

Reading Edward Bond's *Lear* from An Agitprop Perspective

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Abstract

The twentieth century had witnessed several hard events which resulted in the appearance of many literary movements in general and dramatic ones in particular. Those dramatic movements mainly used the term "agitprop" in order to provoke the public against the corrupted political figures and systems in addition to the current miserable social condition. It is worth mentioning that the Communist Party at the beginning of the twentieth century adopted the term "Agitprop" to propagate its ideas and thoughts popular. Edward Bond (1934-) is considered as one of the finest English dramatists who became distinctive for employing the agitprop drama in his plays in the second half of the twentieth century. In most of his plays, Bond is characterized by showing shocking events accompanied by extreme violence to provoke his audience and make them aware of the socio-political flaws in the society that they belong to. This paper aims at shedding light on the agitprop drama as depicted by Bond's *Lear* as his well-known play.

Introduction

Agitprop Drama

The term "agitprop", which is compilation of two words "agitation" and "propoganda", is a Russian term derived from the establishment of the Department of Agitation and Propoganda in 1920 within the Central Committee Secretariat of the Soviet Communist Party after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. During the revolutionary struggle, the Bolsheviks wanted to adopt art as a weapon where the agitprop department transmitted culture across the vast illiterate country to agitate people to understand and be involved in the critical issues such as health, sanitation, literacy and military. There were several means to show the short films such as trains, boats, colourful posters and stirring slogans. As far as drama is concerned, the Blue Blouse movement, named after the the industrial clothes a worker wears, adopted several vital forms on traditional folk art to make its agitational ideas popular. (Cuddon 1998:15)

Blue Blouse troupes were performed in wagons and pubs and adopted colloquial language away from the traditional theatres by using music that featured a political analysis of the contemporary situation. Striking and simple costume with little or no scenery were also used by the Blue Blouse troupes where the performers were initially amateur and reached the height of their influence in the 1930's. They made use of the simple or fascinating costume in addition to limited scenery. (Cuddon 1998:15)

In modern time, the relationship between literature and propoganda is essential especially after the end of using of the literary approaches that deal with the aesthetic aspects and consider any literary work as a merely fruitful source for entertainment and enjoyment. Thus, with the rapid and radical changes that emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century, thinkers began to investigate whether men of letters should interfere

in politics or leave a distance between their well-decorated artistic works and the cruel world of politics. (Orwell and Angus 1970: 176)

During the international Communist activity and the spread of the Soviet companies in the late 1920's and early 1930's, Agitprop drama spread in Europe and America. Agitprop was considered as antidote to bourgeois to emerge as a mixture of the adopted model and local traditions. Germany, away the Soviet Union, had a very powerful agitprop movement until suppressing it by Nazism. The German groups were characterized by their mass or choral speaking and were associated with the theatre director Erwin Piscator (1893-1966) and the renowned playwright Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956). (Cuddon 1998:15)

Europe, during the 1960's, witnessed social and political dangers. These dangers were the consequences of the World War II. Generally, Youth were unproductive, seeking for pleasure. The elders were shocked by the youth's strange and shocking appearance of long hair and flowing clothes with their addiction to drugs. In coincidence with the increased violence in the world such as the United States' war with North Vietnam, Europe witnessed some political riots. It is believed that these upheavals were resulted by the agitational ideas of the revolutionary socialist writers. (Elsom 1997: 77)

Simultaneously, playwrights began to adopt agitprop drama in their plays to propagate their believes to bring about the social reformation. This process was supported by removing the censorship in 1968. Agitprop drama was primarily used by some playwrights to show social oppression caused by the corrupt political systems. Edward Bond (1934 -) became one of the distinctive and innovative names in the modern Britain's drama. (Elsom 1997: 79)

