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**The Similar Aspects between Edward Bond's Lear and William
Shakespeare's King Lear**

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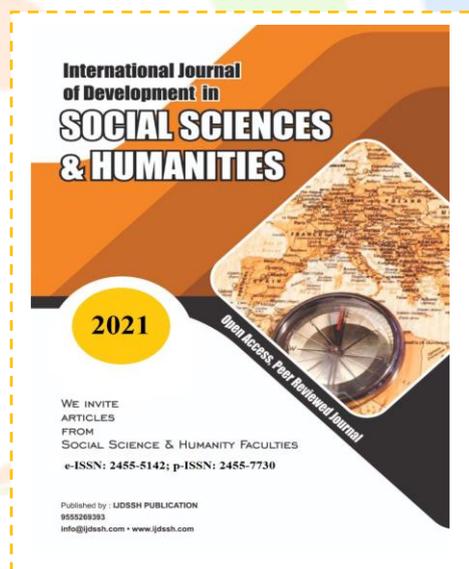
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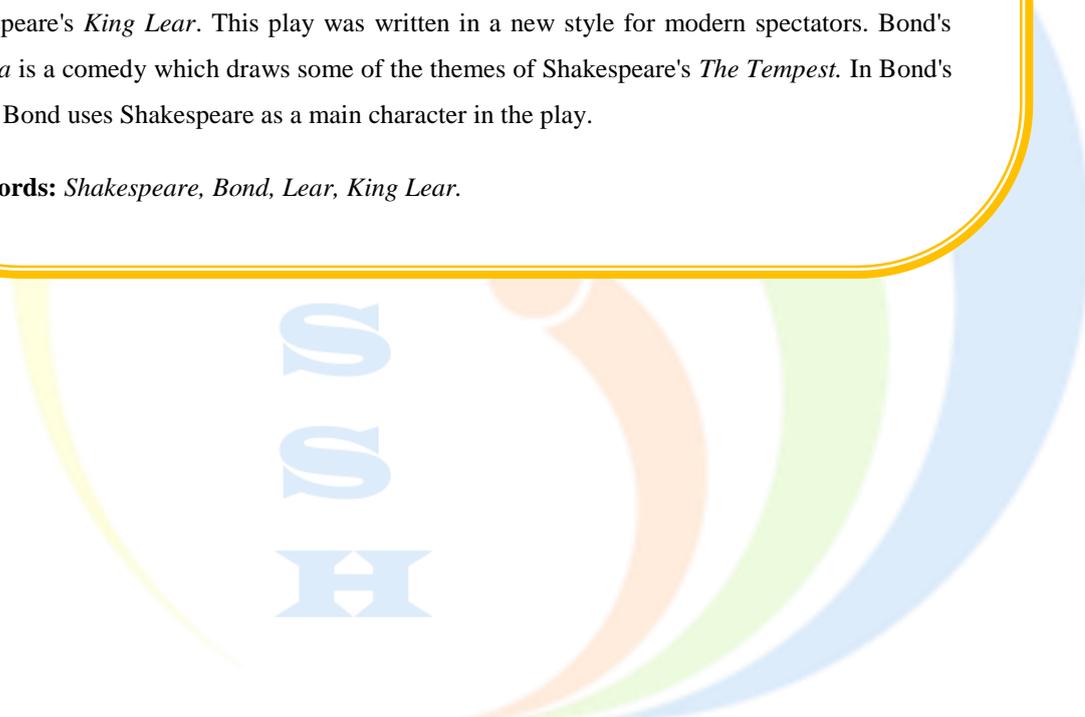


ABSTRACT

Edward Bond (born 18 July 1934) is an English dramatist, poet, thinker, and theatre director. He is the author of some fifty plays. Among these plays are *Lear* (1971), and *Saved* (1965), the production of which was instrumental in the elimination of theatre restriction in the UK. Bond is regarded one of the major living dramatists. His writings have been contentious, because of the violence shown in his plays and his theories of drama. By presenting violence on theatre, Bond tries to materialize the evils of society. Some critics give the reason behind Bond's tendency for violence to the Second World War that broke out when he was a child. Throughout this war, he was banished to the countryside and observed the violence of London in 1940 and 1944. This experience to the horror and violence of war formed themes in his work.

