [...]. But the organizing group becomes self-justifying, because although its position is unjust it is the administrator of justice. At first opposition to it will not be revolutionary or even political; it will be 'meaningless' and involve personal discontents and frustrations. [...]. In this way an unjust society causes and defines crime; and an aggressive social structure which is unjust and must create aggressive social disruption, receives the moral sanction of being 'law and order'. (5)

The thugs involved in the murder are all youngsters like Pete, Barry, Mike and Colin. The inherent nature of people who assert their supremacy over others is seen in them because they are the members of a socially moralized institution. They try to assert their status in the group. There is a clear-cut hierarchy in their group. Barry who is the object of humiliation is the person who instigates the terrible

action of infanticide so as to assert the supremacy. It is only on the weakest infant that he could assert his superiority. In other words he tries to react on the weakest member of the society and thus gives vent to his aggression. The agitated Barry tries to assert his supremacy when he sings a crude lullaby for the baby in the pram and pushes it viciously:

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

He wants to urinate on the baby. His actions reveal the manner in which he wants to assert supremacy because he himself is a victim of the circumstances. For Colin the baby is a "yellow nigger" (78). Pete, another member of the gang has the same attitude towards the children. The death of another child involving Pete's car and a lorry is treated in a casual manner. This shows the casual and hostile approach

of youngsters towards serious events. Having brought up in a restricted socially moralized environment the youngsters stress upon the need to make light of everything. That is what follows in scene six. They feel that the baby should be put to sleep with a brick. It is treated like a ball. At first the carriage is given a light push, but, as it moves the pram gathers speed because the actions of the youngsters have become out of control. The frustrated youngsters have a lust for blood and murder. An advanced degree of this lust is witnessed. The pram is spinned and pushed violently. The hair of the baby is pulled and the attitude of the entire gang is "little bleeder's alf dead a fright" (75). They punch the baby, hit it and go to the extent of smearing its face with its own excrement. Here the youngsters do not see the baby as a symbol of hope. For them the baby will "grow up an idiot" or "deformed" (78). This attitude is because of their bitter experiences with the world. They belong to a world that lacks justice. In an unjust society others control them. Society deprives justice to many of its members--especially

the lower working class. They are denied of a healthy social and economic environment. This breeds ignorance, frustration and violence.

The thugs even force Fred, the father of the baby to stone it since he does not "get a chance like this everyday" (79). They even throw burning matches at the baby. The murder of the baby is one of the fairly casual acts of violence, which they like to indulge in. Their actions take a diabolic form when their tensions burst and their latent violence vents itself upon the unresponding child. The contempt for those even powerless than themselves accounts for the brutal action. The child who is on the lower side of the social scale is brutally treated by them. The brutalized derive a certain sense of superiority from brutalizing the persons who are less powerful than them. The aggression in the youngsters becomes an extension of the violence inherent in the system and leads to social self-destruction or a futureless society.

The thugs belong to the lower working class of a moralized society. Hence the feeling of opposition against the prevailing system is more. But they are unable to react, since the ruling class is more powerful. So the powerless innocent babies are targeted for an emotional outlet, which creates a feeling in the suppressed members that somebody else is there in this world who suffers more than them.

The murder can also be viewed as an act of racism in which the ruling class manipulates the anger of the slaves to its own ends. There is mutual encouragement among the killers for stoning and killing the baby. They raise the ruling class slogans according to Bond.

The characteristics of a postwar degenerated society find reflection in the behaviour of Harry and Mary. Their environment is filled with suffocation and agitation. There is a big communication gap between Mary and Pam and also between Harry and Mary. Even though Mary has lost her

son in the bombing she does not find consolation in Pam's baby. The word she used for the baby is "ol' doormat" (57). She is least bothered when the baby cries. Moreover never does she instructs or directs her daughter to look after the baby. She does not take care of her only daughter, Pam. Mary as a mother fails to understand the problems of Pam when the latter is not well and bed ridden. Instead she tells her that Pam is as sound as her as per the doctor's report. Her attitude to Harry is also not different. The husband and wife talk only to fight. The couple -- Harry and Mary do not feel the responsibility for each other. When Mary hits Harry with a teapot, badly, she blames him for cracking it. Her attitude towards Harry is "Don't talk t'me" (118). She finds no comfort in talking to her husband or sharing her worries with him. She has chosen to live in her own world of chaos. She has no time to bother for the kid who is being murdered in the pram. At times she feels sorry for Pam and not for the kid. She disagrees with Pam for selling the pram for fifty pounds instead of two hundred and fifty pounds and picks

up a quarrel but she never chides her for leaving the baby alone in the park. Harry feels that their lives have changed after witnessing the disaster of the war. They prefer to live quietly but are forced to live in a noisy world. The noisy world brings a great transformation in the members of the society wherein one finds Mary and Harry as the victims. Harry is also least concerned about his own child whom he has already lost in the war. When Len asks him about it he seems to be least bothered about it. There is no joy in living together nor is there love and care in the family. Even though Len is a "pickup" (32) of Pam, the father agrees him to stay in the house only because he is paying his rent. This points out the materialistic nature of a war inflicted society. The violent tenor of the characters lies not in their instincts but in their social relationship. They are violent because they have not made the relationships civilized.

The psychological unrest in the postwar world does not turn against cultural and religious institutions nor is

there a resistance between labour and the capital. Instead man vents his aggression on other afflicted beings that are less powerful than him. The capitalist society has moulded man in such a manner that he is unable to resist his superiors.

Physical Environment:

The inhumanity of the setting contributes and strengthens the evil behaviour of man. The inhospitable sterility affects the characters a lot. In an article entitled "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence," Bond reflects his idea:

I always get the impression, whatever it's true or not, that it's [South London] more industrialized. I've got a feeling, too that it's physically flatter there-and those miles and miles of long straight streets that always look the same. I used to call it the brick desert and this feeling of being in a desert of bricks seemed to be absolutely right for the play. (7-8)

Too many people crowded close together can also be a force behind the violent nature of man. According to Rodger Hudson, Bond once remarked in "Drama and the Dialectics of Violence":

If you cage an animal so that it can't behave in a normal way, so that it always feels threatened by the things around it, it becomes violent. And if you threaten human beings all the while, they become violent. No animal can be subjected to too much noise, for instance, because noise means danger. We have the same function in us—we don't like noise. We are living on top of motorways. Biologically we cannot function. There are H-bombs in the air all the time. The human being today is always in a state of tension and of being scared and frightened, and is therefore aggressive. (9)

The entire surrounding in South London is more industrialized and this created a feeling of suffocation and congestion. The crowded house of Pam, the desert like

atmosphere of the entire setting and the tensed atmosphere outside all contribute to the aggressive and violent nature of the characters and they give vent to it by battering the infant.

In short it can be said that the insecurity seen in Pam and Len, the apathetic behavior of Fred, Pam and Mary, the attitude of the thugs being the victims of the social moral order, the attitude of the members of a war degenerated society as seen in Harry and Mary all denote that there is aggression in the members of the society. They become directly or indirectly responsible for the murder of the infant, because their tensions, worry, fear and pain of existence have reached to its fullest level.

The unspeakable atrocity unreels in a slow motion from the time the baby is born and reaches to the zenith of ugliness and cruelty in scene six, when some hooligans stone the baby to death. It is evident that the fall in the

morality of characters, which is the background of all of Bond's plays occurs when human beings are forced to live unnaturally, to behave in ways for which they are not designed. They become destructive and neurotic and make bad parents. Society as a whole experienced such a fall, and now generation of children continue to experience it. The characters in Saved are the members of the Welfare State. They are being brutalized by the capitalist system that thrives on certain moralities, which are various forms of coercions. As a result they become self-hating individuals. The working class condition is a disgruntled existence of social welfare, unemployed, alienated, and frustrated; where the only comfort of the wretched is the consolation that there is always someone worse than them. This consolation is attained when they harm the less powerful members of the society. Hence the scapegoat turns out to be the weakest member that is the child. In other words the Welfare State is not designed to save its children.

Usually stoning is an act which is the result of the loss of purity and innocence. It symbolizes the spiritual death of a society. In the notes to Saved, Bond portrays the twentieth century society, devoid of any feeling and always acting in a destructive manner:

Clearly the stoning to death of a baby in a London park is a typical English understatement. Compared to the "strategic" bombing of German towns it is a negligible atrocity, compared to the cultural and emotional deprivation of most of our children its consequences are insignificant. (310)

Intense poverty, shattered dreams, unfulfilled goals, frustration and the feeling that one is incapable of doing anything are the reasons for a submissive nature. But at the same time the disappointment, worries and tensions get heavily accumulated in the human mind. Man is in a state of aggression. Feeling of insecurity, apathetic behaviour, the existing social order, the physical environment all add to his

aggression. He looks for a chance to give an outlet to his fears. The medium he sees for this outlet is by attacking the less powerful. He gets a feeling of recognition when he feels that somebody is less powerful than him in this noisy world. So he asserts his supremacy on the less powerful being by attacking it. Eventually the child becomes the less powerful being. The infanticide becomes the metaphor of fear and the atrocity that is laid upon the infant opens the doors to a futureless society.

Infanticide a Narrowed Vision of Humanity:

In a Letter to Richard Scharine, dated 6 July 1971 Jane Howell, the director of Narrow Road to the Deep North wrote:

Narrow Road presents situations rather than characters. It shows you people in situations and what they do is very important. [...]. It seeks that the

audience should think as well as feel and that what is presented is always presented as a fact.

(Scharine 285)

If Saved staged a gruesome infanticide, followed by scathing criticisms against its creator, Narrow Road to the Deep North earned wide acclaim for Bond. John Russel Taylor in his Anger and After commented that "Narrow Road to the Deep North [...] showed a new certainty of touch and purposeful economy in its dialogue. Again its climax is an outbreak of carnage, but the lead-up is cool and controlled, and the resolution pulls the whole thing into shape" (110).

The theme of the play is centered on the narrowing opportunities for humanity in a society filled with aggression. Inhumanity becomes the most often played tune by the orchestra of human society, which is in a state of aggression.

The babies are not treated in a humane manner since their guardians are members of a hostile society. Even when the play is set out of England, the nature of the society remains to be the same. Bond wants to highlight the fact that in whichever place such hostile societies are implanted the result they produce is the same.

The play when premiered in the Belgrade Theater of Coventry in 1968 did not produce a shocking effect on the audience as they did in Saved. This is due to the difference in the setting of the play from the usual ones. The viewers are taken to Japan, that too, to a place two hundred years ago. The shift in the locale, and the use of language, invited less criticisms, since the events staged were out of the local reach of the English people and thus it could raise lively debate from them. Hilary Spurling in an article entitled "Bond Honoured" remarks:

Narrow Road to the Deep North, set in Japan two or three hundred years ago could scarcely be farther

from the mean and dingy London streets of *Saved*; but, though its colours are lighter and brighter, and dash on with a bolder hand, its themes are the same-what Coleridge called "the vulgarity of all bad passions" - and it has the same clarity and economy of line. (313)

The reaction in Eastern Europe was also not much different. According to Gaskill, *Narrow Road to the Deep North* was readily accepted. He recalls the reason for this in one of his Letters dated 19 March 1971:

The interesting thing about reactions in countries like Czechoslovakia and Poland was that the allegory of *Narrow Road* was much easier for them to "read" as they spend their lives creating allegories when censorship prevents a more direct realistic approach. *Saved* was more remote because the social conditions, which produce crimes of violence of that kind, are not found to the same extent in their countries and the

obsession with infanticide seems to be a very English obsession. (qtd. in Scharine 128)

The most significant part of the play is that Bond found the skeletal framework for his play in “The Records of a Weather-exposed Skeleton” by Matsuo Basho, the seventeenth century Japanese haiku poet-who later was caricatured as the leading character in Bond’s Narrow Road to the Deep North. The title of Bond’s play is also borrowed from Basho’s The Narrow Road to the Deep North and Other Travel Sketches, in which “The Records of a Weather - exposed Skeleton” appeared. Basho’s work tells the story of an abandoned infant and the attitude of a learned man towards him. While walking along the river Fuji, the poet sees a small child, abandoned by his parents. The child “destined to have a life shorter” than the “morning dew” was left to be killed since his parents thought, “this child was unable to ride through the stormy waters of life” (52). The poet does not find any fault with the parents of the child

and instead puts the blame on the “irresistible will of heaven” (52). The poet urges the child to raise his voice to Heaven, and he too leaves him, in the hands of fate.

Narrow Road to the Deep North portrays the nature of a belligerent society through the conduct of the characters. The characters are not contented with the kind of life they follow. Aggression is dominant in the characters. *Poverty, Self-centredness, Emotional Sterility, and Enforced Order* in the play speak a lot about the aggression found in the characters.

Poverty:

When poverty prevails there is aggression. When the physiological needs are not fulfilled the human mind is disturbed. The victim is in a state of aggression and he has a hatred for the whole social system. His poverty cannot make him unleash his anger at the authorities nor is he allowed to

do an act of kindness to his own family. He is in a state of despair.

The parents of the baby abandoned at the riverside belong to the group of the poor people caught by the poverty snare. Their sin of abandoning the baby has got its own reasons. They are forced to abandon him near the river edge, due to intense poverty. The parents see the infant as an unwanted additional member in the poverty stricken family. The maternal feelings of the mother is evident in the play but at the same time the aggression on the parents is so much that they are forced to leave it. The child being the weakest member is unable to retaliate or express his feelings, he is at the verge of destruction. The father of the child is of the opinion that it is "better lose one than all of them" (7). Poverty has fallen upon the society so much that abandoning the child has become a universal happening in the society. Here also the weakest member of the society, the child, turns out to be the victim since it is at the bottom

of the pyramid of aggression, according to Bond. When the peasant remarks, "you'll come across plenty of them along the river" (8) it is clear that the society is able to perceive it as washing the face or taking their daily bath.

Children are the most vulnerable to the unnatural social conditions that they ultimately tend to perpetuate. Even Kiro, the priest, explains his wretched childhood due to poverty to Basho when the latter enquires about the reason for his sadness.

KIRO. My parents died when I was a child. They were peasants. One year the rice just didn't grow and they starved.

A priest came to the house. He was begging. The door was open and he looked in and saw me lying with my dead parents. (9)

Self-centredness:

A society built on the bricks of competition and forced morality would find selfishness and self-obsession as the dominant trait of its members. They are in war with the other members of the society. They are never rational in their thoughts and actions since the self predominates in all their deeds. Out of selfishness they perform mean actions that indirectly provide an appropriate atmosphere for the evil to breed more.

The introductory part of Bond's Narrow Road to the Deep North has the same setting mentioned before, in which the great seventeenth century Japanese poet, Basho on his way to enlightenment witnesses an attempted infanticide.