Agitprop drama in Edward Bond's *Lear*

It is believed that early critics, upon publishing Edward Bond's *Lear* in London in 1969, did not fully interpret the play, but unwillingly condemned it due to the excellent reputation that Bond has as a good playwright after publishing his 1965 play *Saved*. The critique was resulted from the tremendous violence and bloodshed that the play has compared to Bond's other plays. Violence that *Lear* shows remains a subject of critical argument till the present time. (Galens and Spanpinato 1998: 220)

For Bond, addressing current conditions means addressing about violence where he focused on it as an essential part of contemporary society. Hence, *Lear* starts and finishes with violence and death. In the early beginning of the play, *Lear* kills a worker who has killed his colleague worker by mistake, whereas *Lear* is also killed by a soldier in the final scene. There are several events of beastliness in between the two scenes: Warrington, the counselor and supporter of *Lear*, is tortured: his tongue is cut and needles were thrust into his ears. The innocent Gravedigger's wife is raped, and his son is killed. Even when the boy turns to be a ghost, the sufferance continues when he suffers a second violent death by pigs attacking him. *Lear*'s two daughters Fontanelle and Bodice did not escape the suffering. Fontanelle is killed, and the latter is stabbed by soldiers. Gradually, more minor characters in the play face death violently. (Galens and Spanpinato 1998: 226-227)

An on-stage gore, besides violence, is depicted in the play. Fontanelle is autopsied and *Lear* turned to be blinded on stage, therefore; these events are considered as the most dreadful ones in the history of contemporary drama. (Galens and Spanpinato 1998: 227)

David L. Hirst (1985) believes that extreme violence on the stage which is unmatched in any drama since then, is alienating both critics and audience during the first performance of the play. He assures that Bond aims at disturbing the audience and making them unsettled. Accordingly, it is important that the theater interested people should be able to specify the causes and analyze them. (Hirst 1985: 132-133)

Jenny S. Spencer (1992) argues Bond's intention of presenting violence on stage:

"One must feel the urgently unacceptable nature of events before desiring to change them. Sickness is felt before seeking a cure; the experience of discomfort works like a catalyst. Thus the audience, like Lear himself, should begin to search for some understanding of events, then analysis that would relieve the suffering." (Spencer 1992: 84)

Another debatable issue of the play, apart from its excessive violence, is when Bond deliberately took one of the "sacred cows" of the British culture which is William Shakespeare's play King Lear. (Mangan 1998: 23)

It is necessary to notice that Bond's Lear is not a simple adaptation of Shakespeare's King Lear rather a reference to it. Bond assures, in several interviews, that King Lear, is too important to be left alone but the message it carries to the contemporary culture needs to be discussed. Later, he argues that the reaction to of the audience to Shakespeare's King Lear, which centers on the artistic experience of the play, should be changed. It is clear the Bond aims at producing a piece of work that is politically effective in order to agitate people to reconsider the situation that they live in rather than having aesthetic experience. As being a socialist dramatist, Bond is making his drama causing change in society rather than entertaining it. (Galens and Spaninato 1998: 221)

Commenting on Shakespeare's King Lear, Bond reflects that "the social moral of Shakespeare's play is this: endure till in time the world will be made right. That's a dangerous moral for us. We have less time than Shakespeare". (Mangan 1998: 25)

Bond's Lear is full of violence, rebellion and freedom. Lear, a paranoid autocrat, is in the process of building a wall to save his people, as he claims and keep any outsiders away from his kingdom and to bring peace to his kingdom. Building this wall was Lear's main and only concern where he neglected farms and lands due to the great demand of the manpower for building the wall. As a king, Lear routinely visits the building location. Once he pays a visit for inspecting to the wall accompanied by his two daughters, Bodice and Fontanelle, he witnessed an accident related to a death of one worker. A worker was accidentally killed by another where Lear orders that a worker who has unintentionally killed his work companion should be executed. Bodice and Fontanelle, who are planning to marry the Dukes of Cornwall and North, object to the order. Meanwhile, Lear rejects the idea of getting married to those dukes because he considers them his enemies and like "wolves in the fold." The events emerged in breaking out a civil war between the father and the daughters. The war resulted in making Lear ruined and defeated. Later, as being defeated, Lear is hosted in the cottage of the Gravedigger's Boy and Cordelia, his wife, who live in a simple and sufficient life depending on their land. Another violent scene appeared when soldiers arrived and shot the Gravedigger's boy and rape Cordelia who does not like providing refuge for Lear and did not have time to tell her kindhearted husband to send him way. The Carpenter, who loves Cordelia, killed the soldiers with his rifle as revenge to end the first act of the play. (Trussler 1976: 22-23)