One of the actions which Bond is known for is returning back to the old plays. William Shakespeare is among the writers whose impact is clear in Bond's writing. The Shakespearean impact is very clear in Bond's *Lear*. This play is regarded a re-telling of Shakespeare's *King Lear*. This play was written in a new style for modern spectators. Bond's *The Sea* is a comedy which draws some of the themes of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. In Bond's *Bingo*, Bond uses Shakespeare as a main character in the play.

Key words: *Shakespeare, Bond, Lear, King Lear.*



SSH

LITERARY BACKGROUND

“If we search for one single epithet to apply to the modern stage we are forced in the end to select the adjective “eclectic”. No era efforts such as motley array of complex and confusing trends” (Nicoll 1962, 248).

Critics who wrote on the history of theatre, such as Edwin Wilson and Oscar G. Brocket, consider the year of 1875 as the opening of modern theatre. After this year which witnessed “the first Gilbert and Sullivan operetta (Courtland 2004, 36), the arts came as reflections to the big changes that had happened in society. Among these big changes was the publication of *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin in 1859, a theory in which Darwin challenged the idea that human beings are special and created by God in his own image (Wilson and Alvin 1998, 302).

This radical concept is described as a challenge to the confidence of the Orthodox because it rejected the existence of everything except matter. In his *The Origin of Species*, Darwin stresses that “man has no soul, and even thought is secreted by the mind as temper is secreted by the liver (Wilson J. Burgess 1969, 235). Though Darwin was not a critic, his theory had much

impact on literary works, like the novels of George Eliot. Eliot is a Methodist who broke with the Church of England and found it incredible to have faith in God (Alexander 2000, 259).

With the publication of *Das Kapital* by Carl Marx in 1867, the same upheaval happened. Marx questioned the basic concepts of capitalism (Wilson and Alvin, 302). With this theory, which was based on materialist interpretation of history, Marx established a new conception of society and suggested new procedures of distributing wealth (Wilson, 235). Thus, the modern stage was deeply influenced by these trends which so markedly disrupted and changed life conditions of this period. Sigmund Freud in his *Interpretations of Dreams* stated that “people are not in complete control of their thoughts or even their actions (Nicoll, 250).

EDWARD BOND'S LITERARY CONTRIBUTION.

“Characteristically, the oldest political dramatist in industrial theatre, Edward Bond, ... called not simply for political revolution but for a new way of viewing human potential, which would itself lead to a new way of living” (Peacock 1990, 66).

The First World War ended in a wave of hopefulness as republics substituted kingdoms, but optimism soon weakened. The reason behind that is because of the great financial difficulties created by human and material obliteration. Widespread inflation was followed by rigid economic despair in 1930s. After that, the second World War came. It was more damaging than the first as a result of the more severe violence this war brought into life (Brocket 1991, 517). Bond is considered as one of the post-war playwright whose major plays were controlled by violence.

Edward Bond was born in North London from a working-class family which had three other children – in addition to Bond (Abe and Camus 2003, 400). Bond's father was a worker who carried his family to London to find work in the depression (Sternlicht 2004, 173). His family was evacuated to Cornwall at the beginning of the Second World War. After that, Bond returned to his grandparents' home near Ely. These country experiences were very important to him and may be the source of his exceptional ability to capture a wide variety for speech mannerisms (Abe and Camus 2003, 400).

Bond is anxious with political violence. He distributed with the scandals of those in power against the helpless and poor people, like children, women, laborers and

other victims (Ford, 103). According to Bond, "those who govern do not know what a person is and the governed do not know what a government should be (Bond 2000, 2).

The damage and fierceness that Bond saw during the war characterizes his clear themes. He described his years of childhood as years of clear impact upon him. That is why, he was not prepared to talk about them. From his early childhood, Bond in order to accentuate the violence accompanied him, he stated that: "I was bombed when I was five. The bombing went on till I was eleven. Later, the army taught me ten ways to kill my enemy and the community taught me a hundred ways to kill my neighbor (ibid, 1).