Basho, a poet passes the riverside and the infant's mother on seeing him requests him to take the responsibility of the baby. She explains the weight of the circumstances, which forced them to abandon the baby. But he seems to be

little worried about his responsibility as a social being and for the self-centred educated man, the infant is a burden in his journey towards enlightenment. Basho is very much aware of the fact that the baby is not responsible for its doom but he is not willing to save the baby or to explain the cause for the ill fate of the baby. His world reveals a total loss of compassion and humanity. When humanity is called in question he abdicates from all responsible actions and leaves the place attributing the entire responsibility to God:

BASHO. Ha! He stares at me as if I was a toy. What

Funny little eyes! (Turns away) It hasn't done

anything to earn this suffering-it's caused by

something greater and more massive: you could call

it the irresistible will of heaven. So it must cry to

heaven. And I must go to the North. (8)

Basho's crude comment about the abandoning of the baby by the parents is that, "They're hungry and they must feel some relief because they've got rid of one of their

problems" (8) reminds us of the line, in "The Prologue" to Chaucer's Canterbury Tales "that if gold ruste what shal iren doo" (500)?

It is evident that a baby left to die has been tortured from its birth. The painful experiences of its childhood will inflict deep wounds in its minds and the psychological growth of the baby is affected. If a poet like Basho had saved the baby it would have got a chance to escape from its ill fate and would have grown up normally. But here the baby has already died emotionally and culturally due to the irresponsible behaviour of Basho. After thirty years when the enlightened Basho returns from the north to his hometown, he learns that a tyrant named Shogo rules the city. Later it is revealed that Shogo is the child who was abandoned by his parents as well as Basho at the river edge. He grew up viciously aggressive--a consequence of Basho's irresponsible action.

Basho gets a second chance for an onerous action that is to bring up the baby Emperor into an effective individual, but he misuses it. His thirst for power creates more tension in the state. He takes the help of the Commodore and his sister -mistress Georgina to knock down the city of Shogo in the name of the baby Emperor. Again a city of violence is created. Basho a poet as well as a priest fails to see the humanity around him. He is in a wild pursuit of his invisible God and claims to be superior to his fellow beings. When Kiro the traditional Bond innocent requests Basho to accept him as a disciple, Basho examines Kiro's knowledge by asking irrelevant questions about God. When Kiro fails to answer a certain question, Basho lashes out at him, by saying that, "You don't know anything about God. You've only been looking at men" (11). This shows the reluctance of Basho to involve himself in the affairs of men. He has no confidence in man and mankind. He is self-centred. His detachment from the world and his fellow beings and the

staunch belief in the omnipotence of heaven becomes the crux of all problems and destruction in the play.

Basho, a lover of power and social prestige after his return from the deep North realizes that he can easily attain the kingdom in the name of religion. He turns out to be a hypocrite who laments on the atrocities committed by Shogo. This is evident when he has a discussion with Shogo's Prime minister:

BASHO (angrily). He's imprisoned innocent women, Orphaned children, made the men soldiers, and killed them. His city is hell, ruled by atrocity. I could put up with that if I could still hope. But how can I hope if he destroys religion? He knew the pot was sacred. Of course, that's only a symbol, but we need symbols to protect us from ourselves. If he destroys them, there's no future. (27)

Shogo returns to power for the second time and Basho realizes that the former is a threat to his life and is a constant enemy. With the help of the Commodore he crushes the rule of Shogo and finally he is hacked to pieces. In other words Basho terminates his enemy forever.

When Basho realizes that Shogo is the baby whom he abandoned at the riverside to die thirty years back he laments for not drowning the child thirty years before. It is clear that all he learns from his experience is his folly of not having destroyed the baby. Though a poet and a man of enlightenment he fails to be a man of realization. This unravels the hollow principles in him. In other words he represents a moral order in which a "dead religion is taught" by a "ghost":

BASHO (Off). Now I come to the worst of all-I, Basho,
saw the child, I saw it in its rags by the river, already

lying in its own filth. I looked at it and went on. O
god forgive me!

-If I had looked in its eyes I would have seen the
devil, and I would have put it in the water and held
it under with these poets hands...(The CROWD
groans)...I am a poet and I would have known...(56)

Basho takes up the act of killing the baby as his own
responsibility. Bond explains this attitude of Basho in his
preface to Lear:

People with unjust social privileges have an obvious
emotional interest in social morality. It allows them to
maintain their privileges and justifies them in taking
steps to do so. It reflects their fear of an opposition
that would often take away everything they have,
even their lives. This is one way in which social
morality becomes angry and aggressive. (5)

This explains the attitude of Basho towards Shogo.
Shogo has always been a threat for him. In the beginning

Shogo comes in the form of an impediment in Basho's journey for enlightenment. Later, when Shogo becomes the ruler Basho feels that Shogo doesn't give importance for symbols that are essential to protect the lives of people like Basho and the tyrannical rule of Shogo would create problems for priests like Basho. Finally Basho is crucifying Shogo and he brings an end to the opposition. To summarize his deeds reflect the selfish, self-centred mentality of people who are the representatives of a moralized society.

Emotional Sterility:

Emotional sterility refers to the aridness of emotions especially positive tender emotions like love, empathy, and sympathy. A person born into an aggressive surrounding lacks the above-mentioned positive emotions and negative emotions like anger and fear dominate him. This is because anger and fear are rooted in feelings of insecurity and

irritation. This aspect is highlighted in the behaviour of Shogo, the abandoned baby who grew up into a tyrant.

Irving Wardle in "A Discussion with Edward Bond" quotes Bond's feeling towards the abandoned child at the river edge:

I mean, in fact, the child [found by the historic Basho] was actually left there, probably fell into the river and drowned. So this is a play about a nonexistent child. [...] Human beings are produced into, are told that their environment is their enemy. They must fight it all the while. So, of course, human beings become vicious, wild, dangerous, and all the rest of it. In fact, you could say, Basho didn't save the child so the child grew up dead. (10-11)

Shogo being a victim of the brutal acts of the society has designed a world full of aggression. He can be compared to the hooligans who kill the baby in Saved, since he is morally dead. He perpetuates a world, which is more demonic than

he survived. Anger is the emotion that predominates him. The society makes men evil. The evils are imposed on men by the society itself, in which they exist. Shogo's evil nature according to Bond is because of his false belief that life is the real cause of suffering of people. That is what life has taught him. The bitter experiences of his childhood have inflicted deep wounds in him and he believes that by creating an impeccable society he can save the people from being affected by such acrimonious encounters. In his attempt to create an impeccable society he commits heinous crime. But for each and every crime he has got an excuse -- an excuse of building a faultless society. In other words he inflicts upon his subjects the same cruelty to which he was subjected but in a refined form that is in the form of government. Shogo provides people with the best "schools, churches, food, law and hospitals" (28), but at the same time he puts them in prison to prevent suffering and chaos. He believes that there should be a "policeman for every two streets" (29), a sort of restriction imposed upon the humanity.

According to Shogo, giving punishment, would wipe off all the disorders in the society. For him a person is a hero if he dies to protect the rule of law. By imposing certain restrictions on his people he believes that he is helping them to come out of a "tiger's mouth" (29). His bitter experiences in life fail to make him realize that severe restriction in due course of time would result in violence. Instead as the head of the city he suppresses the feelings and actions of his people. Even Shogo suppresses his feelings and is in a war with him. He does not respect humanity at all. In the words of Kiro the soldiers of Shogo "bring some here every day and throw them in the river. They put them in the sacks and hold them under with their poles" (11). In short a tortured child in future can create only a society filled with aggression. The result of the deprivation of emotional and social needs is the clear relationship between the victim and the aggressor. Shogo, the aggressor is indirectly a victim of his situation. This aggression takes the extended form of fear and paves way to more violence in the society. This violence

takes the form of rebellion and slaughter of children and men.

Being the victim of the actions of a heartless society Shogo has lost all his tender emotions. The experience of pleasant emotions like joy, humour and affection helps to develop a feeling of being loved and accepted, and friendly attitude towards people. Since Shogo did not experience any of the so-called pleasant emotions in his life he becomes a tyrant by nature.

Shogo has no feelings for the babies or men. After a long struggle in a ruthless society he has set up his life so did not want to have any impediment on his path to success. That is the reason he feels insecure in the presence of the baby Emperor. So he gives the baby of the deposed Emperor to Basho for its preservation and survival but with an instruction that the baby ought to be murdered emotionally:



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SHOGO. Two years ago when I killed the old Emperor, his wife was pregnant. Luckily she died in childbirth. This was the son. I kept him in the palace, but now he's beginning to notice things and I can't keep him here any more. It's too risky. People mustn't know there is someone else who could claim my city. That would start trouble. Take him away and bring him up with some other children-you can get them from the slums, orphans best-and let him think he's an orphan and his parents were peasants. You must never tell him he's an Emperor's son. (24)

After the Commodore defeats Shogo and captures the city, Shogo comes back in a state of aggression to recapture the power. He carries out mass infanticide, putting the garb of an evil monster. He realizes that the baby, whom he has given to Basho, has been the root cause of his fall. In the wild run for power he fails to understand that each child has

got an identity. He refuses to accept the identity of the children since he himself is a victim of the socially moralized society. Having failed to identify the Emperor's son, who is an impediment for his future, he decides to murder all the children. Thus the innocent infants become the victims of the treacherous web woven by the society, so as to trap them. Shogo has no concern for the babies, blinded with anger and out of fear of becoming powerless, commits the human slaughter:

SHOGO (to a boy). Who was your mummy and daddy? (to another BOY) Were you brought up in a palace? Do you remember soldiers and lot of toys? (to another BOY) Have you seen me before? You remember me, don't you? Don't you? (He shakes another BOY) Answer when you're told! Which one of you's the Emperor's son? Please! D'you want to make me do something terrible? (Shouts) (50-51)

The mass infanticide performed by Shogo echoes the repetition of human history -- he is the scapegoat of the deeds of a cruel society. So he adopts the same technique for his own survival.

The infant the most powerless and insecure creature on earth when born into this world should equip himself for a war against the alien enemy -- the society itself. Shogo, the once abandoned infant grows by waging a war against society. His actions are the outcome of the weight of aggression laid upon him by the society that can also be called fear. He is a victim of a society that forces him to become violently aggressive in order to survive. The fear when takes a more extended form its outcome is violence. Instead of acting to counter the violence and repression of society Shogo contributes to more violence because of the weight of aggression laid upon him by the society. He decides to kill the Emperor's son who is the greatest impediment in his life. At this point Shogo becomes the

modern Herod. Herod, the king of Judea was troubled when he heard from the wise men about the birth of Jesus Christ. Knowing that his reign was coming to an end, he sent the wise men to search diligently for the child. But the wise men did not return. Herod realizing that he was mocked by the wise men decided to slay all the infants in Bethlehem from two years old and under in a fit of rage. One of the murdered children is Herod's own son and that brings the end of a heritage. Likewise Shogo in his wild run for power, which is indirectly a mean for his existence in a moralized society, commits mass infanticide without considering the identity of the children. The massacre of the innocents makes him a modern Herod who is in a war with the posterity. The implication of a society having the modern Herod is that the society will end in self-destruction. A society devoid of humane and moral responsibility for the future existence of children will only disintegrate.

Enforced Order:

Enforced order is one of the reasons for aggression. Enforced order facilitates the stringent observance of the imposed law and order, which give rise to socially moralized people and institutions. In a moralized society people look for symbols to protect themselves as in the case with Basho. According to Bond it is like getting scared of darkness and shutting the eyes, thinking that darkness will go away, but really it does not. The people living in a socially moralized society are forced to believe that the unjust world is good. According to Bond the socially moralized people express contempt for liberty externally but in their inner self they crave for liberty and the suppression of it comes out in the form of violence. Such societal restrictions cause rebellion. In his preface to Lear he said:

The aggressive response of such people has been smothered by social morality, but this only increases its tension. So they try to relieve it in extrovert ways. Often they become missionaries and campaigners.

[...]. Their social morality denies their need for justice, but that need is so basic it can only be struggled against by dying or going mad; otherwise it must be struggled against obsessively. [...]. Sometimes their aggression is hidden under strenuous gleefulness. (9)

The city designed by the Commodore and Georgina corresponds to a socially moralized institution. They have imposed a socially moralized society through their law and order. The godless city of Shogo is replaced by a rule of more violence but masquerading as “the love of Jesus” (39). According to Georgina “Shogo ruled by atrocity” (42). But at the same time the Commodore and herself rule it with morality imposed on people, which is more evil, but it has got the garb of religion:

GEORGINA. I persuade people-in their hearts-that they are sin, and that they have evil thoughts, and that they're greedy and violent and destructive, and more than anything else-that their bodies must be

hidden, and that sex is nasty and corrupting and must be secret. When they believe all that they do what they're told. They don't judge you-they feel guilty themselves and accept that you have the right to judge them. That's how I run the city: the missions and churches and bishops and magistrates and politicians and papers will tell people they are sin and must be kept in order. If sin didn't exist it would be necessary to invent it. I learned all this from my Scottish nanny. (42)

Georgina, the Salvation Army Sister, has moulded a state full of aggression that is a stone's throw away from the British Welfare State. For her social morality is essential for the existence of man. Such a condition only paves way for more rebellion. Basho is made in charge of education for a whole generation of children. He also aims at a socially moralized society that restricts people through various institutions like religion, morality and other social

organizations. So it is obvious that Basho will groom the children in such a manner that they will grow up virtually dead.

The members of the society built on social morality turns out to be intolerant, and destructive. They are in a state of aggression, since social morality does not allow people to be true to themselves. The people become the victims of a socially moralized society, deceive themselves and end in self-destruction. Bond explains this in his preface to Lear:

Their morality is angry because they are in conflict with themselves. Not merely divide, but fighting their own repressed need for justice with all the fear and hysteria of their original panic. Because this isn't something that is done once, in childhood or later; to go on living these people must murder them everyday [...]. Socially moralized people must act contemptuously and angrily to all liberalism,

contentment, and sexual freedom, because these are the things they are fighting in themselves. (7)

The state of poverty seen throughout in the play, the selfishness in Basho, the emotional sterility in Shogo, the tortured baby of the riverside who grew up emotionally dead, the Commodore's city where in the rules are enforced, all contribute towards aggression in the society which they live. It is clear that poverty, self-centredness, emotional sterility, and enforced order denote the aggression prevailing in the society. Even though Bond has chosen a far off locale viz. Japan about the seventeenth, eighteenth, or nineteenth century for the play it should be noted that the society he has portrayed has got all the characteristics of a socially moralized society. The members of the society finds child as an easy platform to give vent to their tumult. When the agitation is at its saturation point the children are made the victims since they belong to the weakest section of the society.

Here it is also observed that the children become vulnerable to the unnatural social conditions and when they grow up in such an atmosphere they tend to act in an ugly and violent manner. A tortured child will build a society with full of atrocities. The feeling of being suppressed will make them strike back at the society like a whirlwind. This creates more aggression in the society leading to more massacres of the innocents for instance the deeds of Shogo.