Bodice and Fontanelle have caught Lear, but the situation is still unstable due to the recent fight that emerged between them and the rebel peasant forces which is led by Cordelia and the Carpenter. Lear in the prison accompanied by the Ghost of the Gravedigger's Boy. The violent events that the characters witnessed could result in changing them a little where Bodice, Fontanelle, and the dukes are all put to death, Warrington, the councilor and supporter of Lear, is tortured and sent mad. Lear's eyes are put out to make him politically unable to run his kingdom, and the people are still building the wall. (Trussler 1976: 22-23)

The final act starts when the Ghost of the Gravedigger's Boy is sticking to the blinded Lear whose political adventures are attracting the crowds. Susan, John and Thomas, who work in the land, are taking care of the blinded Lear. Cordelia, after controlling the kingdom, gets back to her old home to warn Lear that he should not talk about her government. She is unable to recognize the presence of the Ghost, her previous husband, which is a walking skeleton that would soon die for the second time between Lear's arms. In the final scene, Lear is killed while being on the wall by a soldier who is from Cordelia's army. His corpse falls from the top of the wall and is left on the ground. (Trussler 1976: 23)

Lear, Like Bond's two earlier plays, *Saved* and *Early Morning*, starts with an image of a degenerated family. The opening scene of the play shows the disputes within the royal family when Lear opposes the idea of marriage between his two daughters and his foes, the dukes, which resulted in the daughter's intention to destroy their father's wall. Lear's response towards his daughters was due to his knowledge of their wickedness by wondering "Where does their vileness come from?" (Bond 1986:9) Meanwhile, it is clear for the audience that Lear and his daughters are in a civil war. There was a lack of the fatherhood and daughterhood towards each other. Lear behaves in away that he is the one who determines the path of their lives, whereas they refuse his tyranny and are eager to have him dead. This is quite clear that when Bodice presents Lear's death warrant to her sister, the latter quickly signs it. At the trial, Lear denies his parentage by saying that he has no daughters. (Galens and Spanpinato 1998: 226)

The play's political message is depicted in various themes. One of those is the family disintegration. Lear, as stated by Hirst, dramatizes toppling a regime by a rebellion developed by its own severe code; the brutality of Lear is carried further when his two daughters hold power. Moreover, Cordelia, who established a new regime, used power negatively where she oppressed her people whom she fought for and her government started to suppress all resistance and criticism. (Hirst 1985: 139)

The play depends on the development of its title character Lear despite the other extensive characters. Unlike almost flat characters, Lear underwent a purgatorial journey that begins in his daughter's torturing him till his sacrificial death. Through out the journey, he behaves in a childish way that always needs his wishes and desires be accomplished. He neglects any other issues related to his people and is engaged by the construction of his huge wall. He does not understand that securing people is not by staging them, but by teaching them to bear responsibility for protecting themselves from the enemies. (Galens and Spanpinato 1995: 232-33)