In the *Notes*, Bond wrote with his plays, he upholds that as a consequence of the industrial revolution, the two world wars, and the H-bombs, there should be something new in art. He adds that these changes led to growths not only in society but also in sanctity. Returning in line with these developments, Bond specifies that he wanted to take this spiritual revolution further. He also highlights that his goal for this was to live modern art not as an artistic privacy, but to live it politically and economically (Stuart 2000, 39).

Bond began as a short-story writer. While Bond was in foot soldiers in Vienna in

1953, he wrote his first short story. Two short plays are written after that. Although they did not show a liberated Bondian style, both plays were exciting, particularly the second which was written in a Brecht-like style (Hay and Roberts 1980, 8). The two plays were followed by about fifteen plays for television, radio, and stage. The titles of these plays are famous now, like *A Woman Weeping*, *The Broken Shepherdess*, and *The Tragedy*. Bond ascribed his attention in drama to two childhood practices. First, his seeing Daniel Wolfit in *Macbeth* (1606), and second, his early exposure to the music hall, where one of his sisters was a magician assistant (Abe and Campus, 400).

Bond is a moralist. He thinks that many results are ascribed to human deeds. He tries to apply this opinion to writers and their work. He believes that the mind of the artist must assist humanity (Sternlicht, 173). According to Bond, humanity can be helped by art if art has a social purpose. He assures that saying: "I think art must have a social function because I think art is the confrontation of justice with law and order. As justice is always the good thing and law and order is not, then art in that sense is always creative, always evolutionary, always in the sides of the angels" (Hay and Roberts, 27).

Bond, like Shaw, writes prefaces and brochures to his plays. These introductions are devoted to offer a critical view of his plays and also to refer to causes behind presenting a work (Worth 1972, 171). Bond, in his preface to *Lear*, said:

"I write about violence as logically Jane Austen wrote about behaviors. ... People who do not want to stop writers to write about violence want to stop them writing about our time. It would be corrupt not to write about violence" (Bond 2006, Li).

As for the Shakespearean impact is concerned upon Bond, he highlighted the idea that it was Shakespeare who taught him the sense of life. All in all, Bond has regarded an important figure in modern drama. He has been bestowed many prizes for his writings. As a young writer, he was awarded the George Divine and John Whiting Awards in 1968 (Abe and Campus, 400). He also was awarded an honorary doctorate at Yale in 1977. He detained significant positions such as Northern Arts Literary Fellow of the University of Newcastle and Durham. He became theatre-writer-in-residence at the University of Palermo (ibid).

**A Critical Study of William Shakespeare's
King Lear and Edward Bond's *Lear***

“Shakespeare took this character and I wished to correct it so that it would become model for me and, I would like to think, for our society” (Roberts 1978, p.18).

Edward Bond in the above lines gives a reason for his writing *Lear*. He describes Shakespeare as a dramatist who- in this play- accepts what comes and notices that a human being can accept many things in order to survive. The acceptance of suffering of Shakespeare is not accepted by Bond, since Bond regards "Shakespeare too much a part of his own time to fully understand the government of his day" (Patterson 2003, p. 140).

In his play *Lear*, Bond was influenced by Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Bond wrote his play to be a play of dramatic daring and knowledge. A play that deals with the Shakespearean myth in a way which is suitable for modern audience. Bond expresses this saying: "I felt that somehow I wasn't living in the real world until I dealt with that myth in my own terms. My *Lear* ... is old and has to die anyway. He makes his gesture only to those who are learning how to live " (Roberts, p.25).

Despite the fact of Bonds major admiration of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, his major move from it is clear from the title of *Lear* without the word king. This move gives much consideration in technical studies which center on the notion that "each step ... in the structure ... is a step in depth, and each ... shift is a step in depth" (Cummings & Simmons 1983, p.138). Bond's omission of the word 'King' shows that he is not involved in the imperial nature of the king. It also gives the sense that it makes no variance to Bond whether *Lear* give leaves his the kingdom willingly or his enforced to give up it (Patterson, p. 141). In spite of that Bond's *Lear* is reliant on Shakespeare's *King Lear*, in a inspired way, but there is a rudimentary difference focuses on the idea that Bond focuses not only the personal tragedies of characters, but on the tragedy of the society, too (Zeid 2012, p. xii)".