The spectators are made to realize the various aspects of the fear in the members of a socially moralized society through the behaviour of the characters. The method, the members adopt to give vent to their feelings is by torturing the children. When the children who are the symbols of hope and future are victimized, the society cannot exist. Here the mass infanticide and the attempted infanticide act as a metaphor of the fear of such a society, which in turn makes it futureless.

Infanticide in a Bundle:

Bond in his early plays made the spectators conscious of the problems existing in the society. But in his later plays he emerges as a dramatist who provides answers for the problems. The Bundle, which belongs to the later plays of Bond, was performed in 1978 at the Royal Shakespeare Company's Warehouse theatre. Through the play Bond provides an alternative to the futureless society. In other words he gives options or devises methods of reducing aggression in society.

The Bundle or New Narrow Road to the Deep North takes the spectators back to the Narrow Road to the Deep North. The incidents are similar to Matsuo Basho's "The Records of Weather - Exposed Skeleton." The locale is shifted to Asia in the twentieth century. This was done to "abstract certain social forces and show their effect in a direct and simple way" (Hay & Roberts 268). Basho on his way to enlightenment stumbles across a baby in a bundle

who is left to die near the riverside by his poor parents. Once again Bond brings home in, the fact that children turn out to be the victims of a society in which the natural human feelings are hardened and brutalized by economic necessity. Here the parents are coerced to commit an attempted infanticide due to their economic deprivation. They unburden the weight of aggression by behaving in a violent manner towards the child, in such a way as to leave him all alone to the favour of the society and climatic conditions.

Since The Bundle happens to be an answer play of Bond he lays more stress on how the characters find an alternative for the aggressive society in which they live. Revolutions and guerilla warfare steal most of the space in the plot. Here infanticide occurs as a minor slice since the focus is on how to build a new world free of aggression. In Saved and Narrow Road to the Deep North Bond's aim is to make the people conscious of the repercussions of living in a socially moralized society, but in The Bundle, it is to make

the people aware of their strength for the nurturing of a free society.

Though there is a parade of characters in Bundle, only Basho, Wang, ferryman, and the woman who abandons her child, are directly or indirectly involved in the infanticide episode. Here instead of highlighting the different factors, which contribute to aggression, it would be easily comprehensible if character analysis is done on two broad basis viz. (a) *The representative of socialized morality* (b) *The victims of socialized morality*.

(a) The Representative of Socialized Morality:

Basho represents the socialized morality. Basho on seeing the child deviates himself from any responsible task of saving the child, even, when the ferry man requests him to take it so that it "would grow wise and good" (2). On the other hand he goes on defining the child in his own terms. According to him the child was put near the riverside so as

to “tempt him at the start of his journey and moreover it may end at the river” (2). Basho’s inhuman attitude comes from his obsession with his personal quest for enlightenment. He is desperate to attain enlightenment since it transports him to the higher ladder of the social order. To survive in a moralized society acquiring a higher position becomes essential for man, so that he may be less tortured and affected. In other words Basho becomes an instrument tuned according to the needs of the society. His attitude reflects the dead weight of passive compliance with the existing order. This makes him devoid of any natural human feeling. Eventually the inhumane attitude of Basho leads to the birth of a child who grows up dead emotionally and culturally. If in Narrow Road to the Deep North the emotionally dead child happens to be Shogo, here it is Wang, who is an outlaw, leader of a guerilla group and finally a revolutionary.

Basho gets a second chance to save a baby. He seems to bother about the baby only because of his selfish motive. That is, he feels it is an opportunity to try to persuade Wang to stay on in his service. Basho tells Wang that the child is a sign from Heaven for Wang to attain enlightenment. Basho wanted Wang to be his servant for a longer period of time and for this he sees the child as a cause:

BASHO. How strange. For a moment I see into heaven. Once before a child by the river. I left it to seek enlightenment. Now this child. What should we seek this time? Always enlightenment. Heaven has done this. You take the child. Live with it in my house. Then you will find the way. (25)

At the same time he refuses to save the child when Wang asks him to do so. According to Basho "Heaven" has chosen him to show "how to save Wang" (25) and not the child. This attitude of Basho points out to the fact that the children are given the least care, attention and importance in a socially moralized society. They never fulfil their biological

expectations and are murdered either emotionally or physically.

Being a representative of the social morality, Basho adheres to the institution of morality and order that are destructive by nature. Such representatives create aggression in the society. They themselves are perplexed and are in confusion. They assert their power on others. When the lower class people are being suppressed and crushed by such representatives of the social morality the only way for the former is to show their vengeance by destroying the very weakest member of the society. The grim fact is that it happens to be the child.

In other words the representatives of the socially moral institutions have a major share in mounting up the aggression in the society. The representatives of the socially moral institutions are in a conflict with themselves. They are not true to themselves. This makes them implement illogical

and unreasonable law and order, which in turn affects the lower group.

Victims of Social Morality:

The ferryman, Wang and the woman represent the victims of a socialized morality. They belong to the low-privileged group and hence the pressure of the circumstance is high in them. Wang describes the nature of the society in which they exist:

WANG. The landowner still controls. When he needs soldiers he sends-and they come. So people fear him. If we're kind to the women-he must be crueller to the people. So they say: 'She deserves to be punished.' They act out of fear. That is their morality. The only morality they can have. Learn it: the government makes not only laws, but a morality a way of life, what people are in their very nature. (54)

The ferryman has an inner instinct to save the baby at the river edge. But the circumstances are so uncondusive that showing kindness becomes an action that is out of question. The burden imposed on the ferryman by the society is revealed in his words:

FERRYMAN. I won't pick you up. Better not. I'll tell my passengers: a little boy. A mouth to feed now, two-hands to work later. Sow in spring, eat in winter. (He goes back to the boat.) Whoever gets you's in luck. [...] We have no children. Heaven was kind. It knew we couldn't feed them. When you welcome us to heaven you'll understand why I left you. You'll be young and happy forever, we'll be old and soiled. (3-4)

This substantiates that human beings are kind and innocent by nature but the environment makes them do the unthinkable and undesirable actions. The difficulty faced by the ferryman to do a small act of kindness is indirectly the difficulty of the members of an unjust society in general. The

societal pressures never allow the members to indulge in any act of mercy. As a result the members often undergo agonizing struggle as seen in the ferryman.

The fate brings the ferryman and the baby in the bundle together and the latter grows up as a victim of the circumstances. Wang, the baby in the bundle is brought up in a society filled with poverty, starvation and distress. Being the members of the lower working class society they are subjected to the mercy of the landowner in times of flood. Tension prevails in the society to which Wang belongs:

OLD WOMAN (aside to FERRY MAN). Did

you get the rice?

FERRY MAN (shakes his head). I have to steal it from

our bundle in the night. Wang was awake.

OLD WOMAN. You promised.

OLD MAN. The water's been on the edge of

Kan's grave six days. Just by the little hole. Like a cat waiting to pounce.

OLD WOMAN. We'll starve.

FERRYMAN. We're all hungry.

OLD WOMAN. Our rice won't last two days. (11)

Intense poverty forces Wang to sell himself as a slave to the landowner. The ferryman, who saves him when he is a baby in spite of the poor living condition, is not in a condition to save Wang for the second time since it is the question of the existence of his wife and himself. When Wang offers himself as a slave for the safety of the ferryman and his wife, the couple had to retire themselves to the existing social conditions. The weight of the situation seems to be so heavy on the human beings that they are to be the witnesses and victims of a psychologically, socially, culturally and mentally disturbed society:

WANG. (stands stiffly, rooted to the spot. Yells)

Buy me! Buy me! Buy me!

FERRYMAN. We're going to be saved! Saved!

WIFE. Our son. He saves us.

FERRYMAN. Our son.

WANG. (as before, yelling desperately). Buy me! Buy
me! Buy me! (21)

Wang selling himself as a slave to the landowner has a symbolic level also. In a socially moralized institution the lower class becomes the sufferers and they make themselves slaves to the existing morality. They are made to conform to all the imposed law and order that force them to lead a life for which they are not designed biologically. This creates disgust in them and makes them violent.

Later when Wang and Basho come across another baby abandoned in a bundle near the river, the attitude of Wang in the beginning parallels to that of the ferryman's approach towards the abandoned baby. At the same time there is fear in Wang thinking the claim the baby would be

making on his feelings. Being already a victim of the existing morality he finds the child as a burden. "He demonstrates the danger of charity in response to mass starvation" (Coult 57). Moreover after a long tenure of slavery he is given freedom and it is at this juncture he finds the baby. When he is about to step into the world of freedom he finds that the baby is a real burden:

WANG. Nine years - finished! I can go! Tonight!
Through the door. Free. (He stares at the child) What
is trouble? - you don't know! Nothing changes here.
I get up-I do the same things and pretend they're
different. You don't even have to walk. You've been
lying there for hundreds of years. I trip over you
every time I come out of the door! (28)

This reveals the truth that the babies are constantly subjected to violence by an agitated society. Wang is also fully aware that he cannot foster the baby in a society filled with sorrow and aggression:

WANG. Why should I pick you up? Why do I hold you? You're as big as a mountain. My back's broken. [...]. How many babies are left to die by the river? How many? For how many centuries? [...]. All men are torn from their mother's arms: that is the law of men! Is this all? - one little gush of sweetness and I pick up a child? Who picks up the rest? How can I hold my arms wide enough to hold them all? [...]. Towns fall in! Whole generations! [...]. There! You little killer! (28-29)

The attitude of Wang clearly indicates the tension he experiences in a moralized society. His aggressive tone indicates the weight of aggression laid upon him by the society.

The painful existence of the lower class order is evident when Wang tells Kaka the life they are leading due to the landowner and his servants:

WANG. Every year this servants raid the land. Digs up the dead to steal the coins from their mouths. Eats the fields. Strips trees. Takes men's lives. Then it's the day of judgement everyday! - even when it goes back to sleep in its lair its breath stands in the fields like a white mist. What does it take: hope. What does it give: mud, to bury all things. And the people stand in their ruined fields like ghosts. They might as well be buried in them. (38)

Wang's bitter experiences have proved that isolated gestures of sympathy are useless and such individual actions cannot change the already designed treacherous society. So he opts for a violent action culminating out of fear. He hurls the child far out into the river ending up in its death since he has "not yet earned the right to be kind" (54).

Wang, the abandoned baby brought up by the ferryman is emotionally deprived of his needs. He is forced into a world of insecurity, hatred, poverty and various other traumas. These account for his aggression and his heinous act towards the child in the bundle.

The woman becomes another victim of social morality when she explains the reason for her act of abandoning the child. "The baby was torn from her and "it was meant to die" (26-27). Her circumstances force her to be violent since she herself is a silent victim of the diabolical social conditions. She explains her helpless condition, which has forced her to commit such an atrocity:

WOMAN (angrily). What can I do? Our other
Children - it steals their food. Their stomachs are
swollen. Have you heard them cry? (She points to
the child.) This was like a disease in our house let
me go! (27)

She is the passive sufferer of the wretched situation. She is not evil by nature but the burden of the conditions forces her to be evil. Even at the time of abandonment she yearns for the well being of her child. That is why she persuades Wang to take the responsibility of the child:

WOMAN. And look at your coat! [...] I have nothing-
I must even give the child away. You'll find him a corner in the house. You have a good face. You come from a good family. (She becomes almost happy.) My child will have a good life. Better than we could have given it. (27)

The victims of the social morality viz. Wang, the ferryman and the woman underscore the truth that they become evil only due to the prevailing social and political circumstances imposed by the representatives of social morality.

It should also be noted that the representatives of the social morality are also sufferers in one respect that is, they are not true to themselves in a socially moralized institution. They adjust with the existing system with a passive conformity and finally become victims of moral diseases.

The socially moralized society creates unrest and the unrest is passed on to the different levels of the social strata. The unrest becomes evident towards the lower levels of the system. The members of the lower level unleash their fear and anger on its lowest level members, viz. the children. The violent action when directed toward the infant who is a symbol of hope, grace and promise results in the closing down of the doors of future, since future is a term attributed to the infants, eventually resulting in a futureless society.

Conclusion:

The heinous acts committed against children in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle reveal the

existence of a society, which lacks culture. When a society lacks culture it lacks reason. So such horrendous actions are the products of an unreasonable mind. In other words there is a destructive relationship between human beings and the material culture that engulfs them, which results in the corruption of man's natural innocence. The social structure does not allow the characters to live rationally as in the case of Pam, the thugs, Shogo and Wang. As a result the unimaginable happens and the children become the hapless victims.

Through the symbol of the baby Bond creates scenes to make the people aware of the demonic nature of the so-called moralized society. In such a society man has lost his capacity to share feelings and natural compassion. Men just live like living ghosts, or in other words, as dehumanized scapegoats. He is frustrated and his emotions are ill fed. In such a situation of injustice there is a threat to human dignity and as a result violence occurs. Characters like Pam,

Fred, the hooligans, Shogo, and Wang find themselves in a bitter conflict with the society and commit violent acts out of their ignorance. The less powerful group becomes the victims of the violence performed by the members of the socially moralized group. Finally, the child who is the weakest member in the socially moralized setup becomes the worst affected by the atrocities.

The baby who symbolizes man's strength, hope and future is rejected as seen in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle. Its needs are ignored. The baby does not fulfil any of its biological expectations. The death of the baby in Saved takes place long before scene six. Its own family members have already murdered it emotionally. When the mother, Pam, feels that she is being stuck with a kid the death of the baby commences. The same parallels are witnessed in Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle. Shogo, the deposed Emperor's baby son, and Wang have already died emotionally due to the irrational

behaviour of mankind. This leads to more terror. The babies are killed as offerings to jealousy, boredom, ambition and other selfish motives. In other words man is waging a war against posterity, and laying the foundation stones for his own futurelessness. Self-destruction is the curse that is doomed on a society that declares war upon the symbol of life's futurity.

Bond gives a shock therapy to his audience to enable them to view the society objectively and rationally. Further they can bring out changes in the existing system. To conclude with the words of Wang, "We live in a time of great change. It is easy to find monsters-and as easy to find heroes. To judge rightly what is good - to choose between good and evil - that is all that is to be human" (78).

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**INFANTICIDE AS THE METAPHOR OF THE FEAR
OF A FUTURELESS SOCIETY - A STUDY OF THE
SELECTED PLAYS OF EDWARD BOND**

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**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in English Literature to the University of Calicut**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

2007

Chapter III

Milk of Human Kindness Churned to Aspirins of Torture

Then were they brought unto him little children that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 19: 13-14)

Childhood and children have always been recurring images in most of the literary works. The treatment of the theme by Edward Bond appears to be entirely different when compared to earlier writers like Sophocles, William Shakespeare and Bertolt Brecht. Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht have designed their widely read plays viz. Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale, and The Caucasian Chalk Circle by telling the tales of infants, their sufferings and the final

redemption for a new order of blissful living. They have dealt with the theme of abandonment and child torture in their plays.

