Emancipation as the *leitmotif*: An Appraisal of
Arthur Lee Kopit’s Plays

Arthur Lee Kopit’s plays depict the precarious predicament and anxiety of humanity in its frantic quest for meaning in a fragmented and chaotic world. The playwright dexterously dramatises the mental trauma of humanity in its constant confrontation with the world devoid of meaning. His plays are known as powerful social commentary and his themes are provocative. Kopit’s dramatic oeuvre is characterised by a powerful undercurrent of the theme of emancipation which is indeed the leitmotif of his plays. The chapters, “Emancipation from Physical Fetters”, “Emancipation from Social Shackles” and “Emancipation from Psychological Bondages” analyse Kopit’s perception of the various fetters either self-imposed or inflicted by extraneous forces on the individual. Kopit’s discerning eye and dramatic vision enable him to deftly portray the bondages of his characters and their unrelenting struggle for emancipation.