However, the Shakespearean influence on *Lear* may be understood by looking at this play as a distinguishing adaptation of *King Lear*. The adaptation comes with major alternations "to support his dramatic concern with moral accountability in modern context" (Diyaiy 1998, p. 81). The most important reasons behind describing Bond a Marxist dramatist were his attack against capitalism and his nostalgia for the past. He employs past themes as a technique to achieve his political views. He believes that without a

good knowledge of the past, it is impossible to understand the present and make any advances (Chris 2012, p.214). Bond, in *Lear*, suggests that "more can be learned from history and literature than lessons of survival" (Spencer, p.81). In addition to employing past themes, Bond believes that morality should be shouldered by modern writers in a distinguished technique, since they live in a period when the sense of morality has been corrupted by the sense of fault. He also thinks that there will not be a sense of morality unless the sense of guilt is removed (Stuart 2000, p.97).

According to Bond, both political and ethical concerns should be intermixed by the writer, because there can be no moral manner without political responsibility. In his concern, Bond thinks that the modern era is an era in which the writer must correspond his faith with his daily life; the writer's political and economic matters should go in line with his moral propaganda (Roberts, p.52). The modern writer has to expose the world in a way that is deeper than tragedy. Tragedy attempts to create a meaning to meaningless events. Whereas, a modern writer has to show that "what has meaning has been made meaningless by human silliness, pride and fear (Stuart, p.123). Pride may seem an old-fashioned sin. It is a form of mental cruelty. This Bondian belief with politics and history is clearer than in his *Lear*, which explores the

individual's relation to history (Spencer, p.81).

According to Bond, dealing with any strict king is impossible without dealing with King Lear. He expresses that saying: "Lear was standing in my path, and I had to get him out of the way. I couldn't get beyond him to do other things that I also wanted, so I had to come to terms with him" (Quoted in Mangan, p.23). Shakespeare's *King Lear* was written to reflect his society. Bond's *Lear* also was written to reflect the problems of his society. In that society, freedom becomes a possible issue. It is a play with a king of moral accountability. It displays the troubles of action in an unjust society. Bond also states that "freedom is not an idea, it's a passion! If you haven't got it you fight like a fish out of water fighting for air" (*Lear*, ii, p.76).

Bond's *Lear* depicts his view of a writer's responsibility in the modern society, a responsibility which is based on explaining and analyzing and writing what's probably going to occur. In addition to his view of the importance of the political revolution, Bond gives the same importance to the propaganda that should accompany this revolution, because he thinks that unless people specify their faults and make a correct analysis of them, there won't be a real change (Roberts 1980, 103-4). One cannot make a real revolution unless he/ she understands the

nature of the new revolution, because it is a revolution in an industrial society which didn't exist during the Shakespearean time.

The first common idea between Shakespeare's *King Lear* and Bond's *Lear* is that both plays start to reflect the great power of the two kings having the same name although the technology of violence is clearer in the second one (Mangan, p.23), which begins with "TWO WORKERS carry on a DEAD WORKER and put him down" (*Lear*, ii, p.1). Then, this king is turned into weak and homeless person, a bread seeker in his "I'm hungry ..., but you could sell me some bread. I can pay" (ibid, vii, p.17) or even a vagabond who asks for charities:

LEAR: "I must beg".

"Lear takes out a bowl and begs".

"Alms! I'm not a criminal, I wasn't blinded by a judge. Alms! " (65).

Jenny S. Spencer, in her *Dramatic Strategies in the Plays of Edward Bond*, states that the relation between *King Lear* and *Lear* can be expressed by the idea that both are great strategies. She points out that the relation between these two plays can be studied in terms of events, structure, character, and language (Spencer p.78). Bond borrows three names from Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Lear is a king and the duke of Cornwall is a husband of one of his evil daughters.

There is a character called Cordelia, but she is not a daughter of Lear. She plays a very different role from the role played by Shakespeare's character (Patterson 2005, p.230).

Patricia Hern, in her introduction to *Lear*, emphasizes that Bond does not allow his characters to contemplate and expose their inner goals and emotions as clearly as Shakespeare allows his through soliloquy. Instead, Bond is concerned to "reveal his characters' individual experience dramatically, to imply an emotional life and a consistent inner logic through their responses to the changing conditions of their world (Hern 1994, p.xix).