In the plays of Bond viz. Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle it is very difficult to find characters with a humane touch. All the characters seem to be instruments of torture for the innocent babies. On the other hand the common thread that weaves Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale and The Caucasian Chalk Circle is the presence of characters filled with humanity. Whenever the child is at the stage of suffering there are some characters to help the child. In other words there is some milk of human kindness in these plays. At the same time Bond introduces characters who give high dosages of aspirins to the babies to make them silent. Bond portrays only characters that are in a race to torture babies whereas the other three mentioned dramatists portray compassionate characters also while dealing with child torture. The approach of Bond appears to

be entirely different from that of the approach of the other mentioned dramatists.

This chapter is a detailed comparative study of the theme of child torture in the selected plays of Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht with that of the selected plays of Bond. The plays selected for study are Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, The Winter's Tale by Shakespeare and The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Brecht.

An elaborate comparative study of the treatment of child abandonment and attempted infanticide in the selected plays of Bond and Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht is carried out at three different dimensions viz. (i) *The Woman Characters* (ii) *Enlightened Characters, Fathers and Youth versus Shepherds and Foster Fathers* and (iii) *Remorseless Characters*.

The Woman Characters:

Wang the character in The Bundle says, "Women know how to care for a child" (26). At the same time it is interesting to note that no woman character in the plays of Bond cares to look after the children.

Pam in Saved when compared to Jocasta the most ill-starred lady in literature who is forced to abandon her baby son Oedipus due to the Oracle of Apollo, one finds that there is a wide range of differences in the behavioural approach of the two mothers. Even though the baby of Jocasta is born to be doomed the mother does not hate the baby completely whereas Pam who is blessed with a baby from her lover Fred finds the existence of the baby itself as a boredom. For her the baby is a "bloody bastard" (70) and is the cause of all her misery. When the legs of baby Oedipus are pinned so as to escape from the ill fate Pam gives her baby aspirins so that it would not wake up till next morning. Pam does this cruelty for her own convenience. Bond through such

inhuman actions of his characters presents the aggression inherent in them. Pam is cruel towards the baby for no reason and this makes the spectators ask themselves the reason for it. In other words Bond employs the theme of child-torture to present a common problem whereas Sophocles employs the same theme to narrate a legend.

It is evident that at one point Jocasta repents the death of the baby:

JOCASTA. For Loxias said a child of mine should kill
him.

It was not to be; poor child, it was he that died.

A fig for divination! After this

I would not cross the road for any of it. (49)

Pam never laments the death of the baby. The reason being the strained relationship she has with her parents, Len and Fred never gives her an environment to feel the loss of

the baby. In her state of worry and panic she forgets the baby and finds its death as a relief. When the oracle serves to be the main factor for the baby being tortured in Oedipus Rex the parents of the baby in Saved attribute to the maximum torture inflicted on the baby. Jocasta fears the sin of infanticide but for Pam the infanticide is a natural thing. Bond thus takes the spectators to an arid materialistic world devoid of values, passion and life. Jocasta is an epitome of a mother who is so unfortunate to give away her baby for reasons uncontrollable to human beings .Pam becomes a symbol of individuals who are the victims of man- made laws and legislations.

The peasant and his wife in Narrow Road To The Deep North take the initiative to leave the baby on the river side. They are fully aware that the baby will die. The wife herself tells Basho "no one will take him. He'll die, or crawl in the river and drown" (7). The fact that they are sending the baby to the hands of death never restrains them to keep away

from such a cruel act. They have their own reason -- that is poverty. The inner conscience of the wife tells her that she is doing wrong by leaving the baby on the river edge. She asks her husband, "Will God forgive me" (7)? Even though her conscience says she is wrong the circumstances force her to sin. In other words when Laius and Jocasta try to prevent themselves directly from committing the sin of infanticide and child torture which fate has forced them to do, the peasant and his wife commit the sin of child abandonment. They thus become submissive victims of the circumstances.

The woman in The Bundle who takes the responsibility of abandoning her own baby never cares to wait and see what happens to the baby after the abandonment. She knows she is committing a crime but her situation demands to do so. When she is caught by Wang she pretends that she has taken the wrong way. She parts with her responsibility and tells Wang that it is his responsibility to look after the baby since he has found it:

WANG. Look, a child left by the river. Often they
have no limbs or they're blind. This is a fine child.

WOMAN. (looks at the child from where she stands).
Is it?

I must get to the ferry.

WANG. Take it.

WOMAN. No, no.

WANG. It was left to die. Women know how to care
for a child-

WOMAN. My husband is waiting

WANG. It will die!

WOMAN. I must find the ferry- (26)

When Wang goes on persisting her she gives her final statement that "the baby was meant to die" (27). The mother herself takes the initiative of committing the sin of infanticide. Here the milk of passion and affection for the baby expected from a mother is changed to venomous acts of torture. The mother herself says boldly that she cannot remember the number of children she has abandoned.

WANG. This isn't the first child you've left.

WOMAN. No.

WANG. How many?

WOMAN. What's the use?

WANG. When did it start?

WOMAN. I don't think of them.

WANG. How long ago?

WOMAN. I don't know (27)

It is evident that abandoning the child has become a habit for the mother. When compared to Jocasta, the mother in The Bundle seems to be a monster. In Oedipus Rex one finds that Jocasta still remembers the ill-fate of her kid but the mother in The Bundle never bothers to remember the kids she had nor what would have happened to them after abandonment.

Sophocles has portrayed in a very dexterous manner the character of Jocasta. She becomes a cursed mother who had to give up her kid to save her husband and the family

from being ruined. She has all the feminine aspects attributed to a mother. Through Pam, Mary, the peasant's wife and the woman Bond wonderfully portrays the human minds of the twentieth century capitalist society. He takes us to a dangerous world where women lose all their natural goodness. Love and care have become alien words in such a society. Circumstances and the mode of living make the characters harsh. They do not have an elegant life. They themselves are victims of circumstances like Pam and Mary who are the main earning members of the family, the peasant's wife and the woman who lead a life in utter poverty. The harsh materialistic situations make them fearless in doing anything to achieve the end. There is no fear of sin. Everybody tries the level best for his or her own existence. The struggle for existence has reached such a saturation point that the parents are ever ready to destroy their own babies who are defenseless in the capitalist society filled with aggression. It is evident that the prevailing

situation gives the garb of monsters to the Bondian woman characters.

No woman character in the selected plays of Bond has the vigour of Paulina in The Winter's Tale with respect to humanity. This is a deliberate attempt which Bond makes so as to highlight the message that people in a socially moralized society lose their power of expression. Paulina is a voice against the injustice done to the baby. She is a lady of high rank in the court. At the same time she is a lady with warm heart and a vigorous brain. She is fearless in asserting the truth even before the king. In spite of the fury and froth of Leontes she has the courage to lash with her tongue the injustice done by Leontes towards the queen and the baby. No Bondian character reacts against the brutal treatment given to the children. This indirectly reveals that all the characters have lost their good human nature. Life in a tensed environment has taught them to forget all the natural kindness. The characters are all weird toys of the situations.

The peculiar situations force them to move on. The urge to react against the evil is no more in them. In other words they become resigned human beings accepting the situation as it is. The society in the plays of Bond makes man completely numb. So there is no reaction or response from the characters. There are no challenges nor are the characters ready to take challenges in life. The society which governs them has taken away their power to face challenges and to react accordingly.

There is a moral grandeur in Paulina. The very harshness of the virtue of Paulina highlights the fact that children should be protected. According to Paulina the baby is a gift of God. She believes that the baby is a renewing spirit for the king and the queen:

PAULINA. I pray you, do not push me; I'll be gone

Look to your babe, my lord: tis yours: Jove send her

A better guiding spirit! What needs these hands?

(2.3.124-29)

It is the duty of the adults to raise voice against the injustice done to children. The baby in The Winter's Tale only becomes an indirect victim of her father's suspicion. That leads to her sufferings. But there are characters who react against the atrocities done to the children. Paulina argues for the baby and her arguments make others perceive the importance of pity, mercy and kindness towards the infants. She becomes one of the noble characters in the play due to her selfless courageous act. Her nobility escalates when she takes up the defence of the innocent new born baby.

Pam and Mary only argue for their own cause which results only in a row. There is no reaction from the side of Pam and Mary when they realize that the baby is stoned to death. Pam even befriends Fred and the thugs, the main persons behind the stoning of her own baby. This reflects that the death of the baby is not a very important issue for her nor is she bothered about the true nature of her lover and friends. She lives in a world of total materialistic concerns.

Whenever she yearns for the presence of Fred she goes to him without thinking much about his real nature. As a mother she never raises her voice against the injustice done to her baby. Instead she laments on what course the law will take against Fred for his involvement in the killing of the baby. She never upbraids Fred or his friends. Such a reaction from a woman who is the real mother of the baby arises shock in the spectators.

The elderly lady Mary, being the grandmother of the baby does not take the responsibility of making Fred understand his unworthy actions. When Paulina takes the responsibility of making the king understand his mistakes Mary deviates from her responsibility. Bond through the portrayal of such a character highlights the careless and meaningless existence which prevails in a society with capitalist culture. Through the vigorous Paulina Shakespeare explains the need for raising one's voice against injustice but

Bond through his passive characters gives the alarm bell to respond against the injustices in this world.

Grusha, the servant-girl in The Caucasian Chalk Circle embodies human kindness. The Governor's wife Natella Abashvili forgets to take the baby Michael with her at the time of rebellion. When she sees that the east gate is engulfed by the fire she flees from the place in horror. Meanwhile the Governor is beheaded. The fat prince who leads the coup offers a reward for the life of the baby. He also declares that the person found helping the baby cannot expect any mercy. In spite of all these adverse circumstances the baby is rescued. An ordinary servant-girl has the generosity to take the baby with her. Grusha is unaware of the fate which is in store for her. She is fully aware that the baby is a risking factor for her life also. Still she determines to move on with the Governor's baby.

The quality of being humane is what the woman characters in the plays of Bond mainly lack. They are ignorant of the concept of ignoring their personal interests because they are already in a world of danger. Pam, Mary and the peasant's wife are all biological mothers but they lack the spontaneity and the emotional attachment of Grusha the foster mother. When Grusha claims with pride that she has reared her adopted baby in such a way that he can become a useful member of the society, the mothers in the selected plays of Bond have to stand dumb. Pam, Mary and the peasant's wife can never claim that they have put in their efforts or sacrificed themselves for the effective growth of their babies psychologically, emotionally or physically. They only contribute to the emotional death of their babies. The spectators are made to relate the situations which compel the natural mothers do such a crime. At this juncture Bond succeeds in his mission of writing plays which is to make the people realize the prevailing war torn and violence-ridden situations in an unjust society.

The baby in The Caucasian Chalk Circle is not given an opportunity to be tortured by its new Guardian -- Grusha. Her life itself is devoted for the well being of the baby. Her fight for humanity overshadows any other powerful character in the play. When the baby becomes too heavy for her in all sense she decides to secure a safe home for the baby. She never thinks of abandoning the baby in unsafe hands. She decides to part with the baby thinking that it is in need of a secure shelter. The baby is kept in front of the house of a peasant. But when she finds that the baby is unsafe in that house she decides to take the baby along with her and is adamant to be the mother of the baby. In her effort to save the baby she even takes the extreme step of knocking the Ironshirts. She places herself in great trouble through such an action. But for her , the life of the baby is important than her own life:

GRUSHA. Nobody wants to take you

So I shall have to take you

There is no-one else but me, my dear

On this black day in a meagre year

Who will not forsake you.

Since I've carried you too long

And with sore feet

Since the milk was too dear

I grew fond of you.

(I wouldn't be without you anymore) (39)

She takes the decision that both the baby and herself will live and die together. This again glorifies the attitude of an ordinary peasant girl. The sense of belongingness is present in Grusha. She identifies the baby in trouble with her own self. The feeling of empathy increases the virtue of the maid. The song that Grusha sings to the baby reveals her unconditional love for the baby:

GRUSHA. If the gulf is deep

And the rotten bridge sways

It is not for us, son

To choose our ways.

The way that I know

Is the one for your feet
The bread that I find
Is all you will eat
Of every four morsels
You shall have three.
I would that I knew
How big they will be! (41)

Unconditional love and the strong determination power are completely lacking in the woman characters present in the plays of Bond. If there is unconditional love for the baby then nothing can be an impediment for saving the life of the baby. The characters are not to be blamed for the lack of the unconditional love. They themselves have not experienced the warmth of love in life. The relationship between Pam and Fred, Marry and Harry which is already discussed in the second chapter reveals the lack of affection and love. The peasant's wife and the woman also live in a similar society as that of Pam and Mary. Their experiences

are also not different. This accounts for their inhumane behaviour.

Brecht attributes a more humane nature to Grusha. This humane nature of Grusha makes the abandonment theme less frightening. More than the maternal love the humane response in Grusha deserves attention. To be humane means one has to ignore the personal and class interest and expose oneself to danger for the welfare of the other. This humane quality remains intact in Grusha till the end of the play. In the beginning she saves the baby only out of humanity. Towards the end she is ready to give up the baby even though she has sacrificed her life for him. But at any cost she does not want the baby to be tortured so she ignores her personal interest, joy and pleasure for keeping that baby and craves for the welfare of it.

The woman characters in the selected plays of Bond fail to rise to the occasion like Grusha. Her sweet feminine

nature, her brave mentality to face any odds and her clear mission that the baby will not be made to suffer at any cost make her different. One does not find a character equivalent to Grusha in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North, and The Bundle. Bond does not introduce such a character filled with the milk of human kindness. This is because all the characters in the selected plays of Bond live in an atmosphere of tension. The general aggression prevailing in the society is experienced by all the characters.

Bond portrays woman characters in his selected plays in such a way that they become exactly opposite to the natural graces attributed to them from time immemorial. They lack all the qualities of a woman. By reversing the quality of the woman characters and making them do certain deeds like child-torture which is never expected from them Bond brings out the aggression present in the society. Brecht does not introduce any child torture in The Caucasian Chalk Circle as such. The message he conveys is that when a

selfless person like Grusha undertakes the responsibility of the baby there is no question of the child being tortured. Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht give all the virtues to their woman characters and make them embodiments of natural poise and elegance.

Enlightened Characters, Fathers and Youth versus Shepherds and Foster Fathers:

The act of educated Basho in Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle is totally in contrast to the act of the shepherds in Oedipus Rex and The Winter's Tale. The educated poet Basho never lends a hand to help the baby from its misfortune. He feels the baby is a "problem" for the parents themselves and it was "born to cry" (7) as he says in Narrow Road to the Deep North. In The Bundle when the ferryman requests Basho to accept the abandoned child and make it grow "wise and good" (2) Basho tells him that the baby is thrown by the parents so that it may die. In other words the baby is destined to die. Later he orders the

ferryman who himself is very poor, to take the child. This behaviour of educated Basho is in a great contrast to the Theban shepherd who tries to save the baby at the risk of his life and entrust him in safe hands. Basho though educated and highly intelligent lacks the basic virtues in life. He lives in a world where there is no place for fundamental human values. His world is a suffocated one when compared to the ideal pastoral world of the shepherd. His education never helps him to think about the future of the child and the consequences that would prop out on leaving the baby to die. Instead he is in search for more glory and power. In the wild run for power and glory he fails to understand the importance of the baby.