It is obvious from the first scene that Lear neglects and disregards others. He is a contradictory person who blames workers for leaving wood in the mud to rot and then complains about the miserable conditions that they live in. Further, Bond clarifies that complaining about the miserable condition of the workers is not caused by his sympathy towards them, but related to being afraid of losing more men and therefore his wall will not be completed quickly. Lear said to the foreman: "When they finish work they must be kept in dry huts. All these huts are wet" (Bond 1986:2), it seems that, like the wood, the workers, are neglected to rot and die. "You waste men;" (Bond 1986:2) he continues to tell the Foreman. To Lear, the workers are just stuff to be used for building the wall. Further, Lear issues an order that to make use of all the available men so Lear's old councilor, Warrington, replies "We can't take more men. The countryside would be left derelict, and there'd be starvation in the towns." (Bond 1986:2)

By Lear's insistence on executing the worker, who accidentally killed his fellow despite his daughters' objection, Bond shows a clear attitude of Lear towards his people. Hence, a clear contrast between Lear's spoken concern and action is shown. Lear, when

his daughters assured their intention to put down the wall, said "I loved and cared for all my children, and now you've sold them to their enemies!" (Bond 1986:7) Immediately after his reply, Lear kills the worker and this is clear that Lear is the real enemy of his people. (Galens and Spanpinato 1998: 233)

As Lou Lappin (1987) stated that the wall represents the glorification of Lear and a protection for his throne rather than a means for protecting his people. The wall, for Lear, is like a memorial that immortalizes him. Lear reflects, "When I'm dead my people will live in freedom and peace and remember my name, no-venerate it." (Bond 1986:7)

For the audience, it is obvious that the wall stands for the oppression and control of the corrupt regime and is a barrier that blocks the way between the king and his subjects. The wall represents the suffering, difficulties and misery for the subjects because it results in losing their lands and making them weak and powerless. Ironically, the same wall will be a prison for Lear from which he tries to escape. (Lappin 1987: 129)

Richard Scharine (1976:112-14) remarks that Lear he is constrained into the community he has created like a baby being born after being defeated. Lear is like a child at the house of the Gravedigger's Boy. He totally needs the assistance of the Gravedigger's family to get food and shelter when he addressed Cordelia: "You've looked after me well. I slept like a child in this silence all day." (Bond 1986:25) Lear did not care about the tormented Warrington when he saw him. He focused on himself: "I'll die! I've seen a ghost. I'm going to die. That's why he came back. I'll die." (Bond 1986:22), he reacted to Cordelia in a child's outburst when she tells him he should leave:

"No, I won't go. He said I could stay. He won't break his wordNo, I won't be at everybody's call! My daughters sent you! You go! It's you who're destroying this place! We must get rid of you!" (Bond 1986:27)

Lear starts to feel the others' suffering after witnessing the death of the Gravedigger's Boy and Cordelia's rape. Lappin (1987:132) clarifies that Lear's speech to the soldiers indicates how the autocratic government uses its tool to execute any sight of life and this speech is somehow agitating the audience: "O burn the house! You've murdered the husband, slaughtered the cattle, poisoned the well, raped the mother, killed the child-you must burn the house!" (Bond 1986: 30-31)

Though Lear has started to recognize the surrounding suffering of his people, but he did not realize that this suffering is made by his own deeds. In fact, Lear finds away to escape his loneliness and his guilt for the terror around him by being obsessed with the Gravedigger's Boy's Ghost. When the Ghost summons the ghosts of Lear's daughters that are phantasms of the obedient girls who are not corrupted by their father sitting around him in peace and intimacy, Lear feels in a sort of relief and comfort. Hence, Lear created an imaginary world in the presence of the ghosts to escape being a caged animal which later recognized when Bodice gave him the mirror in the trial. Lear rejects the idea of being responsible for his imprisonment or the deeds of his daughters. He still believes that he is a victim and subject to pity while seeing himself in the cage. Lear after looking in the mirror says, "No, that's not the king ...This is a little cage of bars with an animal in it. Who shut that animal in that cage? Let it out."(Bond 1986:35). Interestingly, Bond reflects to the image of the caged animal:

"Lear, who has seen himself on postage stamps, ...on monuments as a hero and father, sees himself for the first time as he really is - as a bad father and a bad king." (Scharine 1976:112-17)

In this scene, Lear recognition to others' suffering is reflected: "I can't live with that suffering in the world."(Bond 1986:35)

The play continues to show the animal imagery. It is obvious when Lear describes the Dukes as "wolves in a fold"(Bond 1986:6); and he also describes himself as " a famished dog that sits on the earth and howls"(Bond 1986:17); Lear seems to advocate social revolution by calling any man who is frightened a wolf that "crawls away in terror and hides with the rats"(Bond 1986:20); but later on, he reflects "the mouse comes out of his hole and stares"(Bond 1986:35); and "the animal will slip out of its cage, and lie in the fields, and run by the river, and groom itself in the sun ..."(Bond 1986:40)

Jenny S. Spencer (1992) said "not whether, but how, the violence and aggression of contemporary society could be explained as a consequence of an evolutionary and instinctual heritage." to shed light on the images of animals, as used by Bond, in order to show the behavior of both humans and animals. Just like any other animal, man is to behave aggressively just to get his own needs and desires. So the hidden self of man is represented by the animal image that once it gets outside him, it turns into a dangerous beast. By showing the caged animal in the court, Lear indirectly implies that he is suffering like others. This sufferance is the natural result of the cruel world that they all imprisoned in. Thus, the animal image is the metaphorical parable, as employed by Bond, which reflects one's impulses chained by social conventions. In addition to that, Bond metaphorically hints to the human value that is damaged by the modern world.

Moreover, in presenting such dehumanized characters, Bond metaphorically refers to man's value which is underestimated by modern world. (Spencer 1992: 86)

However, Bond focuses on the fact that the powerful man is the prisoner of the social role he plays in the society. Jenny S. Spencer (1992: 89-90), reflecting upon this point, assures that in Bond's Lear, the characters are deprived from humanity which they control a little due to the social roles that determine their actions. Bodice, for instance, says "They say decide this and that, but I don't decide anything. My decisions are forced on me....It's like a mountain moving forward, but not because I tell it to." (Bond 1986:48); then she continues, "Now I have all the power ...but I'm a slave." (Bond 1986:49)

It is noteworthy that Lear, during the trial, ignores his own guilt by trying to get out of the prison because he is immoral person. He has one chance to act like a moral person who has ties with his family only when the Ghost summons the apparitions of Lear's daughters when they were children. The scene shows how kind Lear is when he passionately strokes his daughters' hair while putting their heads on his lap. Once they left, he starts to recognize his real personality: "I killed so many people and never looked at one of their faces." (Bond 1986:42) "I don't want to live except for the boy. Who'd look after him?" (Bond 1986:53) Lear shows that he cares for the Ghost whom he already resulted in his death. Lear, as (Cohn 1977: 230) illustrates, also reveals a sense of his own responsibility in his relationship with the Ghost; he says about the Ghost, "I did him a great wrong once, a very great wrong. He's never blamed me. I must be kind to him now." (Bond 1986:54)

(Cohn 1977: 234) assures that Lear's character is growing to gain more moral development where he started to recognize that he needs to be sympathetic, responsible and his actions must be revised. Lear's self-realization is clearer during Fontanelle's autopsy. He is shocked to compare between his daughters' outside cruelty and Fontanelle's inside beauty and tenderness. "Did I make this," he asks, "and destroy it?" (Bond 1986:59) Lear reacts to the incident and blames himself for deforming his daughters' characters. Lear shows his desire to face reality when the Ghost tried to move him away from the scene of Fontanelle's autopsy: "I ran away so often, but my life was ruined just the same. Now I'll stay....I must open my eyes and see"(Bond 1986:58)

Ironically, Lear's desire to stay and watch is followed immediately by his blindness. Richard Scharine (1976: 119) believes "Lear's blindness is a dramatic metaphor for insight just like Oedipus'."