In Bond's *Lear*, the first four scenes comprise reliable echoes of Shakespeare's *King Lear*: "the ungratefulness of daughters and Lear's insanity"(Zeid, p.28). The image of a king getting angry because the deed of his daughters is clear from the first scene "Peace Kent! Come not between the dragon and his anger" (*King Lear*, I.i, p.7), or his "The bow is bent and drawn; make from the shaft" (ibid). The same thing occurs in the first scene of Bond's *Lear* when Lear is annoyed because, for the first time, his daughters object his decisions and reveal their disassociation from him (Zeid, p.30).

Bond focuses on the character of Lear, because he knows that Shakespeare's dealing

with law and authority is based on that character, whose "anger to his daughters is aggression put into him by his upbringing and education, for political power" (Stuart, p.97). Despite the fact, that both Shakespeare and Bond concentrate on the character of Lear, Bond points out that he can "swerve away from his precursor ... In Bond's *Lear*, not only Lear and his evil daughters, but also Cordelia, are corrupted by power" (Zeid, p.17).

Bond's play starts with Lear's arrival to speed up his men who work on the wall which is fanatically being erected around his kingdom. In the first scene, Lear urges his people to build the wall and regards it a "flogging crime to delay work" (*Lear*, I.i, p.2), and when it occurs that even when unintentionally a workman "killed a workman on the wall. That alone makes him a traitor" (ibid, 3). He adds "my people will live behind this wall when I'm dead" (ibid). Unlike Shakespeare's escapist Lear who decides to give up power when he says:

*"Only we shall retain
The name and all th' addition to
a king: the sway,
Revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours; which
to confirm,
This coronet part between you"*.

(*King Lear*, I.i, p.7).

Bond makes his Lear accept moral responsibility for his actions. He still act at till the end of the play in spite of his blindness. The responsibility of Bond's Lear is emphasized stylistically many times by revealing himself either as a shepherd who thinks that if any sheep is lost from his cattle, he is responsible for bringing it back, or as a merciful father, whose main aim is to create liberty and peace for his people (ibid). These claims are just lies from a king whose main aim is to protect his power. However, huge deprivation the building of the wall will lead to. This becomes a symbol of social oppression, because of the grief and illness it brings to those who work at it (Diyaiy, p.83).

Michael Patterson, in his *Strategies of Political Theatre*, believes that the wall offers a central active image. It stands as a symbol of a tyrant regime that sacrifices wealth and efforts for protecting himself. Though Lear claims that the purpose of building the wall is to keep enemies out, its building cannot be completed unless people are deprived and their efforts are exploited. This wall is a symbol of atomic deterrent (Patterson, p.147).

"Like the wall, the nuclear armaments stockpiled by both Western and Eastern nations were a response to fear of an

unpredictable enemy ... While millions of dollars ... have been spent on weapons which would be suicidal ever to use, the social fabric of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union has been weakened by poverty, unemployment and underfunded social services" (ibid).

Bond's Lear presents the best and worst in Western culture. Lear is authoritarian, he is a king with oppressive power to the needs of common humanity. He has a belief of renewing the civilization he has made; "a belief that tyranny can be just, the despotism can be benevolent, that violence can preserve peace" (Bulman 1986, p.61). In addition to that, Lear is shown as a king who is pleased of his history by reflecting his gallant myths like:

"I killed the fathers therefore the sons must hate me. And when I killed the fathers I stood on the field among our dead and swore to kill the sons! I'm too old now, they've fooled me. But they won't take my country and dig my bones up when I'm dead. Never" (*King Lear*, I.i, p.5)

Bond's Fontanelle and Bodice, who replace Shakespeare's Regan and Goneril, share a great wish for control. They are two daughters who are 'implacable women' of great cruelty and belief. In order to explain this change in names, Bond says:

"Fontanel is the name for the gap in the skull of little babies which isn't quite closed when they are born. The gap closes as the child grows. Bodice is the item of girl's clothing that covers the breast. I wanted to take Shakespeare's evil names ... to point to a human origin for evil: not that we're born evil but that our culture forces evil on us" (Stuart, p.178).