The babies in Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle would have had a better fate if Basho would have saved them. They would have grown up into wise and effective individuals under the guidance of Basho. The baby in Oedipus Rex grows up to be a king even after

abandonment. This is only because of the Theban and the Corinthian shepherds. If they had been hostile the fate of the baby would have taken another course.

One expects Basho to be more merciful and kind to babies born with no curse than the shepherds being kind to a baby born to kill his own father as in Oedipus Rex. Sophocles and Shakespeare tell the stories of human kindness through the shepherds. Bond by portraying Basho unravels the shocking truth of existence in a greedy world.

Jocasta gives the baby to the servant-shepherd of the house hold. The baby is asked to be left on the mountain side so that it may crawl itself to death. The Theban shepherd though lowermost in the hierarchy and is born to execute the order wavers on receiving the baby. He knows that he is born to carry out the orders of the king and the queen. At the same time the humanity in him brims more than the virtue of obedience. The baby who is born with a

bad fate is not despised by the shepherd. Instead his humane nature argues that the baby should not be nipped at the bud. He thinks that an opportunity should be provided for the baby to live. The innocence of the baby would have certainly influenced him. His humanity is revealed when he says to Oedipus later that, "I hadn't the heart to destroy it, master!" (58). This makes him give the baby to a Corinthian shepherd who is ready to accept the baby.

The shepherd is truly at risk for not obeying the orders of the queen. For him his conscience is more important. The affection and sympathy for the baby wins over his allegiance to the king. He is **morally literate**. That makes him to entrust the baby in the care of the Corinthian shepherd. The affection for the baby is so much that the Theban shepherd instructs his friend to "rear the baby as his own" (57). This also brings out the virtues of the pastoral world and its folks.

The characters in the selected plays of Bond are never morally literate. They do not have any moral values since they live in a world of **forced morality**. Morality is forced upon them and this explains the reason for them to deviate from moral values. Morality becomes a law in a capitalist society. The members are instructed to follow moral values without understanding the value or importance of it. The education in the society is not for better realization and reformation but for grabbing more power so as to be a part of the ruling class.

The noble Antigonus in The Winter's Tale and the Judge Azdak in The Caucasian Chalk Circle make use of their knowledge to think and act rationally. Basho is a sharp contrast to them. Antigonus the Lord of Sicilia is an obedient follower of Leontes. He is never at fault to carry out any of the orders of the king. At the same time his rational thinking makes him do things in a sensible manner without disheartening the king. This nature of Antigonus reflects that

he gives importance to the voice of his inner conscience. Leontes gives the directions to Antigonus that Perdita should be abandoned without showing any mercy. Antigonus consents to execute the order. But at the same time his heart is inflated with sympathy for the baby. He even tries to make Leontes realize his mistake of taking such a disastrous step against the baby. Even though he carries out the orders of Leontes he makes it sure that the baby is abandoned in such a way that somebody who falls upon the baby may be forced to adopt her. This reveals that Antigonus really wants to help the baby. In one way he performs the role of a guardian who is worried about the future of the child:

ANTIGONUS. Apollo would, this being indeed the

issue

Of King Polixenes, it should here be laid,

Either for life or death, upon the earth

Of its right father. Blossom, speed thee well!

There lie, and there thy character; there these;

Which may, if fortune please, both breed thee,
pretty,

And still rest thine. (3.3.43-49)

The cruelty imposed on Perdita by Leontes is made less severe by Antigonus. He leaves the child properly equipped for a new life if the fate agrees. This act of Antigonus shows the love and affection he has for Perdita. At this juncture it is to be noted that the characters like Basho and Wang in the selected plays of Bond lack the virtue of Antigonus. They always fail to understand innocence. This results in grim and cruel episodes in Bondian plays. There is no character in the selected plays of Bond with the disposition of Antigonus who wails for a baby abandoned by her own father. No character in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle is given such a gruesome command to destroy the child as given to Antigonus. The characters themselves involve in child torture on their own accord, which is an outgrowth of the tension existing in the society they live. In the

plays of Bond the characters like Basho and Wang are given the opportunity to save a life, but they destroy it.

The adversities can be changed into fortunes through deeds of kindness. The miserable condition of the peasant and his wife can be changed if Basho is willing to adopt the child. The attitude of the characters reflects the attitude of the society itself. When most of the characters commit mistakes, obviously the society is at fault.

The final judgement given by the judge Azdak in The Caucasian Chalk Circle is very rational. His judgement rewards the humane quality of Grusha. Azdak is already notorious for his drinking habits and also for taking bribe. Azdak though a man of ill reputed fame has some fund of commonsense and kindness left in him. His final decision of giving the baby to Grusha and proclaiming her as the real mother is in another way a reward for the pain and sufferings which she had undergone.

The judge orders for the tug-of-war between Natella Abashvili and Grusha keeping the baby in between. One may perceive him as a cruel man. But the judge is indirectly making the court realize the real maternal feelings of Grusha through such an episode. Grusha is reluctant to tear the baby and so gives up her claim for the baby. Azdak does not hesitate to declare Grusha as the mother. He serves as the main instrument in recognizing the good nature of Grusha. The judge Azdak becomes the champion of humanity when he renders his aid to Grusha through the judgement. He appears to be King Solomon who gave a similar prediction when the baby was a bone of contention between two ladies.

Brecht rewards the good natured Grusha through Azdak. He also establishes the fact that even if some people are rough at exterior they have the wisdom and intelligence to realize the real touch of human feelings. No bribe and power can influence the truth.

In the selected plays of Bond no character is supportive to the deeds of mercy. The fact being merciful is a rare phenomenon in the selected plays of Bond. Azdak and Grusha are characters that one cannot expect in the plays of Bond. Generosity can be rewarded only if a trace of it is present. In the plays of Bond there is not even a single trace of humanity. There is only tension. Bond introduces a glum world to prove certain startling truth about the existence in the twentieth century capitalist society.

The old shepherd who finds the deserted baby in The Winter's Tale has the kindness and innocence of the pastoral world. He lives in an ideal world, so are his thoughts. He takes Perdita to his wife, who nurses the baby tenderly. He does not waver like the ferryman in The Bundle who says, "God knows what my wife will say. I'll leave you outside the door where she'll find you" (4). The old shepherd brings up Perdita as his own daughter. The fatherly love bestowed on her by the old shepherd makes her believe that she is the

daughter of the shepherd and her world is nature itself. The old shepherd could not give her the education which was befitting a princess. But her natural graces are made more refined by the ideal pastoral world. On the other hand the ferryman in The Bundle is not given a chance to demonstrate any act of mercy because his social conditions prevent him from doing so. He is not able to carry out things as per his conscience. At the core of the heart he wants to save the baby. But his economic condition makes him think for a second time and he is scared of his wife. For the shepherd it is his conscience that matters more. He is more fortunate that his deeds are as per his wishes. On the other hand Bond deals with the unfortunate characters caught in the world of aggression.

The Corinthian shepherd gives a better opportunity for the baby by presenting him to the childless Polybus. The baby gifted to Polybus has a better chance to prosper in life. This kind act of the Corinthian shepherd helps the cursed

baby to survive. Kindness and compassion rule the pastoral world. The baby seen as the symbol of innocence is perceived as a gift from Heaven. In Saved, Len and the thugs who disown the abandoned baby again form a sharp contrast to the Theban and the Corinthian shepherds. It is the duty of Len to save the baby from the cruel hands of the thugs. Instead of remaining passive and witnessing the whole affair of stoning the baby he should have extended the helping hand for the baby. When the baby is left all alone in the park it becomes the duty of the thugs to leave it in the hands of responsible persons. Instead of offering help each one of them tries their level best to give the maximum torture to the baby in their own way. When Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht provide guardian angels for the abandoned children Bond administers more Lucifers for the abandoned babies. These Lucifers point out that the life in the worldly society is a real hell. There is no future in hell and as such there is no future in this world of ours too ,which is a veritable hell.

In the beginning the ferryman in The Bundle proves to be a saviour for the abandoned baby. The baby grows in the house of the ferryman as Wang. Later it is revealed that the ferryman saw the saving of the baby as a business deal. Fourteen years later the servants of the landowner come to rescue the people in the refugee camp. They ask for the grown up Wang to work as a slave in lieu of saving the lives of the ferryman and his wife. The response of the ferryman reflects his pure business mentality:

FERRYMAN. But who'll work the ferry when I'm old? We invested so much in him. If you take him away our lives have been wasted! (18)

When it becomes inevitable that Wang should serve as a slave in order to save the lives of the Ferryman and his wife, the latter clearly reveals that Wang owes his life to them. Even the foster mother becomes selfish and loses all her tender qualities.

WIFE. (crying and holding Wang's hand) It's wrong to take a young life, but I don't want to die and leave your father without me. (19)

The society forces the ferryman and his wife to demand a return-gift for their deeds of charity and mercy. They are forcibly made to decide a rate for their good actions also. Bond directly portrays the present condition of the society where everything is viewed in terms of business and money.

The attitude of the Theban shepherd is selfless when he realizes that the baby has grown up into Oedipus and has become the king of Thebes. He never takes pride or boasts of helping the king when the latter was an infant. Nor he expects any reward from the King. He also never curses his act of saving the life of the baby who has brought the disaster to Thebes later. The Theban and the Corinthian shepherds at no moment repent that the baby Oedipus is saved. The Theban shepherd wishes that he should have died on the day when assigned the task of abandoning the

baby. On the contrary the enlightened Basho in The Narrow Road to the Deep North repents for not killing the baby he found on the riverbank. This again points out to the world of immorality and the nature of the lives led by the members of a worldly society.

The poor old shepherd in The Winter's Tale who has the heart to see an infant as "good luck" (228) takes the initiative to hand over Perdita to her real father Leontes. This again reveals the selfless nature of the shepherd. He preserves the jewels and other tokens of Peridita's high birth like a treasure. One cannot but appreciate the selfless mentality of the shepherd. He is least affected by the materialistic world which is a striking difference with the Bondian characters.

The shepherds become highly morally literate beings in Oedipus Rex and The Winter's Tale. Their actions are wrapped by kindness and dignity. They are introduced to

elucidate the natural innocence of man leading a life associated with nature. Even when kings disown their children and leave them for torture there are other selfless characters flooded with mercy and kindness that liberate the babies from the torment. Such characters put on the robe of saviours--real human saviours who try to negate the evils done by cruel souls.

The educated Basho who refuses to take the responsibility of the child and the business minded ferryman who sees the saving of the baby as a business deal become morally degenerated beings compared to the shepherds. The shepherds rejoice whole-heartedly on helping the babies in Oedipus Rex and The Winter's Tale. On the other hand the characters in the selected plays of Bond have a cold look for the infants. Parents desolate their children in name of poverty in the plays of Bond, whereas the poor shepherd in The Winter's Tale takes the responsibility of the baby voluntarily. The contrast in the attitude and behaviour of

the characters in Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale and the Bondian characters speak about the differences in the mind set up of the two types of societies portrayed. The society portrayed in Oedipus Rex and The Winter's Tale is not so self oriented as that in the plays of Bond. The society portrayed in Oedipus Rex and The Winter's Tale demands the purgation of the evils in the minds of some corrupted men through the general kindness and good actions of others. But in the plays of Bond the society makes the people more corrupted and so the evil done becomes intensified.

Oedipus who grows in the palace of Polybus experiences only love from his foster father. He is never given a chance by his foster father Polybus to believe that he is the baby gifted by a shepherd. Even when the Corinthian shepherd tells Oedipus that he is the adopted son of Polybus, the latter finds it difficult to believe. He is surprised to hear that he is given to Polybus by the shepherd. This is because Polybus loves him as "his son" (53). That is the intensity of

the love he receives from his foster parents. Once when somebody hurt Oedipus by saying that he is not the son of Polybus, the foster parents "became bitterly angry that anyone should dare to put such a story about" (47). This substantiates that Oedipus is very well taken care of in the household of Polybus. Oedipus receives all the parental care and love from the house hold of Polybus. The magnificence of the king is exalted when he gives the legacy to the adopted baby whom he received from a wandering shepherd. Polybus emerges as a very benevolent loving father than a powerful ruler in the play Oedipus Rex.

Polybus can be compared to Fred and Harry in Saved, the peasant in the Narrow Road to the Deep North and the ferryman in The Bundle. Such a comparative study helps in understanding the disposition of the characters of Bond in a better light.

Fred and Harry serve as emotionless fathers in Saved. The death of their babies never affected their lives emotionally. The baby in Saved has never received any paternal care or affection. Fred as a father tries to disown the baby when he tells Pam to "prove it" (69) that he is the father of the baby. The attachment for the baby is completely lacking in Fred even though he is the real father. When a king like Polybus has the heart to adopt a baby from a shepherd, Fred the representative of the twentieth century working class society finds the existence of the baby itself as a real impediment. He contributes in his own way for the murder of the baby.

The peasant in Narrow Road to the Deep North also emerges as a very selfish father. He loses the ability to feel genuinely because of poverty. He instructs his wife not to go back to the abandoned baby. He is very practical and does not want to think about God's wrath for the abandoning of the baby. When his wife is worried about the punishment

from God his only response is “back to work” (7). When Polybus becomes a star of good luck for the abandoned baby in Oedipus Rex the action of the peasant in The Narrow Road to the Deep North shatters the hope of a good future for his own baby.

The ferryman in The Bundle risks his own life to help Wang in his revolutionary venture only because the latter promises that the revolution would help to make the river their own. Moreover Wang could convince him that he has been lending help for a good cause. Wang also does not show much affection for his foster parents. The ferryman saves the abandoned baby biologically but could not cater to the emotional needs of the baby.

The fathers in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle accelerate the physical and emotional death of the babies. Instead of becoming the guardians of the babies they hold hands with the adversities so as to cause

more miseries for the babies. These actions denote their tensions and aggression. Instead of telling the characters are aggressive Bond portrays the problems through their violent actions.

Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht not only deal with the theme of child abandonment but also explain how morally sound people can make it less severe. They also vindicate that any good deed will not go in vain. There is no child torture as such in the selected plays of the above mentioned dramatists. They deal with child abandonment and attempted infanticide. At the same time characters like the shepherds, Antigonus and Polybus are introduced as veritable representation of kindness who try to save the children from all suffering. In other words the cruelty imposed on the baby is being corrected by human beings themselves. This glorifies the generous nature of man as well as the importance given to innocent babies in a society based on ideals and virtues.

The kind characters in the plays of Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht help the abandoned babies to grow up emotionally and biologically. The torture given to the baby is nullified when compared to the helping hands rendered to it for saving its future. The characters of Bond serve as instruments for the death of the babies who are the hopes of the future. There is no helping hand like the generous servants or kings to help the babies from their miseries. The babies are left behind so as to face the world on their own. There are no characters filled with humanity. Such a treatment of the theme explains the purpose of the plays of Bond.