Some critics think that Bond implicitly refers to the harmful modern technology when he employs a scientific instrument to Lear's blindness. The instrument, used to pull Lear's eyes out, and the formaldehyde solution are wittily employed by Bond to give hints to the audience that the events that they witness are universal and unrestricted to a certain era but applicable to all times. Such anachronism has an influence on the audience where it helps them to be awakened and face reality. (Galens and Spanpinato 1998: 228)

As the doctor gets out Lear's eyes, he says: " Note how the eye passes into the lower chamber and is received into a soothing solution of formaldehyde crystals. One more, please." (Bond 1986:63) Michael Mangan (1998) assures that giving a cold language characterized by being mechanical and relentless to the doctor who is to put Lear's eyes, the audience is made aware of the sharp contrast between the brutal actuality and the civilized language to indicate how science is put at the service of the contemporary military power. Mangan (1998) also illustrates that Bond's plays are full of the relationship between technology and violence as a recurrent theme where Bond reflects that the dreadful uses of technology is to be questioned rather than technology itself. (Mangan 1998: 26-27)

In this respect, Stanton B. Garner (1990) states that the denaturalized man's behavior and excessive violence and aggression is resulted by the unfair institutions that create a "technosphere" which replaces the "biosphere". (Garner 1990:159) Bond reflects Stanton's same remark when he argues:

"The more we can squeeze out of nature by inventions and discoveries and improved organization of labour, the more uncertain our existence seems to be. It's not we who lord it over things, it seems, but things which lord it over us. But that's only because some people make use of things in order to lord it over others." (Hay and Roberts 1980: 117)

Meanwhile, Lear, once blinded, stayed in the countryside which is considered as the natural alternative of the urban life. He met the Farmer, his Wife and their Son who talked about the injustice of the rulers and the effect of the king's wall that destroyed their life. By listening to him, Lear recognized that he has built the wall to separate his people from him and he harmed them. As a result of this recognition, Lear fall down on his knees to ask for forgiveness. Despite his attempts to convince the Son by not joining the army, Lear's efforts were fruitless. Lear's warning was strange for the Farmer and his Son because they lived in a society that is meek and unable to act for themselves even if they were given the chance. (Galens and Spanpinato 1998: 235)

Lear, in the final act, is accompanied by Susan, Thomas and Jon at the house of the Gravedigger's boy. By being with these people and at this house, Lear is attempting to resume the idealized and pastoral life that he once lived with the Boy and Cordelia. Now the difference in Lear's life is that he is no more a child who seeks care by others; contrastively, he is a person who is compassionate and helps others even if his life is at danger. Lear becomes the agitating voice of Bond when he was told to send the deserters away, he refused and insisted on having them stay with him. His speech addressing the audience of the miserable conditions of the society makes him the real agitational voice in the play:

"They're hungry and no one feeds them, so they call for help and no one comes. And when their hunger's worse they scream and jackals and wolves come to tear them to pieces."(Bond 1986: 80-81)

Lear's stance is not only taking people in, but also criticizing the cruel ruling code of the government that he had established before. When his former Councilor told him to stop criticizing Cordelia's government, Lear rejected and continued to resist Cordelia injustice to awaken the people to make Cordelia warns him that he will be executed if he would not stop agitating people against her.

(Galens and Spaninato 1998: 235)

In his final act, Lear actively participated in the political system before his sacrifice when he harshly criticized Cordelia who represents all the oppressing governments through out the world: "Your Law always does more harm than crime, and your morality is a form of violence." (Bond 1986:85) In addition to that, Lear starts to regret all his deeds when he talks to the Ghost about his life before the latter's death: "I see my life, a black tree by a pool. The branches are covered with tears. The tears are shining with light. The wind blows the tears in the sky." (Bond 1986:86) It is clear enough that these tears are purging Lear and preparing him for his death. He reaches his death by heading to the wall that he has earlier started constructing. While attempting to dig down that wall, Lear was shot by a soldier in the same place where he shot the worker in the opening scene. (Hay and Roberts 1980: 137)