In the first scene of *King Lear*, Shakespeare exposes the brutal nature and infidelity of his characters, Goneril and Regan; either by Cordial's:

*"I know what you are
And like a sister am most loath to call
Your faults as they are named. ...
Time shall unfold what plighted
Cunning hides,
Who covert faults at last with shame
desires"*.

(*King Lear*, I.i, p.12)

Or by what say to each other. They accuse their father of being foolish and senile:

GONERIL. "You see how full of changes his age is".

REGAN. "We shall further think of it".

GONERIL. "We must do something, and i'th heat".

(ibid, p.13)

Meaningfully, the Shakespearean monologues such as Hamlet's "To be, or not to be: that is the question" (103). Shakespeare uses this soliloquy to designate the inner feelings and nature of his characters. They are not employed by Bond in *Lear*, who reveals the ambitious and schematic nature of Lear's daughters through his speech to them, saying:

"I shame the men who share your beds. I've observed you plan and scheme. They'll lie by you when you dream! Where will your motivation end? You will toss old men from their coffins, break children's legs, pull the hair from old women's heads, make young men walk the streets in beggary and cold while their wives grow empty and hopelessness. I am

ashamed of my tears! You have done this to me" (7).

Lear, also, expresses the idea in which he never trusts his daughters who wait for any chance to kill him. "They'd never miss a chance to poison good bread" (17). Not obeying his orders, Bodice and Fontanelle marry the Duke of North and the Duke of Cornwall. They are the sons of his enemies against whom the wall is built. These marriages are the main reasons for a civil war with their father (Roberts, p.123). Similar to Shakespeare's Goneril and Regan. They both betray their husbands and write to Edmund secretly (*King Lear*, IV.i, p.107). Bodice and Fontanelle write secretly to Warrington asking him not to tell anyone especially each other. They ask him to betray the king. They also offer him to be the head of the army and let him share their beds (ibid, p.7). Each one of them plans to have her husband killed by an officer as soon as the war is over. The officers, who are tasked to kill the husbands, are killed before achieving their missions (10).

Bodice and Fontanelle torture Warrington- in a way which is similar to that of Goneril and Regan who torment Gloucester by pulling his eyes- but more harshly (Patterson, 142). At first- and in order not to let him reveal their secret plans- they cut his tongue out (*Lear*, I.ii, p.12).

Then, Fontanelle asks a soldier to use the boots, kick him and jump on his head (ibid). Bodice, who is the severer than Fontanelle, believes that cutting out his tongue may not be enough, and starts tormenting him more (Zeid, 31). He states that:

*“Although he can't write or talk,
... he is cunning – he'll find
some way of telling his lies. We
must shut him up inside himself.
(She pokes her needles in
Warrington ears). I'll just jog
these in and out a little.
Doodee, doodee, doo” (Lear,
I.v, p.15).*

Then, Bodice asks a soldier to take him out and let him go away. She regards this torture a warning to all those who think of helping Lear (ibid). Spencer states that *Lear* offers one example of Bond's tendency to literalize subjects already suggested by Shakespeare. The bodily torture symbolically shown in *King Lear* is embodied in *Lear* by the overstated physical violence, which controls almost the whole action (Spencer, 83). Spencer also thinks that Shakespeare's repeated use of thunder becomes Bond's rummage shots. King Lear's complaint that his daughters metaphorically created an engine, beating his head and tormenting his mind, becomes a real tool of torture that blinds its victims by taking away his eyes. In

King Lear, there is only a Lear's wish to anatomize the spirit of Regan. While, in *Lear*, there is an actual postmortem. The hidden army of France becomes Cordelia's guerrilla militaries (ibid).

After Bond's defeat in the war with his daughters, he gives up power and searches refuge in a village with a gravedigger's boy, whose wife is called Cordelia (Muir 1973, 26). The character of Cordelia has no relationship to Shakespeare's. This Cordelia is not, as in *King Lear*, Lear's daughter. She is a daughter of a minister (Goring, 163). One of the most important things in *Lear* is the redefining of the relationship between Lear and Cordelia. Bond's devastating Cordelia keeps just the name of Shakespeare's (Zeid, 17).