The babies in Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale and The Caucasian Chalk Circle are more fortunate than the babies in the plays of Bond. The new-born baby Perdita in The Winter's Tale receives the affection of all the other characters in the play except her father. Baby Oedipus is the apple - eye of Polybus. Grusha invests her life for the welfare of baby

Michael, and the baby is safe by all means. The abandonment theme is treated in such a way that the representatives of righteousness and virtue are in an ever forwarding march to protect the children. There is some moral force left behind to save the children from the atrocities.

The babies in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North, and The Bundle are symbols of despise. This indicates that the welfare state in the plays of Bond fails to mould wholesome and worthwhile individuals.

Remorseless Characters:

Bond never makes his characters repent for their misdeed. Pam, Fred, Basho, Shogo and Wang never repent for any of their misdeeds. They just go on with their lives never reflecting on the past. Leontes suffers for his acts of cruelty, but the characters of Bond never undergo sufferings as such because already their lives from birth itself have been a burden and suffering. The world in which Bond's

characters reside is not so harmonious. There is no value for penance and repentance. What is lost is lost forever and they never dream of getting back the lost things. In other words they live in a stark world of reality filled with harsh and startling truth. There is no space to dream of a happy reunion when the life offers only frustrations.

Leontes in the beginning of the play, The Winter's Tale, turns out to be a monster responsible for the disgraceful incidents in the play. His actions issue from a sudden access of madness caused by the green-eyed monster -- jealousy. His mind is debased when he mistakes his queen Hermione's sweetness to Polixenes as a sign of illicit love. He loses all his self-control and orders for the desolation of his own baby as a punishment for the sin committed by Hermione.

Leontes is a man ruled by passion. At the fit of rage he orders for the baby to be burnt but after his anger subsides to

an extent he tells Antigonus to abandon it in a remote place very far away from his kingdom. He is not exactly an enemy of the baby. The belief that his own queen has cheated him and the baby is begotten from an adulterous deed of the queen disturbs him a lot. This feeling makes him hate the baby a lot. Shakespeare through Leontes portrays a very evil character. But even at the height of his evilness the character does not commit a brutal sin like infanticide. Of course he speaks about dashing the brain of the baby but literally he does not do it. This shows that the treatment of child torture is not as demonic as in the plays of Bond.

The characters in the plays of Bond are not basically evil minded people. They do not have any particular revenge towards the babies. The situation makes them so. So the Bondian characters become more demonic than the furious Leontes and whatever the latter speaks the former makes it a reality through the horrific deeds. One does not find a Leontes in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The

Bundle. Even when Fred kills his own baby in Saved it is not because of any specific reason as Leontes had. Leontes has got his own personal reason for his cruel act of torturing the baby. The striking factor is that when the Bondian characters kill the babies there is no specific or personal reason. This again points out to the fact that if all the members of a particular society commit a crime without any particular reason then there is some problem with the existing norms in the society. Thus Bond treats the theme of infanticide to reveal the enforced system of law and order in the society.

Shakespeare does not allow the angry Leontes to continue with his evil deeds. There is a downfall in his life when he comes to know that he has lost his Queen and the children. This brings a transformation in him. He becomes a changed man repenting for his cruel acts. He blames himself for his cruel fate. He repents for his senseless actions. One

finds a repenting father in Leontes when he remembers his lost children on seeing Florizel and Perdita:

LEONTES. I lost a couple, that 'twixt heaven and earth
Might thus have stood begetting wonder as
You, gracious couple, do. (5.1.130-32)

Shakespeare through the reunion of the lost daughter Perdita and the father Leontes asserts a common truth. The realization of one's own follies and the heart to correct them will lead only to cordial notes. The repenting Leontes after a long gap is united with his own daughter whom he thought to be dead. The feeling of Leontes is inexplicable. He himself confesses his cruelty to his daughter. One of the gentlemen in the palace explains the touching scene of reunion:

THIRD GENTLEMAN. One of the prettiest touches of all, and that which angled for mine eyes, caught the water, though not the fish-was, when, at the relation of the queen's death, with the manner how she came to't bravely confessed and lamented by

the king, how attentiveness wounded his daughter;
 till, from one sign of dolour to another, she did
 when as 'Alas',-I would fain say, bleed tears; for I
 am sure my heart wept blood. (5.2.73-79)

Bond while portraying his characters filters out all the emotional aspects from them. He also makes them champions of sin and crime. They are ignorant of the gentle side of the human nature. They do not feel any shame or disgrace for their inhuman actions. There is no remorse. They do not feel it since they witness and become victims of all cruel actions in the materialistic world. So they have justification for their own misdeeds. If the characters lament and repent then Bond would have failed in his purpose of writing plays.

Conclusion:

The treatment of infanticide and child torture is not a novel theme. The effectiveness of the theme depends on the way it is presented. Different dramatists will have to convey

their own messages through such a theme. So they design the plot accordingly on the basis of the message they want to convey.

Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht in dealing with this particular theme convey the message that the society is not being completely corrupted in general. The mishappenings are due to certain flaws in the character of certain individuals as in the case of Oedipus, Leontes and the fat prince Arsen Kazbeki. The errors committed by the individuals are made less evil by the good actions of the kind people. This proves that the entire world is not filled with bad people alone. The society never compels the individuals to commit crimes. They do it on their own accord. The wrong done never goes without punishment. The ways in which Leontes and Arsen Kazbeki were punished is an example. In other words poetic justice is brought out in the plays. The good people in the society provide a platform for the worst

to change. This accounts for the presence of Messiahs of kindness like the shepherds, and Grusha.

Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht unlike Bond never describe the death of the babies and the torture in detail. In Oedipus Rex it is only said that the baby is given to the shepherd for casting away. Leontes in The Winter's Tale though speaks about the cruel punishment to be given to the baby does no physical torture to the baby. The baby in The Caucasian Chalk Circle does not undergo any pain as the babies in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle undergo. Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht deal with the theme of child abandonment but in a less intense manner. There are no shocking images or mind chilling scenes that highlight the theme in a more intense manner.

The intensity of the theme is made less by introducing good and kind characters. The introduction of good characters reduces the miseries of the children. The children

become safe in some hands if not in their own house. The baby Oedipus, Perdita and Michael are never allowed to die by the dramatists. Some human agency takes care of them. They all grow into effective individuals.

The torture inflicted on the babies in the plays of Bond reaches the maximum. The babies die and are never given an opportunity to grow. Bond never blames a particular individual in his play for the mishappenings. All the characters are designed in such a way that everyone is hostile and does not show any concern to the injustice shown to the baby. Bond through the theme depicts the mistakes of the society in general. This is the main reason that no saviour is being appointed by the dramatist to save the baby. He depicts a society in which individual is divided against individual and also against one's own self. The potentialities and capacities of individual are not developed rationally in such a society. This leads to disaster.

The death of the babies is mentioned in detail in the selected plays of Bond. He wants the spectators to understand the reality of the situation in a more effective way. He is of the opinion that art is the direct record of the human nature, its possibilities and needs. The introduction of shocking images help in making the viewers reflect upon his present existence. Zied. Wagdi Ahmed in his study of "Edward Bond, Tom Stoppard and Shakespeare: The Anxiety of Influence" remarks :

The basic difference between Shakespeare's and Bond's version consists of Bond's concern not only for the personal tragedy of the characters, but for the tragedy of a society that revels in moralized and institutionalized patterns of aggression. Bond's urge to reinforce his antithetical statement is underscored by the one-sided-structure, the development of scenes, and the use of powerful theatrical imagery. (2309)

Bond by introducing infanticide in his plays deals with the real and exact problems of the society. He believes that the drama should deal with the real and urgent problems of man. So the infanticide theme is treated in such a way that intense suffering is demonstrated on stage for the spectators to perceive the absolute truth as Hubert Zapf observes:

The most prominent feature of Bond's plays which sharply distinguishes from Brecht is the conscious, even excessive use of violence as a kind of shock-therapy on the audience. [...]. Bond's analysis of society, the ideological content of his plays, may be rational but his way of communicating this analysis to the audience is built on emotional-shock, on unrelieved tension, on the nightmarish intensity of human suffering and aggression. (354)

Bond never treats the theme of infanticide in such a manner that it appeals to everyone. Through the infanticide theme he makes at least some people realize their mistakes whereas in Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale and The Caucasian Chalk

Circle one finds a common appeal to humanity. When one finds good characters like the shepherds and Grusha one is inspired to be good and generous to all. The incidents in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle never inspire anyone. The incidents only ignite reflection not inspiration. Bond in an Interview with Hilde Klein explains his technique of using dull, depressing images:

If you put something on stage you can't appeal to a common humanity. You must say to people you ought to change your lives because the life you lead is unjust and dangerous. People may not want to be told that, but it is important that I tell them. If they say that is boring, it may actually be because they were very, very afraid. What people say about their reactions is not always what their reactions are; their reactions are often defensive. (411)

Sophocles through Oedipus Rex raises "dark questions about the treatment of men by the gods" (Bowra

162). Bond on the other hand deals with the treatment of fellow human beings by the members of the society. He makes the people possible to talk objectively about their situation. For this he provides certain experiences on the stage, which indirectly make them tell the social truth.

The symbol of infants in Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle remains the same. But Bond stresses on the need for protecting the babies since they form the future of the society. The society in Oedipus Rex, The Winter's Tale and The Caucasian Chalk Circle is not so dangerous. So the babies receive protection in one way or the other.

Bond uses the image of infanticide to explain the violent relationships prevailing in the capitalist society. Here he differs with the other three mentioned dramatists. He wants his plays to reform not only an individual but the

whole society. His observation that the people cannot be generous and socially considerate in a ruthlessly aggressive society accounts for the absence of morally good characters in his plays.

Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht introduce characters filled with the milk of human kindness to avert the miseries afflicted by child abandonment and child torture. Bond makes his characters highly venomous to bring out the maximum destruction. He does so because he perceives a society which could understand the power of innocence and peaceful living. A society which can never understand the innocence in babies and accept the godliness in them cannot afford to be long-lasting. To substantiate this Bond treats the infanticide theme in the most pitiless way. The child is a powerful image and the inhumanity showed to it reflects the disposition of a corrupted society.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying,

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except you be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. (Matt 18:1-5)

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**INFANTICIDE AS THE METAPHOR OF THE FEAR
OF A FUTURELESS SOCIETY - A STUDY OF THE
SELECTED PLAYS OF EDWARD BOND**

By

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**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in English Literature to the University of Calicut**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

2007

Chapter IV

Startling Images for Shocking Recognition

What is being done to the character and what does the character do? Very often it's a question of what is being done to the character. One is describing the processes of society. What one sees is not a character from a to b to c, but a character whom we see from point a, then from point b. what you have to act is that situation. It's no use asking: 'How did I get here?' You have to ask: 'How did it get here?'. What the actor has to define is 'What am I up against in this situation and what does that call out of me?' The situations are designed not to show the development of his character but to show the crucial situations an individual has to cope with in order to produce what is of value to him. (qtd. in Hay & Roberts 60)

Drama demands action. Aristotle considered drama as an imitation of an action. He thought of drama as the most direct response to humanity and the means to imitate experience. When the drama is performed live the need for the space arises. The space used by the actors for the performance is called the stage. Stage and its set up help the actors to perform, and the audiences to see the various limitations of human experiences. At this juncture the importance of theatre arises. The theatre performs two functions that is the act of seeing and being seen. The word theatre comes from the Greek word, 'theatron', meaning seeing place. The question of theatre is significant in drama where the texts are meant for performance. Drama is the theatrical text. Theatre is one of the oldest and most acclaimed forms of entertainment. It is the place where the actors perform live on the stage for the audience. According to Peter Brook, a prominent director of Britain, for a theatre to take place, an actor walks across an empty space while someone is watching.

The stage mainly requires actors, audience, space and performance. The other elements like costumes, scenery, light and sound add to the perfectness of the performance. The role of the actors is to imitate the characters in the theatrical text in such a way that they can provide the audience with greater insight into the drama. They are the creative artists. They enact the lives of the characters. The characters become alive through the actors. The various situations mentioned in the play, which lead to the development of the plot, become clear through the performance of the actors. The performers try their best to convey the idea expressed in the theatrical text through their adept body movements, actions and delivery of dialogues. The status of the actors kept on changing down the ages. In the beginning the performers were mostly singers and dancers since the spoken dialogues were few. Drama has its origin in the religious rituals. So the earliest actors were men who were mostly active in various religious ceremonies. Later, drama began to deal with the social and political

issues of the day. This gave a platform for the layman to exhibit his talents on the stage. In course of time acting became professional. Women became prominent on the English stage in the seventeenth century even though the first performer in Roman Britain was a woman.

The audience differs from a reader of the novel or short stories. The audience has a continuous interaction with the actors. The audience gives the feedback of the effectiveness of the actors' performance through applause, laughter, tears or solemn silence. The category of the audience varies from the lower working class to the aristocratic class. They come to watch the play for different purposes like, entertainment after a tough day's work, aesthetic experience, and cathartic experience. The success of the production mainly depends on the playgoers. They express their opinions through their presence or absence.

The performance mainly depends on the text. The text is the creative child of the dramatist. The idea conveyed by the dramatist through the play attains higher levels of perception through the performance. The dramatist uses many dramatic devices to make the performance more effective. Large pieces of scenery, light and sound effects, and the costumes that help to bring out a realistic portrayal of the characters are some of the devices that help to make the performance successful. These are imaginative devices to enhance the realistic atmosphere of the plot.

The texts are written with different objectives. Some plots are so hilarious that they are meant to entertain all types of audience. Certain plays are written with the motive of instructing the audience. Some plays motivate the spectators; on the contrary, there are other plays that shock the audience. As a result theatre carries out various purposes like delighting the audience, instructing, persuading or shocking the audience.

This chapter is primarily, a study of the theatre techniques adopted by Bond in his plays namely Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle to bring out the message in his plays in a more effective manner.

The outbreak of the Second World War brought a major change in the English theatres. The evacuation of the people in London and other major cities and the movement of the actors out of the country led to a politically informed, experimental and revolutionary English theatre. The influence of dramatists like Bertolt Brecht was evident on the English stage. Brecht's transition from a didactic theatre to a theatre which argued or presented a situation had a great impact on Edward Bond. Brecht was concerned with analyzing the situation in a dramatic action, in terms of causes, effects and nature of action.

Edward Bond following the path of Brecht considers audience as not mere spectators but as rational beings who

maintain their objectivity and identities. He expects the audience to alienate from their own preoccupations and see the reality of the situation. To enable the audience to see the reality Bond believes that the dramatist should present the realistic actions in a realistic way.