(Hay and Roberts 1980: 137) argue that "Lear sets a positive example to the following young generation represented by the young workers who have admirably looked at Lear as he is falling dead at the end of the play. These young workers are really important for they represent the future power that would change the society." Colin Chambers and Mike Prior (1987) see that Lear's death "does not show the audience the need for compassion and responsibility only, but also for action." Lear is no longer a child seeking shelter and looking for care, but he created a moral lesson for others to learn due to his sacrifice. Bond wittily ends Lear's death scene when the soldiers left his corpse on the ground but one of them looked back: "one of them looks back"(Bond 1986:88), this is to show that Lear's sacrifice and death is still useful and not wasted. This lesson came by an old man that would help in making other young heroes and revolutionary. (Chambers and Prior 1987: 68)

However, Bond's message is that as long as rulers hold power, violence is greater. The association between violence and power is determined by the long ruling regime. The audience instantly realized the association between Lear's yearning for power and the violence he employs by ordering to execute the worker in the opening scene. When the first worker is killed in the opening scene. Bodice and Fontanelle, who were terrified by Lear's violence, rebel against him, but, once in power, they become as violent as he is. The same issue happened with Cordelia who was a victim of violence to become an oppressor once she gains power. She becomes merciless as Lear and his daughters. Bond's agitational message to audience is that if the politics of ruling through violence remain, the change of rulers will be vain. His intention is to make his audience aware of the violence around them as a reflection of Lear's violent society. Change could be resulted through this recognition of savagery of the audience's time. (Galens and Spaninato 1998: 227)

Conclusion

Due to the disturbed situation in the twentieth century in all aspects, writers and artists became frustrated with the corrupted world that is desperate, ignorant, faithless and full of exploitation. The chaos caused by the wars and the corrupt political systems required the writers to politically make use of their art to awaken the people to the threats that destroy them and their future. So, many literary works that are made for political purposes appeared to reflect the miserable situation that people lived.

Agitprop is employed by the dramatists to awaken the audience against their miserable condition and corrupt political government. It is noteworthy that the term Agitprop was originally adopted by the Soviet Union during the Communist propaganda in the early twentieth century. Playwrights started using agitprop drama to help people recognize the injustice of their governments.

Edward Bond is characterized by being one of England's finest dramatists who uses Agitprop drama in most of his plays in the second half of the twentieth century. His trends are related to Marxism and he is anti-authoritarian, against any subjects that increase man's suffering and result in alleviating it to his fellows. He believes that the cycle of violence remains active and people are helpless as long as man is involved in the socio-political factors.

Lear, one of Bond's well-known plays, dramatizes the futureless society by presenting the exaggerated amount of violence on stage. The play shows the only interest of the rulers which is to keep power regardless the situation of their people. They are unaware of the people's suffering. The huge wall in *Lear* is a symbol that stands for a real event which is the rulers' intention to keep governing their subjects and keep them in state of dreadful defensiveness just to justify their deeds. The wall is made, as justified by *Lear*, to defend his people but in fact, it is a big prison that keeps them submissive and obedient. It also refers to the arsenals made by the sides of the Cold War that are big enough to destroy the world. *Lear* is an agitational play that conveys the message of refusal to condone the serious effect of the world conflict.

Introducing the domination of a family socially and politically to create chaos, despair and war, the play wittily written by containing some agitating scenes.

There is a clear lack of love, creativity, protection and entertainment by the characters. This is to show that these fundamental needs for mankind are missed in the class-structured capitalist society against which Edward Bond's agitprop drama stands.

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Appendix

This paper has partly been produced from the dissertation titled "Agitprop Drama in Edward Bond's Selected Novels" (Edward Bond'un Propaganda Tiyatrosu: Bazı Seçki Oyunları).