Cordelia's husband presents Lear a accommodation saying: "Stay here. I can't pay you but you can eat and sleep with us" (*Lear*, I.vii, p.25). Lear expresses his pleasure and gladness by this offer, saying:

*“I could have a new life here. I
could overlook all the things
that scare me- the years I have
missed, my enemies, my rage,
my faults. I've been too
believing, too compassionate!
I'm worrying by regrets – I must
forget it all, toss it away! Yes! –*

let me live here and work for you" (ibid).

Cordelia rejects hiding Lear in their house, but he asserts on staying demanding that he is too old to take care of himself (28). Lear's stay in Cordelia's house behind the arrival of daughters' soldiers, soldiers who "killed the husband, poisoned the well, slaughtered the cows, and killed the children" (30). After the episode of her husband's murder and her rape, Cordelia turns into a woman of complete of determination and leads the army which is called guerrilla against Fontanelle and Bodice. She triumphs and kills both them (58). Before Lear's exiling into countryside, Cordelia commands to have him blinded in a way, which is more violent than that of Shakespeare's Gloucester. After that, she has him shot by her soldiers, because his new shelter encourages him with a new society in which he becomes able to fulfill fame and have "following as the teller of politically loaded parables" (Mangan, 24).

Different from Shakespeare's Cordelia, whose death comes on the contrary not only to the natural principles of justice, but also to what a reader hopes (Alexander 2000, 124). Bond's Cordelia leads a different kind of life (Zeid, 30). The last scene in *King Lear*, which shows how King Lear enters carrying his dead Cordelia and then dies of

grief (*Lear*, IV.iii, p.119), is paralleled by Bond's last scene with a Cordelia who represents modern Stalin (Zeid, 38). A Stalin who is not expected even by those who are prepared for him for him, because Bond states that "Lenin thinks that he can use violence for specific ends. He does not understand that he will produce Stalin, and indeed must produce a Stalin (Roberts, 129).

The rebellion of Bond's Cordelia designates how one can use strength to apply the very things one originally revolted against a human violence which is more dangerous than that used by animals; "if the use is large, the fear and terror will be large and this will enforce the use of more violence. According to Bond's view, Cordelia represents a Stalin figure" (Zeid, 18). *Lear* is not the only Bondian play, in which he gives much political attention to women. Rather there are many examples of political women, such as Rose in *Restoration*, Agustina in *Human Cannon*, Hecuba in *The Woman*, and others (Stuart, 195). Bond justifies why in all these plays the main protagonists are women than men, saying: "I wish precisely to deal with feminist questions. I find that to regard almost any contemporary political system from a woman's point of view through more light of it" (ibid, 196).

Bond realizes the difficult task of researchers who study the Shakespearean

language influence on his language, because it will be unfair to take Bond's opinion from Bond himself at a time when there is no Shakespeare to be asked (171). Bond confesses that comparing the two languages of *King Lear* and *Lear* is a huge problem because, he points out that "*Lear's* language is reduced to the essential and resembles the language used in philosophy" (ibid). Bond's characters do not know the use of subordinate clause. They always use short sentences. Bond lives in an era when language became highly practical like the sounds made by machines. An epoch when characters do not talk to themselves, but to the audiences, who are less eloquent in stating their feelings (ibid).

However, Patterson thinks that Bond's concern in *Lear*, like that in *King Lear*, is the human suffering, an inner suffering with reasons which are sometimes unknown to its victims, such as "I lived like a dog. ... Why've I suffered all this?" (*Lear*, III.ii, 79). Sometimes, it comes as a result of violence caused by man against man. He tries to picture the world he lived in as a world controlled by violent aggression, but – according to Bond – this violent aggression can be changed. The reason behind that is the violent society which forces humankind to adopt such a spirit Patterson, 138). The references to human suffering in this violent

world mentioned in different scenes of *Lear*, like

"This is a little cage of bars with an animal in it ... Who shut that animal in that cage? Let it out ... Is it a horse or a bird? It is lying in the dust and its wings broke. Who broke its wings? Who cut off its hands so that it can't shake the bars? ... O God there is no pity in this world. You let it lick the blood from its hair in the corner of a cage with nowhere to hide from its tormentors. No shadow, no hole! Let that animal out of its cage. Look! Look! Have pity. You are cruel! Cruel" (*Lear*, II.ii, 35).