Bond's theatre is often taken as a synonym for violence. His plays shock and mystify critics and audience. The baby's murder in Saved, the mass infanticide in Narrow Road to the Deep North, the cannibalism in Early Morning and the torture in Lear are clear examples. The style adopted by Bond to generate specific reactions from the audience produces a shock effect. According to Tony Coult, Bond shocks an audience by evoking "the vulnerability and the dignity of the human body with a painter's skill (81)". In a discussion published in New Theatre Magazine, with John Willet, Ronald Bryden, Frank Marcus and David Storey at the Cheltenham Festival of Literature Bond said:

Violence has always been a human problem; but now its become a technical and scientific problem. This is the important thing. People could always be cruel to each other; but now there exists the possibility of a total cruelty. Because of our technological advance, we are confronted with something which really does demand an answer. (10)

Richard Scharine has clearly mentioned the motive behind the creation of such daring scenes. He in his work, The Plays of Edward Bond remarks that Bond uses violence "to attack both existing institutions and revered traditions" (24). In other words Bond hated cruelty so much that he was determined to bring home to his audience the full horror of surviving in a war afflicted society. The brutal infanticide in Saved can be seen as an indictment of violence, whose points would have been lost if the scenes had failed to shock the audience. Violence in Saved is shown as the consequence of social deprivation and lovelessness in the war postwar

society. The use of extreme violence is a distancing device to evoke emotional responses from the audience. This in turn paves the way to bring the audience's intellect to have a bearing on what it feels.

Bond firmly believes that the sole subject of the theatre is justice. His aim is to make the spectators understand what is happening in the contemporary world and its causes. His belief that dramas can deal with the problems of the common man and give solutions made him experiment intense shocking images on the stage. In an interview with Michael Bogdanov published in New Statesman Bond expresses his views about theatre and the use of violent imageries:

At the turn of the century theatre does not have to be prescriptive. We are still living in the aftershock of Hiroshima, people are still the scars of history. We may seem competent, but by the end of next century there will be new deserts, new ruins. People will have new

pains, new happiness. But we have to tell them what it is like here so that they will recognise us, recognise their past, and this will help them to be themselves. All I can do is to instill this with urgency into my drama. What I have to do is to make people realise that they need justice to be human and that justice is something collective. We can understand ourselves if we try. It is a painful and difficult process but it is the imperative of theatre. (36)

To make the audience think about the existing situation he presents the truth of the situation with the help of morbid images. It is for the audience to seek the solution for the existing problems. It is like presenting a sea to the audience so that if somebody wants to swim in it, they are free to do so. Bond through his plays explores the nature of human violence in an intense manner. It reveals the internal and external conflict involved in the human struggle to achieve a total natural existence devoid of harmful scientific

inventions like bombs. The very representation of intense violent images becomes a creative act of aggression.

Various issues like the violent effects of a class-structured, technocratic society, the alienation of the individual under capitalism, the need for a working-class structure are presented in a very diverse way in the plays of Bond. According to Jenny. S.Spencer Bond intends to "orient the audience towards action rather than consumption (125)".To achieve this he adopts various strategies which make the audience analyse the situation in a very lucid manner.

The use of the sacrificial image of an innocent human being punished by the society contrasted to the image of enjoyment adds visual and aural dimensions to the themes of the plays of Bond. The images when combined heighten the ironic tensions and the play develops by contradiction.

In Saved Bond uses the visual and aural images to display the destructive relationship between human beings and material culture. In the fourth scene he makes use of familiar images which suggest a typical domestic tableau. In a dark living room, Mary, the mother, sets the table for Len; Pam prepares for her date; and Harry just sits. Visually the scene evokes a natural continuity of life. At the same time there are specific aural and visual images which are purely mechanical. Pam turns on the television and, having some trouble in adjusting the picture, switches to another channel. The image and sound of the television are jarring. The actions of the family members which are mechanical and socially detached twist the situation into ironic juxtaposition with the initial scene of domesticity. Mary watches Len eating, Pam continues with her make up and Harry refuses to talk to his wife. "Slowly a baby starts to cry. It goes on crying without a break until the end of the scene. Nothing happens until it has cried a long while" (46). The mother, Pam ignores the baby. She has as much trouble with the

baby as she has with the television. For her the only difference is that the television can be adjusted or repaired. In other words the baby is totally ignored by all the characters that are very passive and selfish in their behaviour.

The insistent demands of the baby are ignored. The sound of the baby redefines the social limitation of the other characters. It is obvious that the baby is not as important as the television to Pam. Len disowns the kid by saying that he "ain' leavin' that kid" (50). Harry also makes his point clear that he does not want to get involved. Pam leaves the kid with Mary as the former wants her room free of interruption since her date, Fred has arrived. But Mary turns off the television and exits once when Pam and Fred go to their room. The baby is left alone sobbing and dying "away to silence" (52). The aural image reveals that the baby is the focal point around which Bond creates specific scenes to reveal the disastrous effects of modern culture and its value

system on individuals. The baby turns out to be an ironical device of great emotional power. The technique of Bond shows that the baby is just a thing like a television. Sound alone does not convey the sense of the baby's humanity. Like the noisy screen of the television the baby can only irritate with its strange distorted resonances. The irritation felt by Fred, Pam, Mary and Harry due to the baby reveals that the grownups have lost their capacity to share feelings, compassion and morality.

In Saved Bond portrays the working class society whose members have become living ghosts. People have been destroyed by the economic demands of the society. Compassion has got no value in their economic and social relationship. The characters eliminate compassion from their lives so as to simplify their struggles. Mike, Colin, Pete, Barry and Liz meet in the cafe to celebrate the release of Fred from the prison. The ensuing dialogues reveal that there is no convivial warmth inside the cafe nor is there any friendly

warmth in the relationship shared by the characters. The scene develops the sounds of quarrelling and irritation. This emphasizes the lack of good fellowship. The various confrontations among the friends themselves clearly define the social situations.

In Narrow Road to the Deep North the visual and the aural contribute to the ironical overtones. The aural image develops when the five young priests namely, Kiro, Tola, Heigoo, Argi and Breebree drink which leads to an earthy scene of merriment. They mellow and become boisterous and start playing with the religious pot. The scene parallels to the thugs playing with the baby in Saved. When Kiro turns the pot and sets it down on his head the visual image becomes intensely sharp. Through the precise comic visual image Bond reveals that the religious institution has repressed the commonsense of the priests. The pot is not to be broken since it is religious so Kiro is bound to suffocate. In other words Kiro is throttled by the sacredness of the

religious object as modern man is choked by the polluted air of industrial developments.

The relationships between characters of the same class and how they react to the same situation are explored in the plays of Bond. Len and Pam in Saved, Kiro and Shogo in Narrow Road to the Deep North, and the ferryman and Wang in The Bundle help us to perceive how the characters belonging to the same class respond to various life situations. The actions of certain characters are exaggerated or heightened. For example the deeds of Fred's gang in Saved, violence of Shogo in Narrow Road to the Deep North and the reaction of Wang on seeing the abandoned baby are to bring more emotional effects on the audience. Jenny. S. Spencer explains this in a more logical manner:

Just as the way in which the story is dramatized will affect the audience's ability to interpret it, so the ways in which characters perceive their situation and

environment will affect their capacity for changing it. Although not really interested in psychology, Bond is interested in subjectivity. While history may determine the individual, and the individual alone can never alter the economic base of the capitalist state, it is individual men engaged in action, who make history. Since the subject is the location for political practice, Bond must do more than show how subjectivity is created in his characters-he must try to create a radical subjectivity in his audience as well. (131)

The characters in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle are rooted in particular classes and society .This is because the plays show social processes in action. The actor contacts the audience through the social details and political facts. This makes the audience realize that no characters exist apart from society and social pressures. Moreover it also makes the audience aware that the society and its prevailing norms are responsible for the

deeds of individuals. For a contented life for the members of the society it is the duty of the members of the society to change it for the better.

Bond in an interview in Theatre Quarterly expresses his use of violent images in his plays:

Well, I don't think that my plays are really violent, though *Early Morning* might be an exception. They have moments of violence, which are usually set in an atmosphere that is quite different-the dismembered body of Shogo appearing at the end of *Narrow Road*, for instance, which isn't a violent play. It is not even about violence-it is about the kind of situation in which violence occurs. Even in *Saved*, where they talk very aggressively, it's really a joke. They never take violence seriously, nobody in the play takes violence seriously. Violence happens there in the way that it happens to an audience. (10)

The baby is being stoned to death in Saved because Bond finds it intolerable and revolting. At the same time the audience would find the lives of Pam and Fred even in state of deprivation, in a better state than that of the dead baby. For Bond, this state of dead existence of Pam and Fred is also as revolting as the death of the baby. He challenges the audience who would like to find horror only in the death of the baby. It is evident that the violence in the play is a statement or question about the individuals, their judgement and their conduct.

Fred, Pete, Colin and Barry are not to be put away simply as young thugs. The reason for their actions is to be found out by the spectators. The spectators miss the point when they say that Fred, Pete, Colin and Barry are poor unfortunates. Bond intends the spectators to recognize the kind of situation in which violence occurs. He wants the audience to see things more fully and realize the terms of life more intensely. In other words he uses violent images to

provoke awareness in the audience and to make them recognize what they normally do not want to recognize.

The situations in the beginning of the play are directly responsible for the situation at the end. In Saved the play starts very quietly and normally. Later the family turns out to be appalling and it makes the audience think 'Is this the way to live? Is such a living unbearable?' Later the audience conclude that the type of life the family members in the play lead is the archetype of the real life in their society. This gives the shock of recognition. He wants the audience to experience the recognition of what the images imply rather than that of the shock of horror.

Through the powerful metaphor of infanticide Bond presents the literal death of children. It can be observed that the intensity of the cruelty done to children reaches its zenith in the stoning of the baby in Saved and the beheading of the

schoolchildren in Narrow Road to the Deep North. But the plays contain several examples of child abuse. The bombing death of Pam's brother in the park, a parallel to the murder of her own baby, and the attempted infanticide and abandonment of Shogo when he was a child are examples. These types of child abuse portray the death of those characters who have carried the pangs of childhood throughout their life. Indirectly Bond makes the audience realize that the society which tortures the babies for selfish goals will end up as a futureless dead society.

More than the literal death of the children Bond points out at the spiritual death of the society in which these tortured babies live. Most children may survive the attack of the society on them but in terms of humanity and humane potential the tortured children become the ghosts of what they might have been.

The infanticide in his plays symbolizes the spiritual and psychological battering all the children receive from their environment and institutions. It also symbolizes the loss of identity that make such battering possible. The dead baby in Saved has no name. It is sedated with aspirin to remove its sense of its own being. It is not at all recognized as human. The schoolchildren in Narrow Road to the Deep North are killed because no one can literally tell them apart. There is a loss of identity for the children. The infanticide thus brings out the existing death like existence of the members of the society at the emotional, psychological, and intellectual level. Thus the violence is used to condemn the irrational violence of the society. Instead of the conventional notion that man is naturally aggressive Bond offers the view that man is being compelled to behave in a violent manner. Through his powerful metaphors he argues for replacement of the repressive old consciousness filled with indifference and cynicism with a liberating new consciousness tinged with commitment and optimism.

The vulnerability of the helpless children is so powerful that it affects the instincts of the spectators to the maximum. The killing of the child in the pram when it does not cry cannot make any statement about the pain it feels. On the other hand it helps the spectators to watch the actions of the group of boys involved in the murder. The intensity of the brutal actions of the gang is so severe that with an unquestionable conscience the spectators feel that the babies are to be protected.

The handling of the various dialects in a very natural manner makes Bond a naturalistic playwright. In Saved he is so able to command lower-class speech that he could convert it into a functional poetry. The extended exchanged speeches in the play become poetry. There is an exhibition of rhythm in the five or six syllable lines. The haikus he composed in Narrow Road to the Deep North have a striking similarity with that of the six syllable line used in Saved. In a

discussion with Irving Wardle, Bond said about the language of his plays:

I think my plays are poetry. You see this, this is what I dislike about the poetic drama that one gets nowadays; it's something added to prose. Poetry is what you have left when you take the prose away. Poetry is simplified form of prose. And that's the other way round you see, because most people try to make their prose clever poetically, and I hate that. (37)

Bond uses the working class speech in his plays. He has a belief in the greater strength of the lower-class speech since it comes from an oral tradition rather than literary. The language is terse and epigrammatical. It provides lyrical effects at the same time it can be passionate. The language is often touched with a teasing but fundamentally generous humour. The dialogues are pared to the bone. The poetic wit and the economy of words signify the increased awareness

of the dramatist about the complexities of life. At the same time it is to be observed that the basic mode of speech in Saved is the attack of the teased human animal. The teased human animal attacks anything that comes in front of it out of fear or the momentary relief that comes from the inflicting pain set on it by the society. For example, Pam's wish for Len to leave the flat is expressed in an incessant quibbling over the location of the Radio Times.

PAM: Someone's 'ad it. (she rubs her hair vigorously).

I ain' goin' a get it no more. Not after last week. I'll cancel it. It's the last time I bring it in this 'ouse. I don't see why 'ave t' go on paying for it. Yer must think I'm made a money. It's never 'ere when I wan' a see it. Not once. It's always the same. (she rubs her hair.) I notice no one else offers t' pay for it.

(89)

The characters mistrust words as they mistrust anything that might reveal them to themselves. The

language functions as a tool to hold others at a distance. For example, Pam having picked up Len is willing to share her body, but avoids all other contacts.

LEN: Wass yer name?

PAM: Yer ain' arf nosey (20-21)

Bond employs three comic contexts for violence namely jokes, parody and humour. According to Freud, "jokes release inhibitions" (35). Deliberate jokes are substitute for antisocial behaviour. In Bond's plays such jokes intensify violence. In Saved jokes surround acts of violence. They release the inhibitions imposed by aggression in the characters. In other words shared joking presents the solidarity of a group; its members are aggressive, unashamed and impulsive.

BARRY: Rock a bye baby on a tree top

When the wind blows the cradle will rock

When the bough breaks the cradle will fall

And down will come baby and cradle and tree

An' bash its little brains out an' dad'll scoop
 'em up and use'em for bait

They laugh

FRED: Save money

BARRY: takes the balloon. He poses with it

COLIN: Though they was pink now.

BARRY: (pokes at Colin's head) Come t'the pictures
 t'night darlin'? (He bends it.) It's got a bend in it.

(73)

The jokes of the thugs thus prepare the audience to witness
 the stoning of the baby in the park.

In Narrow Road to the Deep North the jokes indicate a
 shared aggression. When Georgina shares a joke with the
 Gunner Tar and his mate it indicates that below the surface
 the characters share the same aggressive tendencies.

GEORGINA: Isn't it ready yet?

GUNNER TAR: Got a do it right

GUNNER TAR'S MATE: As the mathematician said to
 'is girl friend.

GUNNER TAR: Don't want it comin' out the wrong
 way.

GUNNER TAR'S MATE: As the girl friend said to the
 mathematician

GEORGINA: Fortunatcky that's my deaf ear. (35)

Bond uses parody in Narrow Road to the Deep North to show how violence results when the rulers and leaders forget humanity. Basho relies on religion and poetry .His haiku reflects the uninspired poet in him. He uses haiku as a medium to isolate himself from others.

BASHO: Let me finish this row. (he hoes.) Write this.

(He hoes, and the NUN writes.)

Two soldiers came

The head of the city wants me

They waited

While I wrote this poem. (14)

Bond is at his best when he creates surroundings and environment for his plays. Saved is set in a cramped environment. The living room relates to compression and unavoidable collision. The park which should serve as a place for entertainment is portrayed as a place of frustration and boredom. There is a continuous noise throughout the play. The doors banging in the house, the television and the radio blaring out, teapot shattering, balloon bursting and so on. After the murder of the baby in the park the thugs make a "curious buzzing" (86). This denotes a moment of panic. In short the noisy elements establish that the characters are victims of the situation.

In Narrow Road to the Deep North the spectators are given the liberty to pronounce their own moral judgement . Shogo does not represent the possibilities of real human individuality. When appointed as a leader he takes advantage of haphazard events as well as the social needs of the followers. He orders severe punishment because he

believes that this is the only way to prevent chaos. When Kiro observes that punishment produces aggressiveness and further crime Shogo laughs at him thus denying his own evil. The cold nature towards the fellow beings is the result of his existence in a society which disowned him when he was an infant. Shogo's act of committing mass infanticide makes the spectators consider him as a victim of a society that forced him to be violently aggressive. The result of deprivation is the clear relationship between the victim and the aggressor. All the characters in the play become the victims of the situation.

Bond's plays are historically or geographically distanced from the contemporary life. Even though Saved had a contemporary setting it should be noted that the setting was highly specific. It was the working class London. In Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle the settings are in the far East. Bond believes that the spectator's immediate situation need not always be portrayed by

directly dealing with the present. He examines the historically relative and dialectical nature of morality itself through this distancing technique. In a Letter to Tony Coult he said that he wants his audience to “escape from a mythology of the past, which often lives on as the culture of the present (75)”. This helps the audience to avoid the kind of identification that psychological drama encouraged but at the same time forced them to analyse the relationship between characters and groups of characters.

Many of the techniques employed in the later play, The Bundle are familiar to the earlier plays. The characters are shown in a social role. The actions and behaviour of the characters are motivated not from individual factors but from social factors. Bond employs the use of juxtaposition in the opening scene of the play. The Ferryman and Basho are characterized through their different reactions to the discovery of the baby in the bundle. Their actions are controlled by the kind of life they lead in the society. The

attitudes of the two characters help the audience to look at the world in two different ways.

The manipulation of time is employed to serve the argument and not the plot. The action of the play spans over a period of twenty five years but at the same time the relationship of one scene to another becomes part of the analysis of action. Bond has his own explanation for this manipulation of time:

One wants very sharp contrast in time. In the first scene of *The Bundle* I use time rather slowly because I want to show the struggle in the *Ferryman* and that it takes him time. At another place I want to show what the consequences of certain actions are and in the theatre the consequences can be shown immediately, even if they are ten years later. In the second scene of *The Bundle*, it's fourteen years later. There are probably some people in the audience who won't realize that the boy is the baby in the bundle until the

Ferryman says to Basho: "This is the boy." I wanted the audience to go through that experience of asking: "Who is he?" and then suddenly or slowly realizing, so that they would be prepared for what Basho would go through. (qtd in Hay & Roberts 272)

The contrast in the attitudes of the characters and their refusal to change, help the audience to analyse the events and situations in a better way. In scene two, Wang asks Basho to explain what he is seeking. But Basho ignores Wang. There is no change in Basho. He appears to act in the same way he ignored the baby in the bundle fourteen years ago. At the same time the ferryman is still trying to strike a rational compromise with the injustices to which he is subjected.

In an interview with Hay and Roberts Bond explained his purpose in selecting the particular situations and actions.

His "theatre is based on trying to define ideas, critical ideas about society and about human activity; trying to define those as precisely as possible, not necessarily in verbal terms but in pictures" (273).

In scene three when the whole village is starving and close to exhaustion, the spectators are made to understand the sufferings of a whole community through the seven characters. The cries of distress offstage remind the audience the nature of sufferings the people has to confront in a society built on aggression.

The society that is portrayed through the play is an unjust society. Individual acts of kindness are insufficient. Bond has designed the scene in such a way that each scene is being portrayed to show the operation of harsh economic and social forces. At the same time he is very careful in avoiding ending a scene on an intense dramatic point. He

does not want the emotional impact on the spectators to be counter-productive. In scene four Basho who is a judge firmly identifies himself with the established order and believes that evils stem from a decline in the morality. At the same time Wang whose values have been designed by his reactions to watching Basho for many years no longer argues but cautions the latter of the need to examine the validity of his own belief. In other words instead of mounting the conflict between two characters, Bond makes use of antithesis from which he builds a dramatic method of how Wang must counter Basho's negative views. Bond presents dialectic as well as a narrative so as to present the issues and ideas in a way which involves the audience on a dramatic level and also makes them realize their freedom in interpreting the play.

The child abandonment scene in the play is extremely striking for the accuracy and objectivity of the dialogue. The speech of the woman who abandons the baby is a series of

statements delivered with thought and deliberation. The woman describes her condition precisely and dispassionately and the spectators are called upon not to judge the woman but to examine the action Wang takes in order to overcome the problems.

WOMAN (sits wearily: speaks flatly, almost calmly and reasonably). More anger...What is the use? You see how we live. I thought I'd jump in the river. Drown with it. But my husband-my children-I've done what I can. What more? You tell me what more there is. (Slight pause. Still calm.) I came back to give him water. Stupid. (27)

Wang puts the child down in scene four, then holds it up again and these actions are being repeated. This is another technique employed by Bond since he does not want the audience to suspect what Wang will do at the end of the speech. Bond through the whole speech and action prepares

the audience to understand the situation and conditions responsible for Wang's actions.

WANG. Why should I pick you up?[...].Is this all?-
one little gush of sweetness and I pick up a child?
Who picks up the rest? How can I hold my arms
wide enough to hold them all? Feed them? Care
for them? All of them? Must the whole world lie
by this river like a corpse? (28-29)

The spectators are made to realize that the isolated gestures like that of the ferryman are insufficient to change the society. Wang hurling the baby into the river challenges the spectators' ability to understand the implication of Wang's statement. Wang's moral dilemma and his action remind the spectators of the stoning of the baby in Saved. The only difference is that Bond provides answers in The Bundle for the audience after involving them in a problem.

Clearly through The Bundle Bond makes the audience to commit themselves emotionally.

Bond prevails upon the audience to react analytically to the incidents portrayed by shocking and surprising them with moving images. For this he makes his main character Wang to face a vision of horror that depicts the life on earth as a hell.

Bond employs overwhelming macabre violence in particularized images. In an interview he clarifies his use of violence on the stage:

Art is the close scrutiny of reality and therefore I put on the stage only those things that I know happen in our society. I'm not interested in an imaginary world. I'm interested in the real world. And in fact, of course, all things that I put on the stage are understatements.

(415)

Bond utilizes the medium of drama to comprehend or realize the truths which usually the society ignores or denies. The spectators are made to realize the stirring issues like the violent outcome of a class structured society, the hostile attitude of the capitalist society and the destructive approach of the social and political institutions through violent images. His plays seem to be didactic at one level, but he adopts the shocking technique to make the spectators learn about the society in which they live. Hence his theatrical idiom, is often complex. He uses the theme of futureless society to offer the vision that a good society creates good men and the contemporary society in its present social order leads to violence. In other words his plays give the optimistic message that man can change his society. He shocks the audience with the violent images into the recognition and analysis of the society in which they live and the type of life they lead.

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Chapter V

Conclusion

There's a solution to every problem

The solving of which would make the world better

(qtd. in Hirst 87)

A close study of the chosen plays of Edward Bond persuades one to conclude that Bond is a socialist who believes in the strength and potentials of individuals in life situations. He dreams of a society in which the members themselves can take control of their lives in a more rational way. At the same time he is well aware that the dominant ideology of a society works through man's relationship with his family, friends and other domestic relationships. So he portrays the human relationships in his plays in such a way as to study society right back to its roots. The human relationships in the plays of Bond take the role of a

transmitter of cultural values. Often these relationships are perceived as an isolated unit of consumption.

It is evident from the preceding study that the intention of Bond behind writing his plays is to change the structure of the society. At the same time he has no dream of a Utopian society. He simply wishes to see people being themselves, happy in their own natural way and giving space for everyone to exist.

The analysis of the plays, Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North, and The Bundle carried out in chapter two, **Journey from Reality to Realization** shows that the victims of his plays are mainly children, women and old people. He highlights their sufferings and struggles so as to emphasize the fact that the weak groups of the social ladder are the worst affected ones in a society devoid of values and culture. He wants to stress upon the fact that even weaker sections of the society have a right to live and lead their own

way of lives. They should be given enough liberty for exercising their own freedom.

It can also be concluded that effect of war on ordinary people is yet another significant message which he wants to convey to his audience as seen in the play Saved. War mainly disturbs the ordinary working class and their way of lives. The postwar society concentrates on rebuilding its deteriorated institutions and the lower middle class people are totally ignored. Survival becomes a tedious term for them. The end result is frustration, anger and boredom which culminates in acts of violence. In other words, Bond invites the spectators to realize the demonic after-effects of war.

The second chapter of the present study also shows that Bond's plays point to three important points which make the audience reflect upon. They are Capitalism, Technology and Human nature. His plays throw light on

the evil side of capitalism, the consequences of the misuse of technology and the factors that alter the general good human nature.

Bond staunchly believes that capitalism depends on an economy based on exploitation and aggression. Such an environment can never make people generous or socially considerate. The old people are abandoned and the children are neglected. In other words "affluence impoverishes and produces the social conditions of scarcity" (Bond VII). Capitalist society gives importance for power. People forget the basic values when power blinds them. Strict laws become prevalent in a society which is driven by power. Each group tries to control the other through enforced laws. This makes people more aggressive since they are not given an opportunity to taste the freedom of life. Bond expresses forcefully his concern for the society in which there are imposed laws. He believes that the innate creativity can only blossom when people are natural. Nothing constructive

comes out when they are made to lead artificial lives .The impending fear that the strict laws create results in destruction.

Science and Technology symbolize a progressive society. At the same time, when they are being handled by wrong hands they become a source of social irrationality. At this juncture culture becomes important since morality can exist only in a cultured society. So the need of a culture to use science and technology wisely is very important.

The reason for the abnormal behaviour of the characters account for their lives in an irrational society. The individual is at war with one's own self and is torn apart. So rationality becomes very important to cope with self consciousness. Bond makes his audience understand that man is born with a lot of potential of varied nature. Disaster occurs only when man fails to realize and utilize his own abilities. Bond through his plays gives a tonic to the

audience to rise up and seek the inner self. His plays are set upon to liberate a new consciousness in the people.

From the third chapter, **Milk of Human Kindness Churned to Aspirins of Torture** which is a comparison of the selected plays of Bond to that of Sophocles, Shakespeare and Brecht one can conclude that the characters of Bond lack compassion and sympathy. But, Bond portrays them as cruel and harsh only to emphasize the fact that a deteriorated society cannot nurture a mentally healthy community. The individuals of a hypocritical society can act only in a pitiless way. There is no room for humanity or human values. The acts of such members of a corrupted community become metaphors of destruction.

It can also be inferred that the infanticides in Saved, Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle serve as images for the society to think about the various institutions of the society and also to realize the fact that child slaughter

can end up only in a world with no future. The images help the audience to make a general survey of their existence. His plays are optimistic. They tend to make the audience think of a new society and to work for the same. In other words his plays take the audience into action. Instead of moralizing or using the didactic method he portrays the worst and gives ample freedom for the spectators to react according to their own conscience. So, in this respect, his plays can be termed as intellectual ones.

From the fourth chapter, **Startling Images for Shocking Recognition** devoted to a close study of Bond's theatrical techniques it becomes clear that Bond uses each and every image with clear precision. The gloating images are not for sadistic pleasure or for creating a violent effect on the stage. They serve as food for thought. In his preface to Lear he clarifies his use of violent images:

I write about violence as naturally as Jane Austen wrote about manners. Violence shapes and obsesses our society, and if we do not stop being violent we have no future. People who do not want writers to write about violence want to stop them writing about us and our time. It would be immoral not to write about violence. (3)

Even though there are no children in Bond's plays he portrays the suffering faced by them in a vivid manner as in Saved. He makes use of the past in order to discover the causes of present problems as in Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Bundle. In other words he makes use of all techniques possible to make the audience realize and recognize the status quo. Bond wants his audience to experience a change and understanding. For achieving this motive he uses violent images in a provocative and imaginative way. When violent episodes like infanticide are performed on the stage the audience perceives the

corruptive side effects of being civilized and the existing boredom and desperation which result in violent acts.

Bond's dislike for capitalism and his political adherence made many of the critics to analyse his plays in a political light. But all his plays cannot be viewed in this manner. His main aim is to make the people evaluate on the nature of lives they are leading more than attacking any school of political thought. His plays are to ring an alarm bell to awaken the people. His attack is mainly on power driven materialistic society. In the long run, such a society turns futile since it lacks all the human values. So more than a political propagandist one finds a humanist in Bond. He cannot be termed as a mere political propagandist since he does not suggest any other alternative form of political system in his plays nor he holds the view that any political system is perfect. He dreams of a society in which everyone can exist by his own free will and there is ample liberty for all.

To make a few brief observations concerning Bond's current situation, direction and status as a writer it is to be noted that his early plays are being read in a new light. His works are more frequently performed than ever before. Even though he remains withdrawn from the main British theatre there have been recent revivals of several early works in major theatres in Europe and America. In Los Angeles a group called Tuesday Laboratory named after the play Tuesday has been set up to put some of Bond's theatrical ideas into practice.

In the light of the preceding study a new line of thinking which deals with the mental, physical and social development of children including the existing educational system which imposes too much discipline on the children can be drawn in a very constructive manner. The study also helps to delve deep into some serious problems like child labour which need much more attention in the present scenario.

Bond does not restrict his theme to a specific zone. This makes his plays a subject for research. He deals with the theme of child torture also in Lear and Passion. It is also found in a subdued form in Grandma Faust. The same could not be included in the present study due to lack of space. A detailed study of these plays can open up new vistas for research. A study of his play, The Worlds can help to correlate terrorism to industrial unrest and also provide some insights to the aggressions prevailing in the society. In other words, a detailed study of the plays of Bond can help the readers to grip with the existing problems in the society. Such is the variety of the theme found in the plays of Bond.

Bond has been successful as an artist who uses his creative imagination to create public images in which the species recognizes itself and confirms its identity. Obviously, success is attributed to a dramatist who believes that "art is a record of the creation of human nature" and "it expresses the real within the limits of knowledge at a

particular time" so that it can always be "rational" (Bond xv). Bond in every sense is an artist who uses the theatre to portray the social, historical and political truth through his work of art called life.

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