Lastly, *Lear* admits that the wall is the symbol of his suffering. He says that "there is a wall all over and he is buried alive in a wall. Does this misery and suffering last foe ever? Do we work to build wrecks, waste all these lives to make a desert no one could live in?" (*Lear*, III.ii, 80). *Lear's* admission exposes the idea that Bond respected Shakespeare's *King Lear* for its effective dealing with human nature though he disagreed with Shakespeare's dealing with human suffering. Shakespeare focused on *Lear's* personal suffering rather than on social

suffering that Lear is a cause of (Quoted in Bulman, 61).

Bond himself attributed Shakespeare's dealing with his personal suffering rather than the social one to the idea that the Elizabethan aesthetic was different from modern one. He point out that Shakespeare couldn't distinguish clearly between personal and political or between private and public, because when Shakespeare wrote, "the court had political power and the rules were a private family as well as state organizations. He could grip the two things together so that it seemed as if political difficulties could have personal answers" (ibid).

Hay and Roberts in *A Study of His Plays*, look at the impact of Shakespeare on *Lear* with a distinguished critical view when they point out that Bond is not criticizing *King Lear* in any way. It is a play he learnt more from than any other play. But – as he says – people in modern society use this play in a wrong way. A matter which motivated him to rewrite it so that it can be used for contemporary social problems (Roberts 1980, 52). Because of this, Bond expresses his refusal of a social moral principle in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, in Bond states that "bear till in time the world would be made right. That's dangerous for us. ... We have to

have a culture that isn't an escape from sordidness of society" (ibid, 53).

Finally, in spite of Jan Kott's opinion regarding the impossibility of climbing *King Lear* (Kott 1974, 128), Bond succeeded in presenting Lear who does not abandon his authority by dividing his kingdom, but a modern Lear who is a victim of modern violence. Or a king who does not give up his authority by being overtaken, or by revolutionary violence (Zeid, 26). Bond succeeded in employing all the elements he borrowed from Shakespeare to embody a modern expression of themes such as madness and sanity, insight and blindness (Spencer, 85). His success can be told by his ability to present a play which not only ends, but also starts as a tragedy with murder in the first scene, (Zeid, 27) when Lear "shoots Third Worker, and his boy slumps forward on the post in a low bow" (*Lear*, I.i, p.7).

CONCLUSION

Modern drama has been described as being 'electric' for the different confusing trends that shaped the majority of its themes. Another important feature of this drama was that its main pillars were not English; the three main modern dramatists were the Norwegian Henrik Ibsen, the Swedish August Strindberg, and the Russian Anton Chekov. Using atomic power, two big world wars, separated by economic ruin and

depression, undoubtedly left their clear influence on all aspects of life including literature. As a result of these events – which had been also preceded by big upheavals, such as those of Darwin and Marx – new literary movements came into being. New writers tried to embody what they saw – as children or even as soldiers – in their works. Those writers were called realistic writers, because they reflected the real events they saw in the outside world on stage.

Edward Bond's relation to William Shakespeare was expressed by different forms. In *Lear*, he dealt with Shakespeare's *King Lear* as a starting point to embody the human cruelty. The 'inter-textual' relation between the two plays can be seen by the repeated names, themes, and events in both of them. Bond clearly uses many styles to make his *Lear* suitable for modern audiences, like his employment of the wall as a symbol of social oppression, or the employment of Cordelia's Guerrilla as a symbol for civil war. He gave an image of a modern Cordelia who is totally different from Shakespeare's. The honest Shakespearean Cordelia is unable to utter even one lie to gain the largest share in her father's kingdom. Therefore, she is deprived of even the fatherly love and care, for being unable to use 'the art of flattery'. This Cordelia appears in modern era as a destructive woman leading a guerrilla army.

All in all, the audience of Bond's works notice a great diversity of technique from one play to another. Despite, Bond is highly influenced by preceding writers, such as Shakespeare, or by his contemporaries, such as Brecht, he presents their works in his own way to make them suitable for his audiences.

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